

2025 -
2040

Parks and Greenspace Strategy

NBBC Parks and Greenspace Strategy 2025 - 2040



Parks and Green spaces are at the heart of Nuneaton and Bedworth. They are where our communities of all ages can come together for events, exercise and moments of calm. The strategy sets out a vision to protect, enhance and invest in these valuable spaces for the benefit of both current and future generations.



Councillor Brady Hughes – Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Health

Executive Summary

Parks and greenspaces offer many benefits to residents and visitors to Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough. Access to parks and greenspaces positively impacts physical health, mental well-being, socio-economic deprivation, cultural life, and enhances community pride. Local access to greenspaces encourages active lifestyles, which can reduce healthcare costs significantly.

In areas with high social deprivation and health inequalities, such as Nuneaton and Bedworth, accessible greenspaces are vital in addressing these disparities. They provide essential recreational facilities, which are particularly important for residents with limited access to private gardens. Additionally, parks play a crucial role in cultural activities, community events, and fostering a sense of place and community cohesion.

Parks and greenspaces offer multiple environmental benefits, including carbon capture, improved air quality, biodiversity support, and sustainable travel routes. Trees and vegetation in parks reduce air pollution and absorb carbon dioxide, contributing to better local air quality. Many greenspaces serve as flood storage areas, mitigating flood risks and protecting communities. These areas also provide habitats for wildlife, promoting biodiversity. Furthermore, parks encourage formal and informal sports, walking and cycling, supporting sustainable travel, and reducing vehicle emissions.

Parks and greenspaces also have significant economic benefits, such as increasing property values, generating secondary spending and creating employment opportunities. Proximity to parks can enhance property values and parks attract visitors who spend money at local businesses. Parks also host commercial activities, contributing further to the local economy.

With limited resources, the Council needs a strategic approach to prioritise actions that maximise benefits for residents. Decision-making should be evidence-based and focused on the most impactful and cost-effective measures. This strategy involves reviewing current provision to ensure it meets residents' needs, prioritising resource allocation, and focusing on sustaining and improving park quality.

Using up to date evidence from audits the strategy will help identify whether current parks and greenspaces adequately serve the community and ensure equitable access. Resources will be directed towards the poorest performing areas, improving the quality of parks and greenspaces. Day-to-day maintenance and repair activities are also crucial, forming the foundation of the service's efforts and the bedrock of satisfaction (or not) with the Parks and Greenspace service.

NBBC commissioned Jon Sheaff Associates (JSA) in 2022 through a competitive tender process to provide critical data and analysis. JSA's extensive work included:

- Auditing Park and play facilities

- Mapping and analysing audit data
- Producing a technical report that underpins this strategy

JSA, in partnership with Eftec consultancy, also provided Natural Capital Accounts to quantify public benefits from park and greenspace areas. Additionally, JSA began preliminary work on updating the allotment and tree strategies.

The strategy aligns with national and local policies emphasising the importance of parks and greenspaces in public health, biodiversity, environmental sustainability, and active travel. Data

Given the detailed data and policy analyses, the strategy aims to:

- Improve the quality and accessibility of parks and greenspaces
- Promote health and wellbeing through active lifestyles
- Enhance biodiversity and environmental sustainability
- Ensure efficient use of resources while addressing budget constraints
- Leverage increased public interest in local greenspaces post-COVID to drive sustained engagement and use

Part of the work undertaken by consultants included an assessment of the Natural Capital Accounting, to evaluate the public benefits derived from its parks and greenspaces. This assessment, undertaken by Jon Sheaff Associates (JSA) in partnership with Eftec consultancy, quantifies the financial and social returns on the Council's investment in these vital public assets.

Using nationally recognised methodologies, including those from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the NCA revealed that NBBC's annual expenditure of £1,892,000 (as of 2021) on parks and greenspaces generates substantial public benefits amounting to £16,500,000 annually. These benefits are categorised into four key outputs:

- Recreation: £10,100,000
- Physical Health: £5,500,000
- Air Quality: £700,000
- Carbon Sequestration: £200,000

The proximity of residential properties to greenspaces also significantly enhances property values. Using methodologies from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the analysis showed that being near recreational greenspaces increases property values by 0.5% to 1.4%, depending on the size of the greenspace. The total uplift in property values within the borough is estimated to be between £389 million and £1 billion at 2021 prices.

The financial and social returns from parks and greenspaces are substantial, demonstrating their significant value beyond the traditional view of them as financial liabilities. Despite a reduction in the parks and greenspaces budget between 2008 and 2021, the measurable benefits far outweigh the annual expenditure of £2,277,000 (2022/23 figure).

Analysis and auditing of Parks and Green Spaces broadly fell into three main categories: Quantity, Location and Quality. The Strategy looks at each of these elements in turn.

Quantity:

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) currently manages 380 hectares of significant recreational greenspace across 75 sites. These spaces are divided into diverse types, including formal parks and "Wildspace" areas designed to support wildlife habitats and provide recreational opportunities. While the council manages a substantial number of smaller areas, the focus is primarily on providing accessible and quality greenspaces for residents.

In the past decade, housing developments have led to the creation of new greenspaces, often managed by developers initially. These areas, totalling 22 hectares, provide recreational opportunities for residents and will eventually be transferred to residents' management companies or NBBC.

Planned developments with granted consents are expected to add further greenspace, including play areas, totalling 76 hectares. These developments aim to address the growing population in the borough.

Using tried and tested methodologies for greenspace provision per resident, NBBC's current provision of 380 hectares falls within acceptable ranges, balancing between government-mandated minimums and desirable standards set by organisations like Fields in Trust. Additional greenspaces from neighbouring authorities, developer-managed sites, and planned developments contribute to a total provision of 505 hectares, ensuring adequate access for residents.

While the current provision meets minimum requirements, future planning needs to ensure continued access to high-quality greenspaces as the population grows. This includes prioritising fewer, higher-quality sites within reasonable walking distances, balancing accessibility with financial sustainability.

Accessibility:

Residents prioritise the location and distribution of greenspaces over sheer quantity. Accessibility is crucial, highlighting the importance of mapping and analysing greenspace distribution relative to residential areas. This allows for identifying gaps and potential surpluses in provision.

The first analysis focuses on access to all forms of greenspaces within 400 meters of residential areas. While gaps exist, especially in older built-up areas, future developments will address many of these. Some gaps persist due to geographical constraints or limited access to existing semi-natural areas.

While some gaps in access cannot be easily rectified, NBBC actively seeks opportunities to improve greenspace provision, particularly through new housing developments. Enhancing green corridor links and active travel routes can further improve general access. Partnership working with organisations like Warwickshire Wildlife Trust may provide avenues for creating new accessible semi-natural greenspaces.

The core provision of Destination Parks and Community Parks forms the foundation of recreational park access for residents. While gaps exist in NBBC's own provision, incorporating sites from other local authorities, developer-managed spaces, and anticipated developments significantly improves coverage.

With the inclusion of additional provisions, almost no gaps in access remain. Exceptions include areas in Weddington, eastern Whitestone, linear housing along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington, and the southern part of Burbages Lane. However, these deficiencies do not warrant immediate action, with a watching brief advised for potential future opportunities.

The mapping reveals comprehensive accessibility to recreational greenspaces within the Borough, with few significant gaps. Continued monitoring ensures timely action if opportunities arise to address remaining deficiencies, particularly in identified areas of need. Overall, residents enjoy good access to various forms of recreational greenspaces, contributing positively to their well-being and quality of life.

Quality:

The audit assessments of park and greenspace provision within NBBC reveals open spaces with variable quality. To address this, NBBC's focus needs to shift from providing the correct number of parks to enhancing the quality of existing provisions. The strategy outlines an evidence-based approach to improve park and greenspace quality, guided by detailed audit data and evidence-led decision-making. Given budget constraints, NBBC will prioritise targeting the poorest-performing parks, greenspaces, and play areas in terms of quality.

The nationally recognised Green Flag Award Park assessment serves as a key evaluation tool. These scores facilitate ranking site performance and identifying areas for improvement and mapping the audit outcomes provide a useful visual representation of quality across the borough. The audit assessments concluded that quality varies significantly across sites, often falling short of Green Flag standards. Maintenance, facilities provision, play offerings, safety, and accessibility are key factors influencing outcomes. Addressing these factors systematically will drive improvements in overall site quality.

Play area provision:

Play areas within parks and greenspaces are often the catalyst for residents visiting open spaces and they provide a focal point for facilities. NBBC provides 55 equipped play areas of differing sizes, depending on what level of greenspace they are in. In addition to NBBC-owned facilities three play areas managed by other local authorities on the edge of the Borough enhance overall coverage. However, gaps in provision remain, particularly at the Community and Destination levels.

From quantitative and accessibility perspectives although there is a good spread of facilities across the borough there are some gaps in provision, due to the differing catchment areas of diverse levels of provision.

The mapping highlights gaps in play area provision, with significant gaps in Community and Destination level play areas. By proposing to upgrade eight Local play areas to Community level and developing one new Community level play area the Council aims to enhance coverage. In addition, identifying a small number of Local play areas as surplus due to overlapping catchments, could streamline resources and enhance overall provision, if a rigorous evidence-led policy is developed.

The assessment of play area quality within NBBC was conducted using two primary methods: NBBC's own play facility criteria linked to the standards in the adopted Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD (OSSPD), and the Play England Play Quality.

The evaluation of play areas against NBBC standards was categorised into three levels: basic, mid-level, and high-level provision, for Local, Community, and Destination play areas. The finding concluded that many NBBC sites failed to meet even basic criteria, particularly lacking in toddler and inclusive play items. None of the play areas audited met high-level provision of facilities, which the Council insists developers meet in any new on-site provision of play facilities in housing developments.

The quality assessment of NBBC play areas reveals significant room for improvement. While many sites fail to meet even the basic criteria, strategic upgrades, and adherence to best practices can enhance the overall play experience. By implementing improvements in design, safety, and inclusivity along with establishing a sinking fund for all new facilities, higher quality and more inclusive play areas will result for all residents.

The next chapters of the Strategy go on to discuss how quality in NBBC's parks and greenspaces can be driven up during the 15-year lifespan of the document. Aspects such as real and perceived safety concerns in the parks are discussed with actions to tackle some of the areas highlighted through design and management. Methods to support and promote the diverse use of the borough's parks and greenspaces are discussed, with partnership working and novel and tried and tested use of different technologies detailed, enabling a wider participation in established and new activities.

Chapter 19 of the strategy discusses the important aspect of adequate maintenance and upkeep of sites, which is often the first aspect of greenspaces that residents see and comment on. Suggested actions to improve how the grounds maintenance contract runs and our ongoing work with external contractors are detailed.

This strategy, based on recent assessments of sites and industry standards, aims to provide a 15-year action plan to identify areas for development and drive-up quality in the parks and greenspaces across the borough, thus creating a more sustainable and equitable provision for residents and visitors in the short and longer term.

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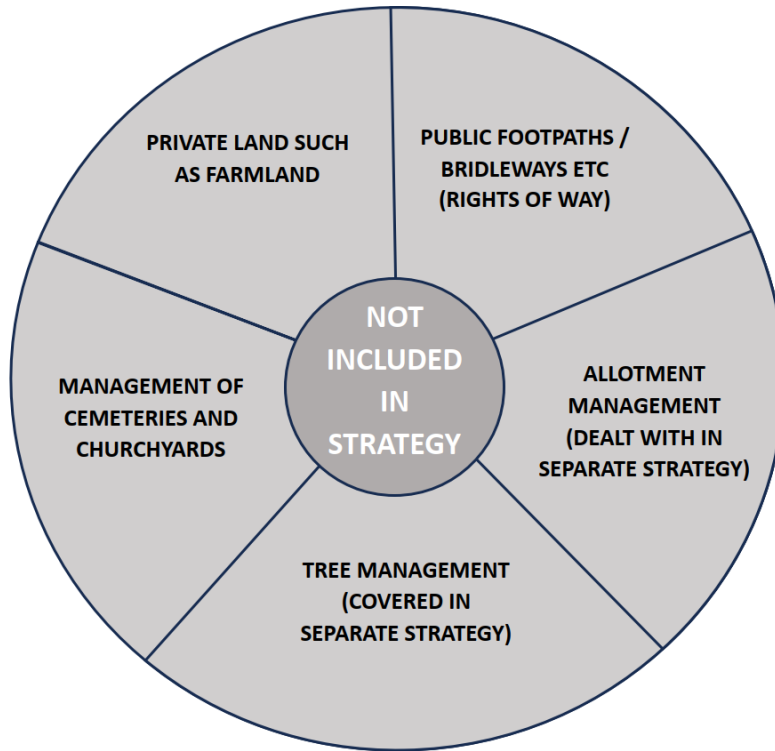
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Chapter 1 – Scope of the Strategy

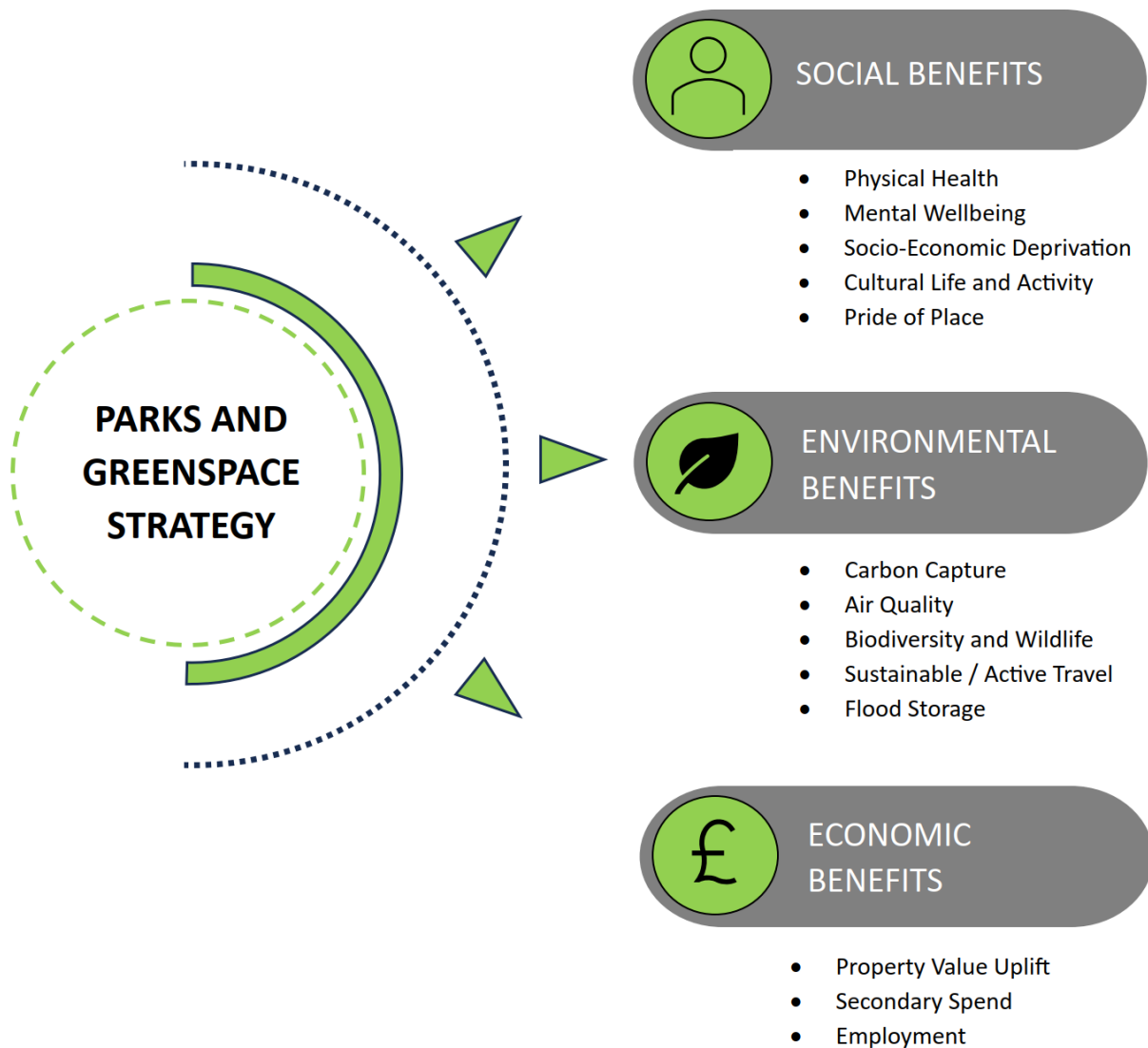
What issues and what types of land are/are not being covered in the document:





Chapter 2: Benefits of Park and Greenspace provision

Why does the Council invest time and funding into Park and Greenspace provision?



- i) Social benefits:
- Physical Health
 - Mental Wellbeing
 - Socio-economic Deprivation
 - Cultural Life and Activity
 - Pride of Place

Park and Greenspace areas provide particularly significant social benefits to those who live in, work in, and visit the Borough.

We all know instinctively that being able to spend time in greenspace – particularly if living most of the time in an urban setting - is of great benefit to mental and physical health and wellbeing. Extensive research now underpins that those benefits are real and have significant value which can also be estimated in financial terms.

These benefits can translate into direct monetary impacts upon key services, especially health services - addressing issues of chronic physical and mental health and helping address the challenges of keeping an aging and increasingly sedentary population healthy.

In the UK, Defra has calculated that the NHS could save £2.1 billion per annum if improved parks and open space infrastructure encouraged people to adopt more active lifestyles. A Natural England 2020 study established that where people have good access to green space, they are 24% more likely to be physically active and describes how a brisk daily walk in the park can reduce the risk of heart attack by 50% of stroke by 50% of diabetes by 50% and of Alzheimer's by 25%.

Access to a green environment improves both mental and physical health – boosting mood and self-esteem. Over 90% of participants exercising in greenspaces report that this activity enhanced their mental health. This is particularly important as anti-depressant drugs cost the NHS £750 million a year.

During the Coronavirus 19 pandemic, public green spaces also proved critical for both physical and mental health in ensuring populations were able to continue to exercise even at times of lockdown restrictions.

The Borough has the greatest levels of social deprivation and health inequalities across the whole of Warwickshire therefore providing 'free at the point of access' recreational greenspace

makes a significant contribution to addressing those inequalities and supporting residents' health and well-being.

Providing free recreational facilities near people's homes can address several challenges, including the lack of car ownership and difficulties in accessing public transport. Additionally, smaller garden sizes or the absence of access to a garden can often correlate with lower socio-economic status. In such cases, free-to-access greenspaces near residences can mitigate the negative effects of limited or no garden space, improving overall quality of life.

(Taken from Technical Report - Get JSA to explain what piece of research this is) - 'Disparities in access to greenspace have been linked to long-term physical and mental health issues. However, research shows that in areas with more greenspace, health inequalities are halved'.

Parks and greenspaces also significantly contribute to cultural life and activity within the Borough often acting as the host for organised events, commemorations and celebrations and for much of the organised sport that takes place in the Borough.

Well-managed Parks and Greenspaces can act as a source of pride in the Borough and for local areas - acting as a source of cultural identity, creating a sense of 'place' for residents.

Most people strongly identify with their local park and consider it an essential part of their neighbourhood. Substantial research has identified the capacity of parks to instil a sense of place and to increase residents' affinity with their neighbourhood.

'Numerous studies' *(taken from technical report - get JSA to name one example to reference)* have identified the capacity of parks to reinforce a sense of community, building social cohesion and allowing a variety of people to interact in a neutral environment.

A well-designed park that is inclusive and appeals to a diverse range of people can foster community connections and foster a sense of pride among residents. This effect is even more pronounced when parks have historical significance or cultural elements that resonate with the community. On the other hand, a poorly maintained or neglected park can diminish perceptions of neighbourhood quality and detract from the overall sense of place.

ii) Environmental Benefits:

- Carbon capture
- Air quality
- Biodiversity & Wildlife
- Sustainable / Active Travel
- Flood storage

Parks and greenspaces are multi-functional and deliver multiple public environmental benefits at the same time as providing the recreational benefits they are most associated with.

All greenspaces help capture carbon through tree and vegetation growth and help improve local air quality. Trees remove particulates from the air as well as absorbing carbon dioxide. It has been estimated that a woodland can reduce the concentration of nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide in each area by 4-5% (*Department of the Environment 1996 research paper: Urban woodland and benefits for local air quality*)

Parks and greenspaces also provide significant wildlife habitat supporting biodiversity and often provide residents with much of their contact with wildlife and the natural world.

Many parks and greenspaces act as sustainable / active travel routes and corridors – enabling and encouraging people to walk and cycle to work to key destinations and facilities / town centres and for recreation and leisure.

Many greenspace areas also act as flood storage areas - slowing / reducing river flows and helping limit downstream flooding – either naturally as part of river floodplains - or artificially through design as flood storage basins / 'swales' etc

iii) Economic benefits:

- Property Value Uplift
- Secondary Spend
- Employment

Although not immediately obvious, Park and Greenspace areas have significant direct local economic benefits.

The research by the Office for National Statistics highlights that the proximity of houses to parks and greenspaces positively affects property values, with the value increasing as the property gets closer to the greenspace. Parks also generate secondary spending, as visitors often patronize nearby shops and businesses, including cafes and refreshment facilities. This can also lead to increased foot traffic in town centres, benefiting local businesses. Additionally, parks can host commercial activities such as fairs, events, and fitness training, further contributing to the local economy.

Furthermore, parks create direct employment opportunities, both within the Parks and Greenspace team and through grounds maintenance contracts, which often employ residents. Local contractors may also be engaged for repair, maintenance, and new works, contributing to

economic activity within the community. Additionally, parks can facilitate third-sector provision, such as the Mayors Café and Nursery in Miners' Welfare Park, which not only benefits service users with special needs but also adds to the overall attractiveness of the park.

Chapter 3: How the strategy will inform workload

How will a Parks and Greenspace Strategy help guide the work we do?

With limited employees and financial resources, it is crucial to take a strategic, clear-headed, and rational approach to prioritise the use of those resources to maximise the benefits for residents.

Decision making needs to, wherever possible, be based on evidence and good practice and this is paramount in financially and time-constrained circumstances.

Review existing provision and consider how best to address future needs

NBBC has a wide range of parks and greenspace areas acquired from a range of sources for historic reasons but can step back and apply logic to whether those sites and recreational facilities currently serve the needs of residents and can ask key questions including:

1. Have we enough park and greenspace provision?
2. Is the provision in the right areas / providing a reasonable equality of access to residents?
3. What is the quality of what is provided?

Inform prioritisation and use of finite resources

It is crucial that our finite time and financial resources are applied to the most cost effective and impactful actions, that make the biggest impacts on residents' experience of visiting parks and greenspaces within the borough.

To enable this, up to date and accurate data needs to be available to inform decision making; helping to target the worst performing sites, facilities and aspects of park and greenspace provision.

Much of the Parks and Greenspace Service's time and resources unavoidably must be invested in day-to-day activities to sustain, maintain and repair existing sites and facilities.

This is the core function of the service which aims to drive up and sustain the quality of the experience residents and visitors have when using our sites. It is crucial that these day-to-day activities are recognised as the bedrock of park and greenspace provision. Improving these day-to-day activities is as important, if not more so, than any new capital investment projects and activity.

Provide focus on how to sustain and improve Park and Greenspace quality for residents

A wide range of actions can be taken to drive up the quality of park and greenspace provision. Constraints on annual and capital project funds and officer time mean we need to identify and prioritise working on the most cost effective and most impactful measures that will drive up the quality of park provision.

Driving up quality involves multiple factors that a person using a park or greenspace notices when visiting a site. The Parks and Greenspace team often need to collectively bring together a range of quality improvements on each site to have the greatest impact on how a resident/visitor will perceive the quality of the provision.

Establish and demonstrate economic value added by park and greenspaces

Many of the public benefits of Parks and Greenspace provision have been described in the past by economists as 'intangibles;' - of value to the public but not able to be given a financial value. On the balance sheet these services look to have significant cost with minimal or no income.

New economic accounting methods that are now recognised, used, and backed at the national governmental level, are now placing economic values on many of the previously 'intangible' public benefits of parks and greenspace provision.

The most obvious benefit is the immediate recreational value of such 'free at the point of access' provision, followed by physical and mental health benefits resulting from activity and time spent in greenspaces then also environmental quality improvements such as air quality, carbon capture There are also direct economic benefits, such as an uplift in property values from proximity to parks and greenspaces.

Chapter 4: Evidence

What has informed the strategy?

Engagement of Consultants:

NBBC commissioned Jon Sheaff Associates (JSA) in 2022 through a competitive tender process to undertake work to provide much of the underpinning for this Strategy. The JSA work resulted in a wide range of outputs including park and play facility audit data, mapping of audit and data findings and analysis of policies and context. These outputs were brought together into a technical report which this Strategy draws significantly on.

NBBC now has detailed and coherent data covering Park, Play Area, and Greenspace site provision, to inform our strategic thinking and decision making.

JSA also partnered with Eftec consultancy to provide 'Natural Capital Accounts' covering some key measurable public benefits that are produced by the Parks and Greenspace areas that NBBC manages.

In addition, JSA undertook some baseline work toward an updated allotment strategy and a new tree strategy.

Review of Local and National Strategies and Policies:

National policy context:

Parks and greenspace provision has had an increasingly high profile over the last decade within wider national public concern - and within policy concern and development covering Health, Biodiversity and Environmental issues, 'Active Travel' matters within Transport - and in general as part of wider Environmental Policy.

This has contrasted with sustained financial pressures on Local Authorities. As a non-statutory service with significant expenditure and minimal scope to generate income park and greenspace provision is always vulnerable to cuts in budgets and staffing.

A reduction of over 30% in NBBC Park and Greenspace budgets (even without accounting for inflationary erosion) has happened between 2008 and 2020. There is a similar picture in all Local Authorities nationally.

More positively over the past few years the Council has placed significant value on the Borough's Parks and Greenspace provision despite those pressures continuing. This

commitment has included allocating additional officers and financial resources to begin to drive up the quality of provision, whilst seeking efficiency, focus and measurable improvements over time such as grounds contract delivery and customer enquiry handling.

The public profile of parks and greenspaces was particularly high during the Covid outbreaks and periods of lockdown which helped reconnect many residents with the open spaces available on their doorstep.

Whilst that interest has eased as people have been able to renew previous activities there is a remaining window of opportunity to further capitalise on that interest and to encourage a sustained increase in usage of local sites if the quality of facilities and maintenance in our parks can be visibly driven up during the next 5-10 years.

National 25 Year Environment Plan and Green Infrastructure Framework:

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan - 'A Green Future' published in 2018 – involves Park and Greenspace provision in many aspects. The Plan's main goals relevant to Parks and Greenspace provision cover:

- Clean Air
- Clean and Plentiful Water
- Thriving Plants and Wildlife
- Using resources more sustainably and efficiently
- Enhancing Beauty, Heritage, and Engagement with the Natural Environment
- Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

A particularly key section covers:

- *making sure that there is high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing*

To assist Local Authorities and others in that regard the Government (through Natural England) has correspondingly in 2023 published a Green Infrastructure (GI) Framework. It is a written framework and set of tools, suggested standards and principles that set out to support the greening of towns and cities and them also making connections into the surrounding landscape.

The general approach of the Framework supports NBBC's approaches set out in the previous Parks and Greenspace Strategy and applies to developing the new strategy. This involves the setting of local quantity and access standards for Park, Play Area and Greenspace provision and then audited assessment of performance of available sites against those standards to identify gaps and potential remedial actions.

Whilst the GI framework advances some standards for accessibility it emphasises these are to encourage the development of locally relevant and locally informed standards, but always based in sound audit and review methodologies. As such the national policy document supports the approach NBBC has taken to preparing this new Strategy.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021):

The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the contribution that parks and open spaces can make toward delivering ‘a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities’.

The NPPF (2021) supersedes several planning policy statements and guidance, including PPG17 and its companion guide. It sets out the government’s planning policies for England in support of the government’s objective to achieve sustainable development.

The NPPF also provides a ‘framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced’. It aims to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development – ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’ The planning system has three main objectives: economic, ‘to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy;’ social, ‘to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities;’ and environmental, ‘to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment.’

Considerable emphasis is placed within the NPPF upon the design of the built environment, stressing the importance of high-quality design in development. Further emphasis is placed upon the delivery of health outcomes, with developments required to be ‘safe and accessible, through the use of attractive, well designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas’.

Local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, ‘taking a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.’

Green infrastructure is defined as a ‘network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.’ Open space is defined as: ‘All areas of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes, and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.’

The NPPF continues: 'Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity are important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'

'Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate. '

As such the NPPF (like the National GI Framework) supports the approach this strategy has taken to setting standards, auditing provision, and assessing gaps in provision and the means to address any such gaps.

The adopted NBBC Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) aligns with this strategy and the NPPF and follows Sport England's guidance, providing a robust evidence data assessment of the applicable facilities, and how through an agreed action plan can seek to meets local needs.

Review of Local Area Context

Demographics:

Population

The current population of the Borough in 2021 has been determined as 134,200 for Nuneaton and Bedworth. Nuneaton and Bedworth's population grew by 0.4% annually between 2011 and 2021. Since 2011 the population size has increased by 7.1%, which is higher than the overall increase in England of 6.6%.

Applying the same growth rate to the strategy period, the Borough's population is expected to increase to 139,665 by 2032. To the south of Nuneaton and Bedworth, Coventry has experienced an even higher rate of growth at 8.9% since 2011, Rugby 14.3%. North Warwickshire to the north of Nuneaton has experienced a slower growth rate at 4.8%, showing the trend of diminishing growth moving away from major urban centres such as Birmingham.

There are three people in England for every football pitch-sized piece of land. As of 2021 Nuneaton and Bedworth is the 10th most densely populated area in the West Midlands, comprised of 30 local authority areas. This means around 12 people live on each football pitch-sized area of land in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough.

This has clear implications in terms of the resulting particularly high value of access to Park and Greenspace sites in such a densely populated and urban Borough.

Age

There has been an increase in people in some age groups in Nuneaton and Bedworth:

- 22% increase in people aged 65+ years
- 3.1% increase in people aged 15-64 years
- 8.2% increase in children aged under 15

However, when you further subdivide the population figures, there are some groups whose numbers have declined:

- 2% decline in ages 60-64
- 11% decline in ages 45-49
- 13% decline in ages 40-44
- 5% decline in ages 20-24
- 13% decline in ages 15-19
- 2% decline in ages 0-4

The two groups with the largest increases in the working population age group (19-64) are the 30–34-year-olds (25%) and 55–59-year-olds (21%).

The overall trend nationally and locally toward an ageing population is likely to have implications for some of the sorts of facilities that may appropriately be provided in Parks and Greenspaces in the future.

Health

In comparison to averages across England, Nuneaton and Bedworth's health statistics are generally worse in the County of Warwickshire:

- Life expectancy for both women and men is lower than the average for England as a whole
- About 18% of children (4,300) live in low-income families
- 20% of children in year 6 (284) are classified as obese
- Rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays for young people under the age of 18 is 60/100,000, worse than the England average – this represents 16 stays per year
- Alcohol related hospital stays for adults are 580/100,000 (equalling 237 stays per year) however, which is better than the England average
- Levels of teenage pregnancy, breastfeeding initiation, and smoking at time of delivery are significantly worse than the England average

- Rate of self-harm hospital stays is 189/100,000, representing 237 stays per year, and suicide rates are significantly worse than the England average
- Estimated levels of adult weight and physical activity are worse than the England average
- Rates of violent crime and percent unemployed are worse than average

(It should be noted that the above statistics were analysed prior to the Coronavirus pandemic)

The Warwickshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) also helps to further identify the principal health issues affecting the Borough:

As an example - between 2014 and 2017 and compared to the 22 JSNA geographies within Warwickshire, Nuneaton Central had:

- The highest directly standardised rate (DSR) of emergency admissions for Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (1,230.9 per 100,000 population 35+)
- The highest DSR of emergency admissions for stroke (1,070 per 100,000 population)
- The 4th highest DSR of emergency admissions for Myocardial Infarction (heart attack) (147.0 per 100,000)
- The 4th highest DSR of emergency admissions for diabetes (275.5 per 100,000)

In the light of these health inequalities affecting the Borough's residents the potential for enhanced Parks and Greenspace provision, accessibility, and usage - to help impact health outcomes through encouraging more active lifestyles - has additional importance with this local context.

Deprivation

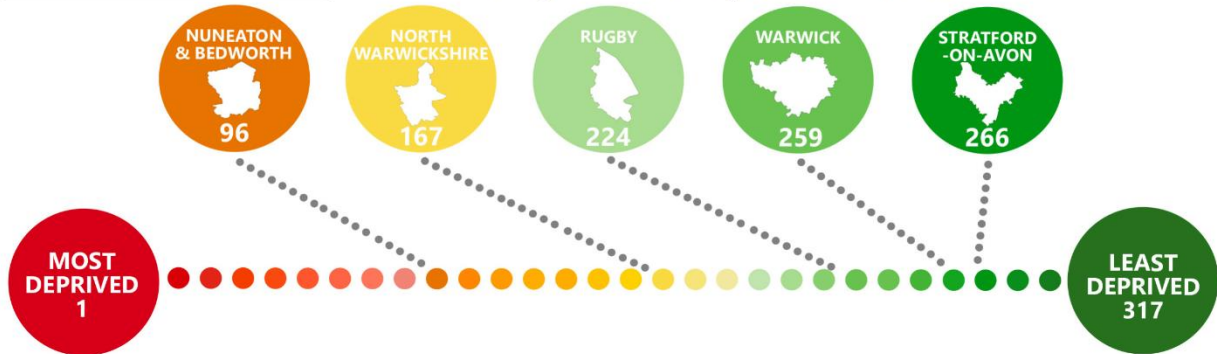
The Borough has the highest socio-economic deprivation levels in Warwickshire and ranks 111th nationally out of 326 in most deprived local authority districts. The most deprived areas are in the western parts of Nuneaton and Bedworth.

Due to several economic, social, and environmental factors, Nuneaton, and Bedworth lags other locations in Warwickshire in key contributors to a high quality of life including Deprivation, crime rates, GCSE attainment; young people not in employment, education or training, activity levels and life expectancy.



DISTRICT & BOROUGH

This graphic shows the national ranking of districts and boroughs out of the 317 Local Authorities using the 'Rank of Average Score' measure in 2019



In that local context the role of parks in providing free-at-the-point-of-access recreational provision and activity also has added importance.

Key Local Policy Documents:

Corporate Plan

The primary document setting context for the work of the Parks and Greenspace Service is the NBBC Corporate Plan.

The key plan objectives include:

- Place and Prosperity – including Regeneration of town centres, Supporting businesses and town centre economies and Promoting and enabling events
- Housing, Health and Communities – including Working with public health partners to reduce inequalities, Promoting healthy lifestyles, Developing active travel opportunities across the Borough, Working with partners to prioritise community safety
- Protecting the Natural Environment, improving Air Quality and creating Sustainable Communities – including through Re-procurement of the Ground's Maintenance service, Celebrating our Heritage within our greenspaces – including working with partners to deliver cultural activities, including adoption of the updated Greenspace Strategy and also promoting and developing play area facilities through a 5-year refurbishment programme, Exploring opportunities to promote protect and enhance Biodiversity - including working with the County Council on Biodiversity net gain, also through Planning Service work and policy and through biodiversity offsets and projects

Borough Plan

Multiple objectives of the current strategic planning document for the Borough relate to parks, open space, climate, and biodiversity issues including:

- A green infrastructure network consisting of high quality, well connected, multi-functional open spaces, corridors and links that benefits the natural environment and the public
- Creating opportunities for walking and cycling networks, better access and accessibility regarding open space, improvement of participation in sports
- Ensuring that new development enhances the natural environment, in particular protection and enhancement of existing open spaces
- Minimising negative impacts of development and making improvements to air quality
- Looking for opportunities to use the River Anker, Wem Brook, Coventry Canal and Ashby Canal as focal points within open spaces and new development, with consideration for water quality and green network provision
- Addressing climate change and encourage sustainability in new developments

Policy NE1 - Green infrastructure

This policy sets out the following considerations regarding new development proposals:

- Connectivity regarding accessing such natural features, creation of new park spaces, conservation, and enhancement of existing spaces
- Restoring the relationship between urban areas and their river valley corridor landscapes
- Creating a network of signed greenway routes for walking and cycling, connecting the green network of key green spaces, townscape, and landscape

Policy NE2 - Open space

This policy sets a goal for new development creating a green network of publicly accessible greenspaces.

Other goals include:

- Protecting and enhancing the hierarchy of open spaces, creating new community parks and linkages, improving access where there are deficits
- New provision of allotments, improved quality, and quantity of play, playing fields

- Utilising open spaces for flood storage where feasible

Policy NE3 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

This policy addresses the ecological network, fragmentation of habitats, biodiversity offsetting, protection of SACs and SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest)

Policy NE4 - Managing flood risk and water quality

New development is prioritised in areas of lowest flood risk as per this policy. Proposals must address climate change factors, and opportunities for river corridor restoration and enhancement are emphasised.

Managing flood risk, SUDS, water, and groundwater quality are all addressed in this policy.

The Borough's adopted Open Space and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document expands on the Borough Plan policy requirements - setting out detailed provision criteria and design criteria for Parks, Play Areas, Allotments and Greenspace areas within new developments - as well as providing additional detail on dealing with Biodiversity and Tree matters within applications.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The recently updated Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Warwickshire published by Warwickshire County Council outlines a strategy for promoting active travel on foot and by bike and improving cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

Between 2001 and 2011 Nuneaton and Bedworth experienced a 15% increase in the number of cars, a total of 8,908 additional cars. 35% of the households have access to two or more cars and the number of households without a car decreased slightly, from 24.1% to 22.4% during this same time. The average number of houses without a car in Warwickshire overall is 17.6%.

70.5% of the working population drove a car or van to work in Nuneaton and Bedworth as of the 2011 analysis, and only 5.8% used public transportation. This is much lower than the national average of 16.9% (but higher than the county average, which was 5.4%).

In 2011 Nuneaton and Bedworth exhibited modest walking and cycling levels: 9.3% of people walked to work and 2.1% cycled, which is slightly lower than the averages during the same time for England (walking 10.7%, cycling 3%) and Warwickshire figures (walking 10.2%, cycling 2.5%).

A study of journey times to key services done in 2016 gave useful indicators of the number of services within the '15-minute neighbourhood'. The average minimum journey time in Nuneaton and Bedworth to reach these key services was determined to be 12.4 minutes, showing that there is genuine potential for encouraging short journeys on foot and by bike in much of the Borough through better planning and infrastructure.

The 2018/19 Active Lives Survey (Sport England) showed that:

- 8.4% of adults in Nuneaton and Bedworth Walk at least three times a week (compared to 13.6% for Warwickshire and 15.1% for England)
- 0.7% of adults in Nuneaton and Bedworth cycle at least three times a week (compared to 1.6% for Warwickshire and 2.3% for England)

In terms of road safety, there has been a steady decrease in pedestrian and cycling casualties overall in the last 5 years, however, there have been several fatalities in more recent years that diminish the success of this trend. In 2020 the proportion of casualties that were pedestrians or cyclists was 26%, compared to 21% in Warwickshire as a whole.

The 'Transforming Nuneaton' regeneration programme includes several measures to improve access to reach the town centre by foot and by cycling.

The public rights of way network in the Borough and urban trails such as the Black Track and Weddington Walk provide good leisure opportunities and walking provision.

Both Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres have pedestrian areas. Several parks and open spaces sites are close to town centres including the two formal Destination parks: Riversley Park and Miner's Welfare Park.

Information has been gathered on collisions, barriers and walking trip generators in the Borough, along with feedback from local people, to identify walking infrastructure improvements.

The greatest demand for walking as well as a higher number of collisions involving pedestrians is around Nuneaton and Bedworth town centres. However, improvements in neighbourhood hubs, schools, and new developments, as well as wider safety measures, highway works, or leisure and tourism projects are being explored for both cycling and walking infrastructure.

Most commuters are much more likely to utilise cycling routes that are already established leisure routes. Making the 'jump' to cycling to work is something only very experienced cyclists are likely to endeavour, without safe and easy to navigate routes which makes off-road provision within Parks and Greenspaces highly attractive to those considering such 'active travel' choices.

Discussions with internal and external partners and 'stakeholders'

JSA held a series of workshops with significant internal and external partners to help identify key interactions, common goals, and potential future areas for joint working. This included internal partners such as Sports and Leisure, Housing and Economic Regeneration, Planning etc and external partners such as the County Council's Cycle Planning officer that covers our Borough.

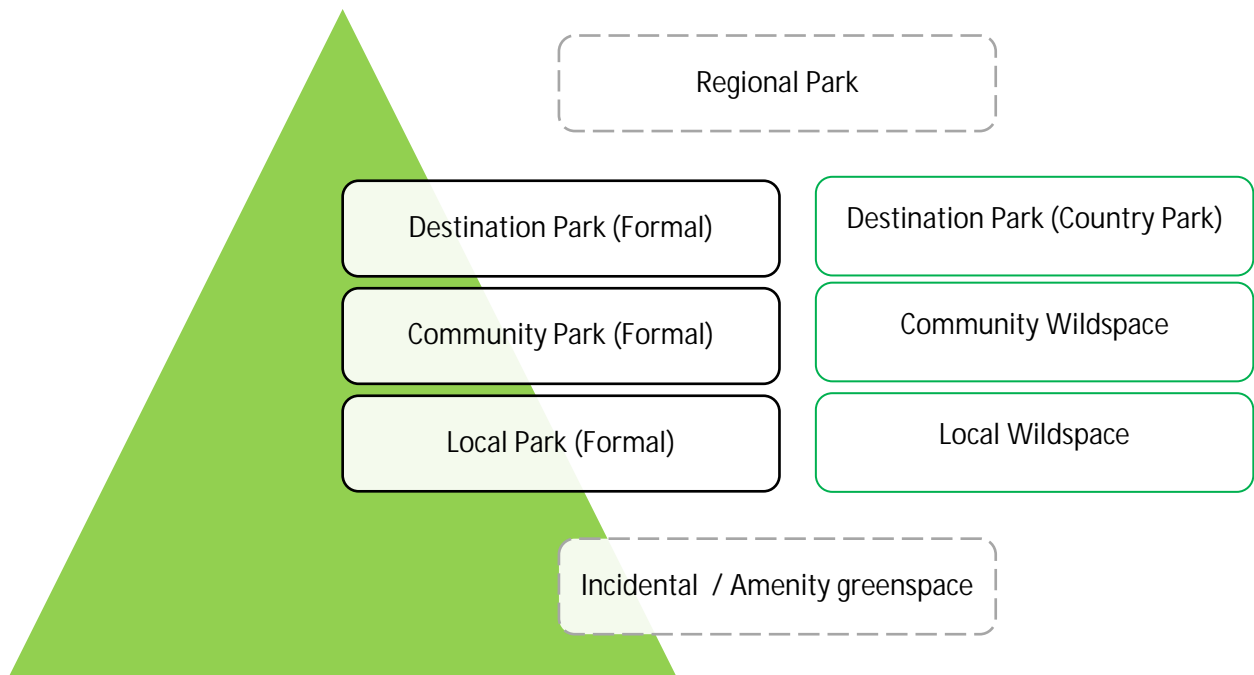
Site Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Review and Creation

Mapped 'polygons' to mark the extents of all significant parks and greenspaces and the extents of play areas within those spaces were then either 'captured' / recycled from existing mapping data sources - or created from new where they were not available - to allow map-based analysis. The GIS data was 'cleansed' / tidied up to remove inaccuracies and to provide consistency in use.

Placing of sites within a 'Typology'

To allow meaningful analysis of the Parks and Greenspace sites that NBBC (and other providers) offer the sites were grouped into logical common types of provision. This grouping (typology) is good practice in all such work and the NBBC typology has much in common with other similar typologies used by other Authorities and in national analysis.

The NBBC typology – which is a refinement of the typology used in the previous NBBC Open Space Strategy (and which was found fit for purpose on review) is as follows:



The three main types of provision that NBBC provide:

1. Destination - Destination Parks are of a significantly different scale from any other provision, with two formal parks; one serving each town and a 'Country Park' scale of provision at Whittleford Park which is the largest publicly accessible wildlife site within the Borough.
2. Community - The Formal Community Parks are the core provision serving neighbourhoods, offering significant sized open spaces for recreation and substantive children's play facilities including provision targeted specifically toward teenagers.
3. Local - Formal Local Parks are sites providing younger children's play areas that help fill in gaps between formal Community Park provisions.

All have their own value and distinct role. It is not a 'hierarchy' where one is much more important than another.

Wildspaces are nature reserve type sites including sites of Destination, Community and Local level which primarily offer quiet recreation in areas of wildlife habitat but do on occasion include forms of play provision when needed to serve the nearby area. They are not a like-for-like substitute for the formal types of park provision and facilities but do have a similar range in the scale of the sites to the formal provision.

'Wildspace' sites are deemed to be sites where 80% or more of the site is being managed as wildlife habitat. Community Parks as a minimum must contain toddler and junior play provision, a multi-use games area (MUGA) ballcourt - or other significant facility targeted at

teenagers (such as a skatepark, bike pumptrack or dynamic teenage play) and to also have at least 5000m² of coherent open level short mown grassland for recreation.

These distinctions are not completely rigid and most formal sites are also increasingly likely to have areas of wildlife habitat within them as the Authority seeks to play its part in reducing national and local declines in wildlife species and habitats through wildlife habitat creation.

Regional parks like Cannock Chase are recognised for their value, but since their provision and accessibility are beyond the influence of NBBC, they are considered outside the scope of the strategy. However, incidental or amenity greenspaces, despite having little recreational value, hold significance in local landscape aesthetics. They contribute to greening and softening urban areas and may serve as ecological or active travel links. While these sites were not audited as part of the strategy, they may be included in sections and maps covering aspects such as 'Green Network' links for active travel.

Auditing of facilities on the ground and through other data sources

Using the agreed typology for sites JSA undertook site audits of all publicly accessible parks, play areas and green spaces in the borough in May 2022. The auditors were all experienced and trained to assess sites against the national 'Green Flag Park quality assessment scheme.

Sites were assessed against the green flag criteria and play areas against the 'Play England' play value assessment criteria. Sites were all also assessed against NBBC standards for basic facility provision within parks and greenspaces. In addition, play areas were assessed against NBBC standards for play equipment provision at the various levels within the typology.

Calculation of economic benefits of parks and greenspace provision through 'Natural Capital' accounting

Once the extents of sites were established EFTEC consultancy also began work to economically quantify the most readily measurable public benefits resulting from NBBC's provision of parks and greenspaces by applying nationally recognised formulas to the site extents and the extents of e.g. tree cover within the parks and greenspace areas managed by NBBC.

Mapping of locations and quantity of Parks and Greenspaces

JSA then undertook extensive mapping work beginning with creating maps of the locations of the different forms of park and greenspace provision in the typology and of play area provision.

The amounts of land forming each type of provision were also calculated from the mapping data.

Mapping of 'Catchment' Areas

Catchment area mapping, conducted by JSA, involved applying varied sizes of "walking distance" catchment areas to various forms of park, play area, and greenspace provision. These catchments represent distances considered reasonable for residents to walk to access these amenities. They are depicted as circles on maps for practical and clear visualisation of coverage.

While the distance to the centre is measured as a straight line, residents may not walk directly, so longer walking journey times within each catchment are accepted. Thus, catchments also represent longer but still acceptable journey times for less direct access.

These catchment sizes are carried over from the previous Open Space Strategy and have proven effective in planning negotiations. They are also integrated into the recently adopted Open Space and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The catchment sizes for distinct types of parks reflect their intended use and accessibility. Local Parks, with a catchment of 400m, primarily serve to bridge gaps between Community Park provision. They typically feature play areas suitable for younger children and are intended for parents who may walk with young children or push a pushchair.

Community Parks and Greenspaces have a larger catchment of 600m, accommodating a broader range of recreational activities and serving a larger population.

Destination Parks, on the other hand, often have a catchment based on driving time, as they are large-scale facilities intended for visitors from a wider area. In an urban Borough like this one, most residents can reach these parks within a 10-minute drive. However, they are also accessible to nearby residents on foot or by bike, acting as equivalent recreational spaces. Thus, they are mapped with a 600m walking distance catchment to match the Community Park catchment, reflecting their accessibility for nearby residents.

Overall, the straight-line distance catchments used in the Accessibility mapping seek to test these levels of access for residents to the main forms of park and greenspace provision:



Walking times:

Understanding walking times in a real-world street and path network is crucial for determining practical catchment distances for parks and greenspaces. While walking in a straight line at an average pace of three miles per hour (4828m per hour) may seem straightforward, navigating through urban streets and paths adds complexity. According to the Transport for London 'Planning for Walking Toolkit 2020', an 800m straight line distance would typically translate to a 960m walking distance in an average urban environment, an increase of about 1.2 times.

Taking this into consideration, a 400m catchment could involve up to 11 minutes of walking time, while a 600m catchment could take up to 16 minutes to reach. These walking times are deemed acceptable for accessing park and greenspace amenities.

Setting shorter target catchment distances for provision needs to be balanced with financial affordability and practicality, especially in existing built areas where creating significant new park spaces may be challenging. Targeting much higher provision levels in new development areas could create a two-tier system, with higher accessibility to parks and greenspaces in newly built areas compared to older built areas. This could lead to a situation where older areas subsidise higher provision levels in newer areas.

When mapping play areas at different park levels, the same walking catchment distances are used, but catchments are centred on the play facilities themselves. This ensures accurate representation, as a play area at one end of a large park may not serve residents at the other end, whereas the park itself serves people within the set catchment distance from its full extents.

Access to Greenspace - additional basic access tests

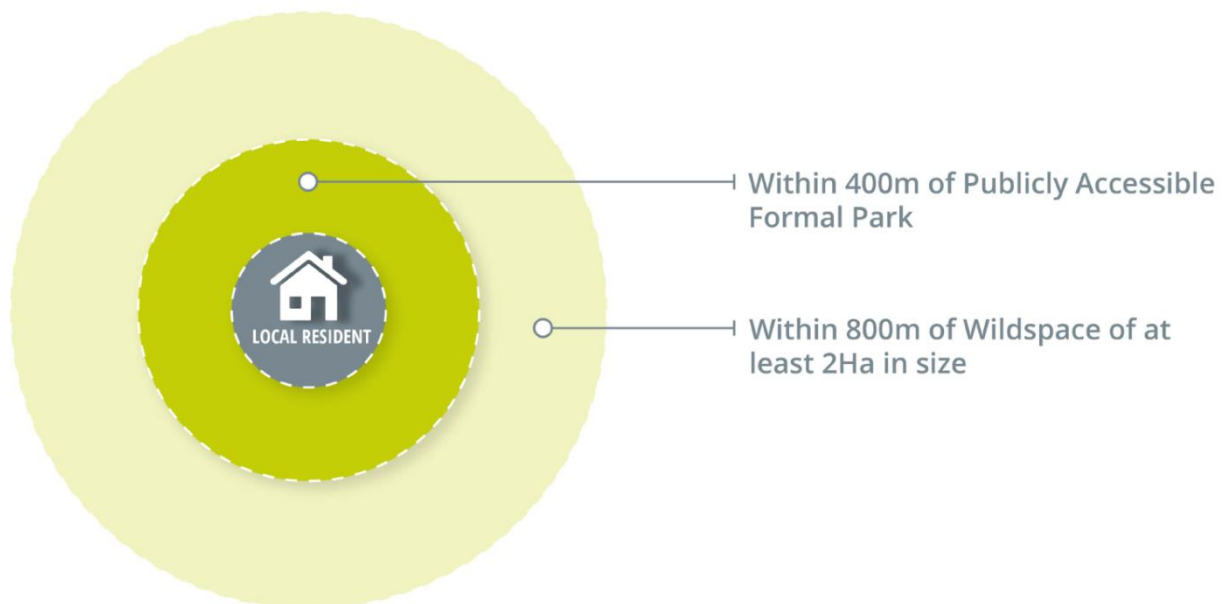
The Government's Environment Plan, launched in 2023, aims for everyone to live within a 15-minute walk of woodlands, wetlands, parks, or rivers. The Parks and Greenspace Strategy aligns with this target by initially assessing residents' basic access to greenspace provision through two sets of mapping against targeted travel times.

One map focuses on catchment distances to reach any of the three main types of significant formal recreational greenspaces within 400m of home. Another map specifically examines access to 'semi-natural' sites, where wildlife habitat dominates, within 800m of home.

At a slow pace, 400m from home equates to up to 11 minutes walking time, meeting the government's 15-minute target. However, this mapping does not cover access to some small greenspaces or features like canal towpaths, making it a more challenging target than the government's.

For access to 'semi-natural' sites within 800m, which might offer a greater sense of retreat from urban stresses, up to 22 minutes walking time is considered. However, this assessment focuses solely on this specific form of greenspace and does not include small sites or access to other provisions like canal towpaths.

These two accessibility tests can be visualised in this way:



Summary of all accessibility targets:



Mapping of Quality audit findings

Further maps were then produced by JSA reflecting the findings of the quality audits that they undertook firstly of greenspace sites and secondly in terms of play areas - using the Green Flag criteria and the Play England Play value assessment tool – and also maps of site performance against greenspace facility criteria and play facility equipment criteria for each of the three types of provision – Destination, Community and Local.

Chapter 5: Findings – Natural Capital

What are the Natural Capital findings of the strategy?

Natural Capital Account:

Using nationally recognised methodologies (Office of National Statistics etc) JSA/ Efttec have calculated that NBBC’s annual outlay of £1,892,000 (2021 figure) on the provision of parks and greenspace provision (through the combination of grounds maintenance costs, infrastructure maintenance costs and staffing costs) has an annual return in public benefits - on the following four key outputs alone – of £16,500,000:

Type of Natural Capital benefit	Public benefits and ecosystem services provided annually through NBBC’s provision of recreational parks and greenspaces
Recreation	£10,100,000
Physical Health	£5,500,000
Air Quality	£700,000
Carbon Sequestration	£200,000
Total	£16,500,000

The methods used to calculate these natural capital accounts are consistent with government guidance, the applicable British Standard and published evidence such as the ONS (Office for National Statistics) (2019) UK Natural Capital Accounts and the latest DEFRA publication ‘Enabling a Natural Capital Approach’ (ENCA) (DEFRA, 2020) which provides case studies and underpinning data sources for pricing a variety of ‘ecosystem services’ and benefits.

Property Uplift:

Calculating the uplift in property values due to proximity to recreational greenspaces in the Borough reveals significant benefits for homeowners and property owners. Nationally recognised methodologies, such as those from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), were employed to assess this uplift. By identifying the number of residential properties within 200m of NBBC-provided recreational greenspaces in each ward and calculating the proportion of the average 2021 property price attributed to this proximity, both per-dwelling and per-ward figures were determined.

The ONS recognises a range of uplift, from 0.5% for small greenspaces to 1.4% for larger ones. Based on this methodology, NBBC's park and greenspace provision contribute at least £389 million to property values within the Borough at 2021 prices. However, given the range of parks and greenspaces available, ranging from small to large in or near most wards, the actual value is significantly higher, estimated to fall between £389,000,000 and up to £1 billion pounds if all sites were large.

The Ward-by-Ward breakdown is below:

Ward (pre-2024 ward boundary changes)	Ward uplift due to greenspace proximity at 0.5% (small greenspaces)	Ward uplift due to greenspace proximity at 1.4% (larger greenspaces)	per property uplift within 200m at 0.5%	per property uplift within 200m at 1.4%
Abbey	£24,697,875	£69,154,050	£8,375	£23,450
Arbury	£26,129,400	£73,162,320	£10,175	£28,490
Attleborough	£25,545,000	£71,526,000	£9,750	£27,300
Bar Pool	£22,077,000	£61,815,600	£8,250	£23,100
Bede	£15,659,695	£43,847,146	£9,005	£25,214
Bulkington	£13,256,600	£37,118,480	£11,900	£33,320
Camp Hill	£27,002,700	£75,607,560	£7,706	£21,578
Exhall	£17,647,500	£49,413,000	£9,750	£27,300
Galley Common	£37,520,725	£105,058,030	£10,213	£28,595
Heath	£16,993,650	£47,582,220	£9,650	£27,020
Kingswood	£13,937,450	£39,024,860	£8,075	£22,610
Poplar	£15,279,880	£42,783,664	£8,470	£23,716
Slough	£25,414,950	£71,161,860	£10,550	£29,540
St. Nicolas	£41,400,500	£115,921,400	£15,500	£43,400
Weddington	£37,587,500	£105,245,000	£12,500	£35,000
Wem Brook	£16,520,050	£46,256,140	£8,150	£22,820
Whitestone	£12,782,000	£35,789,600	£14,000	£39,200
Total	£389,452,475	£1,090,466,930		
Average			£10,119	£28,333

Even at the lower end of the range the average uplift in the borough to each single property within 200m of a park / greenspace at 2021 prices was £10,119 but would fall between that and £28,333.

In some individual Wards, the uplift could be adding between 15 to 40 thousand pounds to individual property prices for such houses at 2021 prices.

It is also important to note that the uplift effect reduces as property distance away from greenspaces increases - so not all the total uplift effect for properties in the Borough due to Greenspace proximity is even captured in these figures.

Analysis of Natural Capital Account figures and Property Uplift figures:

Understanding the financial implications of park and greenspace provision is crucial, especially considering its historically perceived status as a significant financial liability with minimal income-generation potential. The 2022/23 annual cost of providing the Parks and Greenspace Services in the Borough is £2.277m. However, it is essential to view this expenditure in the context of the measured annual Natural Capital benefits it provides to residents, impacting key corporate priorities such as health, wellbeing, and quality of life.

Historically, Parks and Greenspace have often faced significant budget cuts, with a 32% reduction in budgets between 2008 and 2021, even without accounting for inflation. These cuts have been targeted despite the substantial benefits provided by these spaces. The adoption of new nationally recognised accounting methods helps quantify the real and wide-ranging benefits of park and greenspace provision, which were previously considered positive but intangible. These benefits align closely with multiple corporate aims, reinforcing the importance of preserving and investing in parks and greenspaces for the well-being of the community. Therefore, these considerations should be considered if further cuts to park and greenspace budgets are contemplated, as they highlight the significant value of this provision beyond traditional financial metrics.

Next Steps on Natural Capital Valuation Figures:

- **Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy** (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):
 - Short Term – consider briefing note to Members highlighting the Natural Capital value findings - showing Parks and Greenspaces are significant public assets in terms of multiple Natural Capital value benefits and represent good value in terms of the cost of providing the service relative to the value of the public benefits
- **Other actions to undertake in years 5-10, 10 – 15 or beyond the life of the strategy** - (*An annual review will be undertaken of whether it is appropriate to include any such additional actions within the Parks and Countryside Team annual business plan as capacity exists to include them*):

Chapter 6: Findings – Location and Quantity

What does the mapping and analysis show in terms of the locations and quantity of Parks and Greenspace provision?

Current provision by NBBC:

NBBC (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) itself currently provides 380 hectares of significant recreational greenspace at 75 sites through a mixture of formally managed parks (which include most of the equipped play areas) and significant areas of 'Wildspace' where the main management objective is supporting quieter recreational enjoyment of wildlife habitat areas, which help bring nature into the Borough's urban areas.

Site type within NBBC 'typology'	Number of sites	Total Hectarage
Destination (Town / Formal)	2	51
Destination (Wildspace)	1	57
Community (Formal)	17	89
Community (Wildspace)	10	89
Local (Formal)	32	54
Local (Wildspace)	13	36

The land that NBBC now offers for park and greenspace provision is a highly varied mixture of intentionally provided parks, areas left over after housing development and areas acquired to safeguard wildlife habitat and to provide 'informal' recreation, etc.

The Parks and Greenspace Service also manage a substantial number of smaller areas, but these fall below the recreational Local Park provision level. The substantial majority of those have limited recreational value and add local landscape value providing some degree of visual relief from completely urban environments.

The Council undertake grounds maintenance works on significant amounts of land belonging to the Housing Service, on Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards and on Highways Land belonging to Warwickshire County Council, but the Cemetery land and Highways land falls outside the scope of this strategy other than in terms of general improvements targeted toward grounds maintenance performance.

The work undertaken by JSA has allowed a comprehensive 'snapshot' to be taken of the current recreational greenspace landholding, types of provision, gaps in provision etc and the creation of detailed records and digital mapping. This will allow the Parks and Greenspace team to make evidentially based decisions about investment to identify critical gaps in provision and consider how those can best be addressed and to consider if any sites are potentially surplus to needs.

The plan overleaf simply identifies the current Local, Community and Destination level Parks and Wild spaces that NBBC currently manages:

Existing Significant Recreational Parks and Greenspaces provided by NBBC

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 10 - Millais Close
- 11 - Clovelly Way
- 12 - The Long Shoot
- 13 - Coronation Walk
- 14 - Inchford Close
- 15 - Blackberry Lane
- 16 - Abbey Gardens
- 17 - Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 - Cornish Crescent
- 19 - Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 - Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 21 - Changebrook Open Space
- 24 - Chaucer Drive
- 25 - Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 27 - Auden Close
- 28 - Lilleburne Drive
- 29 - Ironbridge Way
- 31 - Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 34 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 35 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 36 - Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 37 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 - Lingmoor Park
- 48 - Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 - Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 - Anker Mills
- 51 - Windmill Hill
- 52 - Poplar Tree Farm
- 53 - Fusiliers Rest
- 54 - Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)
- 55 - Barnacle Lane
- 56 - The Dumbles
- 57 - Red Deepes
- 58 - Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 - Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 60 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 61 - Crowhill
- 62 - Pauls Land
- 63 - Greenmoor Road
- 64 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 - Sandon Park
- 66 - The Dingle
- 67 - Heath End Road
- 68 - Buttermere
- 69 - Johnson Road
- 70 - Tiverton Drive
- 71 - Bailey Park
- 72 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 75 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 76 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 77 - St. Giles Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

- 88 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 - Griff Hollows
- 90 - Whytell Pool
- 91 - Ensor's Pool
- 92 - Bedworth Sloughs
- 93 - The Nook
- 94 - Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 - Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 - Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 - Sowe Meadows

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

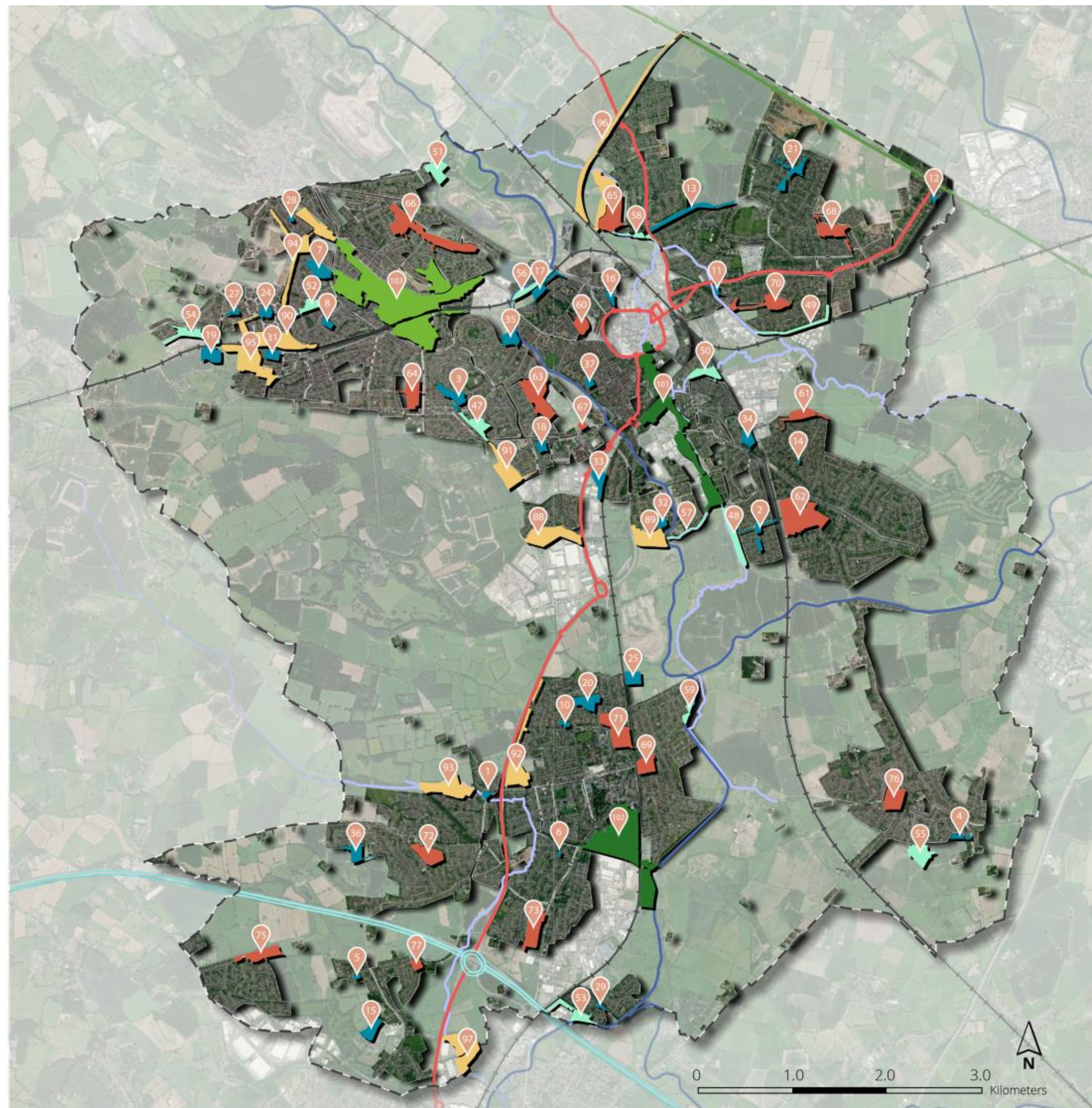
- 101 - Riversley Park
- 102 - Miners Welfare Park

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 - Whittleford Park

KEY

- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | Residential Built-up Area | | Local Wildspace | | Nuneaton Owned (NBBC) |
| | Borough Boundary | | Local Formal Parks | | |
| | Railway | | Community Wildspace | | |
| | A Road | | Community Formal Park | | |
| | Trunk Road | | Destination Country Park | | |
| | Motorway | | Destination Formal Park | | |
| | Canal | | | | |
| | River, Channel and Brook | | | | |



Provision by other Local Authorities that benefits NBBC residents through proximity:

In assessing provision this Strategy also considers equivalent sites from other Local Authority providers of significant publicly accessible recreational greenspace - located near the edge of the Borough where the 'catchment' of the site will include houses within the Borough.

Site type within NBBC 'typology'	Number of sites provided by other providers	Location / Provider/ Nature of Provision	Total Hectarage
Destination (Town / Formal)	0		
Destination (Wildspace)	1	Hartshill Hayes Country Park - Warwickshire County Council -	63
Community (Formal)	2	Snow Hill Recreation Ground – Hartshill Parish Council – Play and sports provision + Bretts Hall Recreation Ground – North Warwickshire Borough Council - play provision	8
Community (Wildspace)	0		
Local (Formal)	0		
Local (Wildspace)	0		

Currently developer managed park and greenspace provision:

In addition to sites managed by the Council and those outside our control planning applications approved in the last 5-10 years have already led to the creation of several greenspaces (often with play areas / play provision) at the Community or Local level that are available to the public but are currently managed by the housing developers. In time such areas will usually either be transferred to a resident's management company or to NBBC dependent on the developer's preference:

Site type within NBBC 'typology'	Number of currently developer / management company managed sites	Total Hectarage
Community (Formal)	2	9

Community (Wildspace)	0	
Local (Formal)	5 +1 Management Company managed site	13
Local (Wildspace)	0	

Consented/anticipated provision not yet delivered on the ground:

In addition planning consents that have already been granted but not yet delivered fully – or not delivered at all yet on the ground – mean that a number of further significant recreational greenspace sites (many with play facilities) are due to be delivered in the next few years and should logically be taken into account in later strategy sections considering access to parks, play areas and greenspaces.

Site type within NBBC 'typology'	Number of further sites to be provided by developers based on consented applications + anticipated Arbury allocation provision	Total Hectarage
Community (Formal)	7	35
Community (Wildspace)	3	28
Local (Formal)	8	11
Local (Wildspace)	0	

Overall:

If all these park and greenspace sites are brought together so that future provision can be seen this leads to a total provision of sites in the locations shown in the plan below.

Obviously as such there will be greater access / coverage as a result for the Borough’s residents when all such sites become fully available. The effect of this on access for residents to parks and greenspace is analysed in detail in the next ‘Accessibility’ section of the Strategy.

New sites resulting from housing developments in some cases will exclusively serve the new residents / new housing but in other cases the geographical location of the new provision may also beneficially provide coverage for existing residents that did not previously have adequate access to appropriate park provision.

Similarly, occasionally large commercial developments (such as that off Wilsons Lane) sometimes provide extra permissibly accessed ‘Wildspace’ provision in a similar vein to that at the existing Prologis Country Park.

The overall locations are as shown on the map below. Provision on some of the allocated but not consented sites such as the 'Arbury' housing allocation west of Ensors Pool are indicative in nature. Obviously as time passes – even during the preparation of this Strategy – additional such sites have been (e.g. southwest of Bulkington) – or will begin to be fixed because of planning applications and will continue to happen with further consents or Borough Plan allocations - so this can only be a snapshot at a point in time:

Significant Recreational Parks and Greenspaces including provision by other Councils and Residents Management Companies, current provision on housing development sites and commercial sites and upcoming provision on housing and commercial development sites

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 1 – Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 – Sterling Way
- 3 – Montana Walk
- 4 – Brewer Road
- 5 – New Road
- 6 – Rectory Close
- 7 – Freesland Rise
- 8 – Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 – The Alders
- 10 – Millais Close
- 11 – Clovelly Way
- 12 – The Long Shoot
- 13 – Coronation Walk
- 14 – Inchford Close
- 15 – Blackberry Lane
- 16 – Abbey Gardens
- 17 – Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 – Cornish Crescent
- 19 – Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 – Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 21 – Changebrook Open Space
- 22 – Jelson - Longshoot
- 23 – Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 24 – Chaucer Drive
- 25 – Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 26 – Barrats / David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 27 – Auden Close
- 28 – Lilleburne Drive
- 29 – Ironbridge Way
- 30 – Churchfields
- 31 – Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 – Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 – Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 34 – Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 35 – Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 36 – Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 37 – Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 38 – Sidings Pool
- 39 – Plough Hill Farm**
- 40 – Ribbonfields Lower Park**
- 41 – Hawkesbury Golf Course Local**
- 42 – Redrow Higham Lane**
- 43 – Arbury - Ensors Allocation Local**
- 44 – Golf Drive Local Park**
- 45 – TW Bulkington North**
- 46 – Wilsons Lane Local Park**

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 – Lingmoor Park
- 48 – Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 – Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 – Anker Mills
- 51 – Windmill Hill
- 52 – Poplar Tree Farm
- 53 – Fusiliers Rest
- 54 – Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)
- 55 – Barnacle Lane
- 56 – The Dumbles
- 57 – Red Deepes
- 58 – Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 – Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 60 – Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 61 – Crowhill
- 62 – Pauls Land
- 63 – Greenmoor Road
- 64 – Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 – Sandon Park
- 66 – The Dingle
- 67 – Heath End Road
- 68 – Buttermere
- 69 – Johnson Road
- 70 – Tiverton Drive
- 71 – Bailey Park
- 72 – Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 – Heckley Recreation Ground
- 74 – Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 75 – Keresley Recreation Ground
- 76 – Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 77 – St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 78 – Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 79 – Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground
- 80 – Snowhill (Hartshill) recreation Ground
- 81 – Top Farm**
- 82 – Golf Drive Community Park**
- 83 – Hawkesbury Golf Course Community**
- 84 – Arbury - Ensors Allocation Community**
- 85 – Callendar Farm**
- 86 – Crowhill Extension Area**
- 87 – Persimmon Higham Lane**

Community Wildspace (CW)

- 88 – Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 – Griff Hollows
- 90 – Whytell Pool
- 91 – Ensor's Pool
- 92 – Bedworth Sloughs
- 93 – The Nook
- 94 – Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 – Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 – Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 – Sowe Meadows
- 98 – Astley Lane Bellways**
- 99 – Top Farm Semi-Natural**
- 100 – Wilsons Lane**

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

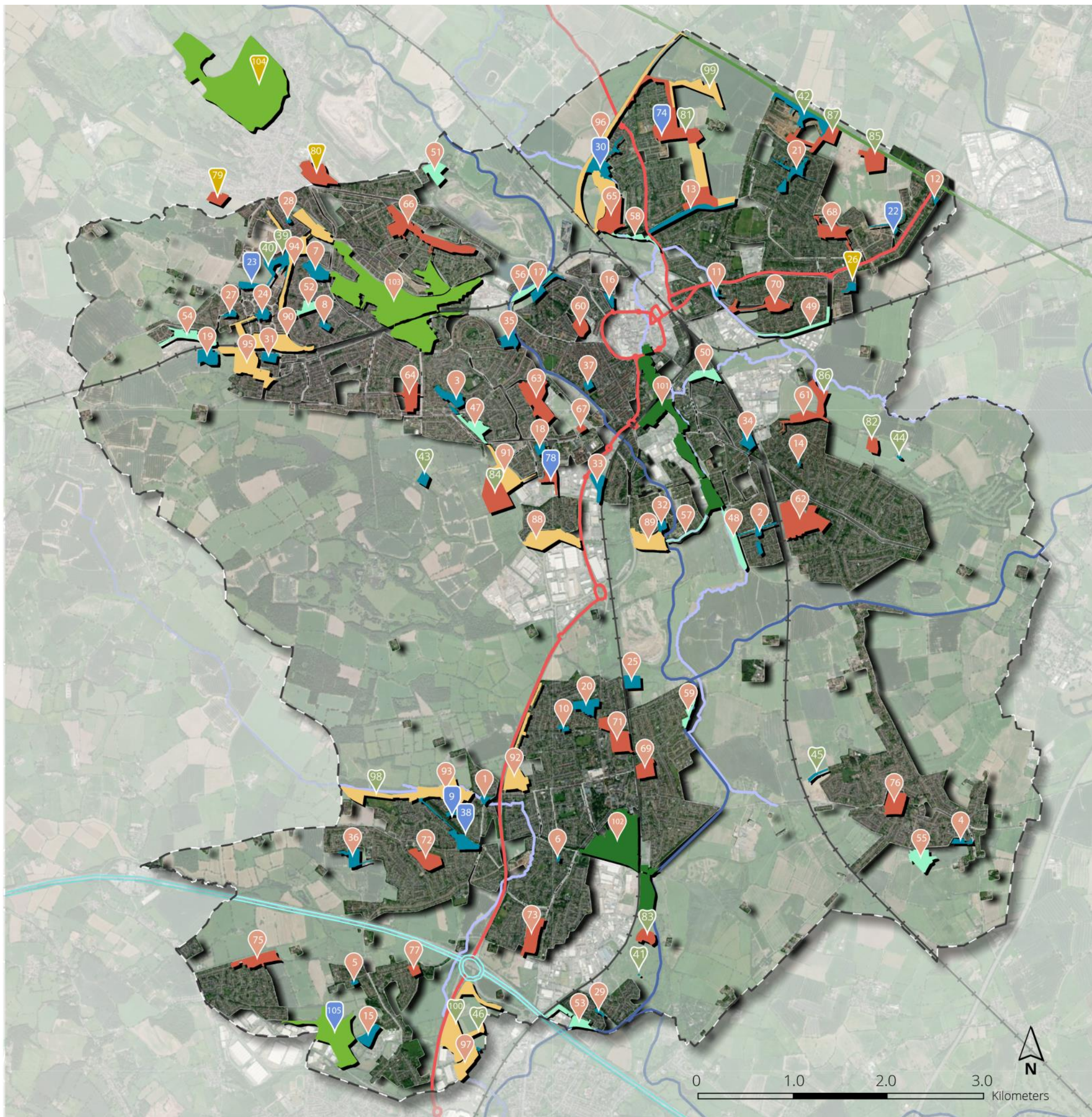
- 101 – Riversley Park
- 102 – Miners Welfare Park

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 – Whittleford Park
- 104 – Hartshill Hayes Country Park
- 105 – Prologis Country Park

KEY

Residential Built-up Area	Local Wildspace	Nuneaton Owned (NBBC)
Borough Boundary	Local Formal Parks	Other Local Authority & Resident Management Company Owned (O & R)
Railway	Community Wildspace	Developer or Commercial Owned (DC)
A Road	Community Formal Park	Parks To Be Developed
Trunk Road	Destination Country Park	
Motorway	Destination Formal Park	
Canal		
River, Channel and Brook		



Overall Analysis on Parks and Greenspace locations and quantity:

In terms of benchmarks for the minimum amount of park and greenspace land that NBBC should provide for residents – or that should be accessible to residents - the most recent such possible methodology to be put forward is included in the 2023 Green Infrastructure standards for England published by Natural England.

- Accessible Greenspace Standards – Capacity criteria: Local authorities have at least 3 hectares of publicly accessible greenspace per 1,000 population and there is no net loss or reduction in capacity of accessible greenspace per 1,000 population at an area-wide scale. Local authorities specify capacity targets for all major residential development informed by a local accessible greenspace baseline, and taking into account local needs, opportunities and constraints.

Applying that methodology:

2021 Census NBBC population = 94364

$94364 / 1000 = 94.364$ thousands

$94.364 \times 3 \text{ Ha (per 1000 population)} = 283.092 \text{ Ha}$ as minimum according to the Accessible Greenspace Standard methodology

Current area of Parks and Greenspace provision by NBBC = 380 Ha which meets the desired minimum.

Publicly Accessible Greenspace (PAGS) methodology:

NBBC's current Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD also includes another methodology for provision per 1000 residents to ensure new development provides additional greenspace in relation to the additional demands it creates.

That methodology is derived from a longstanding / nationally recognised standard for recreational greenspace provision established by the National Playing Fields Association – now known as Fields in Trust (FiT)

The PAGS / FiT methodology requires 6.794 hectares of PAGS land per 1000 new residents

So that would be $6.794 \times 94.364 = 641$ Hectares

As such NBBC providing 380 hectares currently is an appropriate position falling somewhere between the government absolute minimum of 283 hectares and the FiT desirable standard targeting 641 Hectares.

The gap between the current 380 Ha provision and the 641 Ha FiT / PAGS figure in part reflects that historically greenspace was often barely if at all provided in some of the built phases of the towns. Societal benefits have now become more widely recognised hence there is an expectation of a higher level of such greenspace provision per hectare, of built development than was expected of developments in the past.

In addition Prologis Country Park adds 17 Ha of accessible greenspace beyond NBBC's provision, also the Bretts Hall and Snow Hill sites just outside the Borough provide another 8 Ha - and around another 100 Ha of provision, either is on the ground with developer management currently or is anticipated to be going to be created in the next 5-10 years through consented and anticipated development in housing allocations. Those collectively add another 125 Ha which would lift the total available to residents to 505 Ha albeit in part reflecting population growth.

The primary conclusion able to be drawn is that there is an adequate amount of park and greenspace provision in total area in the Borough particularly balancing what is desirable with what is financially sustainable. However, the amount needs to grow in line with population increases through the Planning process so that there continues to be an adequate total amount of provision in relation to the population at any one point in time.

A balance needs to be struck between the number of sites that the authority can financially sustain and having parks and greenspace on everyone's 'doorstep', which some of the national targets for provision unrealistically aspire to do.

It should be noted that new housing does finance the maintenance of any sites for 20 years that NBBC adopts, through payment of a maintenance sum, and additional council tax receipts from the additional houses can after that time appropriately be expected to pick up the additional costs for the corresponding areas of greenspace.

Increasingly Residents Management Company use by developers (discussed in more detail later in this Strategy) is transferring the ongoing costs of park and greenspace provision in some individual developments into direct service charges to the development residents for the on-site park and greenspace provision. As a result, those sites will not fall to the Council taxpayer to finance going forward.

The need for accessible park and greenspace provision must be balanced with financial sustainability. Rather than having numerous low-quality sites close to residential areas, it is proposed to prioritise fewer sites of high quality within a reasonable walking distance. This balance is explored further in the next section on Accessibility.

Additionally, there is a potential mechanism for creating more greenspace, especially wild or semi-natural habitats, through biodiversity net gain requirements in the planning system. This could lead to biodiversity offset sites with public access, facilitated by organisations like Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. However, landowners might be hesitant due to the lure of selling their land for residential development.

There is also the possibility of increased public access to farmland in the future, depending on incentives in a new post-Brexit agricultural subsidy regime.

Next Steps on Quantity of Parks and Greenspace:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term – continue current use of Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD to require provision of minimum ‘PAGS’ requirement of new on-site recreational open space provision in medium to large developments - so that growth in residential population is matched by adequate growth in availability of park and recreational greenspace land
- Medium Term - review Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD with Planning service to maximise its ease of use by / accessibility to planners and developers

- Other actions to undertake in years 5-10, 10 – 15 or beyond the life of the strategy - (*An annual review will be undertaken of whether it is appropriate to include any such additional actions within the Parks and Countryside Team annual business plan as capacity exists to include them*):

- Long term - keep partnership opportunities such as potential no-net-cost provision through Biodiversity Net Gain offset markets under regular review that could e.g. potentially lead to creation of e.g. an additional Country Park type provision within the Borough managed by a third party

Chapter 7: Findings- Accessibility

What does the mapping and analysis show in terms of Access for residents to Parks and Greenspaces?

Looking beyond quantity and numbers of sites, the actual location of provision relative to where you live and the quality of what is provided within those recreational greenspaces is much more important than overall quantity to residents. Therefore, the Accessibility of provision to residents (and then in turn the Quality of provision) needs to be considered next within the Strategy. Any consideration of gaps and potential surpluses in provision must be informed by the actual distribution of sites across the Borough and the ease of access for residents, not just by the total quantity of land.

General accessibility of Park and Greenspace provision for Residents

At the most basic level it is *access* to recreational greenspace from home (or the lack of it in some locations) which is the most important to residents. Therefore, location and distribution of greenspaces is more fundamental than the overall amounts of greenspace that were discussed in the previous Strategy section. The mapping of accessibility allows gaps in provision to be identified (as well as any potential areas where provision may be surplus to needs).

The first two Accessibility plans give two different angles on basic access to recreational greenspace.

The first simply shows access to any of the forms of greenspace in the NBBC typology; Local, Destination and Community within 400m of home. It does however restrict that mapping to current provision. Several of the gaps (grey urban areas), as described below, will be removed through the catchment coverage of parks and greenspace that will be delivered in the future but that are not yet available 'on the ground.' In some 'gap' areas smaller less significant greenspaces are still physically present.

400m radius circles at scale, equating to up to 11 minutes walking time at a slow pace, are used to show the coverage from each significant park or greenspace but where full barriers (canals, motorways, rivers, railways etc) or partial barriers to access exist (where footbridges/underpasses exist etc) then an adjustment is made to the catchment extent.

Access to recreational greenspaces provided by NBBC or third parties within 400m of residential

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 1 – Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 – Sterling Way
- 3 – Montana Walk
- 4 – Brewer Road
- 5 – New Road
- 6 – Rectory Close
- 7 – Freesland Rise
- 8 – Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 – The Alders**
- 10 – Millais Close
- 11 – Clovelly Way
- 12 – The Long Shoot
- 13 – Coronation Walk
- 14 – Inchford Close
- 15 – Blackberry Lane
- 16 – Abbey Gardens
- 17 – Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 – Cornish Crescent
- 19 – Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 – Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 21 – Changebrook Open Space
- 22 – Jelson - Longshoot**
- 23 – Ribbonfields Upper Park**
- 24 – Chaucer Drive
- 25 – Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 26 – Barrats / David Wilson - Woolpack Drive**
- 27 – Auden Close
- 28 – Lilleburne Drive
- 29 – Ironbridge Way
- 30 – Churchfields**
- 31 – Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 – Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 – Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 34 – Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 35 – Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 36 – Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 37 – Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 38 – Sidings Pool**

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 – Lingmoor Park
- 48 – Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 – Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 – Anker Mills
- 51 – Windmill Hill
- 52 – Poplar Tree Farm
- 53 – Fusiliers Rest
- 54 – Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)
- 55 – Barnacle Lane
- 56 – The Dumbles
- 57 – Red Deeps
- 58 – Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 – Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 60 – Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 61 – Crowhill
- 62 – Pauls Land
- 63 – Greenmoor Road
- 64 – Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 – Sandon Park
- 66 – The Dingle
- 67 – Heath End Road
- 68 – Buttermere
- 69 – Johnson Road
- 70 – Tiverton Drive
- 71 – Bailey Park
- 72 – Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 – Heckley Recreation Ground
- 74 – Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington**
- 75 – Keresley Recreation Ground
- 76 – Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 77 – St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 78 – Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park**
- 79 – Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground**
- 80 – Snowhill (Hartshill) recreation Ground**

Community Wildspace (CW)

- 88 – Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 – Griff Hollows
- 90 – Whytell Pool
- 91 – Ensor's Pool
- 92 – Bedworth Sloughs
- 93 – The Nook
- 94 – Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 – Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 – Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 – Sowe Meadows

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

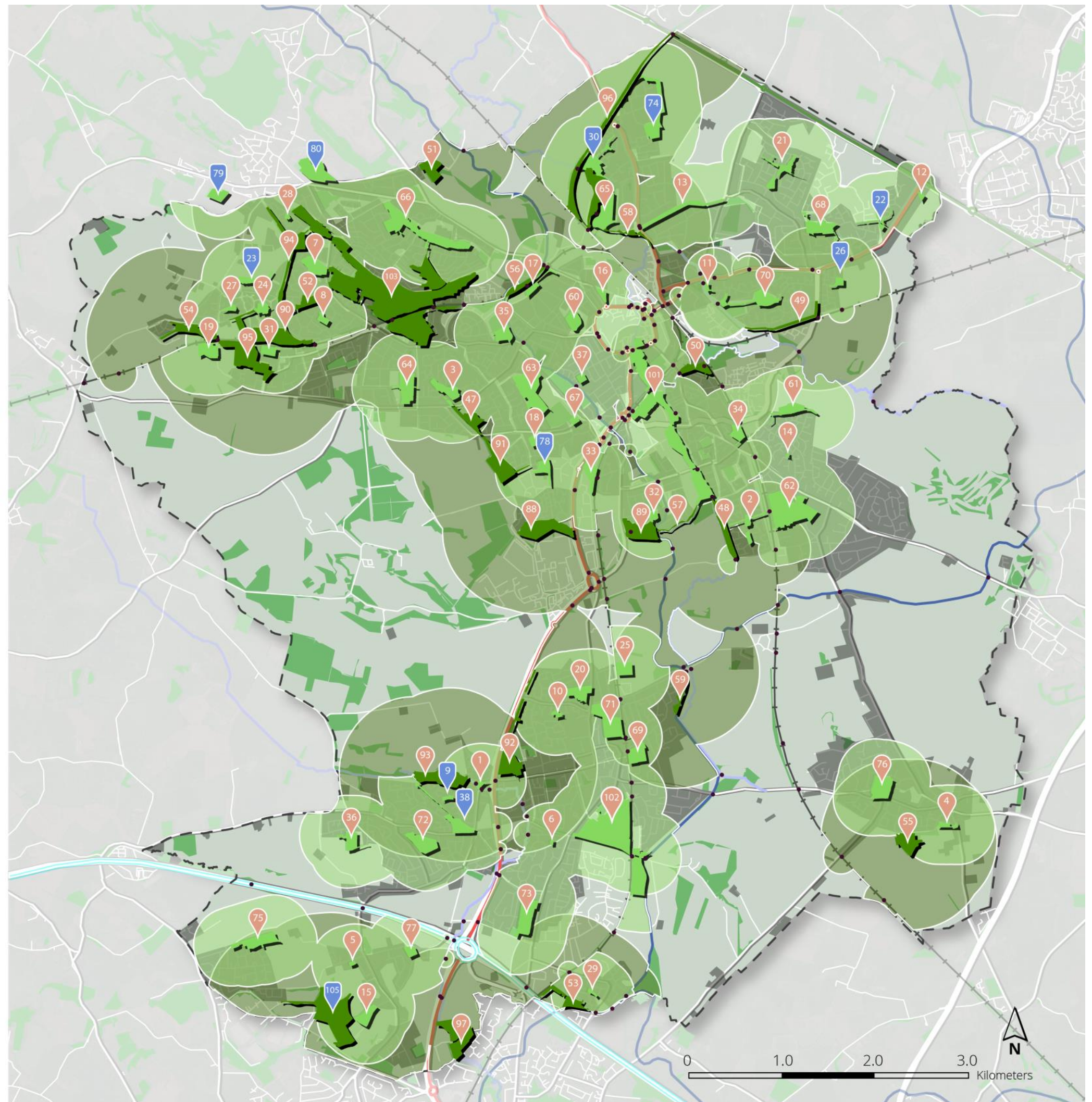
- 101 – Riversley Park
- 102 – Miners Welfare Park

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 – Whittleford Park
- 105 – Prologis Country Park**

KEY

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
|  Residential Built-up Area |  Access barrier crossing point |  Nuneaton Owned (NBBC) |
|  Borough Boundary |  All Existing Formal Park |  Third Party Owned |
|  Railway |  All Existing Formal Park with 400m Buffer | |
|  A Road |  All Existing Wildspaces | |
|  Trunk Road |  All Existing Wildspaces with 800m Buffer | |
|  Motorway | | |
|  Canal | | |
|  River, Channel and Brook | | |



400m access to Local, Community and Destination Greenspaces:

400m can be taken to equate to up to 11 minutes walking time at a slow pace, which is under the government's 15 minutes target. The mapping does not cover access to some small greenspaces and e.g. canal towpaths, so is a more challenging target than the government one.

Our own 400m mapping focusses on access to recreationally significant parks and greenspaces and only those currently available to the public – whereas the government criteria even include areas such as school playing fields and private sports grounds neither of which are open to public access.

Even with more rigorous mapping methods testing access, the overall gaps in access to significant recreational greenspace provision based solely on current offerings are already relatively limited. In some cases, some housing in 'gaps' is still physically within 400m distance of some greenspace but the presence of a barrier to access restricts the catchments of the nearby greenspaces.

The current gaps of any significant extent when assessed on this 400m basis fall into 3 categories –

- a) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision will remove all or most of the gap:
 - Part of the Redrow development at the northern end of Higham Lane (will be removed once on-site greenspace provision is completed)
 - The northwestern tip of Bulkington (will be addressed by the combination of the Taylor Wimpey and Redrow developments)

- b) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision will not remove all or most of the gap but there is some other form of access to greenspace in the area:
 - Northern section of houses along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington - these at least have some access to the nearby Ashby Canal towpath
 - Small area east of Wooton Street and York Avenue on the eastern edge of Bedworth – these at least have some access to the nearby Coventry Canal towpath

- c) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision *will not* remove all or most of the gap and that will remain as gaps in the near future:

- The western part of Stockingford – once out of the catchment of Stockingford Recreation Ground – to the west of Church Road
- Small area of St Nicolas Park to the east of the College
- Small area on south side of Longshoot (though may be addressed if developer wins current housing appeal)
- Eastern side of Whitestone – the most significant gap – a limited area will be addressed by the Golf Drive development park and greenspace provision, but the substantial majority will remain without 400m access (This highlights the value of Thornhill Farm Pond as a small greenspace in that area)
- Mid-section of houses along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington
- Area of houses just north of M6 on Goodyers End Lane
- Some houses around Burbages Lane - although housing development biodiversity offset land will create some recreationally accessible open space nearby - as will the Wilsons Lane commercial development east of the A444 accessible through a public footpath underpass

Despite identified gaps, the number of houses lacking access to recreational greenspace is small and will decrease further with new housing developments. The criteria of a 400m distance for testing access is considered challenging, but even if relaxed to 800m, almost no housing would lack basic access to greenspace.

Thornhill Pond's value is emphasized, especially in addressing the gap affecting the east side of Whitestone. Attention should focus on its quality and potential long-term investments like path surfacing. Exploring the possibility of introducing sympathetically styled play equipment or natural play provision at the site could also be considered, though proximity to the pond and resident preferences would need careful consideration.

For other smaller gaps, beyond improvements resulting from new developments, no specific actions are deemed necessary due to practical and financial constraints, especially considering the built geography in those areas.

The next strategy sections propose further measures to address gaps in access, starting with a 600m catchment for Community and Destination Parks and a 400m catchment for Local provision.

Next steps on basic access to any significant recreational greenspace within 400m of home:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term –
- Medium Term - Consider the role of a potential investment in some form into the Thornhill Farm Pond site given its location in the largest gap in basic access to greenspace but with recognition of the likely sensitivities around any such proposal

800m access to semi-natural/wild space sites:

The second plan assessing basic access to greenspace shows access 'semi-natural'/ 'wild space' areas within 800m of home.

These are much more informally managed sites, often thought of as 'nature reserves' with the substantial majority of land comprised of wildlife habitat. These sites allow residents to have a particular sense of 'getting away' from the built-up urban environment and as such from the stresses and strains of life so can have a significant role in helping with resident's mental health and well-being.

The government has established suggested distances for access to semi-natural greenspaces, specifically outlined in the 2010 Accessible Natural Green Space Target (ANGST) standards. However, these standards are often seen as unrealistic in terms of what local authorities can feasibly provide and sustain financially. The desired levels of greenspace outlined in the ANGST standards may not align with the financial reality faced by local authorities in terms of ownership and maintenance.

These are some of the target distances that the ANGST standards for England suggest authorities might want to adopt:

ANGSt

ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home;
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;

Applying the ANGST standards could potentially create a two-tier system of greenspace provision, where newer developments enjoy higher levels of access, financially supported through council taxes, while older densely built areas have minimal access to semi-natural greenspaces. Achieving such prominent levels of access would require the purchase and demolition of hundreds of residential areas, which is not practical or realistic.

Instead, in this strategy, an access target of 800m (representing a maximum walking time of 22 minutes at a slow pace) to reach either a Local or Community level Wildspace has been chosen. This target is more feasible for many residents in existing or older built-up areas and can also be realistically delivered alongside new housing developments.

Access to any significant existing semi-natural / 'Wildspace' site provided by NBBC / third parties within 800m of home

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 – Lingmoor Park
- 48 – Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 – Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 – Anker Mills
- 51 – Windmill Hill
- 52 – Poplar Tree Farm
- 53 – Fusillers Rest
- 54 – Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)
- 55 – Barnacle Lane
- 56 – The Dumbles
- 57 – Red Deeps
- 58 – Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 – Wharf Meadows

Community Wildspace (CW)

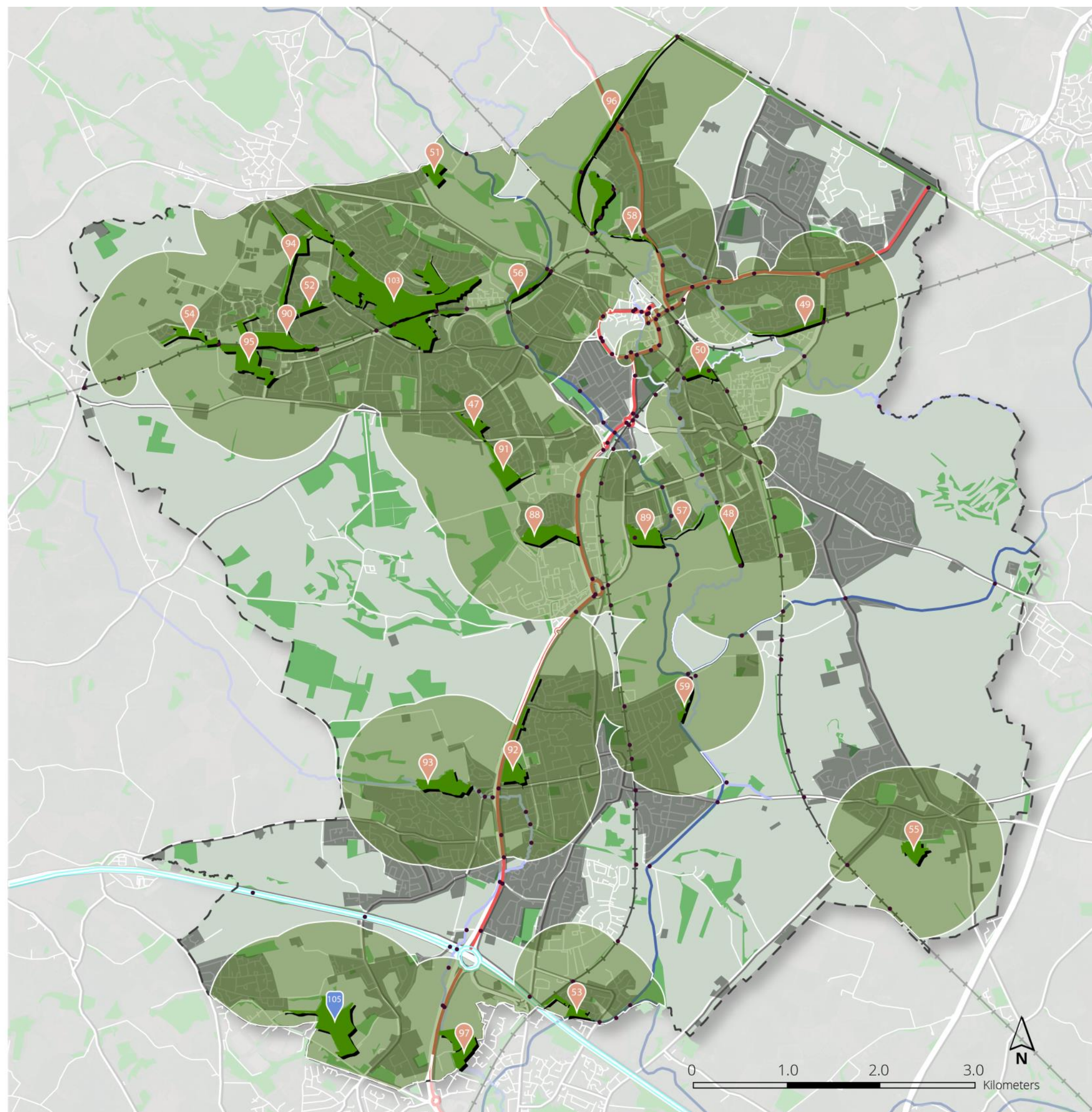
- 88 – Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 – Griff Hollows
- 90 – Whytell Pool
- 91 – Ensor's Pool
- 92 – Bedworth Sloughs
- 93 – The Nook
- 94 – Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 – Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 – Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 – Sowe Meadows

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 – Whittleford Park
- 105 – Prologis Country Park**

KEY

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Residential Built-up Area |  Access barrier crossing point |
|  Borough Boundary |  All Existing Wildspaces |
|  Railway |  All Existing Wildspaces with 800m Buffer |
|  A Road |  Nuneaton Owned (NBBC) |
|  Trunk Road |  Third Party Owned |
|  Motorway | |
|  Canal | |
|  River, Channel and Brook | |



Analysis

The government's aspirational standards for access to semi-natural recreational greenspaces, akin to nature reserves, are commendable but often unrealistic. Despite this, Nuneaton and Bedworth boast a significant amount and distribution of such sites, owing to their industrial past. Old colliery sites, brickworks, and mineral railways, many of which were reclaimed by nature over time, contribute to this abundance. The council's forward-thinking approach in the 1980s led to the acquisition of many of these sites, which are now under council ownership.

Upon mapping catchments for this type of greenspace, some significant gaps emerge compared to the 400m analysis of access to all forms of parks and greenspaces. Some of these gaps reflect and/or expand upon existing gaps identified in the 400m mapping, taking all forms of provision into account.

Again, the gaps can be split three ways:

a) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision will remove all, or most of the gap:

- St Nicolas Park / Callendar Farm / East of Higham Lane – much of the area contains new housing developments and these all will contain new park and greenspace provision. Whilst semi-natural sites will not be the most dominant provision - nonetheless most new formal park and greenspace sites will contain a much higher amount of wildlife habitat than would have been provided in a traditional formal park or recreation ground.

This is both due to retention of habitat that was within the now developed farmland and the developers need to create new and enhanced habitats to meet Biodiversity Net gain requirements that are now an embedded part of the national planning system.

- Crowhill area – there is already a degree of access to semi-natural habitat – there is a little in Crowhill Park itself, also running along the bridlepath adjacent to Crowhill Park and informally through use of two old, farmed fields near the footpath running east and north of Crowhill Park.

The new housing development north of the park will give formal access in time to the 2 farmed fields as public open space - as well as creating new habitat in them. Additional habitat will be created within the existing park and new habitat will also be created on the northern edge of the Golf Drive development adjoining the bridlepath.

- York Avenue / Coalpit Fields area of Bedworth – in part this gap is a mapping distortion as the Bayton Lake Wildspace and Black Bank Wildspace have both been mapped as part of the formal Miners Welfare Park as we work to offer the site as including the Black Bank and Bayton Lake areas as part of everything visitors to

Miners' Welfare Park an access and enjoy. As such they do not appear in this mapping but do provide this form of greenspace accessible to much of this area.

The Bayton Lake area will also be formally extended by further habitat and open space creation by the old Hawkesbury Golf Course housing development – albeit residents often already made unauthorised use of the abandoned golf course site. Additionally, residents have some access also to the Coventry Canal corridor.

b) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision will not remove all, or most of the gap but there is some other form of access to semi-natural greenspace in the area:

- Prince's Avenue / Edward Street area – this densely built terraced housing area has access to formal sites at Marlborough Road and to the east across the A444 in Riversley Park but no 'wild space' sites. The area does though have access to the Coventry Canal corridor to the west side and Riversley Park is to see increased areas of wildlife habitat creation – such as wildflower meadow creation in some of the Pingles / Avenue Road areas
- Northern section of houses along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington - these at least have some access to the nearby Ashby canal towpath
- The northwestern tip of Bulkington – the Taylor Wimpey and Redrow developments both incorporate a combination of formal and informal greenspace provision including semi-natural habitats to a greater degree than would be the case in older housing developments and older formal greenspace provision like recreation grounds.
- Goodyers End Lane and Ashington Road areas of Bedworth – A significant part of these areas will fall within the catchment of new greenspace within the consented development off Hospital Lane that will act as a significant extension of the existing Anderton Road Recreation Ground. The new Park will combine additional formal areas and facilities with significant areas of semi-natural habitat.

c) Gaps where future anticipated park and greenspace provision will not remove all, or most of the gap and that will remain as gaps in the near future:

- Mid-section of houses along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington
- Heckley / Exhall / South of Smarts Road areas – whilst the new housing south of School Lane will provide some limited access to semi-natural habitat being created just north of the M6 - and there may be some very limited scope for e.g. small areas of wildflower meadow creation in Heckley Park – this area will remain fundamentally unserved by access to any significant semi-natural sites.

Overall:

Some gaps in access to semi-natural greenspaces cannot easily be addressed. For example, it is not feasible to expect urban areas to be demolished to create new greenspaces. In other areas, the creation of accessible semi-natural greenspaces depends on farmers or landowners deciding to open their land under new post-Brexit agricultural subsidy regimes. Given these constraints, it is not realistic for NBBC to address all gaps in access. Factors such as local geography and financial constraints limit what can be done.

However, new housing developments are helping to fill some of these gaps by providing required greenspace provision. NBBC actively pursues opportunities to address gaps through the positioning of additional provision on new development sites where justified.

Improving the network of green corridor links and active travel routes between and through greenspaces can also enhance general access to parks and greenspaces. For example, the Borough benefits from 34km of informal semi-natural linear greenspace along canals, incorporating pedestrian and cycle access. The National Cycle Network route 52 also uses the Coventry Canal Towpath for much of its length. Such links are further explored in the Green Network section of the Strategy.

As with general access to greenspace within 400 metres, there may be some potential for partnership working with a body such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust through biodiversity offset funding to provide new accessible semi-natural greenspace.

Next steps on basic access to any semi-natural recreational greenspace within 800m of home:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term – Continue to take up opportunities arising from housing and commercial developments to create access to semi-natural areas
- Medium Term – explore possibilities for any provision of new semi-natural greenspaces arising from biodiversity offsetting provision - potentially working in partnership with a conservation body such as Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

Key Accessibility Catchment mapping in relation to Destination Park, Community Park, and Local Park provision

Destination Park Accessibility:

Due to the compact and urban nature of the Borough it was not felt that mapping against car travel distance to reach the three Destination Park sites would offer any meaningful information. Any small deficiencies / gaps in driving access might only add e.g. a further 5 - 10 minutes of travel time which would have negligible impact as a barrier to access for those owning cars.

The Warwickshire Observatory's key indicator of car ownership in 2004 identified that seven wards within Nuneaton and Bedworth had over 25% of households without cars. These were though primarily in the urban areas which lie close to one or other of the Destination Parks anyway due to their location within the main urban areas. As such residents without access to cars would in most cases be able to reach at least one Destination Park either on foot or by bike – and as such the focus of all the access mapping is on pedestrian access.

In terms of pedestrian access Destination Parks are given the same 600m walking distance catchment as Community Parks as they provide and park of at least an equivalent or greater scale.

It is worth noting that due to their large scale accessing a Destination Park does not necessarily give the rapid access to play facilities that a Community Park would as in a large Destination Park the exact location of the play facilities becomes critical. If for example they are only at one end of such a site, they can be an exceptionally long way from many of the Parks entrance points. As such when mapped in play area catchment terms in a later section of the Strategy the catchments for play areas in any type of park are mapped from the centre of the actual play facility not from the edge of the park.

Combined Destination Park and Community Park Accessibility catchment mapping:

This combined provision is NBBC's absolutely core provision of recreational parks – forming the underpinning building block of recreational park provision and access for residents in the Borough.

Mapping of such sites with their 600m (= 16 minutes slow walking time) catchments form the next map.

Access to NBBC formal Community Park provision within 600m of home - also including Destination Parks functioning as Community Park provision

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 60 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 61 - Crowhill
- 62 - Pauls Land
- 63 - Greenmoor Road
- 64 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 - Sandon Park
- 66 - The Dingle
- 67 - Heath End Road
- 68 - Buttermere
- 69 - Johnson Road
- 70 - Tiverton Drive
- 71 - Bailey Park
- 72 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 75 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 76 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 77 - St. Giles Recreation Ground

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

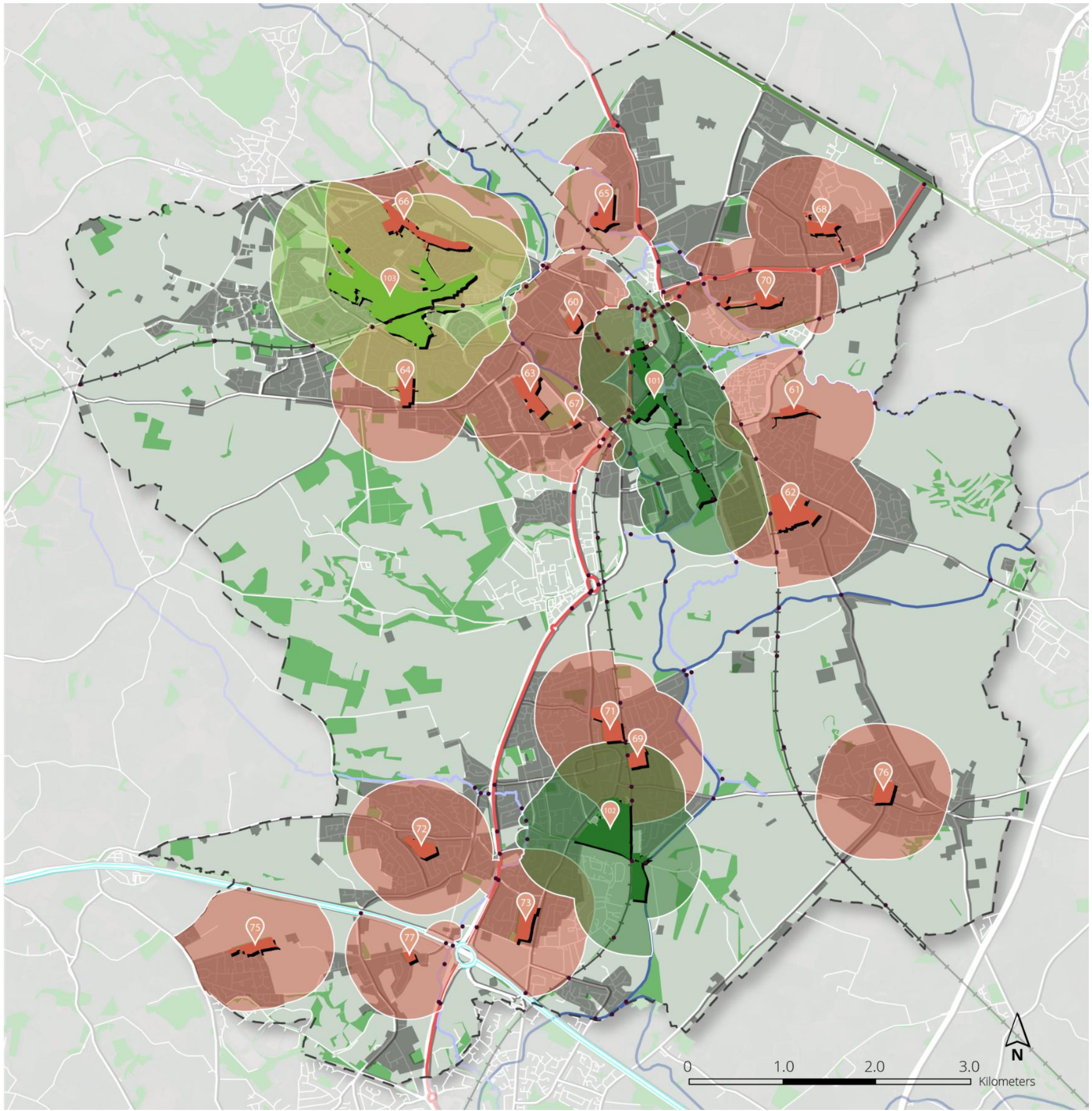
- 101 - Riversley Park**
- 102 - Miners Welfare Park**

Destination Country Park (DCP) with Play

- 103 - Whittleford Park**

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
- Borough Boundary
- Railway
- A Road
- Trunk Road
- Motorway
- Canal
- River, Channel and Brook
- Access barrier crossing point
- Community Formal Parks
- Community Formal Parks 600m Buffer
- Destination Country Parks with play
- Destination Country Parks with play 600m Buffer
- Destination Formal Parks
- Destination Formal Parks 600m Buffer
- Nuneaton Owned (NBBC)



The mapping above shows only NBBC's own and current provision and only of Destination and Community level sites – so although there are significant gaps in access to recreational greenspace it is logical to take account of our Local Park provision as shown in the next map:

The positive outcome is that most residents have good access to at least one form of recreational greenspace provided by the Council.

A few gaps do exist:

- In the Weddington area
- In the eastern part of Whitestone
- Linear housing along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington
- The southern part of Burbages Lane

The next map below however also adds in coverage from:

- Other local authorities (involving the Snow Hill [Hartshill Parish Council provision] and Bretts Hall [North Warwickshire] provisions)
- Housing developer managed provision already on the ground but not yet transferred to a Residents Management Company or NBBC
- Consented provision to be made within housing developments but not yet on the ground and some anticipated provision in housing allocations

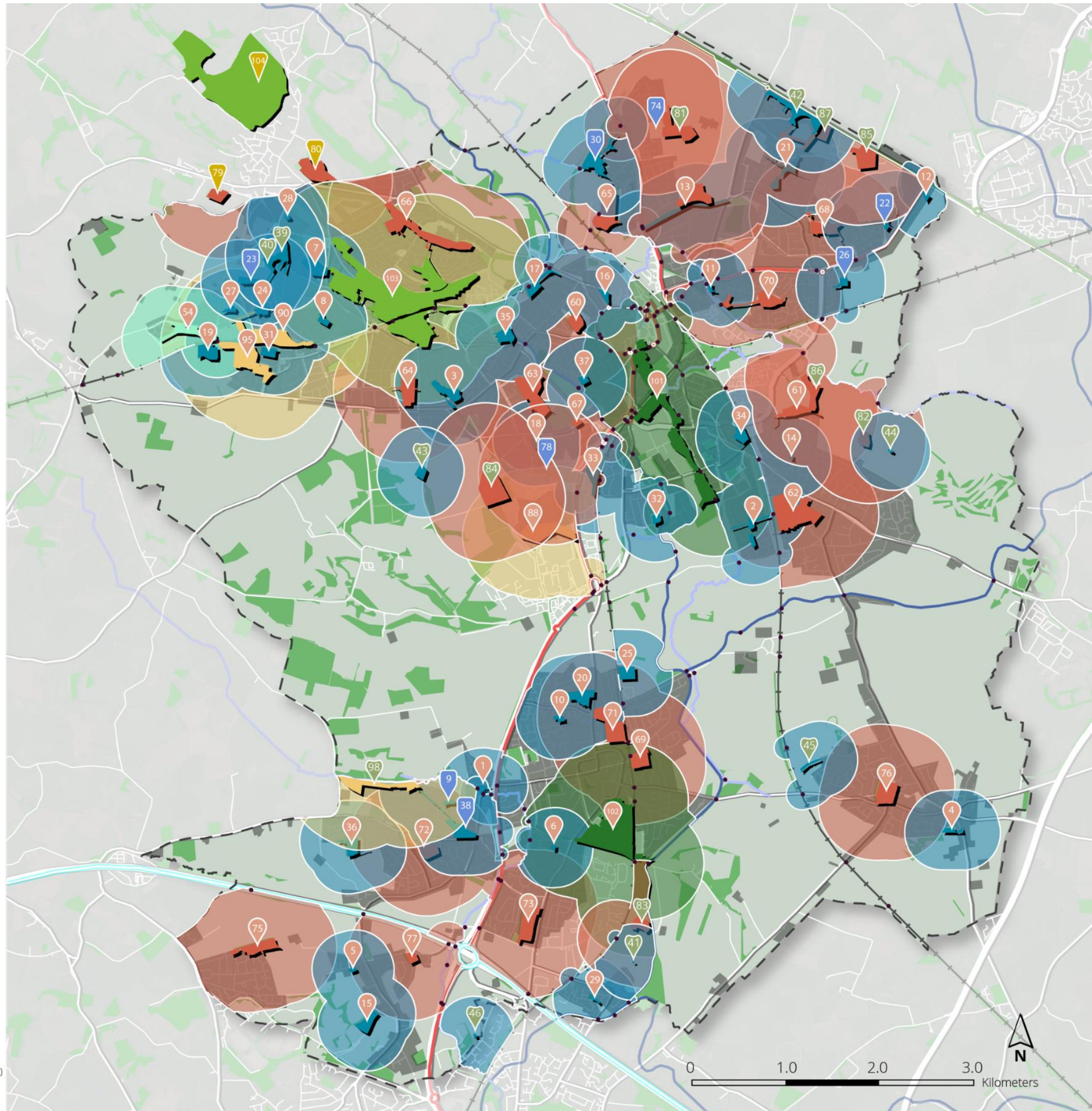
Access to NBBC formal Community Park provision within 600m of home - also including Destination Parks functioning as Community Park provision, Local formal parks with 400m catchments and Local and Community Wildspaces with play plus existing and upcoming third party owned provision

- Local Formal Park**
- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
 - 2 - Sterling Way
 - 3 - Montana Walk
 - 4 - Brewer Road
 - 5 - New Road
 - 6 - Rectory Close
 - 7 - Freesland Rise
 - 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
 - 9 - The Alders
 - 10 - Millais Close
 - 11 - Clovelly Way
 - 12 - The Long Shoot
 - 13 - Coronation Walk
 - 14 - Inchford Close
 - 15 - Blackberry Lane
 - 16 - Abbey Gardens
 - 17 - Stanley Road Recreation Ground
 - 18 - Cornish Crescent
 - 19 - Haunchwood Recreation Ground
 - 20 - Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
 - 21 - Changebrook Open Space
 - 22 - Jelson - Longshoot
 - 23 - Ribbonfields Upper Park
 - 24 - Chaucer Drive
 - 25 - Marston Lane Recreation Ground
 - 26 - Barrats / David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
 - 27 - Auden Close
 - 28 - Lilleburne Drive
 - 29 - Ironbridge Way
 - 30 - Churchfields
 - 31 - Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
 - 32 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
 - 33 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
 - 34 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
 - 35 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
 - 36 - Anderton Road Recreation Ground
 - 37 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
 - 38 - Sidings Pool
 - 39 - Plough Hill Farm**
 - 40 - Ribbonfields Lower Park**
 - 41 - Hawkesbury Golf Course Local**
 - 42 - Redrow Higham Lane**
 - 43 - Arbury - Ensors Allocation Local**
 - 44 - Golf Drive Local Park**
 - 45 - TW Bulkington North**
 - 46 - Wilsons Lane Local Park**
- Local Wildspace with Play**
- 54 - Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)

- Community Formal Park**
- 60 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
 - 61 - Crowhill
 - 62 - Pauls Land
 - 63 - Greenmoor Road
 - 64 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
 - 65 - Sandon Park
 - 66 - The Dingle
 - 67 - Heath End Road
 - 68 - Buttermere
 - 69 - Johnson Road
 - 70 - Tiverton Drive
 - 71 - Bailey Park
 - 72 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
 - 73 - Heckley Recreation Ground
 - 74 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
 - 75 - Keresley Recreation Ground
 - 76 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
 - 77 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
 - 78 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
 - 79 - Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground
 - 80 - Snowhill (Hartshill) recreation Ground
 - 81 - Top Farm**
 - 82 - Golf Drive Community Park**
 - 83 - Hawkesbury Golf Course Community**
 - 84 - Arbury - Ensors Allocation Community**
 - 85 - Callendar Farm**
 - 86 - Crowhill Extension Area**
 - 87 - Persimmon Higham Lane**
- Community Wildspace with Play**
- 88 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
 - 90 - Whytell Pool
 - 95 - Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
 - 98 - Astley Lane Bellways**
- Destination Formal Park**
- 101 - Riversley Park
 - 102 - Miners Welfare Park
- Destination Country Park with Play**
- 103 - Whittleford Park
 - 104 - Hartshill Hayes Country Park

KEY

	Residential Built-up Area		Local Formal Parks
	Borough Boundary		Local Formal Parks 400m Buffer
	Railway		Local Wildspaces with Play
	A Road		Local Wildspaces with Play 400m Buffer
	Trunk Road		Nuneaton Owned (NBBC)
	Motorway		Other Local Authority Owned (O)
	Canal		Resident Management Co. & Developer/Commercial Owned (R+DC)
	River, Channel and Brook		Parks To Be Developed
	Access barrier crossing point		
	Community Formal Parks		
	Community Formal Parks 600m Buffer		
	Community Wildspaces with Play		
	Community Wildspaces with Play 600m Buffer		
	Destination Country Parks with play		
	Destination Country Parks with play 600m Buffer		
	Destination Formal Parks		
	Destination Formal Parks 600m Buffer		



As such it can be seen almost no gaps in access will exist when these other forms of existing recreational greenspace are considered and new provision associated with developments is factored in. The only areas with some deficiency in access sit on the eastern edge of Whitestone and affecting the linear housing along Nuneaton Road between Whitestone and Bulkington.

As such there is no significant identified need to try to act in terms of addressing general accessibility to recreational greenspace within the Borough. A watching brief should obviously be kept for any opportunity to address the gaps in the vicinity of Whitestone – e.g. if relevant development were to get brought forward in that area at some point.

Next Steps on the Accessibility of Recreational Parks and Greenspace at the Destination, Community and Local Park levels:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term – through utilising the Open Space SPD ensure new developments always bring forward the appropriate level of provision to avoid any new shortfalls in provision being created by development
- Medium Term - A watching brief should be kept on any opportunities arising from any future development proposals or housing allocations that could increase accessibility in the Whitestone and Nuneaton Road area linking toward Bulkington.

Also - as outlined earlier - consideration should also be given as to whether any enhancement of the Thornhill Farm Pond site might be tolerated by residents

Chapter 8: Findings- Quality

What Does the mapping and analysis show in terms of the Quality of Parks and Greenspace provision?

Quality of Park and Greenspace provision

In terms of spending any available Council capital funds and pursuing any external funding NBBC will logically prioritise targeting the poorest parks, greenspaces and play areas when assessed in terms of quality. That prioritisation is also particularly necessary with ongoing and significant pressures on NBBC budgets as a whole and within that any available budgets for Park and Greenspace provision and investment.

The strategy work has allowed the quality of parks and greenspaces to be audited in detail which in turn allows evidentially led decision making by drawing on the collected data.

From the point that the audit work was undertaken the Parks and Greenspace team can now assess the quality of park (and play area) provision using multiple criteria and identify the worst performing sites under individual assessment criteria and when multiple criteria are considered together.

Green Flag Park Tool:

A key tool that was used is the nationally recognised Green Flag Award Park assessment. In and of itself this assessment tool blends multiple criteria together to reach a scored outcome per site. The strategy consultants used the following criteria from that tool to assess all the significant parks and greenspaces:

A WELCOMING PLACE				HEALTHY SAFE & SECURE			
Welcoming	Good & safe access	Signage	Equal access for all	Safe equipment & facilities	Personal security in park	Dog fouling	Quality of facilities

CLEAN & WELL MAINTAINED				CONSERVATION & HERITAGE			MARKETING	
Litter & waste management	Grounds maintenance & horticulture	Buildings & infrastructure maintenance	Equipment maintenance	Conservation of natural features, wild fauna & flora	Conservation of landscape features	Conservation of buildings & structures	Provision of appropriate information	Provision of appropriate educational interpretation / information

The strategy consultants employed trained Green Flag Park assessors to evaluate NBBC's sites, resulting in both overall and individual assessment criteria scores for each site. The

Parks and Greenspace Team can now utilise these scores to rank site performance and can combine them with other audit criteria to identify the best and worst performing sites.

Sites performing poorly on one criterion tend to perform poorly on multiple criteria, leading to consistent rankings across different measures of quality. Going forward, investment decisions will be based on these blended rankings, informing a rolling two-yearly capital program (also based on capital funding available). Additionally, the Parks and Greenspace team plan to resume annual internal assessments against Green Flag criteria to monitor progress and guide investment decisions.

Mapping of quality outcomes:

Mapping the audit outcomes helps them to be visualised and more readily digested.

Most of the quality mapping therefore focusses on picking out the worst sites under a range of different assessment criteria and in that way allowing concentration of available staff capacity and of investment toward the worst sites – in a ‘levelling-up’ approach. Where sites perform poorly across multiple criteria the greatest need for staff time capacity and investment can be picked out.

Green Flag scoring visualised in mapping:

The first mapping picks out the worst performing sites in the overall Green Flag scoring undertaken by Jon Sheaff Associates – which were those ranked as ‘Poor’ or ‘Fair’ under JSA’s score banding – as opposed to ‘Good’ or ‘Excellent.’

It can be seen that many sites fall into these ‘poor or ‘fair’ categories - signalling that quality on NBBC parks and greenspaces is a significant issue to address and is where significant gains can be made with careful and thoughtful capital investments and through improvements in day to day management such as grounds maintenance, infrastructure maintenance and through improvements in regard to personal safety etc.

At the same time a moderate number of sites reached the ‘Good’ or ‘Excellent’ banding levels set by JSA (Jon Sheaff Associates) - as can be seen in the second plan – although five of those are also not provided / managed by NBBC itself.

Green Flag Scoring Key criteria banding (lower three bandings shown)

* no sites scored in 'very poor' banding

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 1 – Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 – Sterling Way
- 4 – Brewer Road
- 5 – New Road
- 6 – Rectory Close
- 8 – Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 – The Alders
- 10 – Millais Close
- 11 – Clovelly Way
- 12 – The Long Shoot
- 13 – Coronation Walk
- 14 – Inchford Close
- 15 – Blackberry Lane
- 16 – Abbey Gardens
- 17 – Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 – Cornish Crescent
- 19 – Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 – Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 21 – Changebrook Open Space
- 23 – Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 24 – Chaucer Drive
- 25 – Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 27 – Auden Close
- 29 – Ironbridge Way
- 30 – Churchfields
- 31 – Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 – Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 – Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 34 – Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 35 – Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 36 – Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 37 – Marlborough Road Recreation Ground

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 – Lingmoor Park
- 48 – Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 – Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 – Anker Mills
- 51 – Windmill Hill
- 52 – Poplar Tree Farm
- 53 – Fusiliers Rest
- 55 – Barnacle Lane
- 56 – The Dumbles
- 57 – Red Deeps
- 58 – Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 – Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 61 – Crowhill
- 62 – Pauls Land
- 63 – Greenmoor Road
- 64 – Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 – Sandon Park
- 66 – The Dingle
- 70 – Tiverton Drive
- 72 – Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 – Heckley Recreation Ground
- 74 – Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 75 – Keresley Recreation Ground
- 80 – Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

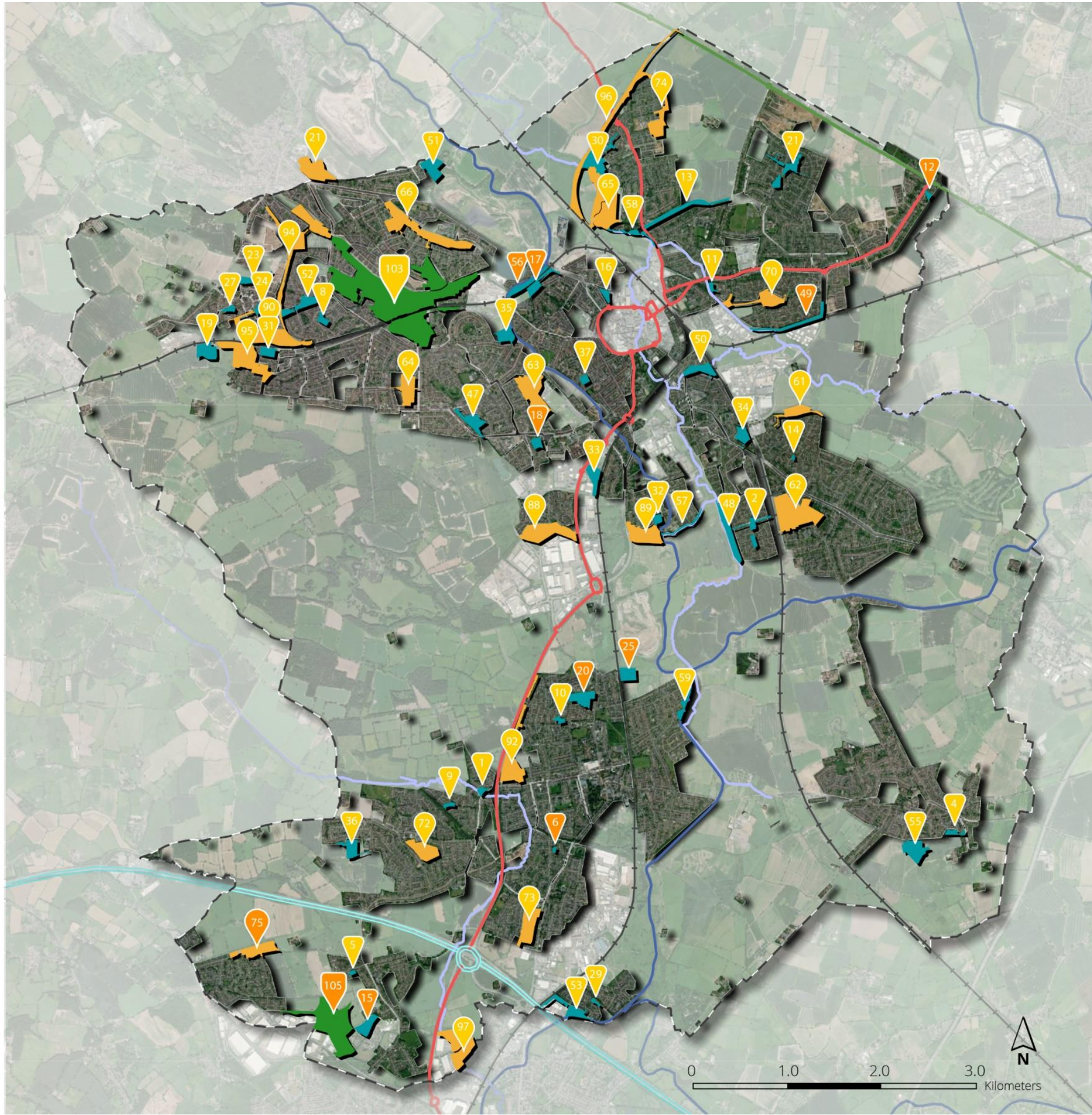
- 88 – Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 – Griff Hollows
- 90 – Whytell Pool
- 92 – Bedworth Sloughs
- 94 – Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 – Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 – Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 – Sowe Meadows

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 – Whittleford Park
- 105 – Prologis Country Park

KEY

Residential Built-up Area	Fair - Green Flag Score
Borough Boundary	Poor - Green Flag Score
Railway	Local Parks (LFP and LW)
A Road	Community Parks (CFP and CW)
Trunk Road	Destination Parks (DFP and DCP)
Motorway	
Canal	
River, Channel and Brook	



Green Flag Scoring Key criteria banding (upper two bandings shown)

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 3 – Montana Walk
- 7 – Freesland Rise
- 22 – Jelson - Longshoot
- 26 – Barrats / David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 28 – Lilleburne Drive
- 38 – Sidings Pool

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 54 – Orford Rise (Inc. Haunchwood Walk)

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 60 – Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 67 – Heath End Road
- 68 – Buttermere
- 69 – Johnson Road
- 71 – Bailey Park
- 76 – Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 77 – St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 78 – Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 79 – Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

- 91 – Ensor's Pool
- 93 – The Nook

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

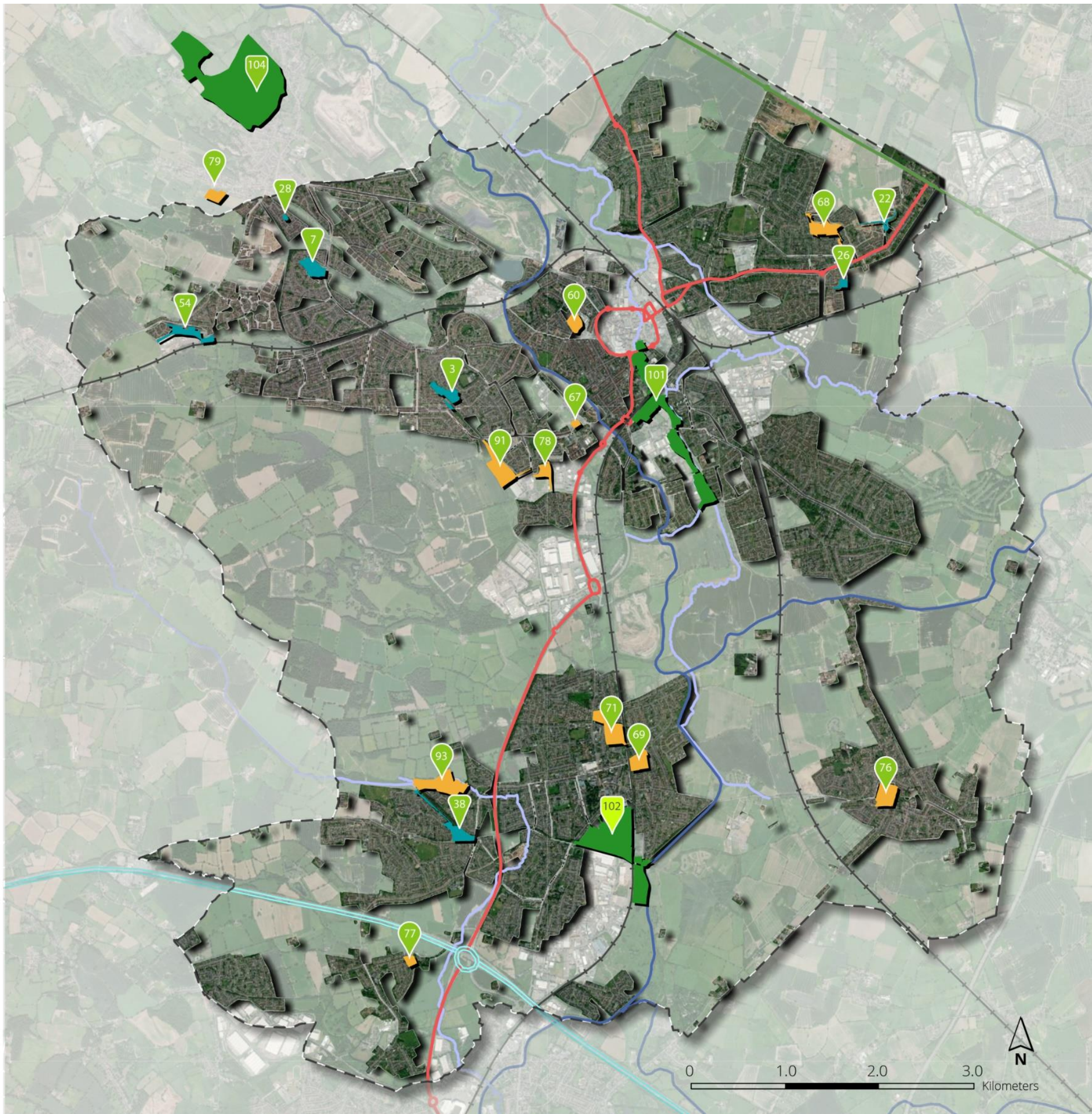
- 101 – Riversley Park
- 102 – Miners Welfare Park

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 104 – Hartshill Hayes Country Park

KEY

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Residential Built-up Area | Excellent - Green Flag Score |
| Borough Boundary | Good - Green Flag Score |
| Railway | Local Parks (LFP and LW) |
| A Road | Community Parks (CFP and CW) |
| Trunk Road | Destination Parks (DFP and DCP) |
| Motorway | |
| Canal | |
| River, Channel and Brook | |



Detailed site by site analysis of the poorest performing sites will allow identification of whether day to day management issues or a lack of capital investment in facilities and infrastructure (or a combination of both) are the factors dragging performance down at any one specific site so that corrective actions target the most effective and needed improvement activity.

Facility audit criteria for each type of Park / Greenspace:

In addition to Green Flag based assessment sites were also assessed in terms of facilities present at the site when checked against a set of minimum facility criteria set for each of the types of open space provision.

The appropriate minimum facility criteria per type were set as follows:

	Local Wildspace	Large Wildspace	Destination (Country Park)	Local Park	Community Park	Destination Park
Criteria:						
Paths linking entrance points and main facilities	Required – in crushed stone as a minimum	Required – in crushed stone as a minimum	Required – in Tarmac	Required – in Tarmac	Required – in Tarmac	Required – in Tarmac
Welcome Signage	At least a single central sign	At each entrance	At each significant entrance	At least a single central sign	At each entrance	At each significant entrance
Directional Signage	Only if part of wider active travel routes	Only if part of wider active travel routes	Required between all significant entrances and facilities	Only if part of wider active travel routes	Only if part of wider active travel routes	Required between all significant entrances and facilities
Information Board Signage	Not required	Single centrally located board	Multiple locations usually at main entrances	Not required	Single centrally located board	Multiple locations usually at main entrances
Play Area provision	Not required	Not required	Required – meeting adopted SPD criteria	Required – meeting adopted SPD criteria	Required – meeting adopted SPD criteria	Required – meeting adopted SPD criteria
On site car parking	Not required	Not required	Required – in one or more locations	Not required	Not required	Required – in one or more locations
Boundary treatment to prevent vehicle access	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Toilets	Not required	Not required	Required - on site or in proximity	Not required	Not required	Required - on site or in proximity
Café	Not required	Not required	Desirable	Not required	Not required	Required

Cycle Parking at Play Area + café	4 children's + two adults if play area present	6 children's and 4 adults if play area present	8 children's + 6 adults at play area (+ café if present)	4 children's + two adults if play area present	6 children's and 4 adults at play area	8 children's + 6 adults at play area + café
Events Infrastructure	Not required	Not required	Utility Connection points and designed area to host events	Not required	Not required	Utility Connection points and designed area to host events
Bespoke landscape features and public art element	Not required	Not required	Expected	Not required	Not required	Expected

Individual audit criteria represented in mapping:

To visually illustrate site performance against individual facility criteria, maps such as the first one below can be created. This example highlights sites that lack an appropriate path network relative to the type of site. This does not mean the sites entirely lack such a network, but certain areas may need investment. Some sites might completely lack surfaced paths despite being significant recreational greenspaces, necessitating a detailed review of specific audit notes following their initial identification by this mapping.

An appropriate path network is crucial for public access and influences multiple Green Flag scoring criteria, impacting aspects like 'welcoming', 'good and safe access', 'equal access for all', 'safe equipment and facilities', and 'quality of facilities'. Therefore, investing in improved path networks is often a key intervention when funds are available.

Single criteria audit data, like that used for the three maps below, will help the Parks and Greenspace team target capital investments effectively on a site-specific basis. This complements multi-criteria rankings such as Green Flag scores, which are the best way to prioritise investment choices between sites.

Single criteria can also be extracted from the JSA Green Flag Park multi-criteria assessments. The second map below shows sites with poor signage provision. The third map highlights sites with safety concerns for visitors, a more subjective criterion but significant for residents' perceptions and their likelihood to revisit. Identifying these sites is valuable for addressing safety concerns.

These analyses, in map form and as ranked spreadsheet data, will be used in preparing site management and development plans, highlighting the main weaknesses in site quality on an individual basis.

All parks lacking an appropriate path network for that type of park

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 3 – Montana Walk
- 4 – Brewer Road
- 5 – New Road
- 6 – Rectory Close
- 7 – Freesland Rise
- 8 – Sherbourne Avenue

9 – The Alders

- 11 – Clovelly Way
- 12 – The Long Shoot
- 13 – Coronation Walk
- 14 – Inchford Close
- 15 – Blackberry Lane
- 17 – Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 – Cornish Crescent
- 19 – Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 – Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 24 – Chaucer Drive
- 25 – Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 27 – Auden Close
- 29 – Ironbridge Way
- 31 – Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 – Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 – Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 36 – Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 38 – Sidings Pool**

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 52 – Poplar Tree Farm
- 56 – The Dumbles
- 58 – Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 – Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 61 – Crowhill
- 62 – Pauls Land
- 63 – Greenmoor Road
- 64 – Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 – Sandon Park
- 68 – Buttermere
- 69 – Johnson Road
- 72 – Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 75 – Keresley Recreation Ground
- 77 – St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 78 – Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park**
- 79 – Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground**
- 80 – Snowhill (Hartshill) recreation Ground**

Community Wildspace (CW)

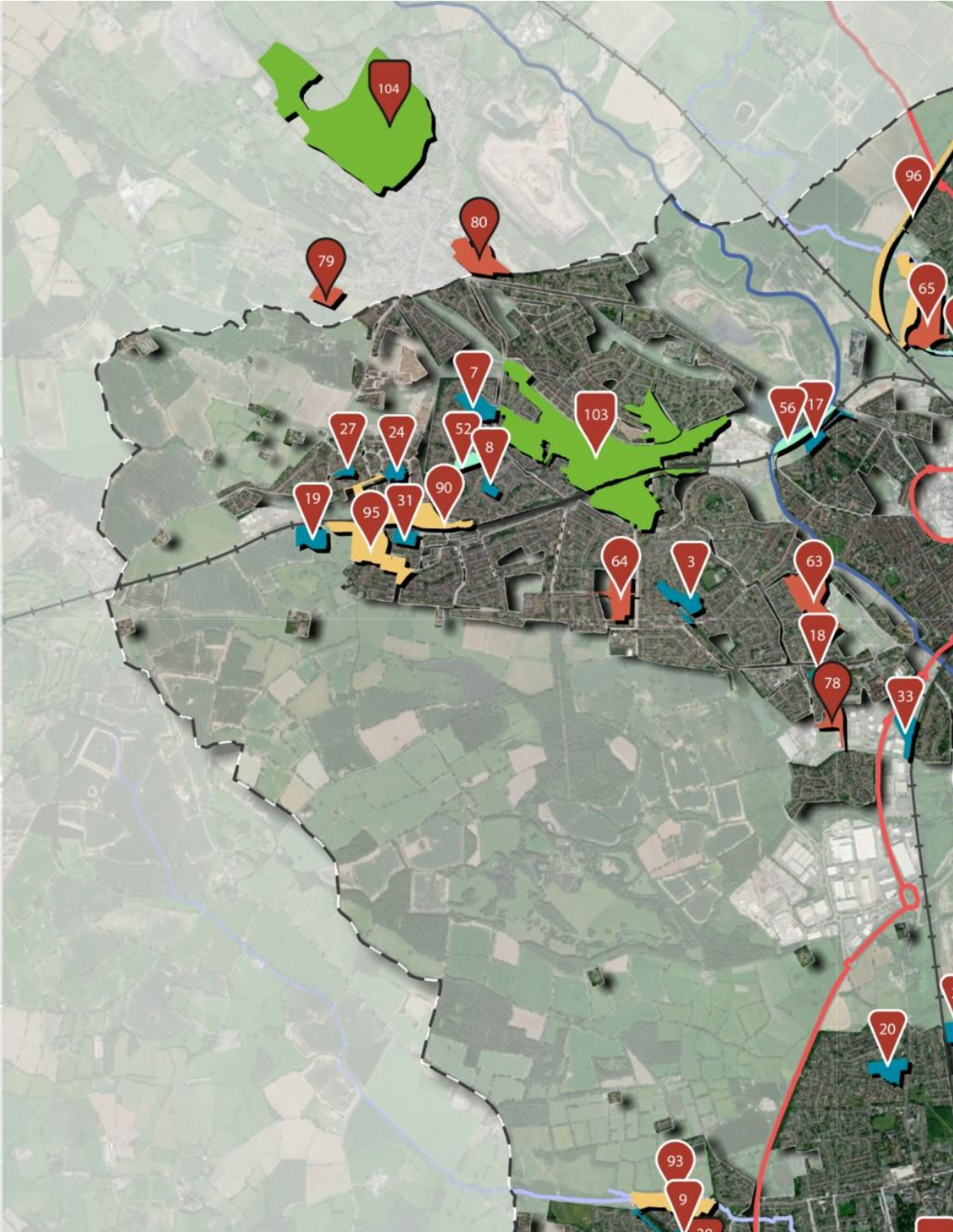
- 89 – Griff Hollows
- 90 – Whytell Pool
- 93 – The Nook
- 95 – Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 – Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 – Sowe Meadows

Destination Formal Park (DFP)

- 101 – Riversley Park
- 102 – Miners Welfare Park

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 – Whittleford Park
- 104 – Hartshill Hayes Country Park**
- 105 – Prologis Country Park**



Green Flag Scoring Signage (lower two bandings shown)

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 11 - Clovelly Way
- 15 - Blackberry Lane
- 16 - Abbey Gardens
- 17 - Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 18 - Cornish Crescent
- 19 - Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 - Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 22 - Jelson - Longshoot
- 23 - Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 24 - Chaucer Drive
- 25 - Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 26 - Barrats / David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 27 - Auden Close
- 30 - Churchfields
- 31 - Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 36 - Anderton Road Recreation Ground

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 48 - Marston Lane Meadows
- 49 - Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 58 - Brooke Lane Pony Field

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 61 - Crowhill
- 64 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 - Sandon Park
- 67 - Heath End Road
- 68 - Buttermere
- 72 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 73 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 74 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 75 - Keresley Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

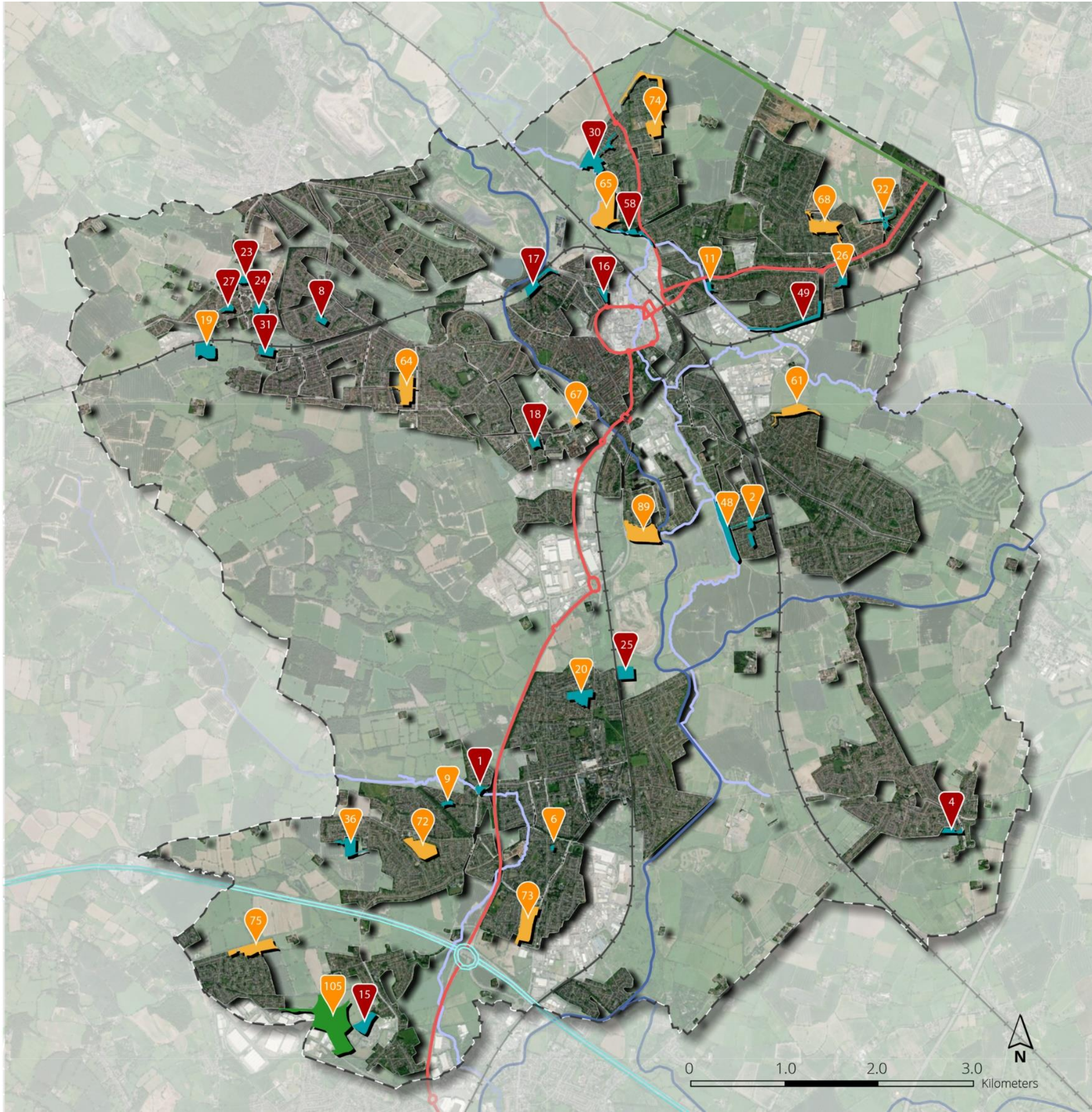
- 89 - Griff Hollows

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 105 - Prologis Country Park

KEY

Residential Built-up Area	Poor - Green Flag Score
Borough Boundary	Very Poor - Green Flag Score
Railway	Local Parks (LFP and LW)
A Road	Community Parks (CFP and CW)
Trunk Road	Destination Parks (DFP and DCP)
Motorway	
Canal	
River, Channel and Brook	



Green Flag Scoring Personal Safety (lower two bandings shown)

* no sites scored in 'very poor' banding

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 6 - Rectory Close
- 12 - The Long Shoot
- 17 - Stanley Road Recreation Ground
- 24 - Chaucer Drive

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 49 - Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 56 - The Dumbles
- 59 - Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 61 - Crowhill
- 63 - Greenmoor Road
- 80 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

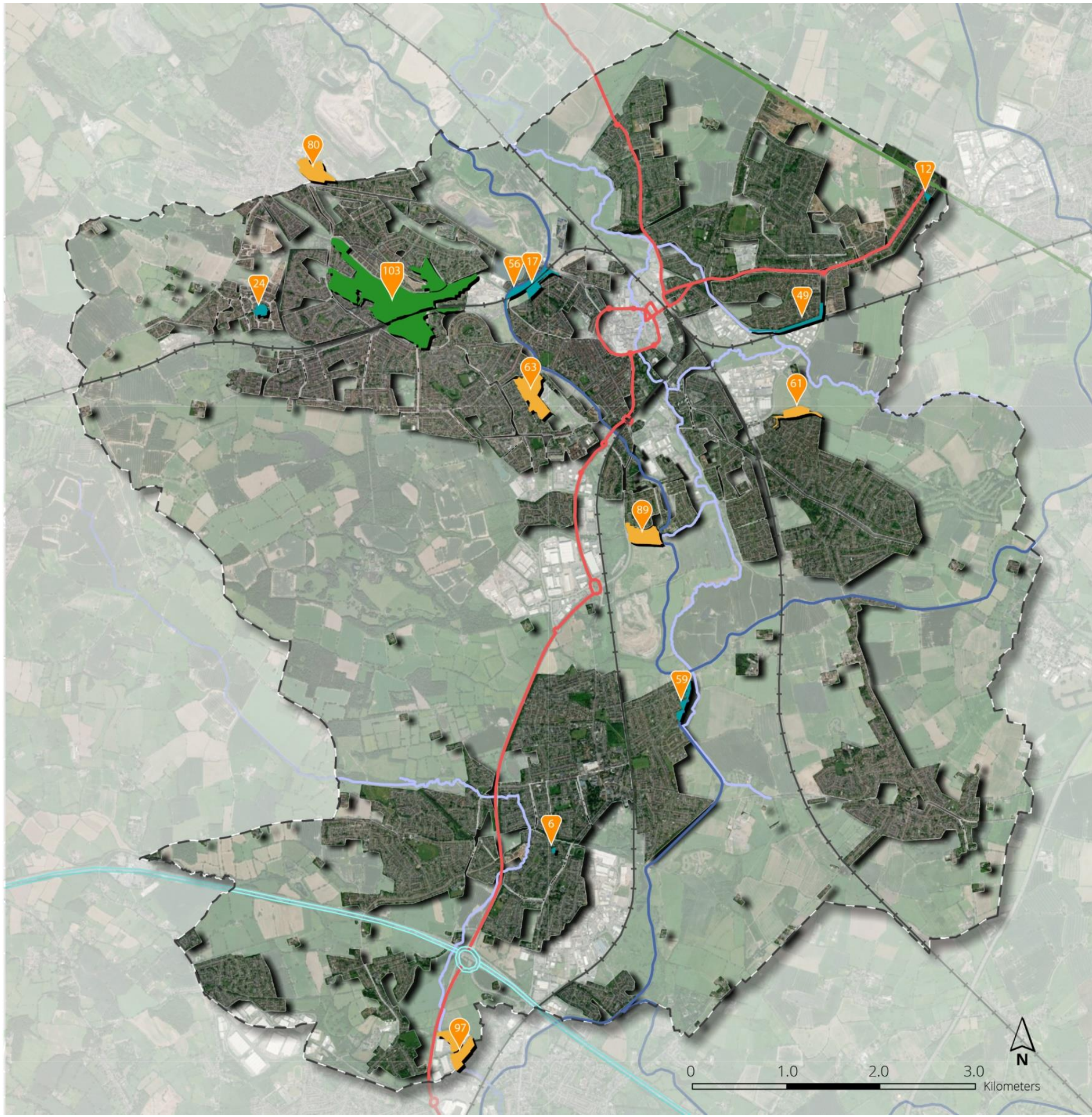
- 89 - Griff Hollows
- 97 - Sowe Meadows

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 103 - Whittleford Park

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
- Borough Boundary
- Railway
- A Road
- Trunk Road
- Motorway
- Canal
- River, Channel and Brook
- Poor - Green Flag Score
- Local Parks (LFP and LW)
- Community Parks (CFP and CW)
- Destination Parks (DFP and DCP)



Overall Analysis of Park and Greenspace site quality:

- Quality is highly variable
- Quality is often poor in relation to Green Flag standards
- Multiple factors contribute to poor outcomes
- Principle contributory factors (varying significantly between sites) are:
 - Quality of Grounds and Infrastructure Maintenance / Upkeep
 - Lack of appropriate facilities – such as path sections, signage etc
 - Quality of play provision as part of facility provision
 - Degree to which users feel safe within the site
 - Degree to which sites and facilities are accessible to all

The earlier sections of this strategy demonstrate that quantity and accessibility are not the primary issues affecting residents' experiences with parks and greenspaces. Instead, the inconsistency in quality is the main concern. Later sections focus on strategies for enhancing and improving the quality of these provisions over time.

Next Steps on Quality of Parks and Greenspace represented in Mapping:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term - Improvement in the Quality of Parks and Greenspace sites within NBBC's control needs to be the key focus of work by the Parks and Greenspace team in the next ten years. Later strategy sections review potential actions to drive up quality in full detail and prioritise the appropriate 'Next Steps'. Going forward sub-sections of the Parks and Greenspace team and individual annual targets should include actions relating directly to driving up quality in respective work areas.
- Medium Term - NBBC should appropriately develop contact with the providers of the Snow Hill and Bretts Hall Parks due to the benefit of those sites to some residents in the Borough. NBBC does partly contribute to the annual costs of the Snow Hill provision and should accordingly ensure Area Greenspace Officer input to the management of the site is put in place.

If relevant 106 contributions arise from developments in the catchment of those sites it will be logical to contribute those to those sites with safeguards to ensure delivery of any particular provisions stipulated in the relevant 106 agreements

The next strategy sections focus on Play Area and 'equipped' play facility provision which are a specific subset of overall provision within each park. They do differ though in the issues affecting residents experience of them and as such are reviewed specifically in terms of Quantity, Accessibility and Quality.

Chapter 9: Findings – Play Area Location and Quantity

What does the mapping and analysis show in terms of the locations and quantity of Play Area provision?

Locations and Quantity of Play provision

NBBC currently provides 55 equipped play areas in the Borough. On the edge of the Borough 3 other equipped play areas managed by other local authority providers are close enough to the Borough to help provide coverage of houses within this Borough. One - at Hartshill Hayes Country Park - is only though near enough in terms of being within an acceptable driving distance at the 'Destination Park' level rather than being within walking distance.

In terms of Destination Parks, Riversley Park contains one Destination type play provision and a Local level provision at Marston Lane. Miners Welfare Park contains a Destination level play provision. Whittleford Park hosts a combination of Local and Community level play areas at several locations around its periphery.

Two Community level play areas outside the Borough are within walking distance of housing within this Borough near Chapel End in Nuneaton (Snow Hill and Bretts Hall).

An increasing number of play areas are currently managed by housing developers due to the number of housing developments coming forward after a lull following the 2008 economic crisis. In most cases these are either awaiting transfer to NBBC once at a fully adoptable standard - or similarly are awaiting transfer to Residents Management Companies again once a suitable finished standard has been reached.

Table of numbers of play areas open to the public - split by provider (at time of audit):

Provider	Number of Community level play areas	Number of Local level play areas
NBBC	18	24
Other Borough Council	1	0
Parish Council	1	0
Developer managed	2	4

A significant further number of such play areas are due to be created by developers following planning consents but have not yet been built. In time these will either transfer to resident’s management companies or to NBBC dependent on the developer’s preference. These should logically be considered in later strategy sections considering access to parks, play areas and greenspaces.

Table of numbers of additional play areas consented or anticipated at the time of the audit:

Provider	Number of Community level play areas consented but not yet delivered + anticipated within allocations	Number of Local level play areas consented but not yet delivered+ anticipated within allocations
Developer	7	7

As with general provision of recreational greenspace the figures can only be a snapshot at a point in time and further planning consents containing play provision have happened since the audit and preparation of the maps in the Strategy.

Locations of play area provision:

The map below shows the locations of NBBC and currently accessible ‘3rd party’ play area provision within recreational parks and greenspaces.

Not all significant parks and greenspaces contain play areas. Play areas tend to usually be set within formally managed sites – so only occasionally feature within the informal Wildspace sites.

It is sometimes appropriate to set play areas in an informal/Wildspace setting if it addressed gaps in provision. In recent times play provision within such sites has become more common nationally and a small number are present in the Borough. These play areas often focus on designs that blend visually with their natural surroundings, emphasising interactive play with natural landscapes and materials.

Locations of all current play area provision within recreational greenspaces:

All play areas where at least 1 item of play equipment (including any active recreation equipment) is present including 3rd party providers

LOCAL PLAY

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue

9 - The Alders

- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 12 - Coronation Walk
- 13 - Inchford Close

14 - Jelson - Longshoot

15 - Ribbonfields Upper Park

- 16 - Chaucer Drive

17 - Barrats/David Wilson - Woolpack Drive

- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way

20 - Churchfields

- 21 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 25 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground

26 - Sidings Pool

- 34 - Orford Rise
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area
- 69 - Rannoch Drive

71 - Hartshill Hayes Country Park

COMMUNITY PLAY

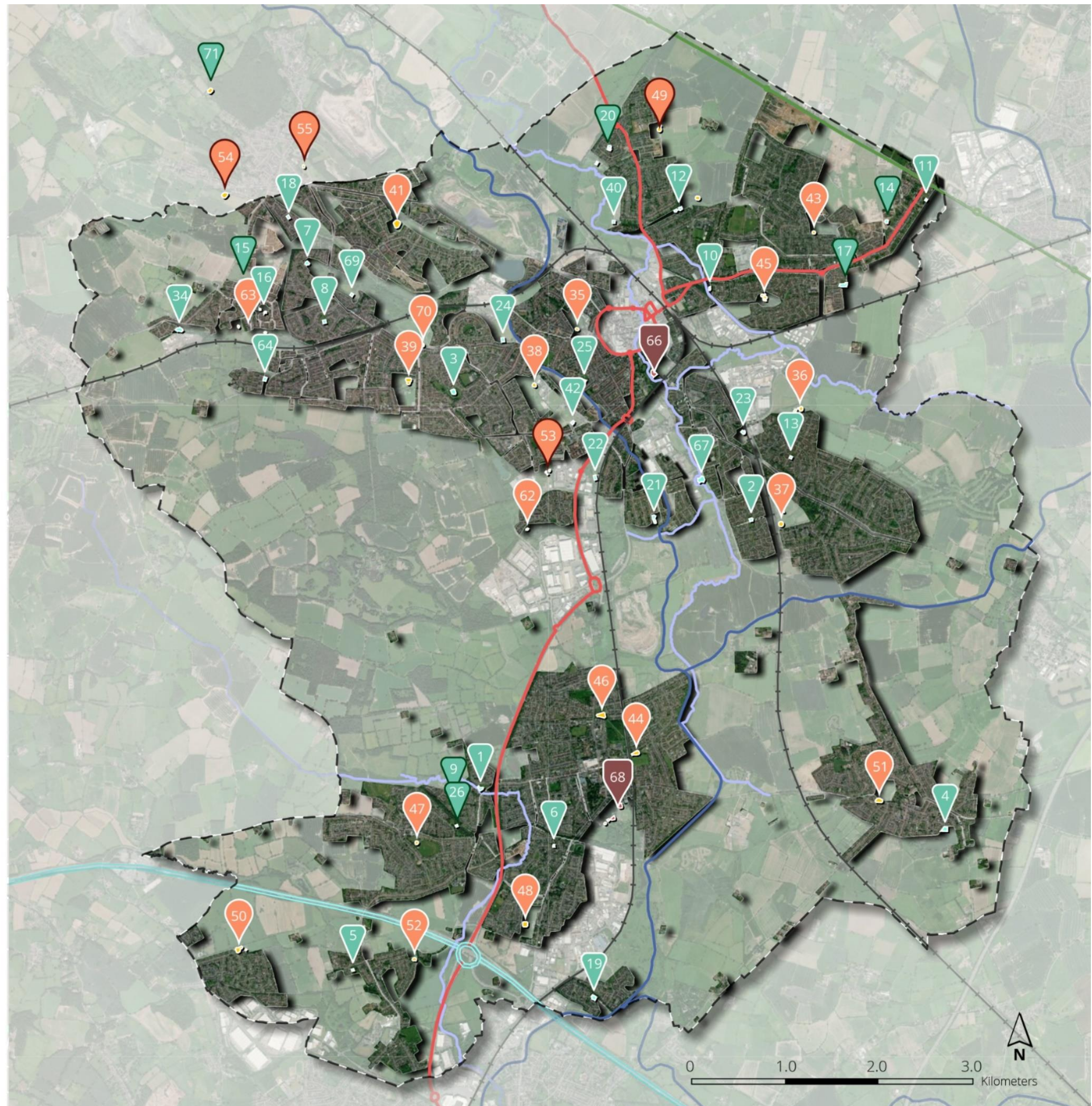
- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 41 - The Dingle
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 49 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington**
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 53 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park**
- 54 - Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground**
- 55 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground**
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

- 66 - Riversley Park
- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
- Borough Boundary
- Railway
- A Road
- Trunk Road
- Motorway
- Canal
- River, Channel and Brook
- NBBC Owned Local Play
- NBBC Owned Community Play
- NBBC Owned Destination Play
- Third Party Owned Local Play
- Third Party Owned Community Play



Chapter 10: Findings – Play Area Accessibility

What does the mapping and analysis show in terms of Access for residents to Play Areas within Parks and Greenspaces?

Accessibility of Play provision for residents

The number of marked play areas does not accurately reflect their accessibility to residents. Play area accessibility can be mapped similarly to recreational greenspace provision, categorised into Destination, Community, and Local levels. However, unlike greenspace mapping, play area accessibility must be centred on the play area itself. This is crucial because residents within a 600m catchment area of a large park might not all have equal access to a play area located at one end of the park.

Mapping based on the centre of play areas affects the catchment coverage of Destination level play areas more significantly than the overall park coverage, slightly affects Community Park sites, and has minimal impact on Local level sites. Consequently, play area catchment coverage is reduced compared to park and greenspace coverage, revealing larger gaps in provision but accurately reflecting residents' access to play areas.

The first map shows NBBC's Community and Destination level play areas, while the second map includes Local Play areas. It is important to note that Local Play areas are not substitutes for Community or Destination level play areas, as they cater for younger children and typically have fewer pieces of equipment.

NBBC Community Park and Destination Park play areas where at least 1 item of play equipment (including any active recreation equipment) is present

COMMUNITY PLAY

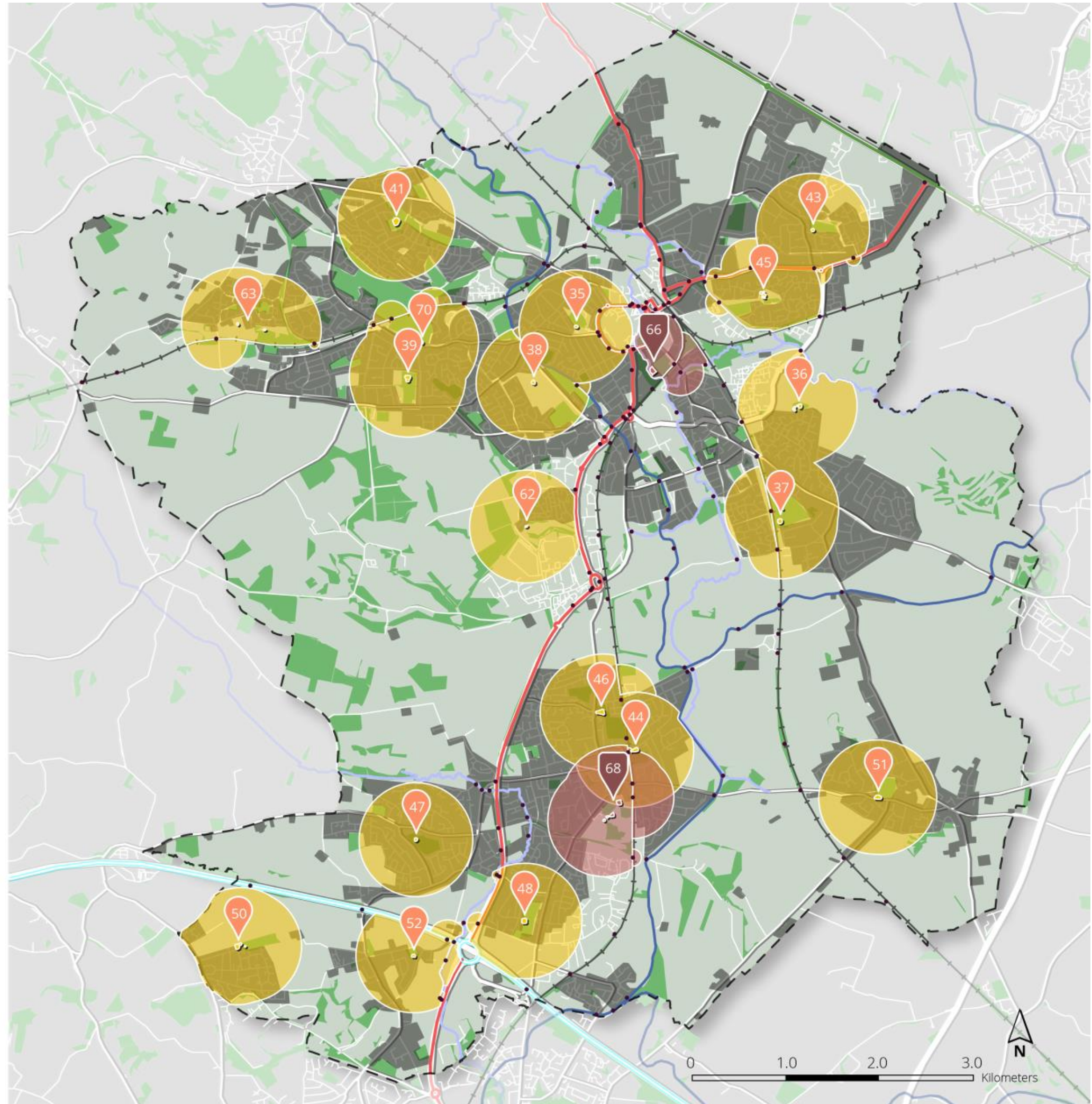
- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 41 - The Dingle
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

- 66 - Riversley Park
- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
 - Borough Boundary
 - Railway
 - A Road
 - Trunk Road
 - Motorway
 - Canal
 - River, Channel and Brook
 - Access barrier crossing point
- NBBC Owned Community Play
 - NBBC Owned Destination Play
 - Community Play with 600m Buffer
 - Destination Play with 600m Buffer



NBBC Community Park, Destination Park and Local Play Areas where at least 1 item of play equipment (including any active recreation equipment) is present

LOCAL PLAY

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 12 - Coronation Walk
- 13 - Inchford Close
- 16 - Chaucer Drive
- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way
- 21 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 25 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 34 - Orford Rise
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area
- 69 - Rannoch Drive

COMMUNITY PLAY

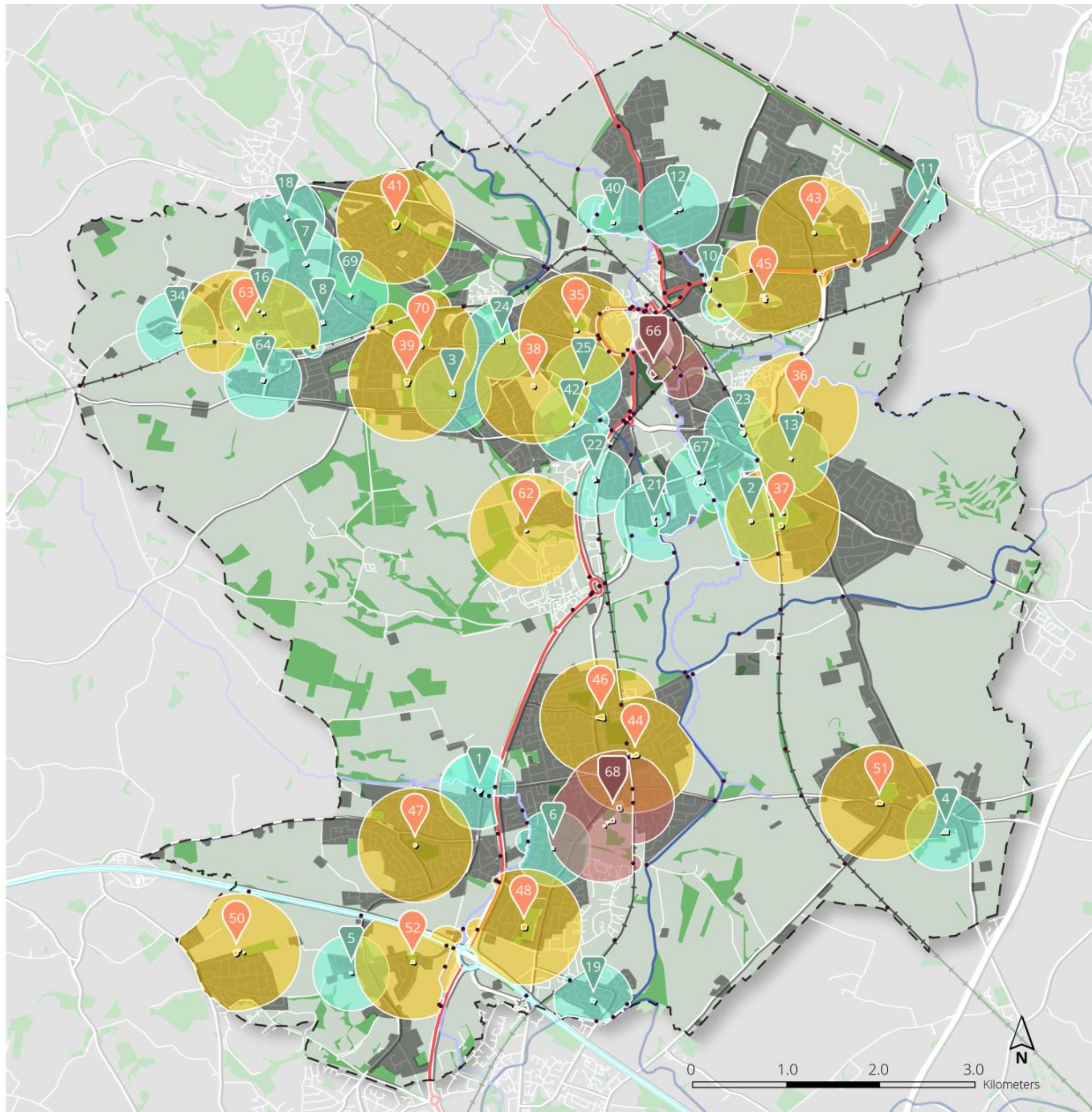
- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 41 - The Dingle
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

- 66 - Riversley Park
- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

	Residential Built-up Area		NBBC Owned Local Play
	Borough Boundary		NBBC Owned Community Play
	Railway		NBBC Owned Destination Play
	A Road		Local Play with 400m Buffer
	Trunk Road		Community Play with 600m Buffer
	Motorway		Destination Play with 600m Buffer
	Canal		
	River, Channel and Brook		
	Access barrier crossing point		



It can readily be seen from the mapping that at the Community and Destination play area provision level there are quite large gaps in provision. Some of these correspond to areas that lacked park and greenspace provision access in the earlier mapping, but additional areas also emerge - due to the actual distribution of play areas within the spaces and the play area specific catchments rather than entire site catchments.

Physical barriers also play a part; for example, reducing the catchment of the Destination level play area in Riversley Park significantly due to the presence of the railway, river, and trunk roads.

It is clear from this mapping that Community level play area provision would need to appropriately increase to help reduce these gaps in provision and access. These gaps particularly affect older children and teens because these forms of provision are exclusively made within Community level and Destination level play areas.

The second plan shows that the combination of Local and Community level play provision does give better overall coverage and access for younger children to access play provision as this is the focus of Local level provision and is also catered for always at Community and Destination level play areas. There are still though multiple significant gaps in this provision.

Upcoming and 3rd party provision:

The plans above do not however allow for play areas provided by 3rd parties (other local authorities and developers / residents management companies) and for play areas that are part of consented and anticipated developments that have yet to be delivered on the ground.

When these are considered in the next map, several of the gaps are reduced or removed by those other or upcoming provisions

This particularly affects the Weddington and St Nicolas areas as well as some of Whitestone, parts of Galley Common, Bedworth Heath, and Bulkington; unsurprisingly mainly where nearby development is taking place that includes new play provision.

Community Park, Destination Park and Local Play Areas where at least 1 item of play equipment (including any active recreation equipment) is present including provision by other local authority providers and existing on the ground developer managed provision, plus upcoming developments and allocations

LOCAL PLAY

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 12 - Coronation Walk
- 13 - Inchford Close
- 14 - Jelson - Longshoot
- 15 - Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 16 - Chaucer Drive
- 17 - Barrats/David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way
- 20 - Churchfields
- 21 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 25 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 26 - Sidings Pool
- 27 - Plough Hill Farm**
- 28 - Hawkesbury Golf Course Phase 1 Local**
- 29 - Redrow Higham Lane**
- 30 - Arbury - Ensors Allocation Local**
- 31 - Golf Drive Local Park**
- 33 - Wilsons Lane Local Park**
- 34 - Orford Rise
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road
- 60 - Callendar Farm**
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area
- 69 - Rannoch Drive
- 71 - Hartshill Hayes Country Park

COMMUNITY PLAY

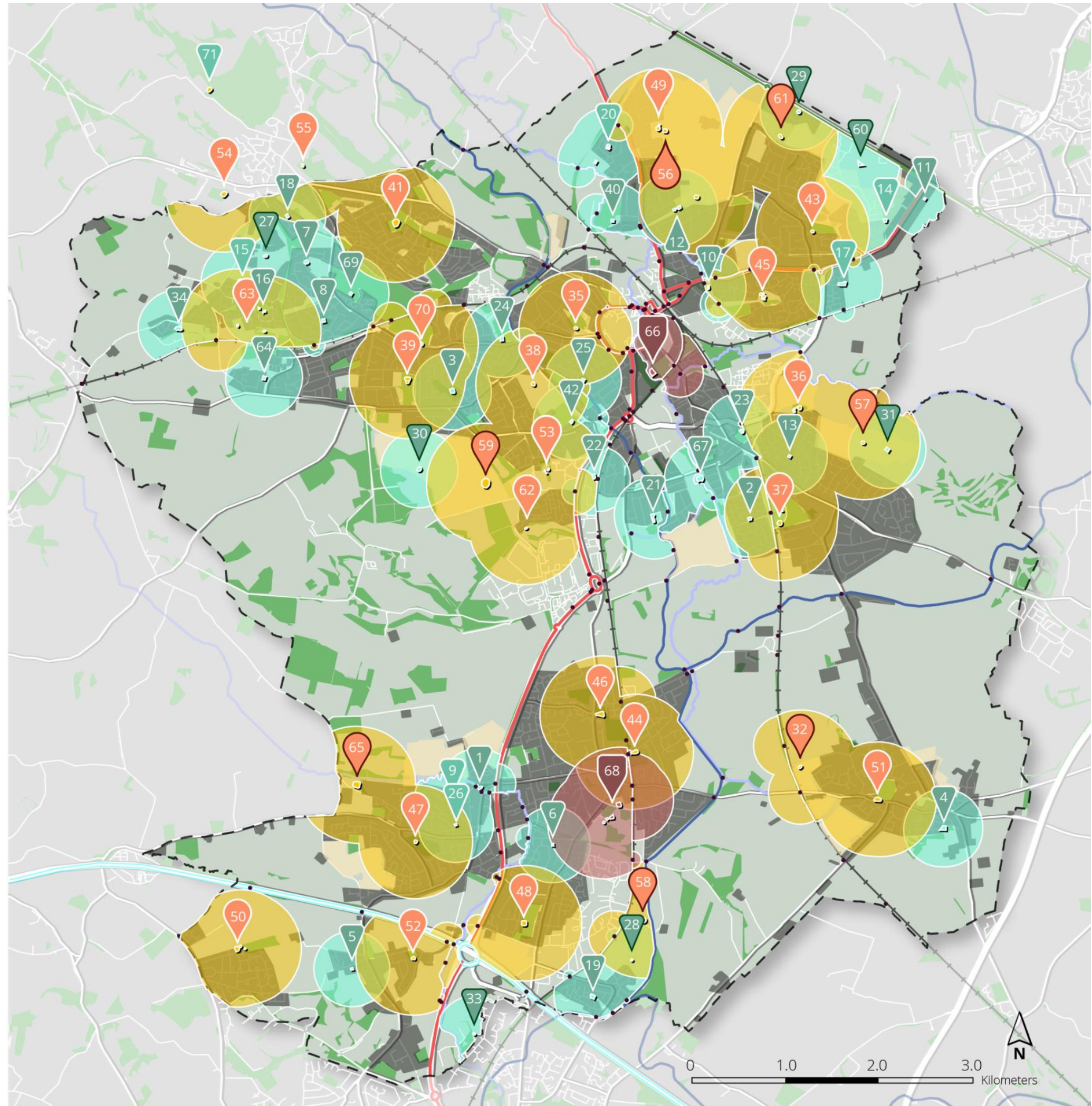
- 32 - TW Bulkington North**
- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 41 - The Dingle
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 49 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 53 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 54 - Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground
- 55 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground
- 56 - Top Farm**
- 57 - Golf Drive Community Park**
- 58 - Hawkesbury Golf Course Phase 2 Community**
- 59 - Arbury - Ensors Allocation Community**
- 61 - Persimmon Higham Lane**
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 65 - Astley Lane Bellways**
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

- 66 - Riversley Park
- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| | Residential Built-up Area | | NBBC and Third Party Owned Local Play | | Local Play with 400m Buffer |
| | Borough Boundary | | NBBC and Third Party Owned Community Play | | Community Play with 600m Buffer |
| | Railway | | NBBC Owned Destination Play | | Destination Play with 600m Buffer |
| | A Road | | To be developed Local Play | | Upcoming Developments and Allocations |
| | Trunk Road | | To be developed Community Play | | |
| | Motorway | | | | |
| | Canal | | | | |
| | River, Channel and Brook | | | | |
| | Access barrier crossing point | | | | |



Key gaps remain including:

- A significant part of Kingswood / Stockingford
- The eastern part of Tuttle Hill / Camphill
- Several areas north and south of Nuneaton Town centre
- Much of Whitestone + the corridor of housing running south to Bulkington
- The eastern end of Marston Lane in Bedworth
- The York Avenue / Walter Scott Road area of Bedworth
- Much of Bedworth along the A444 corridor
- The Burbages Lane / Wheelwright Lane part of Ash Green

Ways to address gaps in play area accessibility:

It is appropriate for the Strategy to look at further means of addressing gaps in provision as new developments do not overcome these and can only do that as a side effect as they are only required to mitigate their own extra demands.

Gaps are more extensive still when Community and Destination level provision is considered alone - with additional gaps emerging at that level.

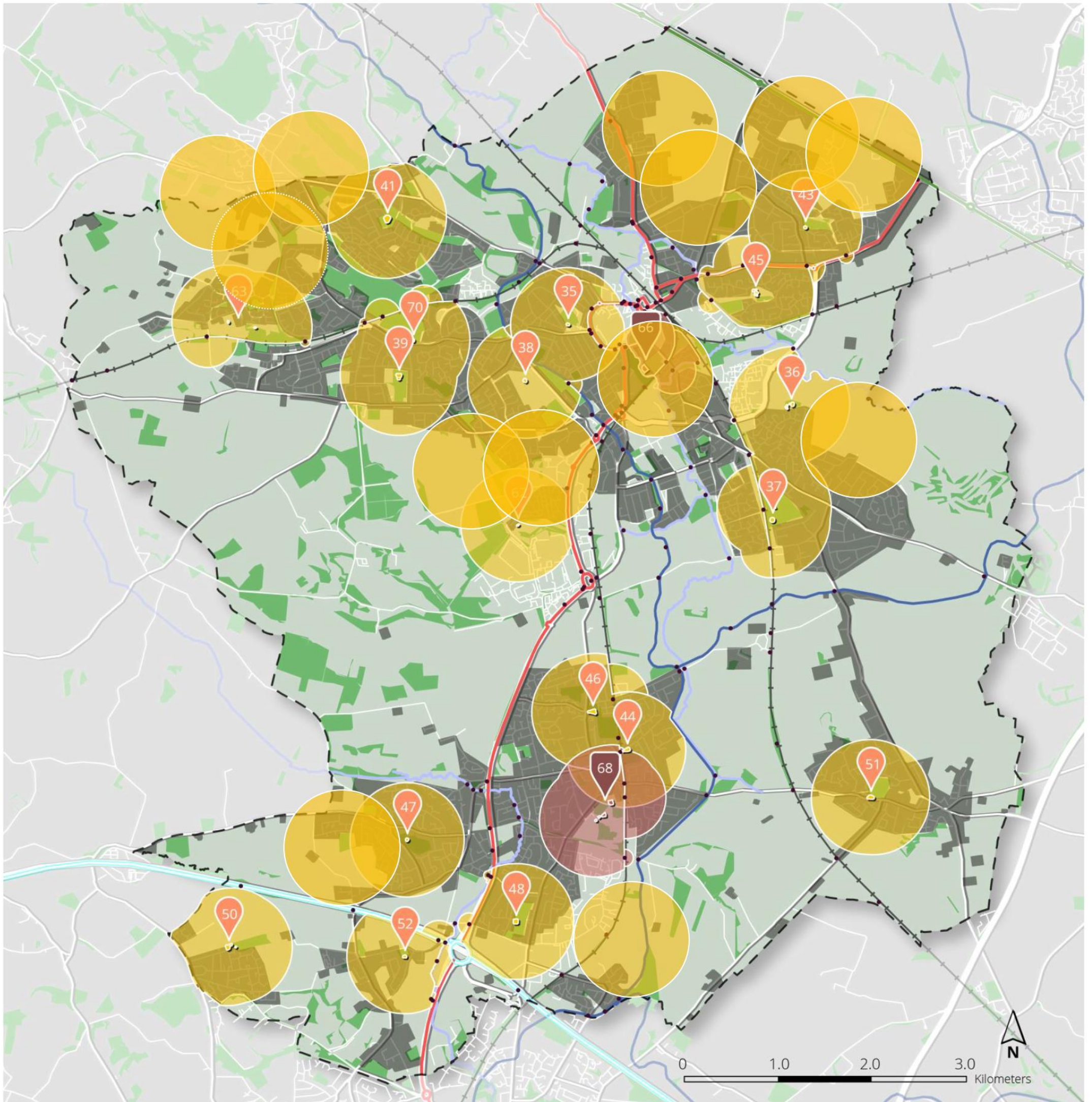
At the same time, the financial affordability of additional provision must be factored into any potential solutions.

Therefore, it is proposed to upgrade play provision at eight Local play areas to Community level as funding becomes available. Additionally, one site within a significant gap in provision will be developed to Community level within a Destination Park. These sites have adequate space for the additional facilities and necessary buffer distances from houses. Once upgraded, these sites will be reassessed as Community Park level provision in broader park and greenspace access evaluations.

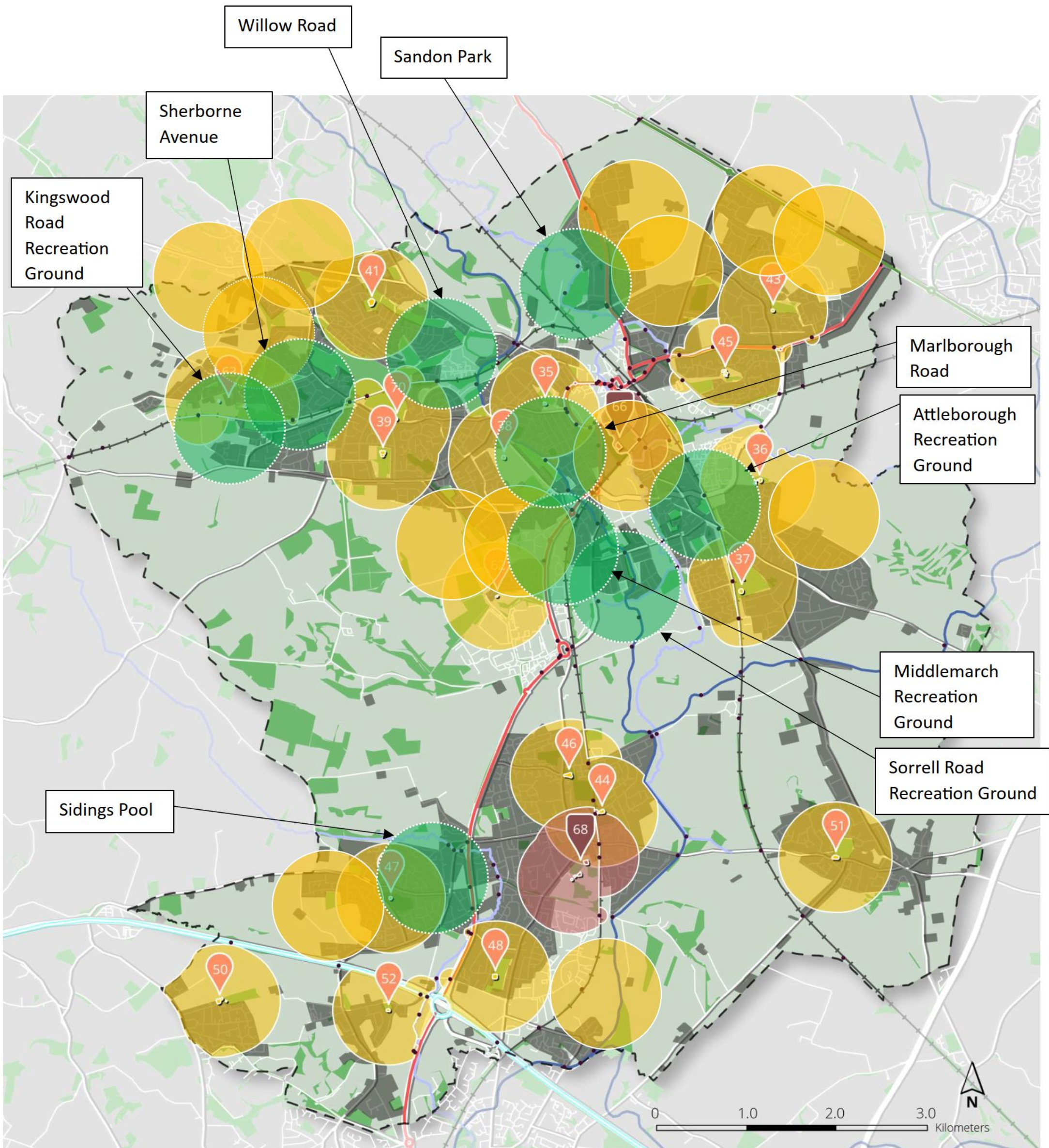
Mapping on the following two pages illustrates the before and after catchment coverage of Community Level Play Areas, showing the general increase in coverage and reduction in gaps. Although this mapping is less detailed than the JSA mapping and does not account for barriers, it adequately demonstrates the improvement in coverage. Destination level play areas are also included as they function at the Community Park level.

In terms of financing capital investment to upgrade the local facilities some opportunities already exist towards achieving this at several of the sites with potential contributions from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Big Lottery via Hill Top and Caldwell Big Local group (HTC), who have chosen to invest in play facilities in their project area and otherwise generally using developer contributions (section 106 contributions) in areas near to new housing where existing provision has been highlighted in legal agreements.

General Community Park level Play Area catchment coverage before any upgrading of Local Play areas to Community level



General Community Park level Play Area catchment coverage after upgrading of Local Play areas to Community level



Potential rationalisation of Local Play area facilities:

- a) A small number of Local play facilities can potentially be identified as surplus to needs due to their catchment already being fully enclosed within the catchment of other play facilities. These are:
- Sterling Way - which falls within the Pauls Land play area catchment
- b) If the proposed upgrades of 8 Local play areas to Community level play area provision and one new Community level provision are pursued there is the corresponding potential that then a small number of Local Play Area facilities could be declared surplus to requirements due to the extended catchment coverage resulting from other Local sites being upgraded to Community level play provision.

The Local Play area facilities that would be potentially made surplus are:

- Marston Lane play area [Nuneaton] (due to the Sorrell and Attleborough upgrades)
 - Whytell Pool (due to the Chaucer Drive upgrade)
 - Thorntons Way (due to the Kingswood Road upgrade)
 - Rannoch Drive ['Hawthorn Common'] (due to the Sherborne Avenue upgrade - but subject to Queen Elizabeth Road having younger children's equipment)
 - The Alders Play Area [Bedworth] (due to the Sidings Pool / Bluebell Drive upgrade)
- c) Much more negatively than progressing option b above - it might also be considered in the terms of economic efficiency given budgetary pressures on the Council that some rationalisation of Local Play area facilities may at some point need to be considered.

There is an argument that a Local Play Area serving fewer than 100 houses makes a minimal contribution to overall access to play areas. This is especially true considering that not all houses will have children who would use the play area, as the provision is primarily targeted at families with toddlers or young children.

Sites that might be affected include:

- Auden Close (which already only consists of a single basketball hoop)
- The Long Shoot
- The Alders Play Area [Bedworth]
- Freesland Rise / Merlin Heights (Subject to Queen Elizabeth Road including younger children's equipment provision)
- Inchford Close – but only when the Taylor Wimpey Golf Drive Community Park becomes available to the public

- Changebrook - but only once the southern Community Park provision within the Top Farm site becomes available

To adopt a policy using a 100-house cut-off for play areas, a detailed analysis of addresses and housing units would be necessary.

Closing any children's play area is likely to be sensitive. Options a and b can justify closures by showing that the affected area is still within the catchment of another existing or upgraded facility, maintaining accessibility. However, this justification does not apply to option c.

For all three cases above consideration should be made whether:

1. To close and remove play facilities as soon as a policy decision is made
2. To only close and remove a play facility once most of the equipment is at the end of its useful and safe working life

In all cases there would be significant costs associated with removal of equipment. In addition, before proceeding with closure and removal the play facilities at the catchment play area would need to be in a satisfactory condition and appropriate level of provision.

In all options (a, b, and c), closing a play area does not mean the site itself will become surplus to the authority's needs for greenspace or active travel networks. Chapter 16 outlines tests for land disposal and emphasises its irreversible nature.

Option a is logical and defensible and could be combined with b.

Option b is also defensible due to investment in upgrading facilities and ensuring alternative provisions are available before closures. It includes upgrading eight local play areas to community park level and potentially closing five local play areas.

Option c is less defensible, appearing driven by financial necessity with an arbitrary threshold, and would reduce resident access to play areas, contrary to NBBC's standards.

Addressing other significant play area provision gaps:

Area of Weddington around Anker Fields open space:

The only potential site, Anker Fields open space, has several constraints making it unsuitable to address the gap. It is not overlooked, as most housing backs onto it, and it is densely wooded in most sections. Additionally, it runs adjacent to the Nuneaton Flood Relief channel, which can carry large flows of water. These factors collectively make the site unsuitable for development.

Bedworth east of A444 corridor

Even after upgrading 8 local play areas to Community Park level, a significant gap in play provision will remain on the east side of the A444, running through much of Bedworth from north to south.

To address this gap, three main opportunities are identified:

1. Collycroft Recreation Ground:

- Positives: Large site, allowing play provision with minimal impact on nearby housing.
- Negatives: Does not extend provision to as many houses as the other locations.

2. Millais Close Open Space:

- Positives: Play provision would be near housing, and a small amount of provision could meet the minimum 30-meter standoff from house facades.
- Negatives: Compact site, limiting the extent of play provision.

3. Bedworth Slough:

- Positives: Suitable for 'Natural Play' type provision
- Negatives: Much of the site is remote from housing and lacks sufficient overlooking.

Eastern end of Marston Lane Bedworth

Consideration could be made to placing equipment within parts of the 'Wharf Meadows' site but most housing backs toward it and the proximity to the canal would require careful consideration.

York Road/Walter Scott Avenue area in Bedworth:

There are no obvious means of addressing this gap so focus should potentially be on ensuring routes into Miners Welfare Park are as attractive and easy to use as possible.

Eastern end of Bulkington and Hawkesbury:

Both these areas are served by Local Play area provision

Burbages Lane / Wheelwright Lane area:

The most logical location would be the Blackberry Lane open space, but this is not overlooked. With the new use of the site by a football club some provision could be contemplated if a pavilion is developed by the club etc but lack of overlooking for much of the week would remain a concern here.

Next Steps on Access to Play Provision:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Preparation should begin on a report detailing the potential to upgrade 8 Local Sites to Community level play provision as and when funds permit – so as to remove the majority of remaining significant gaps in access to play provision. This should note and include the option to then withdraw Local provision at a number of sites covered by the amended catchment areas of the improved sites

- Medium Term -
 - A report should consider whether to take forward any other Local Play area creation where significant gaps exist if funds were to permit this at any point

Chapter 11: Findings – Play Area Quality

What does the mapping and analysis show in terms of the quality of play area provision?

The quality of play provision was assessed in two principal ways:

- Using Play facility criteria linked to the NBBC standards in the adopted Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD (OSSPD)
- Using the Play England Play Quality Assessment Tool

Play facility criteria assessment:

The play facility criteria assessment reviewed whether the play facilities and equipment types and quantities specified by NBBC (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) for various levels of play provision—Destination, Community, and Local—were present. The facilities were evaluated against three levels of provision: basic, mid-level, and high-level, with the elevated level forming the standard used in the.

The criteria per level of play provision type were set as follows:

	Local Play Area – basic minimum	Local Play Area – mid level of adequacy	Local Play Area – higher level of adequacy	Community Play Area – basic minimum	Community Play Area – mid level of adequacy	Community Play Area – higher level of adequacy	Destination Play Area – basic minimum	Destination Play Area – mid level of adequacy	Destination Play Area – higher level of adequacy
Criteria									
2–5-year-old oriented equipment	1 item	2 items	4 items	2 items	3 items	5 items	2 items	4 items	6 items
6–12-year-old oriented equipment	3 items	4 items	5 items	4 items	5 items	7 items	4 items	6 items	8 items
Ball court				Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
Items of physical play equipment targeting teenagers						2 items		2 items	3 items
'Active Recreation' items			2 items		1 item	1 item		2 items	2 items
Gathering point item for teenagers						Required			
Skatepark or Pumptrack (scale of facility increases at distinct levels)						Required		Required	Required
Inclusive Play Items		1 item	1 item		2 items			1 item	1 item
Toddler and Junior Play area set in 'Play landscape'		Required	Required			Required			
Signage indicating ownership and contact details to report issues	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required

The 'Active Recreation' sites that are mentioned in the mapping are current play area facilities, but which currently only consist of 'active recreation' type equipment such as basketball hoops/a green gym or a ballcourt etc but without accompanying general play provision for toddlers and younger children - which is a usually expected element of provision at all play facility types.

The three maps below show the performance of play areas against the criteria. The maps show:

- Sites failing to meet even the minimum criteria
- Sites meeting the minimum criteria but not the mid-level criteria
- Sites meeting the mid-level criteria but not the higher-level criteria

No map is provided for sites meeting the high-level criteria as tellingly none of our play area sites could reach that level:

Sites not meeting minimum standard for play and active recreation equipment provision per type of Park / Greenspace

LOCAL PLAY

- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 13 - Inchford Close
- 14 - Jelson - Longshoot
- 15 - Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 16 - Chaucer Drive
- 20 - Churchfields
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 26 - Sidings Pool
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road

COMMUNITY PLAY

- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 41 - The Dingle

- 43 - Buttermere
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 53 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 55 - Snow Hill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

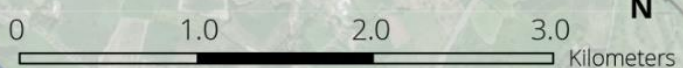
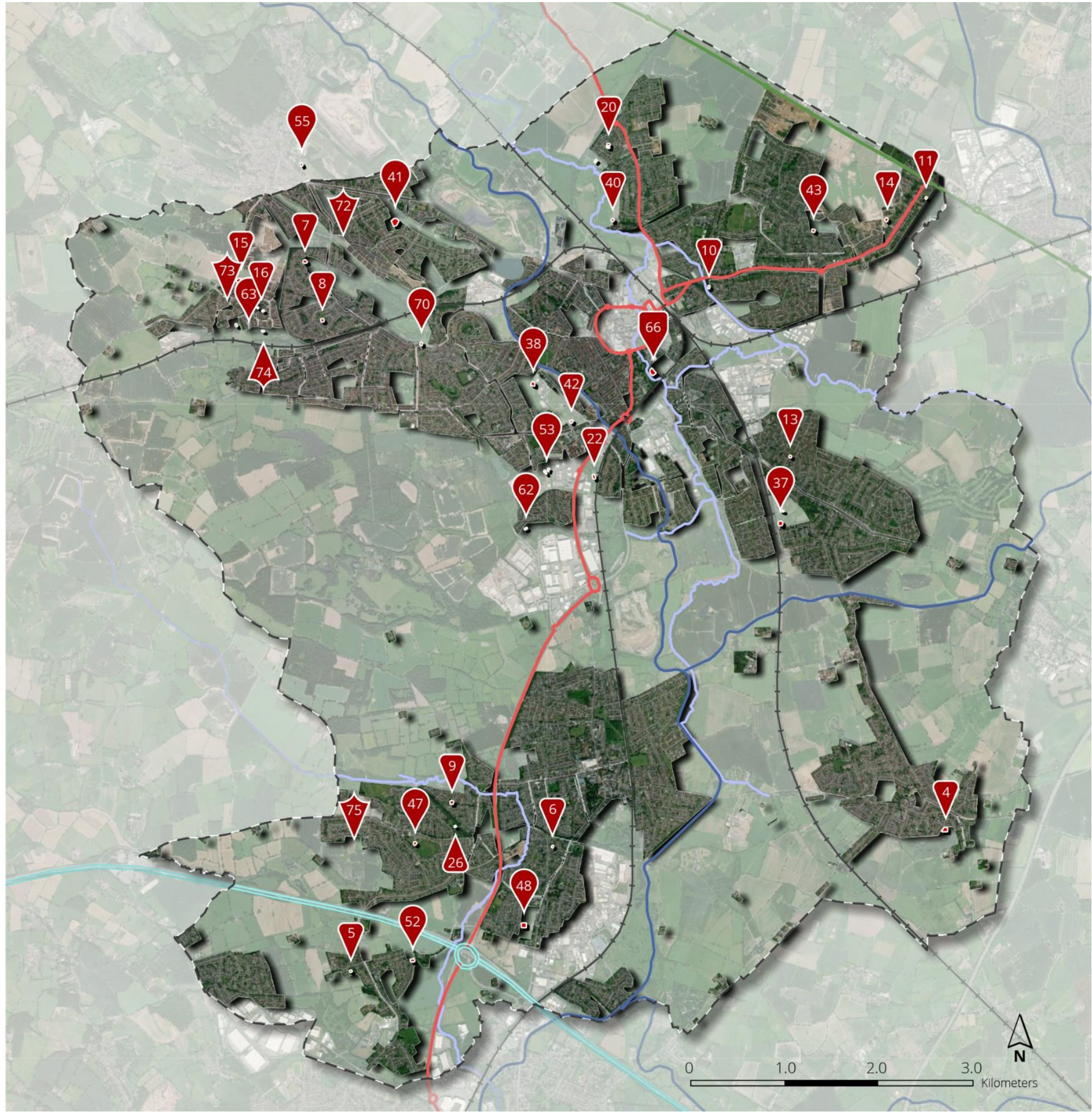
- 66 - Riversley Park

ACTIVE RECREATION PLAY

- 72 - Queen Elizabeth Road-Whittleford Park
- 73 - Auden Close
- 74 - Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 75 - Anderton Road Recreation Ground

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
- Borough Boundary
- Railway
- A Road
- Trunk Road
- Motorway
- Canal
- River, Channel and Brook
- Local Play
- Community Play
- Destination Play
- Active Recreation



Sites meeting minimum standard for play and active recreation equipment provision per type of Park / Greenspace but not meeting mid-standard

LOCAL PLAY

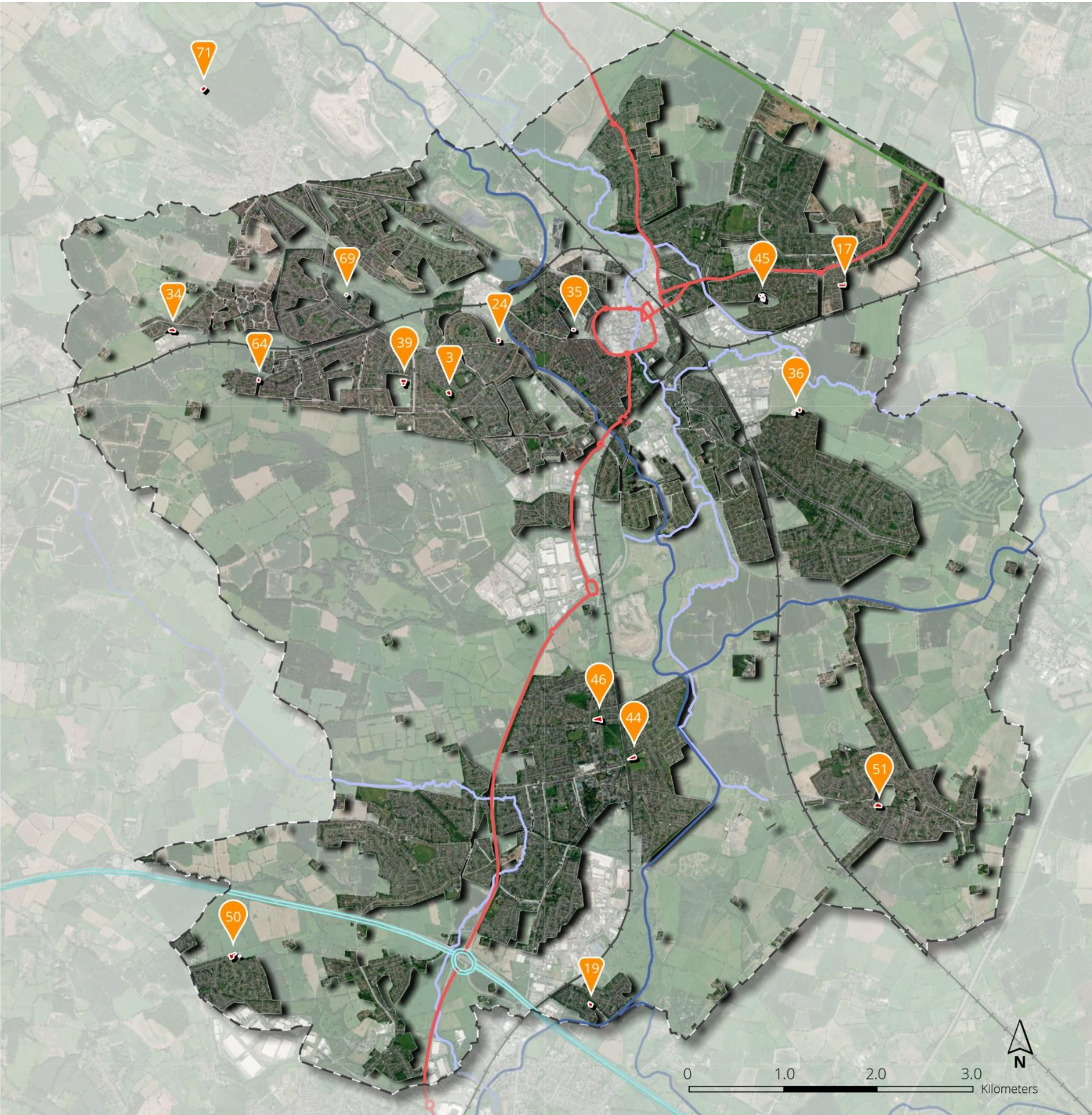
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 17 - Barrats/David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 34 - Orford Rise
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 69 - Rannoch Drive
- 71 - Hartshill Hayes Country Park

COMMUNITY PLAY

- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground

KEY

-  Residential Built-up Area
-  Borough Boundary
-  Railway
-  A Road
-  Trunk Road
-  Motorway
-  Canal
-  River, Channel and Brook
-  Local Play
-  Community Play
-  Destination Play



Sites meeting mid but not full Open Space SPD standard for play and active recreation equipment provision per type of Park / Greenspace

LOCAL PLAY

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 12 - Coronation Walk
- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 25 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area

COMMUNITY PLAY

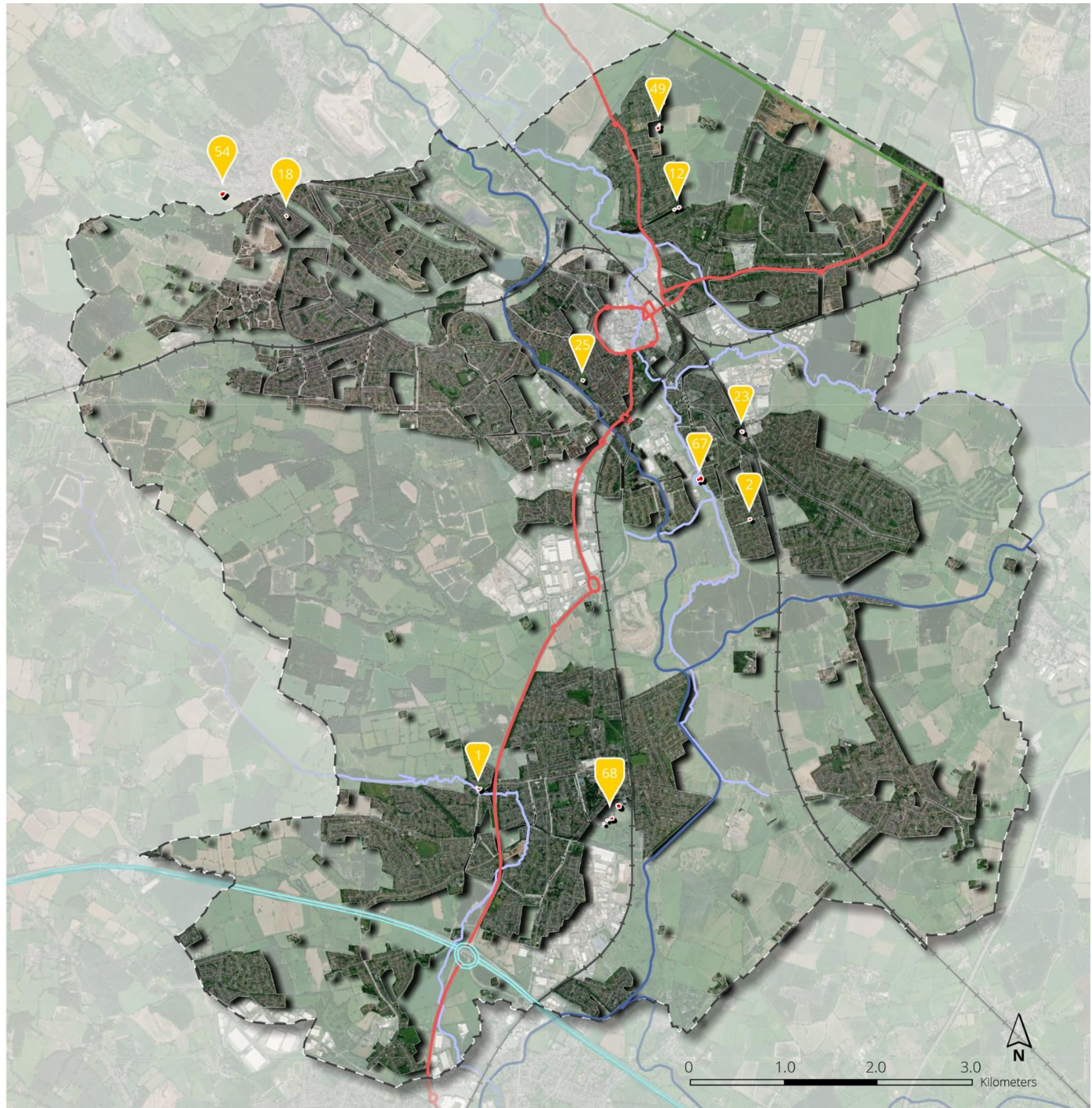
- 49 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 54 - Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground

DESTINATION PLAY

- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|------------------|
|  | Residential Built-up Area |  | Local Play |
|  | Borough Boundary |  | Community Play |
|  | Railway |  | Destination Play |
|  | A Road | | |
|  | Trunk Road | | |
|  | Motorway | | |
|  | Canal | | |
|  | River, Channel and Brook | | |



Analysis:

Many sites failed to meet even the basic facility criteria, with only a few meeting mid-level criteria and even fewer meeting the full criteria. Play area renewals need to include not just life-expired equipment but also additional equipment suited to the facility type. Common issues included:

- Insufficient provision for toddlers and younger children
- Inadequate facilities for teenagers
- Lack of equipment for both able-bodied and less able-bodied children
- Shortage of fitness-oriented 'active recreation' equipment
- Lack of proper signage

Riversley Park notably failed to meet minimum criteria due to the absence of teenage-oriented facilities such as a ballcourt or skatepark. Miners' Welfare Park performed better but faced similar issues after removing an old skatepark, though a replacement is planned. A non-NBBC provision at Bretts Hall site in North Warwickshire was one of the better-performing community-level sites.

Some new play areas created through the Planning process also underperformed, highlighting the need for Planning Officers' support to ensure new developments meet the criteria in the Council's OSSPD.

Play England Play Quality Assessment:

The Play England tool uses multiple assessment criteria to determine an overall level of play quality. It considers the scale of the play area being assessed.

The main criteria being assessed include:

- Suitability of location
 - Oversight / overlooking
 - Level of use
 - Ease of getting to the site
 - Personal Safety/ Security/Lighting
 - Access with impairments, buggies, and pushchairs
 - Character of site and relationship / integration with landscape

- Play Value
 - Enticing to play
 - Opportunities for those with disabilities to play
 - Addresses needs of different age groups
 - Equipment and features encourage different forms of movement
 - Stretches the imagination through design features
 - Opportunity for ball games
 - Interactive aspects that allow the play environment to be changed
 - Interactive aspects with nature / natural materials and features
 - Places for children and young people to sit
 - Added play value through landscape

- Care and Maintenance
 - Quality of Maintenance
 - Risk assessment and Inspection
 - Seating and Bins – provision and upkeep
 - Dog Free Zones

The map below shows the play facilities with poor and poor scoring when audited against the Play England play quality criteria.

Play England scoring - Play sites with poor and very poor scoring

LOCAL PLAY

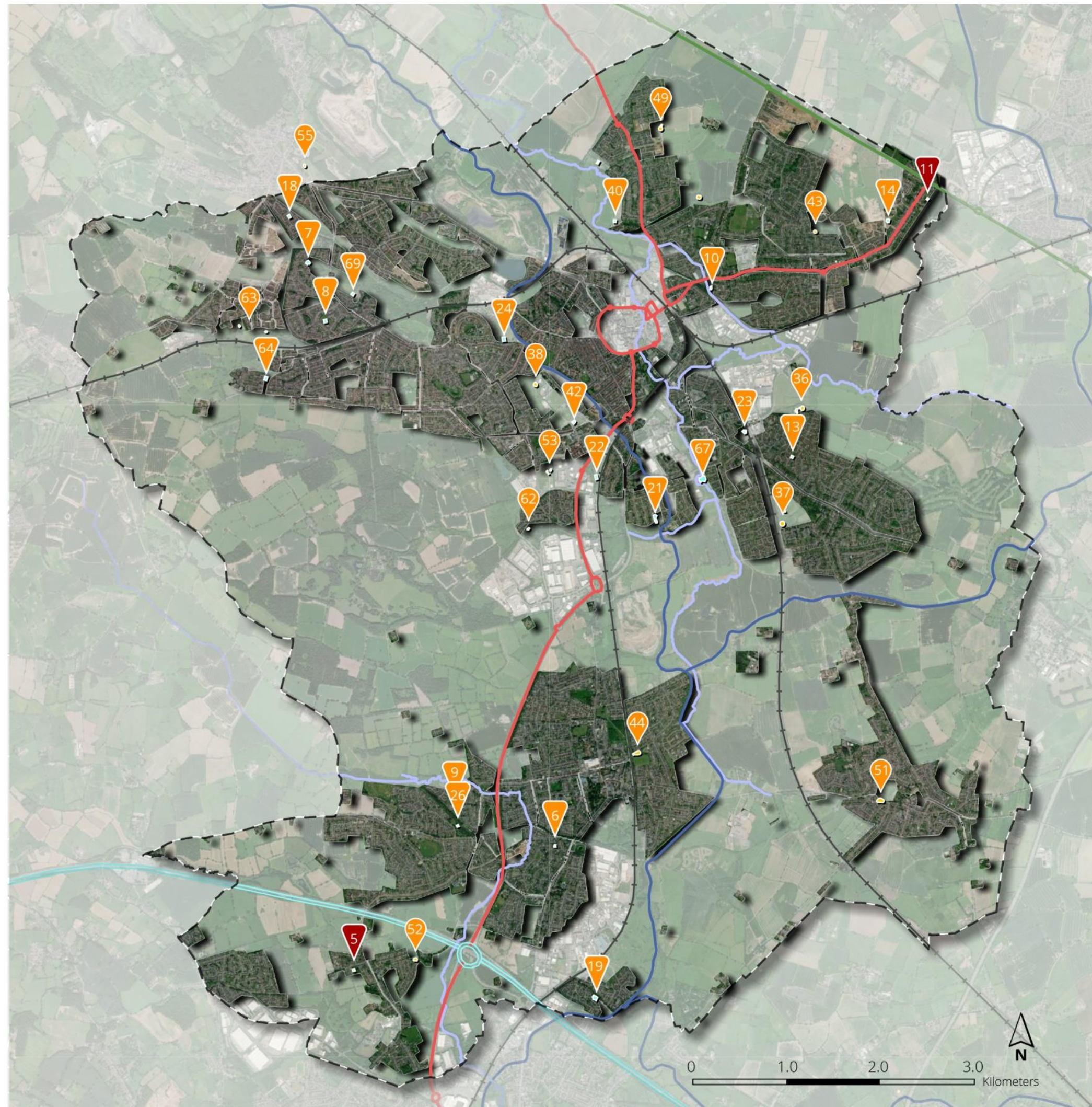
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 13 - Inchford Close
- 14 - Jelson - Longshoot
- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way
- 21 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 26 - Sidings Pool
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area
- 69 - Rannoch Drive

COMMUNITY PLAY

- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 49 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 53 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 55 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool

KEY

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Residential Built-up Area |  Local Play |
|  Borough Boundary |  Community Play |
|  Railway |  Poor |
|  A Road |  Very Poor |
|  Trunk Road | |
|  Motorway | |
|  Canal | |
|  River, Channel and Brook | |



Analysis:

Many sites performed poorly when assessed with the Play England play quality assessment tool. Some sites, however, did well, and their good practices should be used as learning examples.

Poor performance often resulted from the presence or absence of specific equipment, but the Play England tool also considers other factors that enhance or reduce play value, beyond just equipment.

Key points include:

- Play Landscape: High-performing sites offer stimulating play landscapes and design details, which add play value and encourage repeat visits.
- Safety Perceptions: The assessment looks at the location and setting of play areas and their impact on children's and parents' safety perceptions. This is discussed further in the strategy section on Personal Safety.
- Accessibility for Disabilities: Important for both site access and equipment design, including sensory elements like noise, movement, and visual stimuli.
- Maintenance: Day-to-day upkeep and available budgets for repairs and equipment replacement are crucial for maintaining play areas.

Overall, improving play facilities requires addressing equipment needs, enhancing play landscapes, ensuring safety, accommodating disabilities, and maintaining the areas well.

To improve the quality of play facilities over time, several key strategies should be implemented:

Design Quality:

- Develop a design checklist covering Play England good practice and facility criteria per play facility type.
- Incorporate these design qualities into play area renewals and investments as financial resources permit.
- Capital investments should always be checked against the design checklist to inform overall design and equipment selection.

Personal Safety:

- Focus on improving both actual and perceived personal safety during play area renewal work.
- Consider alternative locations for play areas if current locations pose safety concerns.
- Enhance oversight through changes in the surrounding greenspace, such as hedgerow management.

- Provide multiple access routes for increased confidence in leaving the play area if needed.

Access for All:

- Ensure good surface, step-free access routes to and from play areas.
- Design equipment to accommodate the needs of those with disabilities without being exclusive.
- Include sensory aspects and stimuli in design considerations.

Maintenance and Upkeep:

- Prioritise day-to-day upkeep activities like litter picking, graffiti removal, and grounds maintenance.
- Establish a proactive approach to refurbishment and equipment replacement based on asset management records and forward planning.
- Create sinking funds to set aside sums for future facility renewals, following successful models like those for skateparks.
- Require the creation of sinking funds for new facilities or full refurbishments to ensure ongoing maintenance and replacement needs are met.

Next Steps on Quality of Play Area provision:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term – through utilising the Open Space SPD ensure new developments always bring forward the appropriate level of provision to avoid any new shortfalls in provision being created by development

Utilise design guidance checklists to maximise play value outcomes as well as personal safety outcomes of capital investments and review straightforward opportunities to address personal safety including removal of obscuring boundary features etc

Include a specific review of actions to maximise the accessibility of play areas for those with disabilities / impairments in all project briefs and business cases

Cease to bring forward any play area creation / renewal capital project business cases that do not establish a corresponding sinking fund

Develop a rolling two year forward capital programme that uses audit data to help prioritise sites for investment alongside other constraints such as specified site 106 sums

- Medium Term - Address poor play area quality outcomes over time as funds permit
- utilising audit data to prioritise capital investments into worst performing sites as well as utilising relevant 106 sums and grant-aid opportunities

Chapter 12: Findings – Green Network

Green Network:

To maximise greenspace provision in the Borough, it is important to view it as a network across the entire area, not just as individual sites, or park types.

Best practices in ecology, landscape, and active travel emphasize creating networks that connect larger sites, facilitating movement and interconnectivity for both people and wildlife. These networks can align as multifunctional green corridors, offering cycle paths, walkways, and interconnected wildlife habitats within the same greenspace.

Nuneaton and Bedworth's industrial past has left many such connections from old railway routes and industrial sites repurposed as open spaces. The Council's forward-thinking approach in the 1980s led to acquiring much of this land, resulting in a genuinely interconnected greenspace resource. This interconnectedness is now a standard national policy, but few councils have the resources and opportunities that NBBC has.

NBBC can capitalise on this by developing policies to extend and further connect this network as new developments arise and by fully signing the network of cycle paths and walkways to raise awareness of the travel and recreation opportunities. Close partnership with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) will enhance this, particularly through WCC's strategic cycle routes network, including widening footpaths and adopting cycle paths.

A Green Network plan will be created to identify existing routes, gaps, and opportunities. This plan will combine WCC's Cycling and Walking infrastructure plan with our recreational greenspace mapping.

NBBC will install branded fingerpost signs at network entrances to raise public awareness of quick cycling and walking times to local services, town centres, schools, and employment areas, encouraging active travel and lifestyles. The signage will highlight travel times in minutes and distances.

The network will be branded as the 'Green Network' or 'Green Net,' potentially abbreviated as 'GN.' Funding for this signage will continue to be secured through section 106 sums.

Next Steps on Green Network:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term –

Medium Term - develop a Green Network map including continuing liaison with Warwickshire County Council in regard to Strategic cycle network development to maximise co-ordination of effort

Also establish a design style and brand for green network signage and begin installation of 106 funded green network signage

Chapter 13: How we Improve

Driving up the overall Quality of Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces

Given the high variability in the quality of NBBC's recreational parks, play areas and greenspaces - and low-quality scores when audited against various criteria, coupled with limited financial and staff resources - then driving up quality over time will need to be a key focus of work by the Parks and Greenspace team.

Evidence based decision making:

With limited staff and financial resources, it is crucial to make the most effective investment choices to maximise outcomes and work efficiently.

Jon Sheaff Associates' Technical work has provided detailed audit information and accurate geographical data for park and play area locations. This data enables evidence-based and logical decision-making about investment priorities.

By combining this data, we can identify the poorest-performing sites based on various quality factors and target investments accordingly. This approach helps pinpoint where capital investments will have the greatest positive impact geographically. Further details are in the *'forward capital programme and prioritisation'* section of this Strategy.

Data:

To make informed decisions about the use of limited resources to improve parks and greenspaces, it is crucial to have good quality data on these sites and their infrastructure.

While the strategy work has improved data quality in some areas, further improvements are needed in the following:

- Grounds Maintenance GIS (Geographic Information System) plans and associated bills of quantity
- Physical infrastructure assets (bridges, boundary features, paths, site furniture like bins and benches)
- Tree stock

Accurate and updated data on these assets is urgent for preparing the next bills of quantity for the ground's maintenance contract. Capturing this data is labour-intensive and would take years if done by existing staff. Therefore, using external resources is necessary to speed up the process. Tree data capture, requiring specialist surveyors and software, should be procured separately as outlined in the Tree Strategy.

To be efficient, we should combine the data capture for grounds features and other infrastructure assets during single site visits. Ideally, all data should be held in a software system with asset inspection and management functions and GIS mapping. If a suitable software package is unavailable, we may use the corporate GIS package 'GGP' and the existing 'Playsafe' play inspection asset software.

The Parks and Greenspace Team also lacks comprehensive data on:

- Park usage
- Views of park users and non-users

We need to commit to regularly capturing this data, as part of a broader survey of residents' views. However, capturing actual park usage numbers is challenging and labour intensive. While technology using anonymised mobile phone geolocation data shows potential, it is not yet reliable enough.

Currently, limited data is captured for specific facilities, such as the pressure pad counter for the Mountain Bike Trails at Miners Welfare Park. Until better local data is available, we can extrapolate national park usage data to estimate local usage. This method has been used to estimate 3,100,000 visits per annum for the recreational benefits in the Natural Capital benefit valuations.

Process Review:

The Parks and Greenspace team can enhance their work by reviewing and improving business processes and addressing gaps. During strategy discussions, several areas for process improvement were identified:

Grounds Contract Amendments:

There is no clear procedure for modifying the Grounds Maintenance Contract. A set template and process are needed for all amendments, whether initiated internally by the Parks and Greenspace team or the Housing Service, or externally by Warwickshire County Council Highways. The process should include amendments to bills of quantity, GIS mapping, instructions to the contractor, and budget holder authorizations.

Document Management Systems:

Current filing systems are disorganized, with a classic Windows 'tree' folder system that has become cluttered over time. A comprehensive overhaul is needed to reset data retention. While 'Content Manager' software is not user-friendly, One Drive is better but limited to individual use. A recent GIS mapping software demo highlighted the potential for integrating document management with GIS, making records accessible spatially and traditionally. This approach would enhance data access for all team members and reduce knowledge loss when staff leave.

Business Process Support:

For the above examples and other process reviews, it may be beneficial to involve Business Improvement and Process colleagues.

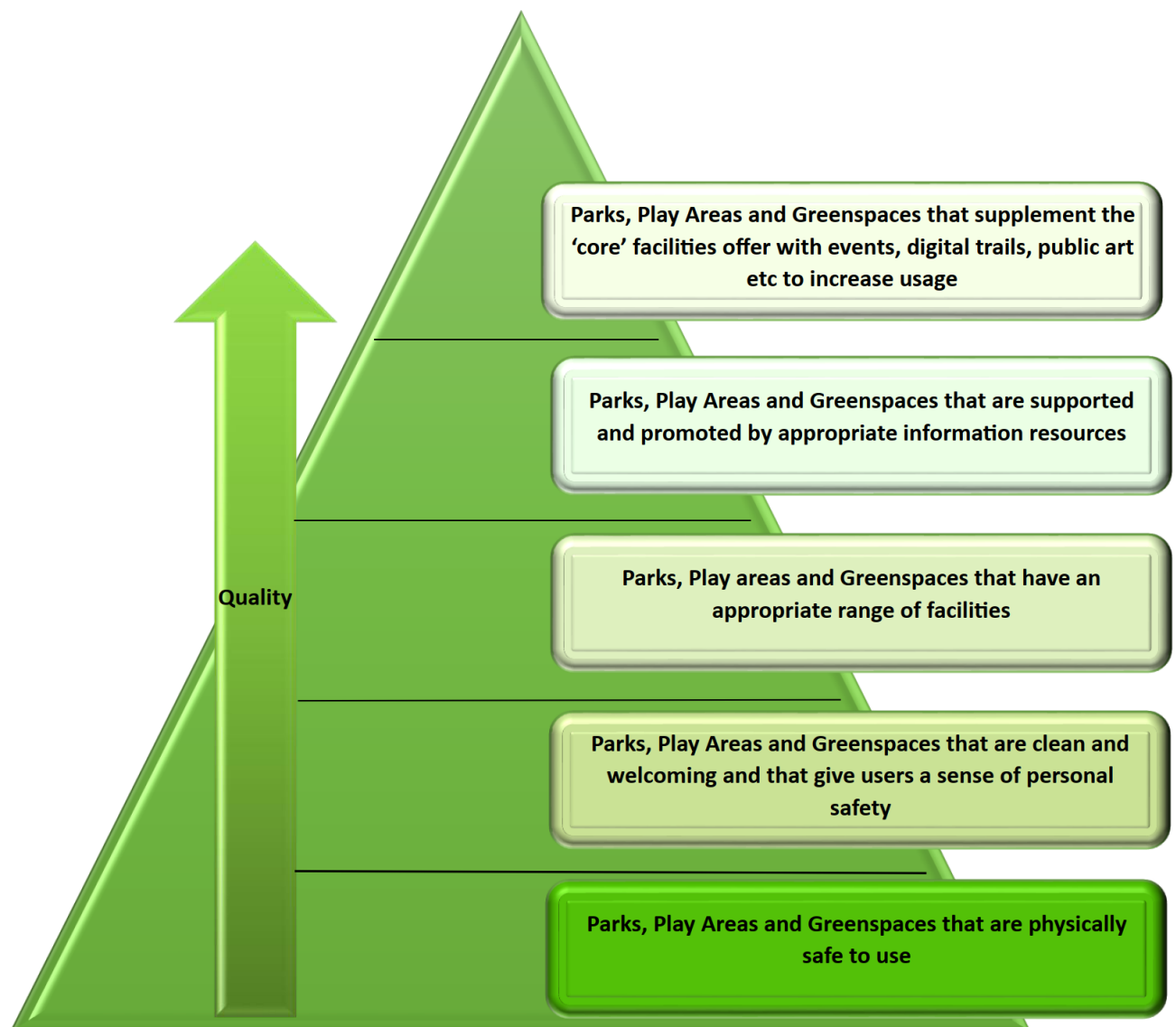
By addressing these areas, the team can work more efficiently and effectively.

Next Steps on Evidence Based Decision Making, Data, Process Review:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them):

- Short Term
 - Business cases, investment decisions and prioritisation are all now able to be evidence led and to be better informed by drawing on the Strategy audit data
 - Undertake annual reviews of internal processes to handle public enquiries and contacts to ensure timely and accurate responses
 - Define and put in place clear Ground Contract Amendment business process and supporting documentation including revision of arrangements within the team, with Housing, with WCC highways and with the ground's contractor
 - Medium Term -
 - Undertake work to update and data cleanse Grounds Maintenance GIS data and corresponding Bills of Quantity to increase accuracy
 - Undertake work to accurately record all Parks and Greenspace site infrastructure assets
 - Undertake work to capture Tree stock data (covered in greater detail in the separate Parks and Greenspaces Tree Strategy)
 - Comprehensively overhaul record / file management systems - potentially with new spatial basis linked to corporate GIS replacement
- Other actions to undertake in years 5-10, 10 – 15 or beyond the life of the strategy - (An annual review will be undertaken of whether it is appropriate to include any such additional actions within the Parks and Countryside Team annual business plan as capacity exists to include them):**
- Long Term - Improve data available on park usage and also regularly capture views of residents as both park users and non-users about Park and Greenspace provision

These factors can be seen as a pyramid of quality building blocks:



All the blocks can be worked on at the same time - but with inevitable limitations on staff resources and financial resources it is important that the lower blocks are sufficiently addressed and given attention to act as the underpinning foundation for further quality enhancements in the higher blocks. It will undermine activities in higher blocks if failings in the lower blocks anyway deter existing site users and potential users.

Later on, in the life of this strategy and in future Parks and Greenspace strategies the higher blocks should begin to be able to receive increasingly greater degrees of time and investment of effort.

Chapter 14: Driving up Quality – Block 1

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces that are physically safe to use:

Risk management systems:

The primary function of the Parks and Greenspace service is to ensure that parks, play facilities, and greenspaces are safe for public use. This not only encourages repeat visits and supports corporate health and wellbeing objectives but also addresses legal, health and safety, risk management, insurance, and reputational concerns.

While the service already has inspection regimes and policies for play areas, water safety, and bridge conditions, a comprehensive review of all risk control processes and inspection regimes should be conducted within the first five years of the Strategy period to ensure they remain effective and cover all foreseeable risks.

This wider risk control process review will need to be carried out in partnership with the Health and Safety team and have the approval of Health and Safety Corporate Group (HASCOG)

Infrastructure Repair Works:

Arrangements for repair work by contractors are crucial to ensure timely repairs, especially for safety concerns affecting site users and neighbours. Most play equipment repairs are handled by an in-house team of two play fitters, who also perform regular inspections. This allows for rapid repairs and quick resolution of safety hazards, aided by their stock of common spare parts.

However, the current team is working at full capacity. With new play areas expected to be adopted by NBBC, funded by developer contributions, the team will be over capacity. Without extra resources, NBBC will not be able to maintain adequate safety inspections or timely repairs and emergency responses.

For general park infrastructure repairs, the recent introduction of a procurement framework with multiple contractors and pre-agreed rates should improve turnaround times. This framework should be reviewed within 18 months to assess performance and within the first five years of the strategy period to ensure its effectiveness.

Historically, most repairs have been reactive. However, proper inspection regimes should enable more proactive planning and maintenance. Safety-critical infrastructure, like bridges and retaining walls, should not be left until they need reactive repairs.

Tree Stock Management

The management of NBBC's Parks and Greenspace tree stock is also important in terms of site user etc safety but this aspect is dealt with in more detail within the specific Parks and Greenspace Tree Strategy that is being brought forward at the same time as this Parks and Greenspace Strategy.

Next Steps on Parks, Play Areas and Greenspaces that are physically safe to use:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Data capture of assets – the upcoming retendering of the ground's maintenance contract presents a need to thoroughly update the bills of quantity including a complete overhaul of the underpinning measurements and associated GIS polygons. This is likely to need the use of an external data capture resource, and it would be particularly financially and time efficient to at the same time capture a full set of infrastructure and asset records for all other site assets.

This would allow a step change in the management of assets by the Parks and Greenspace team by accelerating an infrastructure asset and data capture process that would otherwise take the team many years if undertaken alongside other work roles and duties

Next Steps on Parks, Play Areas and Greenspaces that are physically safe to use:

- Medium Term -
 - Undertake a review of all risk control processes, systems and inspection regimes covering all Park and Greenspace Infrastructure - not just the existing systems for Play Areas, Water Safety and Bridges. T
 - Review Play fitter capacity as new play areas become adopted by the Council and new capital investments in play facilities are made
 - Review performance of Parks Infrastructure Framework fitness for purpose after initial period of use including the 'active monitoring' of contracts in framework in similar way to capital works and the grounds contract
 - create standard inspection form and targeted number of active monitoring inspections including checks that dynamic assessments are actively undertaken by framework contractors - not just a reliance on generic risk assessments and controls that will have been submitted when tendering
 - Capture data on tree stock (likely through external bought-in capacity given existing duties of Tree Officer). This is addressed in more depth in the separate Parks and Greenspaces Tree Strategy.

Chapter 15: Driving up Quality – Block 2

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces that are well maintained, clean and welcoming and that give users a sense of personal safety (including Customer Enquiries)

Improving the quality and user experience of parks and greenspaces requires considerable time and financial resources from the Parks and Greenspace Service. Much of their work involves maintaining the status quo, which often goes unrecognized but is crucial for managing extensive public areas and facilities.

These maintenance tasks are essential for residents' daily experiences and form the core activities of the team. While new capital investments often receive more attention, grounds and infrastructure maintenance are equally, if not more, important.

Residents' perceptions of parks and greenspaces depend on how well these areas are maintained. Clean, well-kept spaces with prompt repairs are key to positive public views of NBBC's provision.

The high visibility of maintenance work also impacts the public perception of NBBC, not just the Parks and Greenspace Service. Customer enquiries, which often concern grounds maintenance and non-safety critical infrastructure, highlight the importance of this work.

Grounds Maintenance

Grounds Maintenance and Perception:

Grounds maintenance significantly impacts how people perceive the quality and safety of parks and greenspaces. Key maintenance areas include:

- Grass length (except in wildflower areas)
- Weed growth (especially in formal settings)
- Litter accumulation
- Overhanging or intimidating vegetation
- Graffiti
- Dirty benches and signs
- Un-swept hard surfaces
- Vegetation blocking key views

Poor maintenance in these areas can make a site feel neglected and unsafe, affecting public perception.

Improving Grounds Maintenance involves two key aspects:

1. Contract Specification and Bills of Quantity:

- Every five years (unless the contract allows for extension periods), the grounds maintenance contract is tendered. This is a chance to apply lessons learned to improve future contracts.
- Most maintenance tasks are cyclical, and increasing their frequency can improve quality but also increase costs.
- Reviewing and improving contract specifications and bills of quantity can enhance performance without significant cost increases.
- Accurate data is essential for effective maintenance, requiring updated GIS mapping and site audits.
- Adequate preparation time and outsourcing some tasks are needed for contract tendering.
- Political and senior management input is crucial for decisions on maintenance frequency and costs.

2. Driving Quality During the Contract Period:

- The focus should be on delivering the contracted work as specified.
- Mechanisms to monitor and enforce contract performance include:
 - Regular contract meetings
 - Oversight of operations and public enquiries through software
 - Annual performance reports and scrutiny panel reporting
 - Performance indicators and reporting
 - Rectification and penalty mechanisms

To ensure quality, the contract must be properly priced, avoiding under-pricing that could lead to compromised performance. Effective use of enforcement mechanisms ensures contractors meet their obligations and deliver quality maintenance.

Other means of improving ground contract performance and function:

Specialist operations away from horticultural management:

Underperformance by the grounds contractor has been noted in operations that significantly affect maintenance quality perception, such as cleansing site furniture, sweeping, and painting. To address this, sourcing certain specialist operations from contractors specializing in these areas is proposed. Sweeping and graffiti removal could potentially be contracted from the in-house waste management team, while painting and decorating for site furniture and infrastructure items could be contracted from small local firms specialising in such work.

Shrub beds

Extensive shrub beds contribute to a substantial number of maintenance complaints and are a major cost element in the ground's maintenance contract. Complaints often stem from excessive growth and missed maintenance operations, which can reduce park users' sense of personal safety due to blind spots and reduced visibility.

To address this, a full review of the value of each shrub bed is proposed, considering removal over time for beds that are problematic or have little functional purpose. In the future, the use of shrub beds in new open spaces and park landscape schemes should be carefully examined, although few such plantings are currently accepted in landscape schemes for new developments.

Pro-active 'comms' on ground maintenance:

Continuing and further developing the pro-active seasonally driven information videos and publicity pre-empting seasonally based enquiries from residents is recommended. In effect an annual month by month ground maintenance 'comms' strategy and plan can be developed.

Corporate events diary:

It is important that a single shared corporate events diary accessible to all Council teams is put in place so that grounds and other site-based operations by contractors can avoid clashes with events and in some cases be timed beneficially ahead of events.

Next Steps on Grounds Maintenance:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Review whether to extend the ground contract within the current 5+2+2+1 contract with Glendale at each review point taking performance and financial implications into account
 - Review whether the next contract should be for a full 10 years to give financial certainty and continuity both to the Council and the appointed grounds firm as this should encourage long term commitment and investment in machinery etc
 - Consider removing specialist operations such as sweeping, decorating, cleansing etc and placing with specialist contractors to ensure works are undertaken and to a good standard due to their visual prominence impacting the public perception of standards of maintenance
 - Fully review and overhaul contract Specification, GIS Data and Bills of Quantity to increase data accuracy and ensure specification targets performance in aspects that have the greatest public sensitivity and lead to largest volumes of grounds maintenance enquiries

Next Steps on Grounds Maintenance continued:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -

- Determine targeted frequencies for any new or amended contract with full political steer linked to anticipated market value of new / amended contract and with full understanding that any reductions in cost will necessitate visible reductions in service frequency and performance.
- Brief politicians on consultant estimated existing and growing gap between value of contract and actual value that would be needed to fully deliver the contract
- Additionally in current inflationary financial context there needs to also be political awareness that the grounds contract budget cost is likely to have to increase when retendered without any corresponding increase in outputs.
- Review mechanisms in contract to monitor, report on and where necessary enforce in terms of performance
- Set grounds contract tender evaluation criteria particularly carefully to specifically ensure the avoidance of accepting an underpriced, under-resourced contract where the stated specification cannot be met with the resources the contract value allows to be deployed

- Medium Term -

Operate any contract (where the awarded contract value allows adequately for the necessary resources to be fully deployed) with full enforcement of contractual requirements from the outset of the contract utilising all available mechanisms in the contract to achieve delivery of the specified works

Review the value and function of all shrub beds and consider financing removal of problematic shrub beds and those with limited public value and function

Seek establishment of shared corporate events diary to allow grounds operations and other operations to be co-ordinated with events

Further develop pro-active publicity with annual grounds 'comms' strategy

Enforcement matters – dog fouling, littering etc

NBBC are responsible for managing and maintaining large and diverse public spaces across the Borough. These include parks and recreational open spaces, as well as large areas of open water. It is important that the Council ensures these spaces are clean and safe so they can be enjoyed by everyone.

While the Council takes steps to try and support the right behaviours, enabling visitors to dispose of litter and dog waste responsibly through the use of waste bins, some residents still chose to not use them or even pick up their dogs waste. To hold those who fail to act responsibly to account, the Council is able to use its enforcement powers. These powers range from the issuing of fixed penalty notices through to Community Protection Notices.

The Council also put in place a Dog Control Public Space Protection Order under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The Order requires owners to :

- Clear up when a dog had fouled
- Keep dogs on a lead in some areas
- Keep dogs out of some areas (such as play areas)
- Put dogs on a lead when asked to do so

The penalty in relation to any offence issued through the Dog Control Public Space Order is a fixed penalty notice in the sum of £100.

In addition to the use of Dog Control Public Space Order the Council is also considering what steps it can take to ensure safety around and within the open water it is responsible for. Proposals around this, as well as strengthening the Council's enforcement team are currently being explored to as to improve the experience of visitors.

Infrastructure Maintenance in relation to personal safety

The general maintenance of park infrastructure is crucial not only for physical safety but also for public perception of NBBC parks and greenspaces.

Whilst inspection, maintenance, repair, and replacement of park infrastructure is key to actual physical public safety - as in Quality Building Block 1 in Chapter 14 – it is also key to public perceptions of the overall quality of NBBC parks, play areas and greenspaces and as a result the perception of personal safety.

Poorly maintained facilities and delayed repairs send negative signals to residents, affecting their sense of personal safety and their willingness to visit parks again. Maintenance tasks like regular painting of park furniture and graffiti removal influence how well the public perceives a park's care and management.

Prompt repairs and high visual standards are essential to enhance public confidence in park safety and encourage repeat visits. While improvements can be made through measures like improved repair times and specialist contractors, the overall aesthetic presentation of infrastructure should remain a priority alongside repair turnaround times.

Personal safety:

After physical safety in quality building block 1 - the other aspect of safety which is far less directly able to be controlled or ensured by the authority is park users' personal safety whilst utilising parks and greenspaces.

The Parks and Greenspace team can enhance safety by fostering effective relationships with the Council's Community Safety team and the Police Neighbourhood teams. Practical actions like introducing lighting and CCTV coverage, and placing motorbike access deterrents, can be taken if funds permit. However, these interventions must be carefully balanced, considering factors like ecological concerns and potential overall deterrence of park use.

Public consultations often highlight concerns about personal safety, which should be consistently considered in day-to-day actions and site development plans. Factors affecting safety include visual detractors like graffiti and litter, as well as narrow pathways and lack of visibility. Various teams within the Parks and Greenspace service contribute to addressing these concerns, and their efforts collectively improve public perception of safety and site quality.

Moving forward, safety considerations should be integral to decision-making processes, and all greenspace enhancement proposals should include measures to enhance both actual and perceived safety for park users. Site management plans should also prioritise actions to improve personal safety for users.

Make Space for Girls initiative –

Women and girls may encounter specific gender-related barriers that deter them from using parks and greenspaces. These barriers can significantly impact their sense of personal safety and addressing them is essential for NBBC to ensure appropriate provision.

To assess park designs and layouts, as well as facility provision in existing parks, a set of good practice design criteria can be utilized. The "Safer Parks - Improving Access for Women and Girls" 2023 guidance, published by the Safer Parks Consortium including the Make Space for Girls initiative, offers valuable criteria covering aspects like visibility, wayfinding, and facility mix.

This guidance will be applied to:

- Review existing parks to inform management plan preparation and improvement activities
- Inform the design of new capital schemes

- Guide the upcoming revision of the Council's adopted Open Space and Green Infrastructure SPD and its design appendices

Secured By Design 'Active Frontage' principles:

The "Secured by Design" guidance emphasises the importance of "active frontages" in park design, ensuring that surrounding properties face public spaces like parks and play areas to maximise oversight. This principle, which promotes informal policing and deters anti-social behaviour, should be applied to both new park designs and existing park management and investments.

"Active frontages" discourage criminal activity and vandalism by increasing visibility and oversight from neighbouring properties, passing vehicles, and pedestrians. They also prevent private properties from backing onto greenspaces, reducing the risk of fly-tipping and negative interactions between park users and residents.

In terms of existing parks, it may also mean that reductions or removals of e.g. boundary hedges to roads that obscure oversight of and views into parks, play areas and greenspaces will be appropriate (with some appropriate mitigatory planting elsewhere to avoid net loss of biodiversity).

Moving forward, this principle will guide:

- Comments on planning applications and related documents
- New Park designs for capital investments
- Day-to-day Park management, including potential adjustments to existing layouts such as removing boundary hedges to improve visibility and oversight.

Trees (and shrubs) – 'Right Tree - Right Place':

Trees play a significant role in shaping the appeal and emotional response to parks and green spaces. However, poor tree selection, planting location and management can have negative impacts, such as creating overly shaded areas and obstructing views, deterring park use. It is crucial to prioritise the "Right Tree - Right Place" principle, ensuring thoughtful long-term planning for tree planting and management.

Similarly, shrubs, often planted to address boundary issues, can also create blind spots and maintenance challenges if not carefully chosen and managed. Considering the long-term

implications, a review of existing shrub beds and hedges will be necessary to reduce ongoing costs and address complaints.

The upcoming Tree Strategy will further address these tree-related issues, emphasising the importance of strategic planning and careful consideration in park landscaping.

Provision of Lighting:

Lighting in parks and green spaces is often seen as a solution to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, but it comes with significant costs and potential drawbacks. While lighting can extend the usability of facilities and paths, it can also attract unwanted gatherings and negatively impact wildlife, particularly nocturnal protected species like bats.

Currently, only certain heavily trafficked paths in NBBC Parks are lit, but there is no clear rationale for this. Moving forward, a thoughtful approach is needed, considering factors such as:

- the potential benefits of lighting the route in terms of e.g. level of usage (existing and potential if lit) /nature of users (e.g. route to school etc)
- degree to which any route is 'strategic' in nature as part of the 'active travel' network
- the degree to which alternative routes are available such as along nearby lit roads
- statistical evidence on issues / incidents
- provision and maintenance costs
- ecological impacts

Funding for new lighting would need to come from additional sources, such as grants or Community Safety funds.

It is also essential to consider the aesthetic quality of lighting, ensuring it fits the park's setting. In historic or traditional areas, low-quality lighting can detract from the overall ambiance, so investing in aesthetically appropriate lighting may be necessary to maintain the park's visual appeal.

Provision of CCTV

Additional CCTV provision, like lighting, is often requested by the public and viewed as a solution for addressing anti-social and criminal behaviour. However, it comes with significant costs for installation, maintenance, and support. While CCTV is perceived to have

a deterrent effect, factors like poor image resolution and visibility limitations can undermine its effectiveness.

Much like additional lighting, a clear rationale is needed for when CCTV introduction may be appropriate, considering factors such as usage level, availability of alternative routes, statistical evidence of incidents, and costs. Funding for CCTV provision would need to come from additional sources, such as grants or Community Safety funds.

Specialised Dome hawk cameras, used by the Police to target anti-social activity hotspots, are a lower-cost option. The Parks and Greenspace team supports their use and may assist in providing necessary power supplies and fixing points within parks.

Sometimes, tree pruning or removal is requested to improve CCTV coverage. While the Parks and Greenspace team collaborates with camera operators, consideration should be given to trees' amenity value and conservation status. Relocating cameras may be necessary to resolve conflicts with trees. These considerations will also be addressed in the upcoming Tree Strategy.

Presence of Parks and Greenspace team on site:

During consultations, people often ask for more staff presence in parks for reassurance and assistance. The Parks team's two Area Greenspace Officers are key points of contact for the public, but their roles do not allow for frequent site visits, as each area officer covers half of the borough. Other team members also visit sites for grounds maintenance checks and checks on capital projects. The two Play Fitters are the most visible staff members, at play areas, but their duties limit their presence elsewhere.

Park Rangers

The logical response, funding aside, would be to employ two area rangers reporting respectively to the two Area Greenspace Officers. This would provide a strong public facing and publicly visible staff presence within Parks and Greenspaces and would be likely to be very well received by the public.

The Rangers could take on the water safety and asset safety inspection roles of the Area Greenspace Officers - freeing them up to speed up turnaround time on other matters like repairs utilising contractors. The Rangers could also undertake immediate / rapid repairs for straightforward matters and speed up response times to matters such as offensive graffiti, making safe hazards prior to more permanent repairs and quickly investigating more straightforward public enquiries and public reports of problems on the ground.

Rangers could also engage to a greater degree with community groups and potentially work with some community group volunteers on some practical site management tasks.

As such a detailed case for the creation of such posts should be developed and then considered corporately.

Grounds Contract team

In the absence of Rangers consideration could alternatively be given to incorporating a requirement in the next grounds contract for the grounds contractor to place an identifiable on-site member of staff in each of the two formal Destination Parks – Riversley and Miners' Welfare Parks – at least for the summer holiday period as a minimum. These on-site grounds staff could then undertake more straightforward contract tasks during those periods (litter picking, graffiti removal etc) as well as being available and visible to the public as a point of contact.

In terms of other general presence on site the grounds contractor's staff are the most frequently present staff on site and it is important both the contract specification and the day to day management of the contract and management culture of the grounds contractor makes the most of and encourages the potential for the grounds contractors staff to report issues on site that may not be grounds contract related but can be quickly passed through to NBBC.

Desirably the grounds contractor's staff will share a sense of pride in the parks and greenspaces they work within and help to create and as a result will actively engage in such reporting and be thanked for such reporting and encouraged in that regard.

Grounds contract staff will unavoidably be seen as potential points of contact on the ground by the public - particularly in the absence of staff such as Rangers – and should be prepared to pass on public reports / issues to their supervisors when made to them by the public and trained to handle such approaches but it is not fair to promote them actively to the public (other than in the suggested summer months situation proposed above) as normal points of contact for the public.

Other on-site presence:

Other forms of on-site presence can come in several ways.

Leisure contractor facilities and staff:

Staff at fixed facilities within parks, like leisure centres, often become the first point of contact for issues on-site. It is crucial for the Parks team to maintain effective communication with the Leisure Contractor to ensure that matters reported to leisure facility staff are addressed or directed to the council. These staff members also handle emergency situations, such as accidents or injuries, so their role should be acknowledged and appreciated by NBBC. Additionally, proactive roles by the Leisure Contractor, like

coaching for activities or managing bike loan and hire points, can contribute to an onsite presence, and should be considered in leisure contract specifications.

Nuneaton Museum and Art Gallery + café + Mayors Café in Bedworth:

Museum staff in Riversley Park and café staff at the Mayors Café and the Museum café also are also very much on-site and public facing so it will similarly be logical for the Parks team to further cultivate good relationships also with those organisations and staff working at these points of contact and to give them easy means of routing public queries into NBBC / 'signposting' the public to the best routes.

Visible police patrols in parks and greenspaces are desirable to the public, along with targeted responses to reported issues like antisocial behaviour and off-road motorbike problems. However, both the police and NBBC face resource constraints. To maximize police effectiveness, the Parks team supports them by providing intelligence on hotspots and problem areas reported by the public. This information is shared through the Community Safety team.

The Parks team also reports criminal damage and vandalism to ensure these issues are reflected in police statistics. Encouraging the public to report incidents and obtain incident numbers is essential for directing police and Community Safety resources to address ongoing problems.

Relationship with Community Safety team and Police:

The Parks and Greenspace team collaborates closely with the Council's Community Safety team and the Police. While they cannot enforce public behaviour or address anti-social and criminal behaviour directly, they play a supportive role by identifying and reporting incidents and making physical changes to sites where possible. These actions assist specialists in Community Safety and the Police in their efforts to address such issues. However, it is the responsibility of these specialists to lead efforts in combating anti-social behaviour and crime in public spaces.

Other Park design measures that can be considered:

Parks should offer a range of activities to cater to different age groups, including teenagers and young adults, providing spaces for socialising without negative assumptions. Examples include basketball areas, skate parks, and outdoor fitness areas. These facilities not only give young people a purpose for being in the park but also promote their health and well-being. It is important to note that principal parks like Riversley Park and Miners' Welfare Park lack such amenities, which could enhance their appeal to teenagers and young adults.

Additionally, dispersing activity throughout the park, rather than concentrating it in one area, encourages active use and serves as a form of informal policing. This design approach ensures that the park feels vibrant and welcoming, discouraging anti-social behaviour in less frequented areas.

Next Steps on Personal Safety in Parks and Greenspaces:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - All investment decision making / business cases / capital projects etc going forward to include specific written review of impacts on actual and perceived park user personal safety
 - All capital projects etc (and associated business cases) going forward to include consideration of the *Making Space for Girls / Safer Park Consortium* design guidance and of Secured by Design 'Active Frontage' principles
 - Management Plan preparation for parks (and associated templates) to include specific consideration of *Making Space for Girls / Safer Park Consortium* design guidance and of Secured by Design "Active Frontage principles

- All future tree and shrub planting proposals to be tested against 'Right Tree, Right Place' principles and assessed specifically in terms of potential impacts on personal safety and perceived personal safety including the consideration of the trees/shrubs at mature size
 - A team-wide commitment to be made to pursuing strong presentational consistency of sites within each site - in terms of both site furniture and branding – through capital investments and day to day management / repairs etc - as part of conveying a sense of a well-managed / cared-for site
 - On site signage (as and when newly installed) to clearly explain what incidents / issues should be reported directly via the Police 101 number rather than to the Council
-
- Medium Term -
 - A full review leading to the development of a policy covering our approaches to and means of enhancing park users' sense of personal safety - including how this is impacted and can be enhanced:
 - by review of byelaws and related legislation - by review of possible use of arrangements for civil enforcement companies to increase enforcement activity in parks in relation to dog fouling and littering etc and also by review of interaction with dog warden service
 - by Grounds Maintenance contract specification, processes and activity - including maintenance operations that are in the contract but are not always delivered - and also maintenance activities that should be in the contract but have not been included in the bills of quantity
 - by possible redirection of specialist operations such as cleansing and painting etc to local contractors who specialise in these particular operations, so they are actually done and done to a high standard
 - by Infrastructure maintenance processes, procurement framework performance on repair times and other repair activity
 - by existing and new park design and layout (including entrance points, constricted path routes and pinch points and blind spots) with the most problematic locations identified and prioritised for any available investment
 - by lighting – including a specific rationale on provision – including being of an aesthetic quality matching the setting where installed in accordance with the rationale

- by use of CCTV – including a specific rationale on provision
 - by site information and signage
 - by the presence or absence of staff on site / on the ground - including Parks service staff, grounds contract staff, third party staff in adjacent facilities and police patrols
 - by working relationships and interactions with NBBC’s Community Safety team and with the Police - including having regular liaison meetings with the Community Safety team
 - by continuing the promotion of the ‘dob ‘em in’ unauthorised motorbike reporting scheme
- Investment in Destination and Community Parks - as and when funds permit - to ensure at least a proportion of the substantive recreational facilities per site are targeted toward teenagers where such facilities are not already present
 - Review to be undertaken of existing shrub beds and hedges across all sites - considering whether they act as an asset or if they cause problems / have a negative impact in each case in relation to personal safety

Customer enquiries /reporting of maintenance and repair issues

Ensuring high-quality grounds and infrastructure maintenance in parks requires easy procedures for residents to report problems promptly. The most public inquiries received by the Parks and Greenspace service concern maintenance and repair issues, highlighting their significance in public perception. Efforts have been made to streamline handling public inquiries, including the use of Customer Services software systems and improvements to website information.

Regular reviews of customer service processes are conducted to ensure adequate resources are available to handle inquiries, reports, and complaints effectively. Collaboration with the Council’s IT (Information Technology), Customer Services, and Communications teams is essential for efficiency.

Two areas for improvement include simplifying the process for the public to report problems, through a mobile app, and enhancing the back-office process for tracking and completing reported actions. This may involve developing a system to track actions from report receipt to completion.

Efforts are also underway to improve data analysis for better understanding and addressing customer complaints. This includes refining categorisations in the customer service system and exploring additional administrative support during the busy spring/summer peak periods.

Next Steps on Customer Enquiries in Parks and Greenspaces:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Issues and performance in regard to public enquires / DASH system etc to be standing agenda item for each Parks and Greenspace team meeting to promote continuous improvement
 - Annual review of Parks and Greenspace team performance in handling customer enquiries and of process adjustments that might further improve performance

- Medium Term -
 - Five yearly in depth review of performance in handling customer enquiries and potential adjustments to processes that might further improve performance – including IT software and technological changes such as AI

Chapter 16: Driving up Quality – Block 3

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces that have an appropriate range of facilities:

Providing an appropriate range of facilities per greenspace is closely related to the availability of capital funds to deliver any new facilities and to replace facilities at the end of their working life. This also means being able to invest in new facilities to fill any gaps that are identified. This is different from the day-to-day budget for repairs discussed in 'Driving up Quality – Block 2' earlier.

To find gaps in current facilities, standards were set for each type of park or greenspace, and audits were undertaken to see how well they met those standards. Basic facilities like pathways and signage are considered important for all greenspaces.

In terms of play areas, the following facility criteria were audited - with minimum requirements also for each aspect increasing at higher level types of provision:

Level of Provision					
Local level Play Areas	Equipment provision for 2–5-year-olds	Equipment Provision for 6–12-year-olds	Appropriate provision of contact signage	Provision of fully inclusive item(s)	
Community level Play Areas	Equipment provision for 2–5-year-olds	Equipment Provision for 6–12-year-olds	Appropriate provision of contact signage	Provision of fully inclusive item(s)	Provision of various forms of facilities and equipment targeted toward teenagers
Destination level Play Areas	Equipment provision for 2–5-year-olds	Equipment Provision for 6–12-year-olds	Appropriate provision of contact signage	Provision of fully inclusive item(s)	Provision of various forms of facilities and equipment targeted toward teenagers

The audit results offer detailed data for evaluating facilities against set criteria, ranking them from best to worst. Ideally, capital investment would target the sites with the poorest facilities, aiming to equalise provision across all Council sites and reduce disparities. NBBC facilities fell short of expected standards, with notable variations in performance among different sites.

Potential sources of funding for capital investment into facilities and infrastructure

There are only a limited range of potential sources for capital investment to address deficiencies in facility provision levels and to help drive up quality across sites – primarily:

NBBC Capital Funding

Due to ongoing financial constraints and pressures on the council it may be unrealistic to anticipate significant Capital funding being able to be allocated in the near future to tackle deficiencies in facility provision and quality.

It is obviously important that Parks and Greenspace set out the case clearly for corporate investment linked to delivery of the corporate plan priorities and targets and these cases should be clearly made within capital project business cases.

Should it become a Council priority and if finances allowed - a parks capital scheme targeting the worst performing sites with least access to S.106 funds etc would be the logical step leading to the quickest delivery of improvements with least hurdles to overcome to delivery.

S.106 Planning Sums

During the past decade, substantial funding has been secured for capital investment in various Park and Greenspace sites. However, it is important to note that such funding requests must demonstrate a direct link to the residential developments concerned. These funds are allocated to address the additional needs arising from new housing occupancies and must be spent at specified sites outlined in the S106 agreement, directly related to the housing developments. They cannot be redirected to other locations, and many have designated uses within the named sites.

Consequently, these funds may need to be utilised at sites that may not be among the worst-performing in terms of park and greenspace facilities but are closely tied to the housing developments that provided the funding. Therefore, despite securing significant S106 sums, these funds may not necessarily be allocated to sites with significant facility deficiencies or inferior performance in audit assessments. Additionally, several sites deserving investment may not receive any S106 sums, while others may only receive limited amounts.

External Grant Funding:

To address deficiencies at poorly performing sites (which have no NBBC capital or S106 funding), the option is to pursue external grant aid, which is highly time-intensive for officers. Currently, the Parks and Greenspace team lacks capacity for this pursuit. Local Authorities have limited eligibility for grant funds, with more options available to Community Groups. Collaborating with community groups as lead applicants is possible but even more time-consuming and complex. Given the constraints on S106 funds and the

unlikely of significant targeted capital schemes for parks, pursuing grant aid is the most viable option for securing funds.

Employing a dedicated staff member to pursue grant funding full-time is an option, despite the associated cost, as the potential benefits outweigh it. However, the capacity to deliver capital schemes through project management must also be assessed, considering the team's current workload from secured S106 sums. Additional grant-funded improvements may require increased capacity, potentially through hiring external landscape architects or assistants funded by a portion of the grant aid and S106 sums.

Overall forward capital programme and prioritisation

The Parks and Greenspace Service at the time of this strategy's preparation has capital funding to utilise from all three sources –

- NBBC (albeit small in scale at £75,000 per annum toward play provision)
- Significant S106 sums both held on receipt from developers and to be paid to NBBC at the proper time when S106 commencement and occupancy triggers are reached
- Significant external grant funding from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Towns Fund

As such preparation of a forward and rolling capital programme - considering staff capacity to manage delivery – is a complex but key task. Such a programme also must be 'live' and frequently reviewed - considering:

- The poorest performing parks, greenspaces and play area as evidenced by the audit data as the primary driving force for investment decisions
- Fixed timescales for use of funds either in terms of annual budget, grant award terms and S106 usage terms (typically usage within 10 years from receipt)
- Fixed locations for use of sums which do not necessarily align with the poorest performing sites
- Changes in circumstances

Also as such - whilst it may always be attractive to pursue external funding that has become newly open to the authority to apply for such decisions have to be also based on the capacity of the service to deliver against existing commitments and the utilisation of already existing funds with several million pounds of S106 funds secured in recent years that need to be spent through capital projects delivered over the next decade.

Given the limited likelihood of significant NBBC capital funding and the constraints of S106 sums, pursuing grant funds appears to be the most feasible route to improve standards at poorly performing sites and facilities. Due to existing staff capacity constraints, creating additional resources, either through external capacity or employing a dedicated post holder, is necessary to secure such grant funds. This post holder would focus solely on pursuing grant aid to address sites lacking existing funding.

While the post may generate larger capital sums than its cost, these funds cannot be used to cover the post's expenses. This approach requires acceptance that sites should be uplifted

to targeted standards to reduce inequalities, despite the additional maintenance burdens and costs not typically covered by grant funding.

Next Steps on Capital investment sources and prioritisation in Parks and Greenspaces:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Progress delivery of Town's Fund 'Parks Revival' project in Riversley Park and of UKSPF funded projects both in accordance with agreed business plans - and progress received Section 106 fund utilisation
 - Production of annual capital programme with facility / quality audit findings as primary driver – along with timescales for uses, geographical constraints on use and grant condition constraints etc
- Medium Term -
 - Inclusion of 1-2 year forward projected element to annual capital programme that will be adjusted and refined at each annual review taking current circumstances into account
 - Employment or other resourcing of additional capacity to pursue grant funding for poorest performing parks relative to facility criteria and audit outcomes

Other potential means of generating capital funds:

Disposal of surplus land:

The potential disposal of surplus land to generate capital funds is an option that may seem appealing on the surface, but it requires careful consideration. Catchment area mapping can help identify land and facilities that may be surplus to requirements, such as smaller pieces of land fully within the catchment of larger sites. However, any decision to dispose of land should be approached with caution, considering irreversible impacts on ecology, landscape value, and future potential. Formal considerations should include assessing whether the site is surplus in terms of greenspace accessibility and facility provision, as well as evaluating ecological, landscape, and travel network values. It is important to note that capital receipts from land disposals may not be guaranteed for reinvestment in parks and greenspaces, as they may not pass into the General Fund. Additionally, if the land is Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land, the capital receipt would go into the HRA, potentially limiting investment in parks and greenspaces.

Creation of income generating commercial properties / holdings on surplus land:

A potentially positive approach that has been pursued in the past in the national New Towns programme is to create long term income generating assets within any surplus land - with that income stream being ring fenced - or at least ring-fenced in stated policy terms - to support park and greenspace investment. This could be e.g. through an initial one-off capital investment by NBBC leading to the creation of property assets such as commercial industrial units that attract rent payment if there was adequate confidence in that being commercially profitable in the long term. Doing this in partnership – with a partner such as WCC would result in income being split but might bring in the initial capital with e.g. NBBC contributing the land for its part.

Sinking funds:

Despite the significant extent of NBBC park and play facility assets - a sinking fund only exists in relation to certain skatepark provisions.

All other assets / infrastructure can only be replaced either through limited and long reducing (in real terms) maintenance budgets (which are actually meant for day to day repairs not end of life replacement of large assets) - or alternatively through NBBC capital funds or external grant funds that have to be secured on a one-off basis each time a significant asset has reached the end of its useful life.

Just in play area terms alone there are 55 play areas with outright replacement values ranging from Local Play Areas costing e.g. £90,000 to £200,000 or more and Community Park provisions with total values each in the several hundreds of thousands or more. As

such relying on one at a time / one-off capital or grant bidding to replace key recreational and infrastructure assets is not a desirable long term financial strategy for sustaining key recreational assets for residents of the Borough.

An expansion of the sinking fund approach to cover more assets - in the pattern of the current skatepark sinking fund – is needed which will require additional resource commitments to be made per additional new asset created with capital funds or external grant aid and this additional burden will need to be factored in at the outset.

Also retrospectively creating a sinking fund to cover existing facilities would be good financial practice but will present a very significant additional annual cost burden - and with existing assets each one's remaining life expectancy would come into the calculations and will typically be shorter than for a new asset - as a result increasing the payment to be made annually if the sinking fund is to be able to cover the asset replacement at the end of the anticipated end of useful life of the asset.

Income from concessions / sponsorship:

Small amounts of income are received from e.g. ice cream concessions. Concessions are worth some attention in terms of additional services they may positively bring to park users – such as on-site cafés potentially with toilets etc – but are not worth pursuing for their minimal financial benefit alone relative to the time invested.

Historically also private sponsorship of e.g. Britain in Bloom / floral features etc has been tried by parks services. Experience shows that the limited sums raised by such activity do not justify the time and cost that goes into promoting the opportunities, liaising with sponsors, placing necessary signage etc and chasing on occasion unpaid debts. Valuable officer time is wasted that could be focussed on achieving positive outcomes for residents.

Next Steps on other potential means of generating capital funds:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Adopt disposal tests and further considerations in regard to all future park and greenspace land disposals
 - Only take forward new capital investments in facilities that include the creation of an accompanying sinking fund that will generate sufficient funds to replace the facility at the estimated end point of their useful working life

- Medium Term -
 -

- Long Term -
 - Formally consider and investigate the potential for creation of income generating commercial properties / holdings on surplus park and greenspace land

Additional maintenance costs arising through additional capital investment:

When new capital-funded facilities are added to existing provision, they often come with an additional maintenance burden. For instance, S106 funds typically cover maintenance costs for the first 20 years, after which the ongoing burden falls on taxpayers if the assets remain or need replacement.

Similarly, grant-funded capital investments seldom include maintenance budgets, meaning the recipient must bear the ongoing costs. If NBBC cannot afford these additional maintenance expenses from general funds, it should carefully weigh the decision to pursue such grants, as doing so could strain existing budgets and facility provision.

Next Steps on additional maintenance costs arising through additional capital investment:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Only take forward business cases for capital investment where the business case identifies any additional maintenance cost burdens that will arise and where such costs are unfunded there is recognition and acceptance in approving the business case that a costed growth in maintenance budgets will be added at the point the new facility / asset is brought into active use.

How 106 maintenance funds are utilised and released:

Historically, S106 funds designated for maintenance have been immediately used (often in 15ths or 20ths) to offset park and greenspace maintenance costs before the new open space has been officially adopted. However, this practice does not align with when the additional maintenance burden arises. To address this, these funds should only be released once NBBC formally adopts the associated open space, with corresponding increases in maintenance budgets to cover the added costs. The funds should then be released incrementally over 20 years, rather than being used to reduce existing cost burdens.

Next Steps on how 106 sums for maintenance are utilised and released:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Going forward 106 maintenance sums to only be released in 20th's from the point that Legal formally confirm to Finance that the related piece of land and facilities have been legally adopted even if payment has been made at an earlier point
 - Going forward all 106 sums to be released in 20ths as a corresponding growth item in maintenance budgets from the point of adoption - not used to subsidise and reduce the cost burden of existing asset / infrastructure / grounds maintenance.

Chapter 17: Driving up Quality – Block 4

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces that are supported and promoted by appropriate information resources

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces need to have appropriate information resources to support usage. The principal such resources are on-site signage and on-line resources.

Signage:

Signage has three main elements:

- signage identifying ownership and allowing reporting of problems
- directional signage
- information / 'interpretation' boards

Signage that identifies ownership and provides contact details for reporting issues is fundamental but currently lacking in many NBBC greenspaces due to insufficient investment. Addressing this deficiency will be prioritised for significant recreational greenspaces.

Directional signage within a site benefits primarily first-time visitors and is most justified in large sites where visitors from outside the local area are expected. Additionally, such signage can encourage residents to use greenspaces as part of a sustainable travel network, by showing connections to broader pedestrian and cycle path networks and making these routes highly visible at entrances and road frontages. This promotes active travel for work, school, and recreation, contributing to residents' health.

Plans are in place to gradually implement a recognisable and consistent signage pattern for a 'Green Network' of strategic paths as funds allow, coordinating with WCC where these paths intersect with wider cycle links.

Information signage often involves noticeboards for NBBC and community messages, excluding commercial and political content. Interpretation signage provides site visitors with historical, wildlife, and management information, potentially combined with noticeboards depending on the site's scale.

Appropriate/expected types of signage at distinct types of sites:

Level of Provision			
	Ownership / contact signage	Directional Signage	Information and Interpretation Signage
Local Parks	Signage identifying NBBC site ownership and contact details	Directional Signage where this is appropriate as part of the 'Green Network'	

Community Parks	Signage identifying NBBC site ownership and contact details	Directional Signage where this is appropriate as part of the 'Green Network'	Single central information and interpretation board
Destination Parks	Signage identifying NBBC site ownership and contact details	Directional Signage as standard - including 'Green Network' links	Information and interpretation boards at key entrance points

Signage will be provided as resources allow, with priority given to ensuring every site has at least one sign indicating ownership and contact details, often located at play areas. However, the initial and ongoing costs of vandalism-resistant signage and maintenance are significant. Poorly maintained signs can attract graffiti and give a sense of neglect, making sites uninviting.

Therefore, it is crucial to regularly monitor the condition of signage, promptly repair damages, and have effective arrangements for routine cleaning and maintenance. In the future, digital information may become more important, with on-site signs potentially directing users to digital resources via QR codes.

On-line resources / digital strategy:

Historically, park visitor information was provided through printed leaflets. Currently, limited information is available on the Council's website. Significant digital modernisation is needed, as outlined in the Corporate Plan. In 2024, the Council's website was updated for better phone access, hosting only short information formats with downloadable content being restricted.

Given the shift to digital, the Parks and Greenspace team should focus on providing information through prominent digital channels and search engines like Google, Trip Advisor, and Strava.

QR codes on signage could link to digital resources but must be maintained to avoid broken links. The digital strategy should include managing basic site information on Google to ensure accuracy and targeting youth through specialist websites for activities like skateboarding and BMX.

Increased use of social media and short videos can also help reach diverse and younger audiences, providing news, PR, and countering misinformation. Maintenance of digital content is crucial and requires sufficient staff resources. Expertise in digital marketing might be necessary to optimise the digital strategy.

Digital channels can be used for news and PR, with short videos on YouTube and social media to inform residents about parks and Greenspace activities. These videos have been effective in addressing public concerns about seasonal maintenance tasks like hedge and grass cutting and explaining necessary tree felling due to disease.

These digital approaches help reach younger audiences and quickly garner significant views. They can share good news, upcoming events, and counter negative or inaccurate information on social media.

Branding:

Effective communication includes the use of branding and consistency in presentation. NBBC's corporate branding is of course the primary brand to be applied in all Parks and Greenspace Service communication including in signage and on digital platforms etc.

There is scope within that approach for sub branding – such as site specific and consistent branding for parks to help give them their own identity and to also work to deliver that in combination with online information about the site and with landscaping, landmarks, site histories and unique features to the site in question.

As such it is proposed the following approach will be taken to branding by the Parks and Greenspace Service with changes made only as funds permit / as existing signage comes to the end of its working life:

Brand to be developed and applied consistently	Approach
Green Network	Consistent branding with fingerpost signs with 'GN' in roundel topping sign. Distances primarily in bike or on foot travel times
Destination Parks	Site specific brand developed per park with consistent font and graphical style. Site specific but consistent entry point branding / features also developed
Community Parks	Single consistent graphical style / colour palette across all Community Parks in terms of primary welcome and information board(s). Consistent move from 'x Recreation Ground' to 'x <i>Community Park</i> ' when significant investment and introduction of structural tree planting takes place to reflect the enhanced facility
Local Parks	Single positive welcome sign on play area acts as entire site sign that includes contact details for

	reporting site issues + What 3 words location and nearest road name
Play Areas	Single positive welcome sign that includes contact details for reporting site issues + What 3 words location and nearest road name
Smaller Local type sites without play equipment but with some recreational value due to scale of site	Single sign (e.g. large sustainable source hardwood bollard post e.g. native Oak with inset sign) identifying site ownership for reporting problems
Biodiversity offsetting habitat creation works	Positive messaging in signage / distributed literature etc to encourage public support / acceptance of partial change to sites – with a brand per habitat type. Meadows = <i>Meadow Magic</i> , Woods – <i>Wonderful Woods</i> , Wetland = <i>Wonderful Wetlands etc</i>
Water safety specific signage	Consistent signage style with recognised warning logos for hazard signage and simple messaging

As such when significant capital investments take place - or when site signage is being introduced or replaced - this branding strategy needs to be referred to and consistently applied to site signage and in parallel when staff are preparing new digital information about sites or initiatives.

A small toolkit / reference folder is to be developed as the single consistent reference point for the relevant branding including fonts/brand specific graphic styles and details and with example photos, details of suppliers etc

One emotive aspect of branding is also the name of parks and greenspace sites. In the past some site names have been imposed through signage etc (sometimes simply given the name of a nearby street for access location purposes etc). In terms of pride and sense of place however it can only be right in naming sites to first establish the local name that most residents use for a site - and unless inappropriate or offensive in some way this local name should always be used for the site and applied to signage etc.

Several sites have two or even more differing names used on internal documents, external signage and by residents and this can also potentially lead to confusion also when problems are being reported etc. As such when the next grounds maintenance contract documents are being prepared all site names should be reviewed and then become fixed – based on the local resident’s name prioritisation described above.

Next Steps on Signage, Online Resources and Branding:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Going forward enhanced site signage to be seen as integral part of site developments and enhancements
 - Site signage going forward to always follow consistent approach identified in this Strategy

- Medium Term -
 - Set out Parks and Greenspace Service digital information access strategy - drawing on any corporate policies - covering improved targeted presence through search engines and other popular information resources, approach to social media, QR code and augmented reality apps, consistency of branding across on-site and digital information resources etc.
 - Develop reference signage 'toolkit' detailing consistent sign formats per type of site / facility and containing reference images, specifications, supplier details etc

Chapter 18: Driving up Quality – Block 5

Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces that supplement the 'core' facilities offer with digital trails, public art, events etc to increase usage

Parks and greenspaces themselves and the core facilities are effectively 'self-serve' provisions - but this final aspect of improving their quality involves layering on additional self-serve and staffed activities.

A full good-practice offer of Parks and Greenspace provision includes additional 'activation' of recreational spaces - with additional means of encouraging and attracting usage and activity within them - further increasing the range of activities offered to residents within those spaces beyond the core provision.

Digital trails, fitness apps and geocaching:

These are all additional self-serve provisions delivered through phone-based apps that can increase usage of parks and greenspaces – and in that way enhance physical activity levels of residents and mental wellbeing through spending time in the outdoors. These provisions can usefully be made without the need for direct staffing - but staff time and finance usually have to be put in to create and to maintain these digital resources.

Digital trails:

NBBC could enhance its self-service trails using digital trail applications offered by various software companies. These applications range from traditional 'points of interest' trails, previously reliant on vulnerable onsite markers, to dynamic family-friendly trails with changing themes and augmented reality, like the viral Pokémon Go app.

The cost of such software could be shared with other authority departments, like Markets and Town Centre Management, each of which could develop their own trails.

In addition to, or instead of, bespoke trail software, NBBC could post recommended walking and cycling trails on popular trail websites and apps such as All-Trails, OS Maps, and Komoot. For example, markerless digital orienteering courses at Miners' Welfare Park, mapped with Council grant aid by the Octavian Droobers group, are already available on the MapRun app.

Google Maps and Street View offer another option, allowing the posting of 360-degree photos along routes to create virtual tours. These can be used for live navigation or to provide virtual access for those unable to visit physically. Partnering with Google could

enhance this further by creating high-resolution 'Trek' experiences, like Street View, for a more immersive digital trail experience.

Fitness Apps:

There are also potential opportunities to provide bespoke fitness apps which could be linked to NBBC's recreational running, cycling, and walking routes and facilities such as green gyms / bike trails etc... to encourage repeat usage with information and fitness tracking.

Consideration should be given to whether instead promote locations and routes on existing popular fitness apps and if that could deliver greater effect and whether any partnerships with such app providers could localise the app in terms of mapping local such provision and focussing on local usage within the wider app abilities.

Geo-caching:

Most geo-caching happens without formal consent of the landowners, but geo-cache trails are widely promoted on the internet and through specific apps - requiring the location of hidden 'treasure' caches usually in outdoor public spaces through clues usually shared on caching apps or the internet.

Again, there are potentially opportunities for NBBC to formally engage with this popular - typically family-based activity and to work with recognised national bodies and popular app providers.

Public art and public art trails:

General approach:

Public art can evoke strong emotions, generating either great enthusiasm and increased visitation, as seen with the Angel of the North and Grisedale Sculpture Trail, or potential public rejection and hostility. It is important to approach public art carefully, especially during financial pressures on residents and council budgets when such investments may be viewed as wasteful compared to essential services.

Negative reception often results from inadequate scale relative to the setting. Therefore, public art is often best integrated as part of planned capital investments at a site, enhancing functional features like seating, fencing, bridges, paving, and play equipment. This approach adds visual richness to necessary elements, ensuring they contribute positively to their surroundings.

Public art need not be expensive; it can simply involve incorporating visual and aesthetic quality into each capital investment in parks and greenspaces. For larger focal pieces, it is

advisable to present multiple preliminary proposals from various artists and seek public support through the media for the preferred option.

Cultural Strategy:

The NBBC Cultural Strategy published in 2023 highlights the potential for public art projects utilising parks and greenspaces in the Borough. Such projects may culminate in the production of longer lasting pieces of art - or in some cases in public events, celebrations, and performances - and it highlights the importance and value of engaging residents and communities in the creation of public art and in public art projects.

The establishment of a Cultural Forum to support develop cultural activity in the Borough forms part of the action plan for the Strategy and the Parks and Greenspace team will engage with the Forum to help the Council play its part in helping to implement the Cultural Strategy and so that there is co-ordination of effort to maximise the benefits of cultural and public art activity within the Borough's Parks and Greenspaces.

Street and Urban Art:

In recent decades, street and urban art have become popular, low-cost ways to enhance public spaces. While sometimes created spontaneously without official consent, the focus should be on the quality of the work and its impact on the surroundings. While amateurish tags and offensive graffiti detract from the environment, high-quality street art, like Banksy's, can significantly enrich public spaces.

NBBC can incorporate street and urban art into greenspace projects by collaborating with local artists, such as the well-regarded N4T4, who has already enhanced public areas in the Borough, including parks. NBBC has successfully partnered with local street artists like the Reel People group and can expand these collaborations by offering future locations for commissioned artwork.

Additionally, NBBC can recognise and manage spontaneous street art in areas like skateparks by commissioning high-quality work and designating graffiti wall locations. This approach, combined with a no-tolerance policy for offensive graffiti, can encourage self-policing among users and maintain the aesthetic quality of the facilities.

Art trails:

Art trails can be classified into two main types: permanent and temporary.

Permanent trails are typically expensive to create, especially if designed to attract day or part-day visitors. They are also susceptible to vandalism, particularly in unstaffed urban areas, as opposed to locations where visitors specifically travel to appreciate the art, which may also be staffed.

However, more low-key trails with digital guidance could be developed to direct people to public art within parks, greenspaces, and town centres. This could serve as an art-specific variant of the digital trails mentioned elsewhere in the Strategy.

Temporary art trails have become highly popular in recent years. These trails often feature a standard sculptural piece, usually an animal, replicated in significant numbers and decorated by local professional artists, community groups, and schools. The artworks are displayed for a limited time in public spaces, forming a trail guided by a phone app, and are auctioned off for charity after the display period.

NBBC Parks and Greenspace could participate in hosting some of these pieces if such a temporary trail is implemented, for example, across the two main towns. Other pieces would typically be placed in prominent locations such as town centres and shopping centres to encourage additional visits and secondary spending, contributing to economic development and town centre activity growth.

Parkrun and Walking for Health / Active Walks / Wellbeing Walks:

Voluntary groups coordinate with the Council to provide activities like Park Run and Wellbeing Walks in Council parks and greenspaces. Park Run operates independently but cooperatively with NBBC, while Wellbeing Walks is a partnership between the Ramblers Association and the Council, evolving from previous health walk programs. Both activities promote physical activity and social interaction, benefiting residents' mental well-being.

NBBC provides coordination support, but the voluntary groups handle most of the delivery, making these activities cost-effective expansions of park programs. Parkrun activities could receive additional support through continued dialogue with organizers. While the Bedworth Parkrun and Nuneaton Junior Parkrun attract many participants, creating additional runs might dilute attendance and strain volunteer leaders. The national Parkrun organisation also regulates event distribution to prevent over-saturation.

The Parks and Greenspace Service can enhance Parkrun events by maintaining and improving route surfaces and potentially adding motivational start/finish points and distance markers. These markers could also support self-led fitness training using apps like Strava, with NBBC promoting routes via QR code links.

Measured Miles:

Local "measured mile" or measured distance circuits could be established in Community Parks, like the self-guided trails in Destination Parks using a Parkrun start and finish arch. These circuits, suitable for walking and jogging, would allow for self-timing and repeated laps. They could also support GP/health service-prescribed "Activity on Prescription" exercise programs for recovery and fitness.

Previously, two such routes were marked in Destination Parks using stencilled path routes to prevent vandalism. Additionally, two routes in Community Parks were marked using metal marker posts.

Events:

Events in NBBC Parks and Greenspaces fall into two main categories: those organised by external parties and those led by NBBC staff.

External Events:

1. Commercial Events:

- Primarily funfairs, these events pay a fee to use NBBC land.
- Popular and welcome, but must ensure income covers NBBC's costs, including staff time and site restoration.
- NBBC's role involves verifying risk assessments, public liability insurance, and coordinating to avoid scheduling conflicts.
- Potential capital investments in infrastructure (e.g., ground reinforcement, utility connections) can support these events.

2. Not-for-Profit Community Group Events:

- Include annual events like Galas, Bonfire, and Firework displays.
- Managed similarly to commercial events.
- Capital investments can also support these community activities.

NBBC-Led Events:

- Include momentous events requiring close coordination with external organizers or entirely organised by NBBC.
- Remembrance activities are a key example, led by others but coordinated by NBBC.

General Support and Coordination:

- NBBC Parks can aid events by aligning grounds maintenance schedules with event dates to ensure optimal conditions.
- While more NBBC-organized events would be beneficial, limited resources make supporting external event organizers the most effective strategy.
- Capital investments in parks should consider infrastructure improvements that facilitate both external and NBBC-led events.

Overall, the focus should be on supporting external groups and organisations to maximize event offerings while efficiently utilising limited staff and financial resources.

Next Steps on supplements to core Park facilities 'offer' to further increase Park and Greenspace usage:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term –
 - Going forward consistently consider the potential for the practical and often functional incorporation of public art within park and facility enhancement projects and landscape works. (This can be low key and low cost not necessarily 'high end' art projects and may involve small detailing bringing aesthetic quality and also street art, land art etc)

- Medium Term -
 - Review support of Park Run and Walking for Health Walks (with leisure colleagues) to help bolster participation and extend provision which may involve physical enhancements of routes etc
 - Review potential use of digital trail app software – potentially as joint purchase with other Council teams
 - Review potential use of outdoor fitness apps to encourage facility use and circuit usage for walking, running, cycling – either provision of tailored app or through integration with most popular such apps
 - Review potential for supporting geo-caching - most likely through interaction with / support to popular apps
 - Review the potential jointly with Arts team colleagues for one-off temporary and permanent public art trails within Parks and Greenspaces
 - Review means of supporting NBBC led events and community group led events including in terms of enhanced infrastructure such as service / utility supply points, ground reinforcement, performance spaces etc

Chapter 19: Ownership and Management of Greenspaces

Usage, Ownership and Control of Parks and Greenspaces:

Housing (HRA) land

Many of the significant parks and recreational areas managed by the Parks and Greenspace team are on land originally acquired for Council Housing by the Borough Council. This land typically belongs to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), unlike most other Council operations under the General Fund.

For years, the Council's lack of resources to build new Council Housing meant this dual usage had negligible impact. However, recent government grant funding has renewed interest in developing new Council Housing, leading the Housing Service to consider available HRA land for such developments.

This interest creates potential conflicts with the long-established public use of these sites as recreational greenspaces, which may be the only available parks in certain areas. Clear ownership and better alignment of land holdings are needed to balance Park and Greenspace provision with Council Housing needs, ensuring both services can plan future investments and capital developments with certainty.

Therefore, the Council needs to review which parks and greenspaces are on HRA land and explore mechanisms for a land exchange between the General Fund and the HRA account. This exchange should be financially neutral and aim to protect key parks and play areas while providing developable land for housing.

The process will be complex due to the lack of detailed data and mapping of HRA and General Fund landholdings. It will require resources to review deeds and acquisition records and to create specific GIS (Geographic Information System) maps. Additional resources will also be needed for land valuations and to establish a cost-neutral and legally sound basis for the land swap.

Next Steps on Housing HRA land that acts as significantly useful recreational greenspace:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -

- Medium Term -
 - Full review including input of Legal and Finance Services identifying all HRA budget land that acts as significantly useful recreational greenspace and establishing any available cost neutral mechanisms allowing transfer of such land in exchange for surplus greenspace land that might be developed for social housing provision.

Work will require an internal or external resource to help move the work forward including mapping of all such land within the HRA and General fund budgets and investigation of the original basis of land acquisition in each case.

Work will need to achieve the full separation of HRA and General Fund land as separate internal ownership layers

Land being maintained but not owned by NBBC

The Parks and Greenspace team currently manages several parcels of land not formally registered under NBBC's ownership due to various historical reasons. This situation is problematic, as it creates uncertainty over capital investments, potential legal liabilities, and ownership control.

To address this, a comprehensive review of land managed by the Parks and Greenspace team is needed to check land registration. This review should ideally occur alongside the review of HRA land. It would identify multiple parcels for registration through 'adverse possession' to establish clear ownership. Additionally, the review might lead to decisions to cease maintenance of certain areas.

This task will require internal and external resources for mapping and legal queries but is essential for ensuring clarity and certainty of land ownership moving forward.

Next Steps on land being maintained but not owned by NBBC:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Medium Term -
 - Full review including input of Legal Services identifying all land that NBBC maintains as Parks and Greenspace but which it does not legally own.

The work will require an internal or external resource to help move the work forward including mapping of all such land, establishment of how long NBBC has been maintaining land, the relative importance of the land to recreational greenspace provision and a recommendation in each case as to whether to seek to achieve NBBC ownership either through concluding outstanding legal processes or through statutory declarations to claim the land through the history on unopposed maintenance by NBBC, or to cease maintenance of the land in question.

This work will need to achieve the full separation of such pieces of land as separate GIS layers from land actually owned by NBBC and attribute the ownership status in the GIS layer metadata

Other Local Authority land

A few parks and greenspaces identified in the audit are managed by other local authorities but also serve NBBC residents due to their catchment areas. Similarly, some NBBC sites benefit residents of neighbouring authorities.

In these cases, NBBC should establish good working relationships with the relevant authorities and consider investing in these sites if long-term security safeguards the investment. This includes applying 106 sums from nearby housing developments, reciprocally where appropriate.

NBBC has had productive discussions with Coventry City Council regarding developments and 106 sums. Additionally, a site managed by North Warwickshire Council at Bretts Hall benefits NBBC residents.

NBBC also contributes to the Snow Hill recreation ground managed by Hartshill Parish Council. This arrangement should be reviewed to ensure value for money and appropriate NBBC involvement in its management and development.

Next Steps on other Local Authority land:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Commit to an open-minded approach to situations where developments within the Borough might most logically contribute to a park / Greenspace provision outside but close to the NBBC boundary and explore the potential for such contributions in those circumstances

- Medium Term -
 - Specifically review the current arrangement and agreement with Hartshill Parish Council regarding Snow Hill recreation ground regarding value for money and appropriate form of management input from NBBC

Resident's Management Company control of Parks, Play Areas, and Greenspaces

A notable change impacting park, play area, and greenspace provision is developers increasingly using Residents Management Companies (RMCs) to manage these spaces in new housing developments. This allows developers to avoid making the 20yr maintenance contributions required by NBBC for adoption. Instead, maintenance costs are passed on to residents through service charges by the RMCs.

NBBC cannot insist on transferring new provisions to Council control and ownership, leading to certain challenges:

1. Quality Control: Maintenance quality may vary on RMC-managed sites, with limited influence from NBBC, potentially resulting in a 2 or 3 tier standard of maintenance across the Borough.
2. Public Perception: Residents may mistakenly believe NBBC manages these spaces, leading to inquiries and frustration with NBBC's limited influence.
3. Investment Limitations: NBBC cannot invest in these sites without residents' agreement, potentially leading to unequal provision standards.

4. Long-Term Viability: There are legal uncertainties around how NBBC can insist/influence RMCs from budgeting for replacements, thus risking loss of essential recreational provision over time.

5. Emergency Scenarios: If RMCs fail, NBBC may have to intervene, diverting resources from its own facilities.

In summary, the increasing use of RMCs for park management poses challenges to maintaining consistent and safe greenspace provision, potentially reducing access to such spaces over time.

NBBC should review the implications of using management companies for park maintenance and monitor the quality of maintenance as these sites increase. Specifically, NBBC should consider binding management companies to replace facilities and equipment at the end of their useful life. Additionally, NBBC should assess whether its Planning and Legal Enforcement capacity is adequate to monitor compliance with 106 agreements and planning condition discharge commitments, ensuring commitments made during planning consent are upheld.

Next Steps on Resident's Management Company control of Parks, Play areas and Greenspaces:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Medium Term -
 - Review the legal mechanisms and basis for Residents Management Company owned park, play area and greenspace sites to ensure they safeguard an adequate quality of provision on an ongoing basis and maximise the potential for successful enforcement actions should those be needed in the worst case scenario

Other Private Sector ownership

It is worth noting a related form of provision to Residents Management Companies also exists where some private commercial developments make publicly accessible greenspace available as part of development proposals.

The Borough has a longstanding example of this, in the form of the Prologis Country Park, and an upcoming example associated with the EMP2 Wilson Lane commercial

allocation/consent which includes a similar provision to Prologis Country Park albeit smaller in scale.

Such provision can bring valuable additional recreational greenspace provision but again NBBC has minimal influence over the management of such provision. It is recommended that a review is undertaken of the legal basis on which such provisions are made, the vulnerability of any provision being withdrawn.

Next Steps on other private sector owned parks and greenspaces:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Medium Term -
 - Develop and then maintain positive contact with the managing organisations for such provision – emphasising the significant value of the provision to residents and remain alert to any circumstances where joint / joined up actions could further enhance the value of these resources for residents whilst remaining alert to the ultimately private nature of the ownerships

Interaction with sports provision, clubs, and the Playing Pitch Strategy

The Council sometimes grants licenses, community use agreements, and leases to community groups, particularly sports clubs, to provide security of tenure for investment in facilities and pursuit of grant funding. This reduces maintenance burdens and allows clubs to attract grant funds not accessible to councils. However, sites must remain multi-functional, serving as key Community Parks, not private sports grounds.

To balance space usage, spatial plans are proposed, visually allocating areas for sports use and wider recreational activities. These plans, incorporated into agreements, establish the balance between sports use and other park functions. Initially prepared internally, they may later be developed with external design input.

It is also logical for the community use and any licence and lease agreements with clubs to have a common and consistent format – with a standard template to be used so that any lessons learned etc and other reasons leading to adjustment of agreements the get applied to all future such agreements. All such agreements will logically be held together in a single

reference folder location, so all officers involved access them as needed whilst interacting with the clubs.

Next Steps on interaction with Sports provision, Clubs and the Playing Pitch Strategy:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):
 - Short Term - Commit going forward that all sites where new or amended leases / licenses are agreed with sports clubs will first be subject to concept plan preparation and that licences, leases and club led facility development projects will proceed subject to aligning with the concept plan and that the concept plan will be included / referenced in all relevant documents that the sports clubs form a party to

Chapter 20: Tools Supporting Improvement

Cross cutting tools to support improvement of Quality across Parks and Greenspace Provision:

Green Flag Criteria Assessment:

The parks department has not actively pursued Green Flag awards in the past, but they have used the award criteria to assess park quality and identify areas for improvement. Instead of focusing on winning awards, they have prioritised improving all parks to meet minimum standards and addressing weaknesses. This approach saves time and resources, allowing them to focus on essential health, safety, and infrastructure management. Due to reduced staff resources, the annual self-assessment against Green Flag criteria was paused, but it can now resume with current staffing levels. This assessment will help inform investment decisions and track progress, building on previous site audits.

Next Steps on role of Green Flag criteria assessment:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term - recommence annual self-assessment reviews of progress on all significant recreational park and greenspace sites against Green Flag Park criteria

Concept Plans:

Concept plans outline infrastructure development proposals for parks, balancing various uses within limited space. These plans consider recreational areas, play facilities, fitness equipment, sports courts, paths, trees, parking, and wildlife habitats.

By spatially mapping out these elements, concept plans ensure a balanced mix of uses and provide a clear path for phased implementation as funds become available. Plans are being developed for all recreational greenspace sites, with Riversley Park and Miners Welfare Park already having plans created through extensive public consultation. Whittleford Park's plan is also in progress.

For Community Parks, internal plans have been useful in allocating space for general recreation, play, and sports, especially where sports clubs have licence agreements with

NBBC. Over time further Community Park (and Community Wildspace) plans will be prepared and it is intended to involve Ward Members in reviewing the detail of each plan.

In the longer-term plans would also be prepared for the Local Parks and Local Wilds Spaces.

Management Plans:

Management Plans are a broader document. They include the site concept plans but would capture multiple other aspects of site management. As well as briefly documenting how the site has developed over time to have the current layout, landscape form and management - the document will primarily assess a sites strengths and weaknesses using the Green Flag criteria as a basis for that analysis. An action plan with Short Term, Medium Term and Longer-Term actions will be set out covering more day-to-day aspects of management and the sort of infrastructure development aspects captured in the concept plan for the site.

Again, it is anticipated that Ward Members would be involved in the process of preparing the plans and then comment would also be invited from relevant community groups and the wider public

Next Steps on role of concept plans and management plans:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term - commit to development of concept plans for all Destination, community and Local Parks with prioritisation of Destination and Community Parks first and of sites where capital funds are available and multiple potentially competing uses occupy the finite amount of space.

Commit to the development of management plans for all Destination, community and Local Parks with prioritisation of Destination and Community Parks first and of sites where user groups and community groups are actively involved in the site.

Chapter 21: Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnerships

It makes sense for NBBC and the Parks and Greenspace service to partner strategically. By working together with other groups, they can use their time and sometimes funding more efficiently. This helps avoid doing the same work twice and can achieve more than working alone.

Existing Local Nature Partnership

The Parks and Greenspace team already have a long standing and active partnership with other Local authorities in the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull sub-region seeking mutually effective and efficient co-ordination of resources and effort to help minimise loss of biodiversity and to also retain and enhance biodiversity.

The partnership includes mutual local authority funding of the Habitat Biodiversity Audit / Natural Capital Audit team that undertake update surveys of habitat and of potential and designated Local Wildlife Sites – with all the data provided to the authorities as GIS (Geographic Information System) layers that allow us to demonstrate up to date and adequate data to carry out this authority's development control and Local Plan functions.

Other joint working and co-ordination covers the development of additional data resources and cross boundary projects that target e.g. river catchments, areas of specific habitat or species concentrations etc and other bodies including the Environment Agency and Canals and Rivers Trust etc also form part of the partnership.

A specific future activity that will draw on much of this partnership's previous work will be the preparation of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) across the sub-region and its component districts - with that work to be led by Warwickshire County Council on the instruction of - and through funding provided by DEFRA. The detail of this is covered in the biodiversity specific section of this Strategy.

Habitat Biodiversity Audit and Local Wildlife Site partnership working:

NBBC (along with all other local authorities in the Warwickshire Coventry and Solihull sub regio has a longstanding partnership to jointly fund habitat biodiversity survey work and Local Wildlife Site (LWS) survey work to ensure Development Control, Planning Policy and other local authority processes and policies can be adequately informed by up-to-date ecological information.

The joint funding across the sub-region leads to significant economies of scale for each authority and the 'Natural Capital Assessment Partnership' team are employed by

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and hosted by Warwickshire County Council again resulting in economies of scale.

The quality and depth over time of information resulting from that partnership is nationally recognised and places the sub region's authorities in a strong position to next develop the required Local Nature Recovery Strategy under the Environment Act and to address the enhanced NERC Act biodiversity reporting duty that each authority will have to report progress nationally and locally on.

The Natural Capital Assessment Partnership team also have the flexibility to provide other Biodiversity duties and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) related services within the scope of the agreements with each authority.

NBBC will continually review the Natural Capital Assessment Partnership with the funding partners to maximise the benefits of the partnership to each authority to enable the authorities to continue to comply with the multiple legislative biodiversity duties that are placed on each authority.

SLA (Service Level Agreement) for ecological services with WCC (Warwickshire County Council):

At the time of writing NBBC's Planning Service has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with WCC to provide ecological comment on development control applications. This work is likely to increase significantly in scale and complexity with the introduction of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and the mandatory 10% net gain requirement from January 2024 (major applications) and April 24 (minor applications).

As such it is anticipated this service will require increased capacity and that the Planning Service will review the funding basis to ensure a full recovery of costs from applicants whereas at present some of these costs are being met by DEFRA transition funding.

Partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust

The Parks and Greenspace Service also works in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust – buying in Wildlife Trust officer time to lead NBBC's weekly Thursday Conservation Volunteer Group which delivers a wide range of wildlife habitat enhancement and public access improvement works on Nuneaton and Bedworth's Wildspace sites – enabling over 2000 hours per annum of such activity.

The Trust is looking to increase its presence and visibility in the Borough – with it currently lacking any Wildlife Trust Reserves within the Borough. The Trust is piloting public engagement work in the Borough through a grant funded outreach project and NBBC will liaise with the Trust as this work progresses and develops.

Partnership in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain may also be possible with the Wildlife Trust setting up an arm's length body to deliver BNG services including habitat baseline and monitoring services supporting landowners and local authorities buying in those services and promoting offset units those landowners have for sale. The arm's length body will also look to acquire land and deliver units offset units in its own right.

NBBC will continually review the possibilities for partnership with the Trust in regard to BNG services as these new markets develop with the introduction on national mandatory BNG

Canals and Rivers Trust (CRT):

NBBC co-ordinates on an occasional basis with CRT primarily in relation to planning applications where open space and/or active travel routes interact with the canal corridor and towpath.

NBBC and CRT have many shared objectives in terms of ecology and recreational usage of the canal corridors; for cycling and pedestrians. The Borough also contains significant canal lengths and resources in the form of the north–south Coventry Canal running the full length of the Borough connecting the main conurbations of Nuneaton and Bedworth respectively and the east-west Ashby Canal section passing north of Bulkington and linking to Hinckley.

The canals are also an identified stronghold of Water Vole populations within Warwickshire along with other minor watercourses in the Borough.

As such NBBC should continue to sustain, and as capacity allows further develop, interaction and partnership with CRT covering recreational usage, ecology, and landscape.

Environment Agency (EA) and WCC as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA):

NBBC shares corporate objectives with the Environment Agency (EA) concerning ecology, landscape, and recreation, particularly regarding rivers like the Anker and parts of the Sowe. While the EA does not typically own river corridor land, it has responsibilities for flood relief, prevention, and water quality. NBBC should maintain contact with the EA for potential partnerships and mutual benefits from joint efforts.

Similarly, NBBC interacts with Warwickshire County Council (WCC) as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). LLFAs (Lead Local Flood Authority) manage consent for works affecting flood management outside the EA's jurisdiction. NBBC and WCC's shared objectives lead to aligned approaches and therefore collaboration opportunities.

WCC (Warwickshire County Council) Public Health Team / Health Service / NHS partnership:

Recent training for Health Impact Assessment and Health Equity Assessment tools has been useful in helping to consider how to maximise health impacts within Park and Greenspace team activity and policy.

It is certain given the close connections between access to greenspace and physical and mental health and well-being that further joint working with Health professionals would be a beneficial avenue of partnership working to develop.

Next Steps on Strategic Partnerships:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term –
 - Participate fully in WCC led preparation of mandatory Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) along with Planning Service colleagues
 - Continue to support the Local Nature Partnership fully who's activity / importance will likely increase with LNRS and continue to fund the Habitat Biodiversity Audit / Natural Capital Auditing team jointly with all other sub-regional authorities to achieve economies of scale in having up to date information to inform Planning policies, decisions and LNRS work
 - Support the Planning Service's use and development of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with WCC to provide planning ecology comment services

- Medium Term -
 - Further develop and regularly review partnership working with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust where mutually beneficial outcomes can be achieved including the weekly Thursday Conservation Volunteers group and further opportunities in relation to site and habitat management and also biodiversity offset provision within the Borough both by NBBC and through offsite developer contributions
 - Further develop links with health professionals to explore joint working on initiatives that increase use of parks benefitting mental and physical health and well being

Next Steps on Strategic Partnerships:

- Other actions to undertake in years 5-10, 10 – 15 or beyond the life of the strategy - *(An annual review will be undertaken of whether it is appropriate to include any such additional actions within the Parks and Countryside Team annual business plan as capacity exists to include them):*

- Long Term -
 - Review and develop relationship with the Canals and Rivers Trust - exploring opportunities for enhanced partnership working in relation to recreational greenspace access, active travel routes and biodiversity
 - Sustain and review relationships with the Environment Agency (EA) and Warwickshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to help maximise positive outcomes in relation to biodiversity, landscape and where appropriate recreational access in relation to watercourses and main rivers

Working with residents and with community groups and clubs:

Residents and community groups play a vital role in maintaining and enhancing local parks and greenspaces. NBBC aims to facilitate their involvement while balancing their input with the council's expertise and resources.

Residents and groups may have varying levels of engagement, from occasional reporting of issues to taking on responsibility for specific activities on a site. NBBC provides appropriate channels for engagement based on the level of involvement desired by residents and groups.

For those interested in occasional reporting, clear routes for contacting NBBC are provided through onsite signage and online platforms, such as the NBBC website or social media channels. Public consultations are conducted for significant park development projects, allowing residents to provide feedback.

Community groups and clubs are encouraged to engage with NBBC, whether through general community organisations or specific interest groups. NBBC offers support for activities such as litter picks and one-off events, ensuring safety and compliance with regulations.

For ongoing involvement, such as taking responsibility for activities or proposing physical changes to sites, formal agreements like licences or leases are required. These agreements outline responsibilities, liabilities, and insurance requirements, ensuring clarity and accountability.

NBBC encourages groups to work with park development plans and provides support through Warwickshire and Solihull Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA) for governance and grant applications.

Parks and Greenspace have begun to develop a written protocol for circumstances where groups wish to enter a legally binding contract (ranging from a licence to a lease) setting out the detailed requirements for such arrangements and the necessary capabilities and competencies of groups entering such arrangements including training requirements in relation to risk assessment, safeguarding and assessment.

Next Steps on Working with the Public, Sports Clubs and Community Groups:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term –
 - Wherever financially possible progress provision of site signage in accordance with the site signage strategy to ensure readily available routes for residents to make enquiries about sites and to report problems
 - The Parks and Greenspace team should continue to undertake a proportionate level of public consultation on park and greenspace development projects particularly those of the most significant scale and impact. Particular prioritisation of digital web-based routes will be appropriate but other means of contact should be supported for those with limited or no internet access.
 - Area Greenspace Officers should sustain and develop contacts / working relationships with local residents associations, clubs using sites for sport and related activities and community groups as well as individual residents to help consider such views as part of site management - but also balancing any one such group or individuals input with that of other groups and also with members of the public - often the majority - who are not represented by a particular club / specialist interest group etc
 - Going forward NBBC Parks and Greenspace should only reach licence or lease agreements with community groups to take on site responsibilities where such arrangements are fully aligned with the adopted protocol for working with Community Groups - including the groups having undertaken all relevant identified training and having committed to agreed management and concept / development plans for the site

- Where long leases to clubs or community groups are under consideration the greatest care should be taken in assessing such proposals and arrangements before entering into them and ensuring the long term interests of the public as a whole are safeguarded rather than the particular priorities of a club or group dominating and impacting the sites ability to continue to benefit the public as a whole.

Making long term spatial commitments through leases is the most serious and significant step that can be taken with a piece of land which can then impact over the long term NBBC's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and needs and ability to invest in its own site in the interests of the public as a whole.

- Regularly review digital routes to make contact including council website content and use of web-based reporting routes such as Fix My Street to ensure contact and problem reporting is as easy as possible and that prompt / timely contact handling and responses are achieved

Interaction with Planning Process

The Parks and Greenspace Service has significant interaction with the Council's Development Control service and with the Planning Policy team. Historically the Parks and Greenspace team have been a source of ecological advice and comment for the Development Control process and have contributed to the development of Planning Policies, but this role is increasingly delivered through the commissioning of services from Warwickshire County Council's ecology unit.

As such the main remaining focus going forward will be the provision of input and comment in relation to the provision of recreational open space on-site within developments and through off-site contributions

We will additionally continue to be involved in the process of adoption of open space were sought by the developer and will provide technical advice on the degree to which open space that is to be transferred to Resident's Management Companies is 'practically complete' to the technical standards agreed and shown in approved drawings for the open space / greenspace provision.

We are also likely to be needed to provide technical advice to Planning Enforcement in relation to any Resident's Management Company maintained open spaces in the future that are seen to be failing in terms of e.g. maintenance standards, inspections and repairs etc as

the number of such pieces of open space increase significantly within the Borough in the coming years.

Parks and Greenspace also provide a significant level of comment and technical advice in relation to tree and arboricultural matters in relation to development control, but this aspect is discussed further in the separate Tree Strategy that is being prepared at the same time as the preparation of this Parks and Greenspace Strategy.

Next Steps on Interaction with the Planning Process:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Due to recent Service Level Agreement with WCC to provide ecological comment focus effort on recreational greenspace provision comments - and where geographically appropriate on off-site contributions toward Park and Greenspace provision
 - Continue to provide technical advisory support to Planning Service in regard to assessing practical and final completion of on-site open space

Biodiversity, Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Strategy highlights the importance of biodiversity conservation and the need for action in response to national and international concerns about declining habitats and species. While NBBC has not yet declared an Ecological Emergency, there is recognition of the urgent need to address biodiversity loss.

The 25-year Environment Plan and the 2021 Environment Act have introduced enhanced duties for local authorities, including the requirement to secure 10% net gain in biodiversity from new developments. NBBC, as a local authority, is tasked with implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which will involve strategic approaches to habitat and species conservation.

The LNRS will address various means of reversing habitat and species decline, with district authorities like NBBC playing a role in its implementation. While the County Council leads the development of the LNRS, district authorities are expected to support its delivery. NBBC will need to allocate resources and consider how to implement the LNRS recommendations

effectively.

Next Steps on Biodiversity, Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategy:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - First review of Biodiversity activities to promote Nature Recovery and address new BNG duties due 1st January 2025
 - Participate fully in preparation of LNRS by WCC as lead authority
 - Continue discussions with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust about potential BNG offset delivery partnership working
 - Continue to deliver offsetting on NBBC land where NBBC has already legally committed to act as an offset provider
 - Encourage WCC registration with DEFRA as a 'Responsible Body' in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain to enable NBBC to provide offsets on its own land where 105 net gain cannot be achieved on land being used for an NBBC corporate development project
 - Cease to act as a BNG offset provider other than for NBBC corporate development projects - due to limited remaining capacity to provide offsets on NBBC land and to significant additional administrative burden per offset under new mandatory system

- Medium Term –
 - Support Planning Service preparation of detailed report on LNRS findings in relation to Borough once LNRS creation is concluded by WCC
 - Begin implementation of LNRS actions where applicable to NBBC land managed by the Parks and Greenspace team
 - Support Planning Service reporting under new Biodiversity duties and against LNRS actions and targets

Chapter 22: Equal Access for All

Disability and Equality:

The Parks and Greenspace Service have had no specific data to draw on in the past in relation to access and quality of provision for those with disabilities until the Strategy audit work was undertaken.

Within the strategy audit work two of the sets of audit criteria included review of access and quality taking the needs of those with disabilities into account. Whilst this is still a limited degree of audit work and does not get into 'granular' levels of detail per site it is a useful start and gives an indication of how well sites and facilities are performing in this regard.

Regrettably, performance is poor at many sites although this is driven by a wide range of underlying factors.

The first audit map below helps illustrate how the auditor's scored performance in regard to access for those with disabilities within the overall Green Flag Parks assessment of each park and greenspace.

The second plan helps show performance when this aspect was assessed per play area as part of the Play England Play Quality Assessment tool:

Green Flag Scoring Equal Access for All (lower two bandings shown)

Local Formal Park (LFP)

- 2 - Sterling Way
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 11 - Clovelly Way
- 12 - The Long Shoot
- 13 - Coronation Walk
- 14 - Inchford Close
- 15 - Blackberry Lane
- 18 - Cornish Crescent
- 19 - Haunchwood Recreation Ground
- 20 - Collycroft Rec. / Alec Wilson
- 24 - Chaucer Drive
- 25 - Marston Lane Recreation Ground
- 29 - Ironbridge Way
- 30 - Churchfields
- 31 - Kingswood Road Recreation Ground
- 32 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 33 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 36 - Anderton Road Recreation Ground
- 38 - Sidings Pool

Local Wildspace (LW)

- 47 - Lingmoor Park
- 49 - Horestone Grange Woodlands Walk E.A.
- 50 - Anker Mills
- 51 - Windmill Hill
- 53 - Fusilliers Rest
- 55 - Barnacle Lane
- 56 - The Dumbles
- 57 - Red Deeps
- 58 - Brooke Lane Pony Field
- 59 - Wharf Meadows

Community Formal Park (CFP)

- 61 - Crowhill
- 62 - Pauls Land
- 63 - Greenmoor Road
- 64 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 65 - Sandon Park
- 69 - Johnson Road
- 70 - Tiverton Drive
- 72 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 75 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 77 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 78 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 80 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground

Community Wildspace (CW)

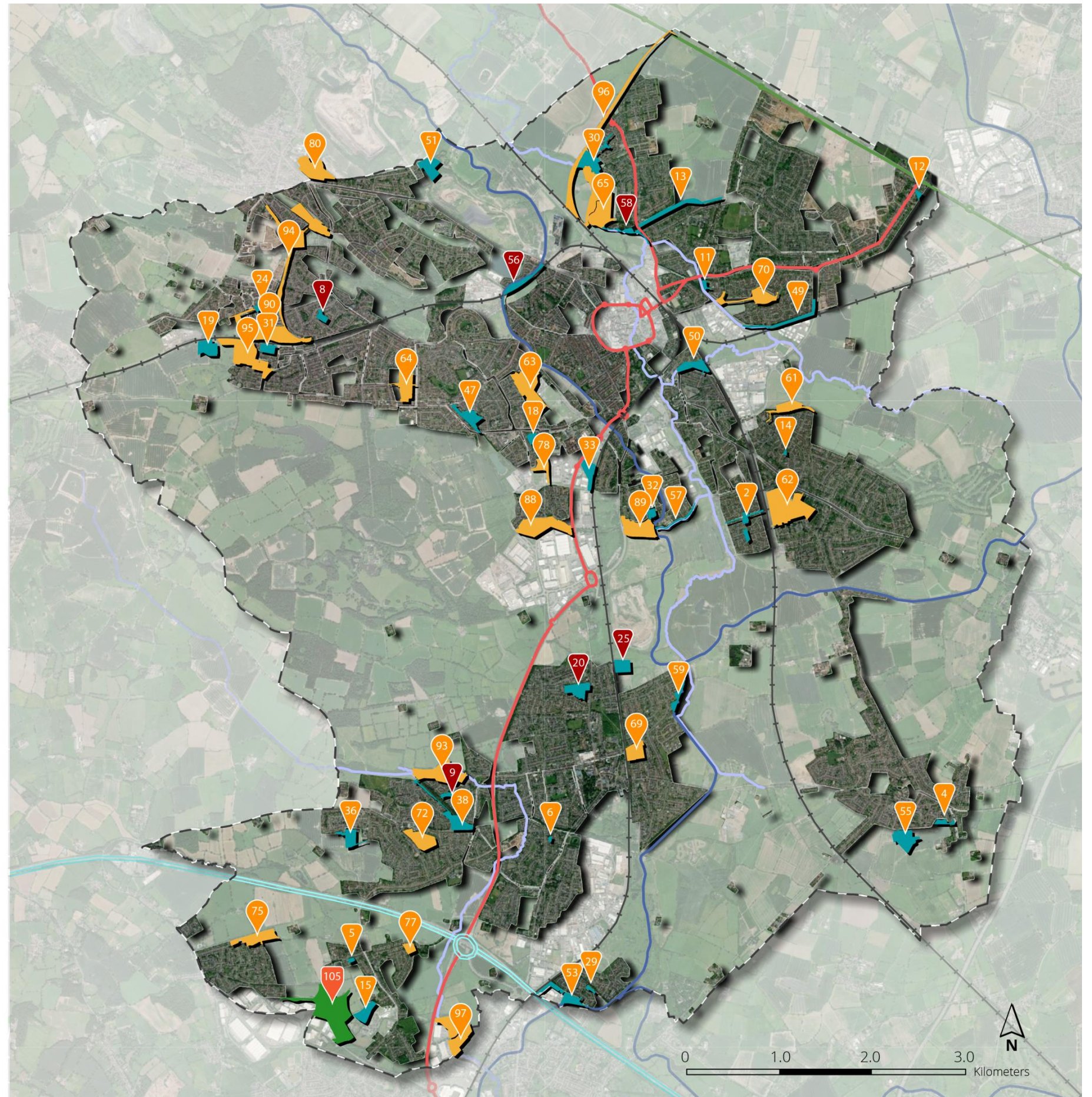
- 88 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 89 - Griff Hollows
- 90 - Whytell Pool
- 93 - The Nook
- 94 - Shuntings/Nuneaton Common
- 95 - Kingswood and Kingswood Meadows
- 96 - Weddington Walk and Meadows
- 97 - Sowe Meadows

Destination Country Park (DCP)

- 105 - Prologis Country Park

KEY

- Residential Built-up Area
- Poor - Green Flag Score
- Borough Boundary
- Very Poor - Green Flag Score
- ⚓ Railway
- ⚓ Local Parks (LFP and LW)
- A Road
- ⚓ Community Parks (CFP and CW)
- Trunk Road
- ⚓ Destination Parks (DFP and DCP)
- Motorway
- Canal
- River, Channel and Brook



Play england scoring - Inclusion of disabled children scoring

LOCAL PLAY

- 1 - Heath Road Recreation Ground
- 2 - Sterling Way
- 3 - Montana Walk
- 4 - Brewer Road
- 5 - New Road
- 6 - Rectory Close
- 7 - Freesland Rise
- 8 - Sherbourne Avenue
- 9 - The Alders
- 10 - Clovelly Way
- 11 - The Long Shoot
- 12 - Coronation Walk
- 13 - Inchford Close
- 14 - Jelson - Longshoot
- 15 - Ribbonfields Upper Park
- 16 - Chaucer Drive
- 17 - Barrats/David Wilson - Woolpack Drive
- 18 - Lilleburne Drive
- 19 - Ironbridge Way
- 20 - Churchfields
- 21 - Sorrell Road Recreation Ground
- 22 - Middlemarch Recreation Ground
- 23 - Attleborough Recreation Ground
- 24 - Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground
- 25 - Marlborough Road Recreation Ground
- 26 - Sidings Pool
- 34 - Orford Rise
- 40 - Sandon Park
- 42 - Heath End Road
- 64 - Thorntons Way
- 67 - Marston Lane Play Area
- 69 - Rannoch Drive
- 71 - Hartshill Hayes Country Park

COMMUNITY PLAY

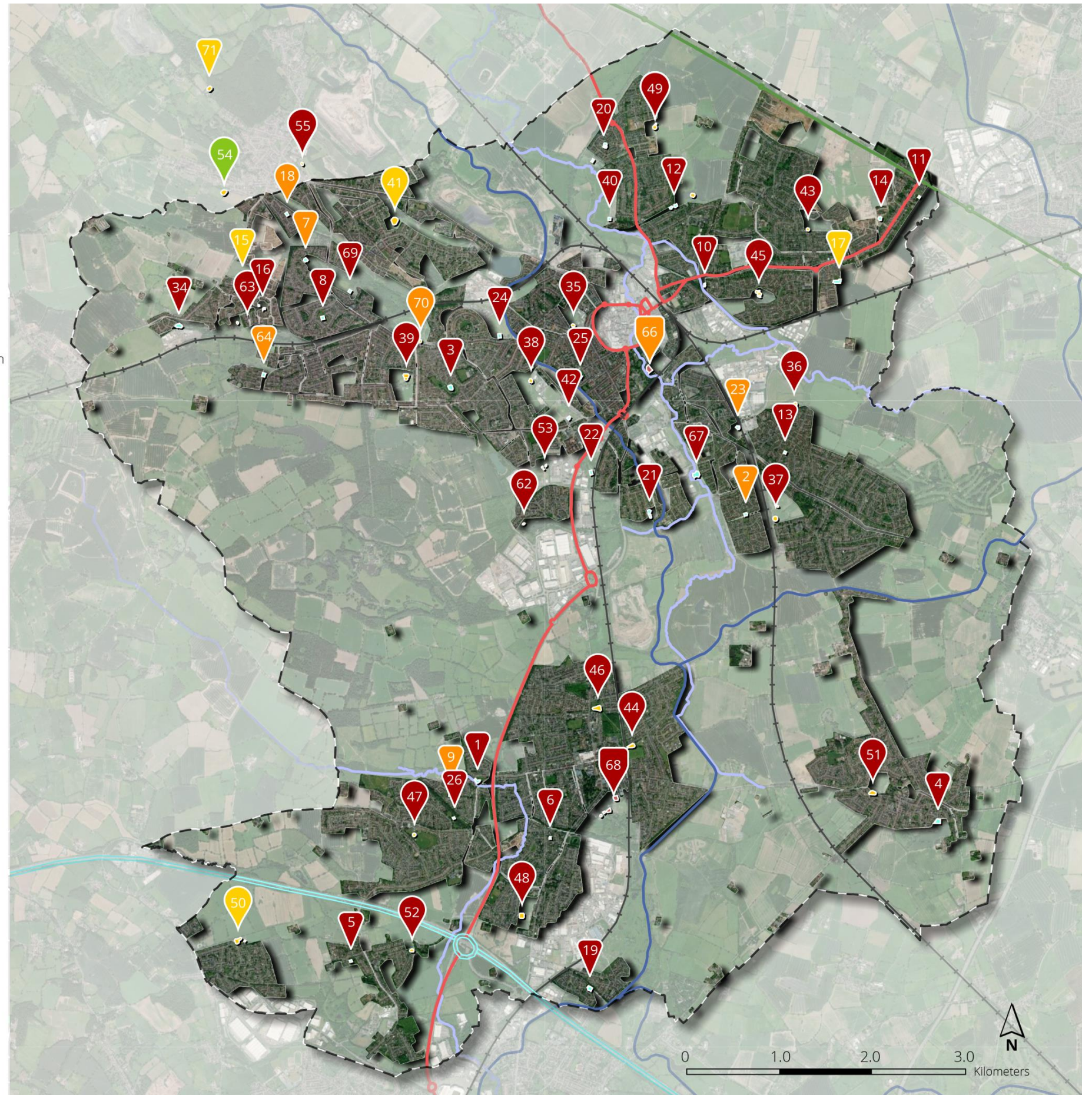
- 35 - Nuneaton Recreation Ground
- 36 - Crowhill
- 37 - Pauls Land
- 38 - Greenmoor Road
- 39 - Stockingford Recreation Ground
- 41 - The Dingle
- 43 - Buttermere
- 44 - Johnson Road
- 45 - Tiverton Drive
- 46 - Bailey Park
- 47 - Newdigate Road Recreation Ground
- 48 - Heckley Recreation Ground
- 49 - Lower Farm + Barratts Weddington
- 50 - Keresley Recreation Ground
- 51 - Bulkington Recreation Ground
- 52 - St. Giles Recreation Ground
- 53 - Bermuda 'Phoenix' Park
- 54 - Bretts Hall Estate Recreation Ground
- 55 - Snowhill (Hartshill) Recreation Ground
- 62 - Bermuda Balancing Lake
- 63 - Whytell Pool
- 70 - Vale View

DESTINATION PLAY

- 66 - Riversley Park
- 68 - Miners Welfare Park

KEY

- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|------------------|--|-----------|
| | Residential Built-up Area | | Local Play | | Good |
| | Borough Boundary | | Community Play | | Fair |
| | Railway | | Destination Play | | Poor |
| | A Road | | | | Very Poor |
| | Trunk Road | | | | |
| | Motorway | | | | |
| | Canal | | | | |
| | River, Channel and Brook | | | | |



Analysis

Whilst there are some differing specifics to how the auditors would make these assessments between the two sets of quality assessment criteria there is a common thread of inferior performance.

There are also significant commonalities in the main weaknesses across sites and specifically within play areas:

- Access to move around within sites and to reach play areas was sometimes poor in terms of paths surfaces
- Sometimes physical obstacles such as motorcycle deterrents made access difficult for those with physical disabilities
- In play areas there was a general lack of equipment that could be easily used by those with disabilities. There was a lack of sensory equipment

Ways to move forward:

Commissioning of more detailed audits per site focussing on the needs of those with disabilities would be a logical next step to start to better address these issues.

Officers can ensure these design aspects are given specific attention in design briefs and that specific consideration then reflected in submitted business cases

In terms of signage, it may be possible to start to include sign language visual symbol-based signage and communication panels – e.g. using Makaton symbols and such work could be taken forward with groups that support those with disabilities as well as drawing on published good practice and exemplar projects around the country.

Next Steps on Disability and Equality:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Going forward all play area capital schemes and park capital works schemes to always formally review and state how / whether the scheme can contribute to improved access for those with disabilities and as a minimum demonstrate causing no additional detriment or creation of additional barriers to such access
- Medium Term –
 - To set out a programme of disability access audits of all recreational greenspaces and play areas to be undertaken over time as funding permits to help better inform site development plans, capital projects and day to day management
 - To review the use of motorcycle deterrents and access controls at site entrances and to develop and adopt a formal policy on their use – taking into account disability and equalities legislation and also risk management of the significant hazard posed by motorbikes accessing paths within Parks, Play Areas and Greenspaces
 - Develop standard symbol-based communication board signage for use in play areas by those with special needs and their carers and then consistently provide them in new play areas and during significant capital investments into existing play areas

Chapter 23: Park and Greenspace Memorials

Memorialisation

Parks and Greenspaces have historically been used for memorialisation, particularly in relation to noteworthy events, such as war memorials and notable individuals. More recently memorialisation of other individuals has been increasingly desired also by residents, in the form of benches, bench plaques and planting of trees. Current trends are also emerging toward the creation of temporary and long term 'shrines' where flowers, cards, and mementoes etc are placed sometimes in association with memorial benches and trees.

These memorialisation activities whilst important in terms of emotional wellbeing have spatial impacts on parks and greenspaces and affect visitors overall experience of using parks and greenspaces. Despite this no clear policy has been developed or put in place to shape and regulate what is or is not permitted.

As such a memorialisation policy should be developed. It is anticipated the policy will cover where memorialisation is spatially appropriate and what forms of memorialisation are suitable, with a strong emphasis on limiting the locations in which this takes place to defined locations within formal Destination Parks. It will also focus memorialisation upon noteworthy events, individuals and civic / civil society groups.

Defining who are notable individuals and what are noteworthy events will be a matter for political decision, bearing in mind that there can only be a finite capacity of room for memorials in formal Destination Parks. Parks are not primarily to serve as memorials; they cater for the leisure and recreation of the wider public.

Whilst temporary 'shrine' creation may be unavoidable this needs a defined end point, and cemeteries are logically the most appropriate location for and focus for individual memorialisation. If longer term individual memorialisation is contemplated by the policy within parks and greenspace it may appropriately be restricted to multi-plaque memorials in the same parks and the same general location as the civic memorialisation.

An issue partly covered in Chapter 17 of this strategy is the approach to naming park and greenspace sites. That section commits to always naming sites park and greenspace sites with the name used by most residents (if the site name is not inappropriate / offensive).

That approach must also apply in terms of memorialisation. It is not appropriate to use the names of sites as a means of memorialisation for individuals. Such naming would always sit at odds with the name used by residents for the site - causing confusion when problems are being reported – and would risk creating a tension with residents rather than encouraging a sense of ownership of the park and greenspace in question. Similarly, the naming of parts of sites as a form of memorialisation is not appropriate going forward for sites whose primary purpose is recreational enjoyment and leisure.

Next Steps on Memorialisation:

- Key actions to undertake during the life of the Strategy (*Preparation of the annual business plan for the Parks and Greenspace team will determine which actions are included in which years as capacity exists to include them*):

- Short Term -
 - Develop and adopt a formal policy covering memorialisation in Parks and Greenspaces

Chapter 24: Development of policy documents

Various sections of this Strategy identify the need for the development of related adopted policy documents to give Parks and Greenspace team members clear reference points within which certain decisions can be made.

Some areas for policy development do not strongly feature in this document as strategic matters but still would be appropriately supported by policy documents:

These policy areas and status can be summarised as follows:

Policy Area		Issues to be addressed	Current Policy Status
Working with Community Groups and Clubs			Informal policy?
Memorialisation within Parks and Greenspaces for individuals and groups			Under development
Enhancing the personal safety of park and greenspace users			Not developed
Use of motorcycle deterrents and access controls			Not developed

Chapter 25: Actions and Targets

Summary of Actions / Targets and Prioritisation

The annual service Parks and Greenspace Business Plan will allocate set delivery timescales for identified strategy actions on a rolling basis as progress is made - working generally through from the short term to medium term and longer terms targets but with ongoing review of the relative priorities, of changes in circumstances and of opportunities that may have emerged since the strategy was adopted.

Strategy implementation via Annual Business Plan for Service:

Whilst the Strategy sets out a general prioritisation for each 'Next Steps' set of actions the specific timescales for implementation will be set by the Parks and Greenspace team's Annual Business Plan drawing on the Strategy and previous progress made against the Strategy 'Next Steps.'

The Parks and Greenspace Annual Business Plan combines required annual activity to deliver Corporate BABB (Building a Better Borough) Plan targets with a range of Service level annual targets.

From the publication of this Strategy forward the majority of Service level annual targets will be linked back directly to the relevant strategy sections to ensure targeted progress is made on the Strategy 'Next Steps.'

Parks and Greenspace team members will also then be able to see how personal annual targets discussed and set during Personal Development Reviews tie back directly into the Strategy - giving a surrounding context to the targets and the underpinning strategic motivation leading to the targets.

Monitoring and Review:

An annual review of progress against all Strategy 'Next Steps' will be carried out and recorded at the time the Parks and Greenspace Team's Annual Business Plan is being prepared

An in-depth review of progress will be carried out in 2029 - 5 years into the 10-year Strategy period and this will include checking whether data that underpinned the strategy still has sufficient 'currency' at that point or whether changes in circumstances and facts on the ground mean some changes may be needed to the Strategies original findings, conclusions and proposed actions.

