

Draft

**CANTERBURY DISTRICT
OPEN SPACE
STRATEGY
2023 TO 2040**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| PART 1: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| PART 2: CONTEXT REVIEW | 2 |
| PART 3: SUMMARY OF OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT | 7 |
| PART 4: VISION AND AIMS | 13 |
| PART 5: OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS | 14 |
| APPENDIX ONE: SITES RATING JUST BELOW QUALITY THRESHOLD | 24 |
| APPENDIX TWO: DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS | 25 |
| APPENDIX THREE: STRATEGIC/MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SITES | 27 |
| APPENDIX FOUR: ALTERNATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS APPROACH | 28 |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
|--|--|--|

Glossary

| | |
|-------|--|
| CCC | Canterbury City Council |
| DDA | Disability Discrimination Act |
| DLUHC | Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities |
| DPD | Development Plan Document |
| FIT | Fields in Trust |
| FOG | Friends of Group |
| GIS | Geographical Information Systems |
| KKP | Knight, Kavanagh and Page |
| LDF | Local Development Framework |
| LNR | Local Nature Reserve |
| MHCLG | Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government |
| MUGA | Multi-use Games Area (an enclosed area with a hard surface for variety of informal play) |
| NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| NSALG | National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners |
| ONS | Office of National Statistics |
| OSNA | Open Space Needs Assessment |
| PPG | Planning Practice Guidance |
| PPS | Playing Pitch Strategy |
| SOA | Super Output Areas |
| SPD | Supplementary Planning Document |
| SSSI | Site of Special Scientific Interest |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
|--|--|--|

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Open Space Strategy for Canterbury City Council (CCC). It provides a summary to the findings of the research, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping undertaken as part of the Open Space Assessment.

The strategy itself helps to inform direction on the future provision of accessible, high quality, sustainable provision of open spaces across Canterbury district. It includes a series of aims and objectives to inform the priorities for open space provision in order to help address current and future needs.

Starting in November 2022, the Open Space Strategy and Assessment was part of the Local Plan Reg 18 consultation, which ran for 12 weeks. We learnt a lot from the consultation and have amended the strategy to reflect the feedback. In summary:

- 80% of respondents agreed to the draft OSS vision and of the three supporting aims, these received support ranging from 92%, 89% and 78% respectively.
- We tested an initial set open space objectives, to set out how we will be delivering the aims, which received an average of 79% support.

The consultation responses made it clear that there was the need to better reflect open space sites' significant contribution to biodiversity (such as Old Park and Chequers Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest) and links to other related workstreams. This has been addressed through changes to the vision, aims and objectives.

This backing for the Open Space Strategy's vision, aims and objectives demonstrates the importance of public open spaces to local communities and users.

Public open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as being "any land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground".

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area. The strategy is therefore a key supporting document to the local plan process.

Open spaces contribute to the health, well-being, cultural heritage, landscape, education, climate change mitigation, biodiversity and movement for people and wildlife. The document does not look to provide detail on all these topics but to act as a signpost to the more specific and detailed strategies which exist.

It reinforces the need to understand what open space provision exists and what the priorities and requirements are for the future. It also stresses the importance of opportunities to promote and explore links to other related strategies such as the Pollinator Plan, Tree and Hedgerow Strategy, Riverside Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy. This can help to strengthen linked and collective actions as well as maximising successful outcomes.

PART 2: CONTEXT REVIEW

It is important to recognise national and local strategies and documents to help understand the need, challenges, and benefits of open space provision.

2.1 Local

Canterbury City Council Corporate Plan (2021 - 2024)

Sets out the key priorities for the Council to reflect where it can make the biggest difference to people's everyday lives. The main priorities are to:

- Support the district's economy to recover then grow
- Deliver a better social housing service for our tenants
- Deliver better waste collection services for all residents
- Using our enforcement powers to protect the district

It recognises the role and function of supporting documents such as the Local Plan and Climate Change Action Plan in helping to achieve the Council's priorities. It also acknowledges the added challenges brought by the pandemic.

Relating to open spaces, it highlights that one of the Council's roles is in *providing leadership and fighting for the district*. This includes

- Being committed to the council achieving its carbon neutral ambitions by 2030 with our efforts being economically viable and timed to get best value for our residents.
- Recognise new housing developments need real open space that is close by to protect the health and wellbeing of residents. The Council should, within its powers, protect these spaces and work in partnership to enhance and maintain them.

Canterbury District Local Plan 2024 - 2040 (Reg 18).

The Draft Open Space Strategy is a supporting document of, and defers to, the Local Plan. It sets out how Canterbury will protect and enhance open space in the district.

The Canterbury District Local Plan is at Regulation 18 stage with public consultation taking place between March and May 2024.

This draft Open Space Strategy informs policy DS24: Publicly Accessible Open Space and provides evidence for the promotion of quantity and accessibility standards for inclusion in the adopted Local Plan.

The draft Local Plan sets out a positive vision for managing growth in the district to 2040, responding directly to often competing priorities, and provides a strategy for high-quality growth, which can deliver decisive improvements to our district's infrastructure while protecting and enhancing our unique natural and historic environments.

The draft Local Plan establishes 12 strategic objectives including the following covering open space interests:

“Protect and enhance our rich environment and valued landscapes, creating a network of green spaces, protecting and enhancing green gaps between settlements, supporting nature’s recovery and biodiversity and improving the health and wellbeing of our communities”.

The draft Local Plan recognises the need for the provision of a range of new open spaces and sports and recreation facilities, linked to housing provision and population growth, including a minimum of:

- a. 75ha of natural and semi natural open space
- a. 46ha of amenity open space (including green corridors)
- b. 15ha of parks and gardens
- c. 10ha of play facilities
- d. 279 allotment plots covering 7ha
- e. 16ha of accessible outdoor sports
- f. sports facilities to support new education provision
- g. Broad Oak Reservoir Country Park covering some 440ha

Policy DS24 - Publicly accessible open space and sports

Covering seven recognised typologies, DS24 - Publicly accessible open space and sports - is the key Local Plan policy that seeks to deliver the standards and actions as evidenced by this open space strategy and its supporting assessments. It provides detail on the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space requirements for development of over 7.4ha, between 3.5 and 7.4ha and developments below 3.4ha.

DS24 sets out the criteria for change of use for sports pitches, following Sport England's exceptions.

Quality standards for new open space provision are set out in section 5 (a-m) of policy DS24.

Canterbury District Green Infrastructure Strategy (2018-2031)

The Green Infrastructure Strategy sits alongside and supports the delivery of both CCC’s adopted Local Plan 2017 and Corporate Plan, both of which recognise the importance of environmental sustainability and the protection of Canterbury district’s outstanding natural assets. It brings together the objectives and actions of several CCC strategies, policy documents and evidence reports, including the Transport Strategy, the Riverside Strategy, the Open Spaces Strategy and the Landscape and Biodiversity Appraisal plus others.

Climate Change Action Plan (2020 - 2030)

Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, CCC has been working towards the achievement of net zero greenhouse gas emissions, building resilience to the risks of climate changes, and championing economic activity that delivers climate actions.

The action plan focuses on achieving tangible actions aligned with proven examples. It aims to ensure that CCC and the district make a positive contribution to the global effort. This includes potential projects that will best help reduce emissions across the district such as looking at reducing emissions relating to corporate buildings and transport.

As part of its multifunctional role, open space has the ability in helping to tackle wider social issues such as climate change.

Some open spaces may have the potential to accommodate greater resilience measures to climate change at a local level. This could include simple measures such as more tree planting and wildflower meadow creation to potentially help reduce CO2 levels, provide flood reduction, mitigate impacts of urban heat island effects, and poor air quality.

2.2 National

National Planning Policy Framework

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

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

Paragraph 98 of the NPPF establishes that access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and well-being. It states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite paragraph 99 of the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

Paragraph 148 states the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the

conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

National Planning Practice Guidance, (MHCLG)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and adds further context to the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). It is intended that the two documents should be read together.

The guidance determines that open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space. It is for local planning authorities to assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas. In carrying out this work, they should have regard to the duty to cooperate where open space serves a wider area.

National Design Guide

This Design Guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places as well as good design practices. It is part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance.

Nature and open spaces are recognised as critical contributors of well-designed places including the quality of places and people's quality of life. Attractive open space that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy including play, food production, recreation and sport, encourage physical activity and promote health, well-being and social inclusion.

Paragraphs 93 and 94 state open spaces should be designed to be high quality, robust and adaptable over time so they remain fit for purpose and are managed and maintained for continual use. This includes:

- A range of sizes and locations
- A variety of natural and designed landscapes for everyone, with different functions to suit a diverse range of needs
- Opportunities for formal and informal play, exercise and rest that are accessible to all and with no segregation
- Well-integrated drainage, ecology, shading, recreation and food production that achieve a biodiversity net gain as required by the 25 year Environment Plan
- Well-considered maintenance and management regimes based on an understanding of the costs for occupants or users.

Building for a Healthy Life

A design code to help improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods. It is intended to help focus the thoughts, discussions and efforts on the things that matter most when creating good places to live. Open space being recognised as a key component. The guide uses a 'traffic light' system to illustrate examples of good practice (green light) and poor practice (red light). Some of the good practice relevant to open space includes:

- Biodiversity net gain

- Movement and feeding corridors for wildlife
- Plans that identify and are specific about the character of new spaces, such as parks, woodland, allotments, wildflower meadows rather than public open space
- Create Park Run ready routes on larger developments and other ways to encourage physical activity and social interaction
- Capturing and managing water creatively and close to where it falls using features (e.g. rain gardens, permeable surfaces); allowing people to connect with water
- Create a habitat network providing residents with opportunities to interact with nature on a day to day basis.
- Provide natural surveillance opportunities
- Connected and accessible network of public open spaces with paths and other routes into and through
- Species rich grasslands
- Well considered management arrangements whether public or privately managed.

Public Health England

In October 2014 Public Health England (PHE) produced a plan to tackle low activity levels across the country. Along with making the case for physical activity, the plan identifies four areas where measures need to be taken at a national and local level:

- Active society: creating a social movement. Shifting social norms so that physical activity becomes a routine part of daily life.
- Moving professionals: activating networks of expertise. Making every contact with the health sector count to push the 'active' message and to deliver the message through other sectors including education, sports and leisure, transport and planning.
- Active environments: creating the right spaces. Making available and accessible appropriate environments that encourage people to be active every day.
- Moving at scale: scaling up interventions that make us active. Maximising existing assets that enable communities to be active.

Summary of context

The NPPF states Local Plans should reflect needs and priorities within a local community and be based on robust and current assessments of open spaces. Engaging residents to take up and retain a minimum or better level of physical literacy¹ and activity is a high priority for national government. For many people, open space/recreational activities have a key role to play in facilitating physical activity. Similarly, open space has an important role in many areas in contributing to climate change resilience. Therefore, ensuring that open space creates an active, climate resilient environment with suitable opportunities and good accessibility is important.

¹ Physical literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities

PART 3: SUMMARY OF OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Open Space Assessment details what open space provision exists, its distribution and overall quality. It analyses provision based on quantity, quality, and accessibility.

3.1 Overview

The Canterbury Open Space Assessment identifies 584 open space sites across the area which covers 4,173 hectares; this is equivalent to nearly 30 Hyde Parks. The largest contributor to provision is natural and semi natural (3,878 hectares). The totals include sites owned and managed by other parties and which are not solely owned by CCC. Consequently, CCC is not in control of the quality and/or future actions for all sites.

Table 3.1: Overview of all open space provision

| Open space typology | Number of sites | Total amount (hectares) ² |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Allotments | 23 | 27 |
| Amenity greenspace | 262 | 132 |
| Cemeteries/churchyards | 48 | 45 |
| Natural & semi-natural greenspace | 89 | 3,878 |
| Outdoor sports | 25 | 60 |
| Park and gardens | 14 | 18 |
| Provision for children & young people | 123 | 13 |
| Total | 584 | 4,173 |

Open space standards

To identify specific needs and deficits or surpluses of open space in a local area, provision standards focusing on Quantity and Accessibility are set.

Quantity: Are there enough spaces in the right places? Aimed at helping to establish areas of surplus and deficiency and, where appropriate, to understand the potential for alternative uses and/or key forms of provision.

Accessibility: Distance thresholds aimed at improving accessibility factors (e.g. so people can find and get to open spaces without undue reliance on using a car) and helping to identify potential areas with gaps in provision. Shown via maps.

² Rounded to the nearest whole number

The following tables detail the provision standards set by CCC, how this compares to up-to-date existing provision levels and national guidance (i.e. FIT guidance), and whether any adjustment to the CCC standards are required based on this comparison.

Provision standards have been increased where accessibility and quantity need to reflect the FIT guidance, which is widely recognised as best practise for open space standards for the majority of local authorities.

Table 3.1.2 Comparison of accessibility catchments

| Open space type | | CCC proposed (2024) | CCC current adopted | FIT guideline |
|--|------|---|---------------------|---------------|
| Parks & Gardens | | Destination (2,000m) Other (710m) | 2,000m | 710m |
| Amenity Greenspace/ Green corridors | | Recreation (710m) Other (480m) | 1,000m | 480m |
| Natural & Semi-natural | | Over 20 ha (2,000m) or Less 20 ha (720m) | 1,000m | 720m |
| Provision for children and young people* | LAP | 100m | 100m | 100m |
| | LEAP | 400m | 400m | 400m |
| | NEAP | 1,000m | 1,000m | 1,000m |
| Allotment | | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Outdoor sports | | n/a | 1,000m | 1,200m |
| Cemeteries | | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Civic space | | n/a | 1 per urban centre | n/a |

* Draft policy also sets a 20-minute drive time for destination play facilities

Table 3.1.3 Comparison of quantity standards

| Open space type | CCC proposed (2024) | CCC adopted | Current levels (2024) | FIT guideline |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| | Hectares per 1,000 population | | | |
| Parks & Gardens | 0.80 | 0.3 | 0.11 | 0.8 |
| Amenity Greenspace / Green corridors | 2.25 | 3.0 | 0.80 | 0.6 |
| Natural & Semi-natural | 4.00 | 4.0 | 23.45 | 1.8 |
| Provision for children and young people | LAP | 0.3 | 0.08 (0.07 for child) (0.01 for young people) | 0.25 (child) 0.30 (young people) |
| | LEAP | | | |
| | NEAP | | | |
| Allotment | 15 plots (0.375) | 15 plots | 0.16 | 0.25 |
| Outdoor sports | 0.87 (PPS to inform) | 0.87 | 0.36 | 1.6 |
| Cemeteries | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Civic space | n/a | 1 per urban centre | n/a | n/a |
| Total | 8.845 | 8.845 | 24.98 | 5.60 |

3.2 Quality and value

In accordance with best practice, certain types of open space have been assessed in terms of quality.

There is a mixed quality of open space, reflected in over half (56%) of sites scoring low quality. Proportionally there are more play provision and amenity greenspace sites to rate low for quality. For amenity, this is reflective of the range of sites within the typology.

Table 3.2.1: Quality ratings for assessed sites

| Analysis area | No. of sites | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| | Low | High |
| Amenity greenspace | 22 | 17 |
| Natural & semi-natural greenspace | 19 | 17 |
| Park and gardens | 5 | 9 |
| Provision for children & young people | 72 | 49 |
| Total | 118 | 92 |

Sites rating lower for quality often reflect a lack of ancillary features and facilities (e.g. seating, signage etc.) or access concerns. For play provision, this is often due to concerns with the range and quality of equipment and/or surfaces.

Of the 118 sites to rate below the quality threshold, 24 are noted as being just below the quality threshold. These sites should be reviewed and/or prioritised for possible enhancements to help address quality of provision. This would also shift the balance of sites rating above or below the threshold in the favour of more sites rating higher.

Value is an assessment of the potential use of a site based on its open space type. Over half of assessed sites (58%) rate as high for value, reflecting the role and importance of open space provision to local communities and environments.

Table 3.2.2: Value ratings for assessed sites

| Analysis area | No. of sites | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| | Low | High |
| Amenity greenspace | 14 | 27 |
| Natural & semi-natural greenspace | 5 | 31 |
| Park and gardens | 1 | 13 |
| Provision for children & young people | 69 | 52 |
| Total | 89 | 123 |

Sites rating below the value thresholds often reflect a general lack of offer or potential use (i.e. no features, difficult to access). For play provision, this is often due to a limited range of equipment at sites.

Of the 24 sites highlighted earlier as being just below the quality threshold, 10 sites are also noted as being below the value threshold. These sites should be reviewed and/or prioritised for possible enhancements to help further strengthen the benefits of provision

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

3.3 Accessibility

Catchment mapping is used to help identify areas potentially not being served by open space provision. They can also be used to help inform where future opportunities for provision could be located.

Gaps in different open space types are highlighted across the area. However, where a gap in one form of provision exists (e.g. for parks) then a site recognised as a different type of open space (e.g. amenity) is often present.

It is therefore important the quality of such sites are to a sufficient level as in some instances they may help to serve as an alternative/secondary role within the identified gap (in the absence of any new provision being able to be provided). Sites helping to serve such gaps are set out within the action plan. It is important that any provision rated as low quality are recognised as a priority for enhancement.

3.4 Quantity

Quantity is measured using a quantity standard (i.e. the amount of provision in hectares per 1,000 population). This can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and to help with determining future requirements due to growth.

All analysis areas are observed as having shortfalls in some form of open space. However, areas such as Upper Hardres, Thanington, Ickham and Well, Hersden, Chartham and Bekesbourne-with-Patrixbourne are highlighted as having shortfalls across all open space types. To some extent this may be expected given the lower population density of such areas.

Areas with greater population density such as Canterbury and Whitstable are both observed as having shortfalls for all provision types (except for allotments in Canterbury and amenity in Whitstable). Herne Bay is noted as having shortfalls in provision with the exception for parks and gardens.

3.5 Headlines

Canterbury

- Has 223 open space sites equating to a total 236 hectares.
- Of the 56 assessed sites, 33 (59%) are below the quality threshold and 26 (46%) are below the value threshold. Seven sites are highlighted as being just below the quality threshold.
- Gaps in catchment mapping are observed in parks, natural and play provision. Within these gaps, six existing sites of different typologies are noted as potentially helping to serve the areas. Of these, two are rated as lower quality.
- The area has shortfalls in quantity against most typologies with the exception for allotments.

Herne Bay

- Has 65 open space sites equating to a total 99 hectares.

- Of the 27 assessed sites, 12 (44%) are below the quality threshold and 10 (37%) are below the value threshold. Four sites are highlighted as being just below the quality threshold.
- Gaps in catchment mapping are observed in parks, natural, amenity and play provision. Within these gaps, seven existing sites of different typologies are noted as potentially helping to serve the areas. Of these, one is rated as lower quality.
- The area has shortfalls in quantity against most typologies with the exception for parks.

Whitstable

- Has 105 open space sites equating to a total 418 hectares.
- Of the 41 assessed sites, 23 (56%) are below the quality threshold and 20 (49%) are below the value threshold. One site is highlighted as being just below the quality threshold.
- Gaps in catchment mapping are observed in parks and play provision. Within these gaps, eight existing sites of different typologies are noted as potentially helping to serve the areas. Of these, three are rated as lower quality.
- The area has shortfalls in quantity against most typologies with the exception for amenity.

Rural area

- Has 232 open space sites equating to a total 3,459 hectares.
- Of the 90 assessed sites, 53 (59%) are below the quality threshold and 37 (41%) are below the value threshold. 12 sites are highlighted as being just below the quality threshold.
- Given the lower population densities across the area, no significant gaps in catchment mapping are observed. However, it is identified that eight sites potentially help to serve gaps highlighted in the other analysis areas. Of these, two are rated as lower quality.
- Shortfalls in quantity exist in most areas. The areas of Upper Hardes, Thanington, Ickham and Well, Hersden, Chartham and Bekesbourne-with-Patrixbourne are highlighted as having shortfalls across all open space types.

PART 4: VISION AND AIMS 2024 - 2040

The vision of the Open Space Strategy is:

‘To develop and maintain an interconnected network of diverse, high quality open spaces which contribute to biodiversity, habitats and the needs of local people to help raise the quality of life for all residents and visitors to the Canterbury district’

To achieve this vision, the following overarching aims are intended to help direct future actions and decisions.

AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of open space provision to meet current and future needs.

AIM 2

To **enhance** open space provision and features for everyone through improving quality and management of sites.

AIM 3

To **promote** and **secure** new provision and features where current or future demand requires it.

PART 5: OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS

The following objectives are provided to work towards the aims of this strategy and to help address the shortfalls and issues identified as part of the study.

5.1 Objectives

Objective 1

Open space provision should be protected in recognition of its contribution to communities. Any potential loss of provision needs to be in line with Local Plan policies.

1. Proposals for development which would result in the loss of publicly accessible open space, as defined on the policies map, will only be permitted if:
 - a. There would be no material harm to the contribution the open space makes to the visual or recreational amenity of the area, and the council has assessed the open space as making no positive contribution to its overall strategy on open space; or
 - b. Where there would be material harm, this would be balanced against demonstrable need for the development in that specific location. Should there be no alternative site available to accommodate the proposed development, any any harm must be offset by the provision of other open space of comparable accessibility, quality, size, character and usability in a suitable location, in addition to any open space requirements of the new development; or
 - c. The proposal is for the construction of a new building that is an essential facility for outdoor sport, recreation, play or allotment use or other open space typology uses that does not conflict with the purpose, character or accessibility of the open space; or
 - d. The proposal is for a proportionate and essential extension or alteration of an existing building or equipment which does not harm the character of the area; or
 - e. The proposal is for the re-use or replacement of existing buildings provided that the proposed uses do not conflict with the purpose, character or accessibility of the open space; and any replacement building is not materially larger; or
 - f. The proposal is for the carrying out of engineering or other operations required for public safety.

In addition, proposals for development which would result in the loss, in whole or in part, of sports or recreation facilities must also demonstrate that:

- g. The site has first been considered for other sport, open space, recreation, biodiversity or community uses; and
- h. It has been demonstrated that the playing field is surplus to requirements having regard to the council's Open Space Strategy or Playing Pitch Strategy; or
- i. There is an overriding need for the proposed development which outweighs the loss and the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or,
- j. The development is for a small part of the site; where it has been demonstrated that it will result in enhanced sport and recreational facilities.

2. Proposals for development that would result in the loss of publicly accessible open spaces provided as part of a planning permission for development through new developments will be refused.
3. Proposals for new sports and recreation facilities, either as standalone facilities or as part of a mixed-use development, will be supported where the proposal meets the requirements of other policies in this plan, and where:
 - a. The new provision meets Sports England's criteria for the proposed use and any criteria issues by the relevant National Governing Body; and
 - b. Appropriate ancillary facilities are proposed; and
 - c. Where other sports facilities are proposed as part of the development, the facilities are co-located where appropriate; and
 - d. There is no adverse impact upon living conditions; and
 - e. The site is appropriately accessible by walking, cycling and, where appropriate, public transport; and
 - f. Buildings are well designed, appropriate in scale and function to the use of the land, and meet the minimum size and quality standards to be usable as the proposed type of sport. This includes ensuring sufficient distance between the boundaries and nearby buildings, new and existing; and
 - g. The scheme incorporates measures to improve resilience to the potential impacts of climate change; and
 - h. The application is supported by evidence of a management scheme which details the future ownership, management and maintenance of the site.

Objective 2

Look to address low quality and low value sites through exploring opportunities for enhancement. The priority should be those highlighted as providing a key role in terms of access or which could be improved through relatively minor enhancements

There are 118 sites to rate low for quality (of which 80 also rate low for value). Eight of these sites are highlighted as having the potential to help serve gaps identified in accessibility catchment mapping. It is also highlighted that 24 low quality sites rate just below the quality threshold (Appendix 1).

The potential to adapt these sites through appropriate formalisation and/or greater provision of features linked to other types of open space should be explored. This is to provide a stronger secondary role as well as opportunities associated with other open space types. For some sites, such as natural greenspace, the ability to adapt or strengthen secondary roles may be limited due to the features and characteristics of the site.

We will maximise opportunities for s106 to invest in new and existing open spaces, work with Friends of Groups to improve management and capitalise on external funding opportunities.

Objective 3

Ensure new developments contribute to the provision of open spaces and explore opportunities to address shortfalls in open space provision and

Quantitative shortfalls are identified across the district and these may be exacerbated further by future population increases. By 2040, based on provision standards, Canterbury will require an additional 132 hectares of open space from new development and other open space provision to be determined.

For many local authorities, often the best opportunities to try and help address such shortfalls are in instances where new housing growth is planned. It is therefore vital that the CCC provision standards are used to inform the amounts of open space required as part of each future development. In some instances and typologies (outdoor sport and allotments) an offsite contribution may be better suited. This strategy and action plan helps inform and identify where offsite s106 developer contributions could be made.

As per Local Plan Regulation 18 policy DS24, for strategic developments, delivering 50 or more homes, consideration must be given to legally protecting the new open space as either Village Green or Field in Trust. For major developments of over 300 new homes the developer must consider transferring the freehold ownership of the open space to the council (or Parish Council) and to establishing a flexible application specific financial model to cover the ongoing management and maintenance of the open space in perpetuity. This approach is developed in Appendix 4 of this strategy.

The Reg 18 Local Plan 2024 proposes a suite of strategic development sites, which due to the large size and requirement for comprehensive masterplanning, offer opportunities to deliver open space destination hubs for sports hubs, skate / wheel parks, allotments and country parks. To realise such opportunities, the Environment Team will require early engagement with the developers and their representatives in Pre-App and masterplanning.

The CCC Open Space Calculator should be used to determine the equivalent offsite contributions.

The creation of new provision and/or offsite contributions may also help to address identified gaps in accessibility catchment mapping. This could either be through the creation of new provision and/or the enhancement of a site's capacity or secondary role (if identified as helping to potentially serve a gap in a provision type).

There is however still a need and desire to provide certain typologies which cannot be created through secondary functions of existing sites (i.e. allotment and parks provision).

Objective 4

Make sure the design of new sites and features are in keeping with council expectations

Given the existing shortfalls, competing pressures on future land supply and the scarcity of creating new provision, it is essential that the design and location of open space and play features are considered as a priority from the outset in the planning of future developments. Appendix 2 sets out some design considerations.

Any new sites/features should be integrated into the development and designed with the objective of contributing optimally to the quality of life of residents. Developments in which open space is 'fitted in' around built elements as a secondary consideration, rarely achieve this objective. Provision should look to be meaningful and at the heart of any development.

Consideration should also be given to the connections between them and their role in climate change resilience, biodiversity and ensuring that a network of safe, diverse, and stimulating accessible open space binds the development together.

Buffer zones, relevant to recreation, play and youth provision, must be considered from the outset when locating and integrating those facilities. Their primary purpose is to prevent potential disturbance from activities at the facility to residents of adjacent dwellings. They also help ensure safety, for example of children playing, by providing a wide field of surveillance and reducing exposure to fast and heavy traffic. Potential spaces for facilities need to be large enough to accommodate buffer zones.

Objective 5

Maximise contributions to biodiversity and Local Nature Recovery networks

Given the national priority to address climate change and the initiatives to regenerate natural greenspace, and relating to Objectives 2 and 3, it is crucial to ensure we and our partners work to retain and enhance the natural environment and the services it provides including other related strategies (i.e. Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy, Pollinator Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy, and Canterbury Riverside Strategy). This may be achieved through appropriate creation or improvement of habitats with potential measures such as encouraging more tree cover, pollinators etc.

Objective 6

Retain the existing number of Green Flag Award sites and explore opportunities to expand

There are currently three sites with a Green Flag Award (a national/international recognised quality mark for greenspaces). Opportunities to expand the number of sites and the resources to support this should be encouraged and explored.

Objective 7

Explore options for appropriate sites to receive additional designations

Designations are a tool to identify and protect open space of particular importance. Given the significance and role of some sites it may be appropriate to consider such levels of protection. Any designation needs to be consistent with local planning policy and meet the criteria set out within the NPPF.

Objective 8

Continue to support the role of Friends of Groups and encourage the formation of any new groups

It is recognised that the role and involvement of friends of groups significantly contributes to the added quality and value of a site. Continuing to support and enable the work of such groups should be advocated. Opportunities to strengthen and grow such groups should also be encouraged and explored.

We will maximise opportunities for s106 to invest in new and existing open spaces, work with Friends of Groups to improve management and capitalise on external funding opportunities.

Objective 9

Recognise the role and importance of key strategic sites through ensuring and enhancing their quality and access

There are several sites (38 listed in Appendix 3) with a more strategic and/or multi-functional role which serve a wider catchment area. For parks, these are referred to as 'destination' sites and for amenity greenspace these are referred to as 'recreation' sites.

There are several of these sites which are observed as being of a lower quality (10 sites). The priority should be to explore options to enhance the quality and access of these key sites given the important role across the district and to individual analysis areas.

This links to existing or imminent works and projects being undertaken such as, for example, the works at Herne Bay Memorial Park, Cornwallis, and Dane John.

5.2 Strategic actions

To help meet the objectives, a series of strategic actions are presented

| Objective 1 | Delivery |
|---|----------|
| 1. In response to the council's Declaration of Biodiversity Emergency, CCC owned open spaces will be subject to a biodiversity audit to assess their opportunities for delivering nature recovery | Ongoing |
| Objective 2 | Delivery |
| 1. Review ownership of the sites scoring low for quality and value and contact owners and managers to commence discussion on improving the sites scores | 2024/25 |
| 2. On CCC owned sites, liaise internally with other council departments to determine minor improvements within the scope of the existing Grounds Maintenance Contract | Ongoing |
| 3. Where appropriate, target S106 developer contributions and CCC capital funds both at priority sites failing quality scores, and sites capable of plugging quantity provision | Ongoing |
| Objective 3 | Delivery |
| 1. Test the use of Sport England's Play Pitch Calculator to better target and define the type of sport provision required, ensuring consistency with the actions in the Playing Pitch Strategy | Ongoing |
| 2. Seek allotment provision (either on-site or S106) from all developments of over 10 homes. If S106 off-site provision is required, pool contributions to facilitate investment in the quality and sustainability of the district's allotments | Ongoing |
| 3. If there is an evidence need to invest s106 funds in off-site provision, in accordance with Draft Local Plan Policy DS24, then prioritisation will be given to the nearest destination or recreation site, as set out in the strategy, and also the sites listed as key priorities in section 5.3 of the OS Strategy | Ongoing |

| Objective 4 | Delivery |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Ensure early engagement in the master planning and plan making process for major and strategic developments across the district to promote best practice design for both utility, sustainability and contribution to sense of place | Ongoing |
| Objective 5 | Delivery |
| 1. On a minimum of 15 open spaces, the Canterbury Pollinator Action Plan will be used to promote opportunities to maximise the creation and maintenance of pollinator friendly. These opportunities could take the form of relaxation of grassland mowing regimes, the planting of pollinator trees and the incorporation of pollinator friendly bedding plants | 2023/25 |
| 2. On completion of the Making Space for Nature and Canterbury's Local Nature Recovery Network (LNRN), all CCC open spaces, as well as strategic developments of over 300 dwellings, will be reviewed to determine their ability to contribute to the priorities of the Nature Recovery Network | Completion of LNRN |
| 3. The design and location of the 4 ha per 1000 population semi-natural open space provision on new developments will be informed by local ecological connectivity opportunities | Completion of LNRN |
| Objective 6 | Delivery |
| 1. Resources will be focused on retaining the current three Green Flag Awards at Westgate Gardens, Gorrell Valley Nature Reserve and Reculver Country Park | Ongoing |
| 2. Ensuring equity across the district's two towns and one city, and rural areas, a review of additional possible Green Flag candidate sites will be completed and informal judging will be undertaken to test candidate sites appropriateness | 2024/25 |
| Objective 7 | Delivery |
| 1. Identify priority sites for dedication as Town/Village Green or Field in Trust, ensuring consistency with Local Plan policies and allocations. | Ongoing |
| Objective 8 | Delivery |
| 1. Promote the new Friends Welcome Pack to provide information on establishing and maintaining Friends of Groups, and to make clear the support available from the city council | 2023 |
| 2. Establish and hold an annual meeting for all Friends Groups to provide forum for shared learning, communication with other stakeholders and to address common issues/concerns | Summer 2024 |
| Objective 9 | Delivery |
| 1. Explore options to enhance the quality and access of the priority sites identified in 5.3 | Ongoing |

5.3 Priority site actions

To help meet some of the objectives, key site-specific actions and priorities are set out on a sub-area basis.

| Canterbury | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|---|-----------|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to enhance the quality of Vauxhall Field and Chineham Way Play Area. Both identified as low quality but helping to serve potential gaps in access. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review quality of sites such as Pilgrim’s Way and Field Avenue which are observed as helping to serve gaps. Ensure quality is sufficient. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance quality of key sites such as Vauxhall Field, Dane John Garden and Canterbury Castle. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ongoing quality of other key sites such as Birch Road, Tannery Field, Toddlers Cove, Pilgrims Way, Franklyn Road, Kingsmead Field Village Green, Suffolk Road, Hales Drive Playing Field, Field Avenue, Long Meadow Way, Westgate Gardens, Lime Kiln Road and Littlebourne Road. | 2 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and explore ability to enhance quality of sites just below the quality threshold (i.e. Avon Close Play, Hollow Lane Play Area, Sturry Road Community Garden, Dane John Garden, St Mary de Castro and Greyfriars Garden). | 2 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish wetland habitat to benefit landscape and biodiversity at Wincheap Meadows, and to contribute to Nutrient Neutrality Strategy. | 5 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ability of Old Park and Chequers Wood to appropriately help serve open space network (balancing recreation and habitat roles). Consider better pathways, lighting and signage especially around Old Park. | 5 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote consistent management and promotion of the open space network that forms the Canterbury Riverside. | 5 | Environment Team | Short, Medium and Long term | s.106/CIL/External funding |

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL | OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

| Canterbury | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|---|------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of open space at Draft Policy Site C6: Land at Merton Park to include new natural/ semi natural, amenity green space, parks and gardens, play facilities (including a new skatepark), outdoor sports (including Sports Hub) and new allotments. | 2, 4, 5, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of open space at Draft Policy Site C7: Land to the North of Hollow Lane to include new natural/ semi natural, amenity green space, parks and gardens, play facilities, outdoor sports and allotments. To include maximising biodiversity connectivity opportunities between the site and Larkey Valley Woods and other sites surrounding this site. | 2, 4, 5, 9 | Environment Team | Medium Term | s.106 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of open space at Draft Policy Site C12: Land north of the University of Kent to include new natural/ semi natural, amenity green space, parks and gardens, play facilities, outdoor sports and allotments. To include maximising biodiversity connectivity opportunities between the site and the Blean Woodlands surrounding the site. | 2, 4, 5, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106 |

| Herne Bay | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|--|-----------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to enhance the quality of Saxon Shore View as identified as low quality but helping to serve potential gap in access | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review quality of sites such as Hampton Recreation Ground, Sanderling Park, Burton Down Park, Sanderling Road Play Area, Herne Bay Memorial Park, and Reculver Country Park (including Bishopstone) which are observed as helping to serve gaps. Ensure quality is sufficient. | 2, 6, 9 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ongoing quality of other key sites such as Reculver Country Park (including Bishopstone), Hampton Recreation Ground, Sanderling Park, Central Parade, Memorial Park and Herne Bay Promenade | 6, 9 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and explore ability to enhance quality of sites just below the quality threshold (i.e. Spa/Western Esplanade, Cormorant Way Play Area, Plover Close Play Area, and Saxon Shore View) | 2 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |

| Herne Bay | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|---|-----------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to establish Hampton Recreation Ground as a key destination site between Herne Bay and Whitstable | 4, 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for enhancement of Herne Bay Downs | 9 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |

| Whitstable | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|--|------------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to enhance the quality of Mariners View, Columbia Avenue, and Eversleigh Rise Play Area. Sites identified as low quality but helping to serve potential gaps in access | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review quality of sites such as Swalecliffe Skate Park, Whitstable Castle Play Area, Seagull Close Play Area, and Plough Lane Park which are observed as helping to serve gaps. Ensure quality is sufficient. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ongoing quality of other key sites such as Tankerton Slopes, Longrock, Marine Parade, Church Lane, Trilby Way and Whitstable Castle | 9 | Environment Team | Short term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and explore ability to enhance quality of sites just below the quality threshold (i.e. Tower Hill Tea Garden) | 2 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to expand the play provision of Whitstable Beach | 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of open space at Draft Policy Site W4: Land at Brooklands Farm to include new natural/ semi natural, amenity green space, parks and gardens, play facilities, outdoor sports (including a new cricket pitch and facilities for Chestfield Cricket Club) and allotments | 2, 4, 5, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |

| Rural | Objective | Lead | Timescale for delivery | Possible funding sources |
|---|-----------|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to enhance the quality of Broomfield Community Park and Chestfield Recreation Ground. Both identified as low quality but helping to serve potential gaps in access | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review quality of sites such as Curtis Wood Park, Hawe Farm Way, Thanington Recreation Ground, Cherry Orchard Recreation Ground, Moat Lane Playing Field and Radfall Recreation Ground which are observed as helping to serve gaps. Ensure quality is sufficient. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Short and Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance quality of key sites such as Bridge Recreation Ground, Chestfield Recreation Ground, Kingston Playing Field and Waltham Playing Field. | 2, 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ongoing quality of other key sites such as Upper Harbledown Playing Field, Wickhambreaux Recreation Ground, Town Road (Petham) Recreation Ground, Chartham Hatch Recreation Ground, Park View Playing Field (Sturry) and Woolage Village Recreation Ground | 9 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and explore ability to enhance quality of sites just below the quality threshold (i.e. Chestfield Recreation Ground, Mill Lane Greenspace, Candler's Way, Kingston Play Area, Adisham Rec Play Area, Honeysuckle Way Play Area, Kendal Meadow Play area, Ince Road Play Area, Chartham Hatch Play Area, Westbere Marshes, Covet Lane Wood and No Man's Orchard Nature Reserve) | 2 | Environment Team | Medium term | s.106/CIL/External funding |

APPENDIX ONE: SITES RATING JUST BELOW QUALITY THRESHOLD

Objective 2 sets out that of the 118 sites to rate low for quality³, 24 are just below the quality threshold. Such sites should be reviewed and explored for opportunities to enhance their quality as they may be relatively simple/low cost to resolve. The table below details for the 24 sites the reasons why a site scores lower.

| Id | Site name | Typology | Reason for low score |
|-----------|--|-----------------|--|
| 30 | Spa Esplanade/Western Esplanade | Amenity | boundary, facilities, and furniture |
| 35 | Kingsmead Field Village Green ⁴ | Amenity | signage, boundary, and car park |
| 39 | Chestfield Recreation Ground | Amenity | signage, boundary, and biodiversity |
| 48 | Mill Lane greenspace, Harbledown | Amenity | signage, safety, facilities, and car park |
| 436 | Cormorant Way Play Area | Play | signage, facilities, furniture and boundary |
| 439 | Plover Close Play Area | Play | signage, facilities, furniture, and biodiversity |
| 449 | Candler's Way, Shalmsford | Play | signage and biodiversity |
| 455 | Kingston Play Area | Play | biodiversity |
| 459 | Adisham Rec Play Area | Play | signage and biodiversity |
| 473 | Honeysuckle Way Play Area | Play | signage and furniture |
| 476 | Kendal Meadow Play Area | Play | signage and furniture |
| 482 | Ince Road Play Area | Play | biodiversity |
| 484 | Chartham Hatch Play Area | Play | biodiversity |
| 494 | Avon Close Play | Play | signage and biodiversity |
| 500 | Hollow Lane Play Area | Play | biodiversity |
| 530 | Sturry Road Community Garden play area | Play | signage, safety, and boundary |
| 420 | Dane John Garden | Parks | rates just below quality threshold. Signage, facilities, furniture, and lighting |
| 424 | Tower Hill Tea Garden | Parks | rates just below quality threshold. Signage, furniture, biodiversity, and lighting |
| 430 | St Mary de Castro | Parks | signage, facilities, furniture, and car park |
| 431 | Greyfriars Garden | Parks | signage, facilities, furniture, and car park |
| 535 | Saxon Shore View | Natural | Facilities, furniture, and overall aesthetic |

³ Site scores previously undertaken by CCC.

⁴ Acknowledged site has recently had major enhancement works undertaken

| | | | |
|-----|---|---------|--|
| 537 | Westbere Marshes | Natural | signage, boundary, furniture, and car park |
| 555 | Covet Lane Wood | Natural | signage, facilities, furniture, and car park |
| 559 | No Man's Orchard Nature Reserve, Chartham | Natural | facilities and car park |

APPENDIX TWO: DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The following sets out some of the key considerations to the design/quality for different types of open spaces.

Allotments

- Linked to pedestrian and cycle paths
- Plots should ideally be situated away from the shade of trees
- Effective drainage through natural soil characteristics and/or land drainage installations
- Minimum of one water point
- Secure perimeter fencing with lockable gate for vehicular access
- Sign at entrance detailing any applicable ownership, rules, emergency contact etc

Amenity greenspace

- Closely integrated with any development to provide a greening effect to the environment.
- Open space provision should be meaningful and at the “heart” of new developments.
- Close positioning of multiple space, can contribute to connectivity and landscape quality
- Focus for such provision is for informal recreational activities such as ‘kickabout’ football, sitting, and dog walking etc
- Ideally incorporate shade from existing mature trees or planting of new trees
- Open views for natural surveillance
- Signage to welcome users, contact details, and set out any constraints of use

Natural greenspace

- Expected to heavily contribute to green infrastructure by reinforcing existing and creation of new corridors to link and close gaps on the existing networks including for example biodiversity net gain and Local Nature Recovery
- Minimise severance impact of road networks on wider green infrastructure
- Existing wildlife value protected and enhanced through restoration and creation of new habitats
- Variations in vegetation structure and topography to ensure habitat diversity and landscape effect
- SUDS may count towards semi-natural provision only if they are publicly accessible and without restriction
- Appropriate footpaths and materials. Main paths could be hard surfaced with loose fill material or simply marked by mowing where natural drainage is adequate. For wet areas, timber boardwalks should be installed
- Fencing and gates/stiles installed as appropriate to reduce user pressure on zones of conservation importance
- Interpretation signage installed as appropriate.

Parks and gardens

- Appropriate design and layout of interest including suitable planting, seating
- Larger sites may accommodate more formal sport pitches, play and youth facilities and other features. Sites large enough to accommodate pitch sports should be, in part, of a level gradient to accommodate such activities.
- Larger facilities could consider providing secure bicycle parking, toilets, café, EV charging etc.
- Access for passive recreation encouraged through especially generous provision of seating and hard surfaced paths. Particular attention also paid to surveillance
- Fencing must integrate aesthetically into the surroundings and be of durable materials.

Provision for children and young people

- Ideally located within a greenspace or park and close enough to pedestrian routes or dwellings to enable natural surveillance
- Incorporate necessary buffer zones (20-30m subject to type of play)
- Away from exposure to prevailing winds
- Linked to pedestrian and vehicular routes by hard surfaced paths, accessible for all.
- Larger facilities should offer secure bicycle parking
- Attractive and stimulating environment for both active and passive play; designed for aesthetic cohesion to a unified theme
- Equipment designed and installed in accordance with EN1176 and EN1177 (or subsequent updates). Equipment selected and positioned to avoid the possibility of views into neighbouring properties.
- Features to encourage inclusive play, e.g. wide transfer platforms on multi-play units, roundabouts flush with ground level, back supports on equipment, play panels, handrails, sound chimes and textured surfaces.
- Separate zones for younger and older children, possibly within the same activity area, or by means of two distinct activity areas in proximity at the same location.
- Maximise opportunities for physical and mental wellbeing including features such as outdoor gym provision
- Signage to name the site and welcome users, also to indicate constraints on use and provide contact details. It is essential that dogs are discouraged, at least through the signage, but sometimes also through fencing.
- Sustainable and suitably located seating
- Any trees and shrubs should be strategically placed to provide areas of shade and play opportunities without obstructing informal surveillance.
- All plants selected are tough and resistant to damage with low maintenance requirements and not poisonous, thorny or otherwise hazardous

APPENDIX THREE: STRATEGIC/MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SITES

There are several sites (recognised in Objective 9) with a more strategic and/or multi-functional role which serve a wider catchment area. For parks, these are referred to as 'destination' sites and for amenity greenspace these are referred to as 'recreation' sites.

The priority should be to explore options to enhance the quality and access of these key sites given the important role across the district and to individual analysis areas.

| Id | Site name | Typology | Strategic/ multifunctional |
|-----------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 24 | Reculver Country Park Amenity | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 31 | Hampton Recreation Ground | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 34 | Vauxhall Field | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 35 | Kingsmead Field Village Green | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 37 | Bridge Recreation Ground | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 39 | Chestfield Recreation Ground | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 42 | Marine Parade | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 46 | Mariners View, Seasalter | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 47 | Columbia Avenue | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 52 | Birch Road | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 53 | Tannery Field, Rheims Way | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 57 | Toddlers Cove | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 66 | Pilgrim's Way | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 68 | Franklyn Road / Pardoner Close | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 70 | Suffolk Road | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 106 | Upper Harbledown Playing Field | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 146 | Wickhambreaux Recreation Ground | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 162 | Hales Drive playing field | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 169 | Field Avenue AGS | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 201 | Long Meadow Way/Westerham Close | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 212 | Church Lane, Seasalter | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 222 | Trilby Way AGS | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 283 | Sanderling Park | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 294 | Central Parade | Amenity greenspace | Recreation |
| 420 | Dane John Garden | Parks and Gardens | Destination |
| 421 | Memorial Park | Parks and Gardens | Destination |
| 423 | Whitstable Castle | Parks and Gardens | Destination |
| 428 | Westgate Gardens | Parks and Gardens | Destination |
| 429 | Canterbury Castle | Parks and Gardens | Destination |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 839 | Chequers Wood (Old Park) | Natural/semi-natural | Destination |
|-----|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------|

APPENDIX FOUR: STEWARDSHIP MODELS FOR IN PERPETUITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF OPEN SPACES WITHIN DEVELOPMENTS

The Council is exploring alternative models to deliver high quality in perpetuity management of the public realm being delivered by new strategic developments of over 500 homes. The previous draft Open Space Strategy explored the single option of setting up an endowment sum and representation were received seeking greater clarity on the proposal.

Since the completion of the previous Reg 18 consultation (2023) it has become increasingly evident that the council and developers are interested in exploring mutually beneficial long term land stewardship models, and also, that rather than there being a single 'tool' or approach to fund and deliver stewardship, there is a need to explore various combined financial models that are relevant and specific to the site's needs and proposals.

Historic positions

Local authorities often adopted all open space in new developments and a Commuted Sum was sought from the developer to cover the first c.15 years of grounds maintenance costs. In this scenario, the cost would be calculated by aggregating the first 15 years of maintenance and that combined sum would be subject to indexation and then paid by the developer to the local authority. The local authority would be 'ring-fenced' to cover the new site specific maintenance costs.

After 15 years the Local Authority would continue to maintain the site but without the benefit of a commuted sum.

If CCC were to look to adopt some open spaces there is a need to protect the authority from longer-term revenue / capital pressures. This is where the possibility of an endowment comes forward.

More recently local authorities have moved to a protective position whereby they no longer adopted new open spaces associated with new developments, and therefore developers have established alternative models for the ongoing maintenance of sites, usually with a third party undertaking the site management and combining an endowment and a homeowners' service charge.

What we say in DS24...

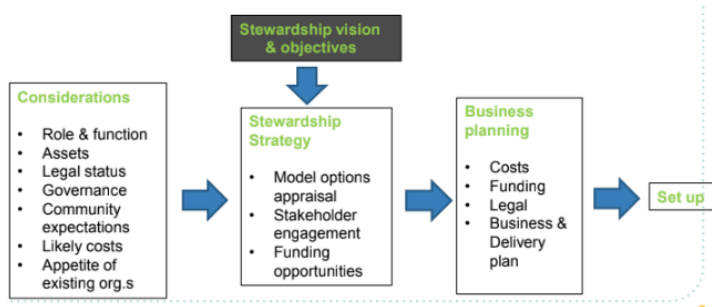
Section 7: Proposals for development for more than 500 homes will be required, for the total on-site open space provision, to

- a. Positively explore with the local planning authority transferring the freehold ownership of the open space to an appropriate body, including the council or a Parish Council, Trust or Community Interest Company); and
- b. Positively explore with the local planning authority the establishment of a flexible and deliverable, phased financial stewardship model to cover the agreed on-going management, and maintenance and replacement costs of the open space in perpetuity, and an agreed and resourced delivery resource and community governance model.

As part of the developers' consenting strategy the development of a specific, in perpetuity, financial model requires early stage joint working between the local authority and developer in order to better understand how public assets are to be generated by the development and then how these might be managed on behalf of the residents and community. There is also a need to first develop and then implement phased governance models and the supporting legal structures required for asset management. The financing of the management & maintenance of community assets will need to be agreed and implemented, and the community assets need to be managed to generate necessary income. Lastly, phased community participation in the management of the stewardship model.

The Overview of process image below is courtesy of Homes England's Garden Cities programme

Overview of process



The Funding/Potential sources slide below is courtesy of Homes England Garden Cities Programme.



Proposed way forward for developing Canterbury district open space and community assets stewardship models

1. Early discussion (Pre App) between appropriate local authority officers (Environment Team, Sports Development, Contracts, Urban design, Case officer) to review options, timings and phasing of stewardship model(s);
2. Determination of site specific interests and community assets that could be managed to generate management and maintenance funds;
3. Establishment of costed, in perpetuity, open space / community assets maintenance programme based on Landscape and Design Access Statement;
4. Discussion on site specific or combined governance options
5. Developer submission of a CCC Open Space and Community Assets Stewardship model as a planning validation document addressing DS24.