



COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE REPORT

APRIL 2023

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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Glossary

CBC	Colchester Borough Council
DPD	Development Plan Document
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOG	Friends of Group
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LAP	Local Area for Play
LEAP	Local Equipped Area for Play
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)
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for 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
SFS	Sports Facilities Strategy
SOA	Super Output Areas
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Colchester Borough Council (CBC) commissioned Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) to deliver an Open Space Assessment. This document focuses on reporting the findings of the research, consultation, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping that underpin the study. It provides detail regarding what provision exists in the area, its condition, distribution and overall quality.

It will help inform direction on the future provision of accessible, high quality, sustainable provision for open spaces. It can help to inform the priorities for open space provision as part of future population distribution and planned growth.

The purpose of an Open Space Study is to recognise the role of open space provision as a resource across Colchester. Open spaces contribute to the health, well-being, cultural heritage, landscape, education, climate change mitigation, biodiversity and movement for people and wildlife. It is therefore vital for local authorities to know what provision currently exists and what the priorities and requirements are for the future.

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

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has replaced PPG17. However, assessment of open space facilities is still normally carried out in accordance with the Companion Guidance to PPG17 as it still remains the only national best practice guidance on the conduct of an open space assessment.

Under paragraph 98 of the NPPF, it is set out that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/assessing-needs-and-opportunities-a-companion-guide-to-planning-policy-guidance-17>

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The table below details the open space typologies included within the study:

Table 1.1: Open space typology definitions

Typology	Primary purpose
Parks and gardens	Parks and formal gardens, open to the general public. Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Supports wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people.
Allotments	Opportunities to grow own produce. Added benefits include the long term promotion of sustainable living, health and social inclusion.

1.1 Report structure

This report considers the supply and demand issues for open space provision across Colchester. Each part contains relevant typology specific data. Further description of the methodology used can be found in Part 2. The report as a whole covers the predominant issues for all open spaces as defined in best practice guidance:

- ◀ Part 3: Open space summary
- ◀ Part 4: Parks and gardens
- ◀ Part 5: Natural/ semi-natural greenspace
- ◀ Part 6: Amenity greenspace
- ◀ Part 7: Provision for children/ young people
- ◀ Part 8: Allotments

Any site recognised as sports provision but with a clear multifunctional role (i.e. where it is also available for wider community use as open space) is included in this study. Provision purely for sporting use are the focus of other studies (i.e. Playing Pitch Strategy). On dual use sites, the pitch playing surfaces are counted as part of the overall site size as they are considered to contribute to the total open space site and reflect its multifunctionality.

1.2 National context

National Planning Policy Framework (2021), (MHCLG)

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) (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 (paragraphs 7-9). 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.

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.

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Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard (2015), Fields in Trust

As part of its protection work, Fields in Trust (FiT) offers guidance on open space provision and design. This is to ensure that the provision of outdoor sport, play and informal open space is of a sufficient size to enable effective use; is located in an accessible location and in close proximity to dwellings; and of a quality to maintain longevity and to encourage its continued use.

Beyond the Six Acre Standard sets out a range of benchmark guidelines on quantity, quality and accessibility for open space and equipped play. It also offers some recommendations to minimum site sizes.

Planning for Sport Guidance (2019), Sport England

Sets out how the planning system can help provide opportunities for everyone to be physically active. It highlights the vital role planning systems play in shaping environments (including open spaces) which offer opportunities to take part in sport and physical activity. To help with this, the guidance sets out 12 planning-for-sport principles to be embraced.

Table 1.2: 12 planning for sport principles

Overarching	Recognise and give weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity
	Undertake, maintain and apply robust and up-to-date assessment of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision, and base policies, decisions and guidance upon them
	Plan, design and maintain buildings, developments, facilities, land and environments that enable people to lead active lifestyles
Protect	Protect and promote existing sport and physical activity provision and ensure new development does not prejudice its use
	Ensure long-term viable management and maintenance of new and existing sport and physical activity provision
Enhance	Support improvements to existing sport and physical activity provision where they are needed
	Encourage and secure wider community use of existing and new sport and physical activity provision
Provide	Support new provision, including allocating new sites for sport and physical activity which meets identified needs
	Ensure a positive approach to meeting the needs generated by new development for sport and physical activity provision
	Provide sport and physical activity provision which is fit for purpose and well designed
	Plan positively for sport and physical activity provision in designated landscapes and the green belt
	Proactively address any amenity issues arising from sport and physical activity developments

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Everybody Active, Every Day (2014), 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.

Open space provision has an important role in working towards these measures. There is a need to ensure accessible facilities that can help meet the physical activity needs of everyone including the physically and mentally disabled and those with learning difficulties and debilitating diseases.

Summary of the national context

Policies set out within the NPPF state that local and neighbourhood plans should both reflect needs and priorities within a local community and be based on robust and current assessments of open space, sport and recreational facilities. Engaging residents to take up and retain a minimum or better level of physical literacy* and activity is a high priority for national government. For many people, sport and recreational activities have a key role to play in facilitating physical activity. Therefore, ensuring that open space creates an active environment with opportunities and good accessibility is important. In line with national policy recommendations, this report makes an assessment of open space provision from which recommendations and policy can be formulated.

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

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PART 2: METHODOLOGY

This section details the methodology undertaken as part of the study. The key stages are:

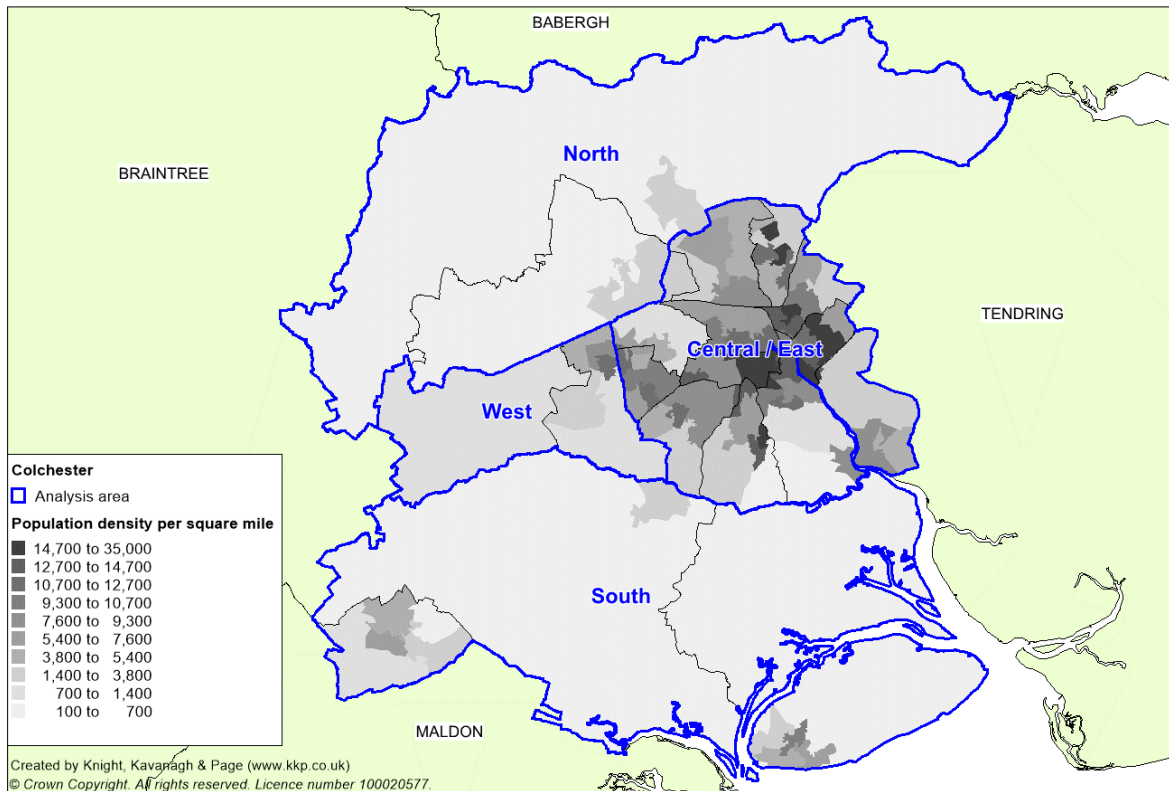
- ◀ 2.1 - Analysis areas
- ◀ 2.2 - Auditing local provision
- ◀ 2.3 - Open space provision standards
- ◀ 2.4 - Quality and value
- ◀ 2.5 - Quality and value thresholds
- ◀ 2.6 - Accessibility standards

2.1 Analysis area

The study area comprises the whole of Colchester. In order to address supply and demand on a more localised level, analysis areas (consisting of grouped electoral wards which align with other work streams) have been utilised.

Figure 2.1 shows the borough broken down into these analysis areas in tandem with population density. Population is considered in more detail below.

Figure 2.1: Map of Colchester Borough including analysis areas



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Table 2.1: Analysis areas and populations

Analysis area	Population
Central/East	142,005
North	16,361
South	23,273
West	15,561
Colchester	197,200

2.2 Auditing local provision

Open space sites (including provision for children and young people) are identified, mapped and assessed to evaluate site value and quality. Only sites publicly accessible are included in the quality and value audit (i.e. private sites or land, which people cannot access, are not included).

Each site is classified based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of space is counted only once. The audit, and the report, analyse the following typologies in accordance with the Companion Guidance to PPG17.

1. Parks and gardens
2. Natural and semi-natural greenspace
3. Amenity greenspace
4. Provision for children and young people
5. Allotments

Site size threshold

In accordance with recommendations from the Companion Guidance to PPG17, a size threshold of 0.2 hectares is applied to the typologies of amenity greenspace and natural/semi-natural greenspace. It is recognised that it would be impractical to capture every piece of land that could be classed as open space. They are often too small to provide any meaningful leisure and recreational opportunities to warrant a full site assessment. However, spaces smaller than 0.2 hectares can provide amenity to local neighbourhoods and stepping-stones for wildlife.

If required, they should be assessed on a site-by-site basis (to assess potential community, biodiversity and visual value) should, for example, a request for development be made upon such a site in the future. Planning policies relating to the consideration of the loss of open space could still apply to such sites, even if they are not specifically included in the audit.

It should be noted that some sites below the threshold i.e. those that are identified as having particular significance and considered to provide an important function, as well as play space for children and young people, are included in the audit process.

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Database development

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

Data held on open spaces database (summary)

- ◀ KKP reference number (used for mapping)
- ◀ Site name
- ◀ Ownership (if known)
- ◀ Management (if known)
- ◀ Typology
- ◀ Size (hectares)
- ◀ Site audit data

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

2.3 Open space standards

To identify specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space in a local area, provision standards focusing on Quality, Quantity and Accessibility are set and applied later in the document (Part 10).

Quality	Ability to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities. Aimed at identifying high quality provision for benchmarking and low quality provision for targeting as part of an improvement programme. The Quality Standard is based on the audit assessment scores.
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.

2.4 Quality and value

Through the audit process most types of open space receive separate quality and value scores. This allows for the application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus within and to a particular open space typology.

Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be unrelated. For example, a site of high quality may be inaccessible and, thus, be of little value; whereas a rundown (poor quality) site may be the only one in an area and thus be immensely valuable. As a result, quality and value are also treated separately in terms of scoring.

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Analysis of quality

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

Quality criteria for open space site visit (score)

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

For the provision for children and young people, criteria are also built around Green Flag. It is a non-technical visual assessment of the whole site, including general equipment and surface quality/appearance plus an assessment of, for example, bench and bin provision.

This differs, for example, from an independent Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RosPA) review, which is a more technical assessment of equipment in terms of play and risk assessment grade.

Analysis of value

Site visit data plus desk-based research is calculated to provide value scores for each site identified. Value is defined in Companion Guidance to PPG17 in relation to the following three issues:

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

In addition, the NPPF refers to attributes to value such as beauty and attractiveness of a site, its recreational value, historic and cultural value and its tranquillity and richness of wildlife.

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

The value criteria set for audit assessment is derived from:

Value criteria for open space site visits (score)

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

One of the implications of Covid-19 has been the importance and vital role open space provision can provide to local communities. Recognising this along with consideration to the future needs and demands of such provision should raise the profile of open spaces and the processes supporting its existence (i.e. ensuring evidence bases are kept up to date and used to inform future decision making processes).

2.5 Quality and value thresholds

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by Companion Guidance to PPG17); the results of the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The primary aim of applying a threshold is to identify sites where investment and/or improvements are required. It can also be used to set an aspirational quality standard to be achieved at some point in the future and to inform decisions around the need to further protect sites from future development (particularly when applied with its respective value score in a matrix format).

A site rating low for quality should not automatically be viewed as being fit for development. It is also necessary to understand its value, access and role within the community it serves. It may for example be the only site serving an area and should therefore be considered a priority for enhancement.

The most recognised national benchmark for measuring the quality of parks and open spaces is the 66% pass rate for the Green Flag Award. This scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and open spaces. Although this open space study uses a similar assessment criteria to that of the Green Flag Award scheme it is inappropriate to use the Green Flag benchmark pass for every open space as they are not all designed or expected to perform to the same exceptionally high standard.

For example, a park would be expected to feature a greater variety of ancillary facilities (seating, bins, play equipment) and manicured landscaping and planting, etc. in contrast to an amenity greenspace serving a smaller catchment and fewer people.

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Furthermore, a different scoring mechanism is used in this study to that of the Green Flag scheme (albeit criteria for this study is derived from the Green Flag scheme). For each open space typology, a different set and / or weighting for each criterion of quality is used. This is to better reflect the different roles, uses and functions of each open space type. Consequently, a different quality threshold level is set for each open space typology.

Quality thresholds in this study are individual to each open space typology. They are based on the average quality score arising from the site assessments and set using KKP's professional judgment and experience from delivering similar studies. The score is to help distinguish between higher and lower quality sites; it is a minimum expectation as opposed to an absolute goal. This works as an effective method to reflect the variability in quality at a local level for different types of provision. It allows the Council more flexibility in directing funds towards sites for enhancements which is useful if funds are geographically constrained with respect to individual developments.

Reason and flexibility are needed when evaluating sites close to the average score / threshold. The review of a quality threshold is just one step for this process, a site should also be evaluated against the value assessment and local knowledge.

For value, there is no national guidance on the setting of thresholds. The 20% threshold is derived from KKP's experience and knowledge in assessing the perceived value of sites.

A high value site is one deemed to be well used and offering visual, social, physical and mental health benefits. Value is also a more subjective measure than assessing the physical quality of provision. Therefore, a conservative threshold of 20% is set across all typologies. Whilst 20% may initially seem low - it is a relative score. One designed to reflect those sites that meet more than one aspect of the criteria used for assessing value (as detailed earlier). If a site meets more than one criterion for value it will score greater than 20%. Consequently, it is deemed to be of higher value.

Table 2.2: Quality and value thresholds by typology

Typology	Quality threshold	Value threshold
Parks and gardens	60%	20%
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	45%	20%
Amenity greenspace	50%	20%
Provision for children and young people	60%	20%

2.6 Accessibility catchments

Accessibility catchments can be used as a tool to identify deficiencies of open space in a local area. This is achieved by applying them to create a distance catchment. The report displays the results of the catchment to highlight any potentially deficiencies in access to provision.

There is an element of subjectivity resulting in time / distance variations. This is to be expected given that people walk at different speeds depending on a number of factors including height, age, levels of fitness and physical barriers on route. Therefore, there will be an element of 'best fit'.

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Accessibility catchments are set as part of the previous Colchester Parks and Greenspace Strategy. These are set out in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Accessibility catchments

Open space type		Catchments
Parks & Gardens		15-minute walk
		15-minute drive
Amenity Greenspace		10-minute walk
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace		15-minute walk
Play provision	LAP	5-minute walk
	LEAP / NEAP	10-minute walk
	Casual provision (e.g. MUGA, Skate park)	15-minute walk
Allotments		15-minute walk
		15-minute drive

PART 3: SUMMARY OF SURVEY AND SITE AUDIT

This section provides a summary of the responses to the online community survey. It also describes generic trends and findings from the site visit quality and value ratings. Site specific and typology issues are covered in the relevant sections later in this report.

3.1 Community Survey

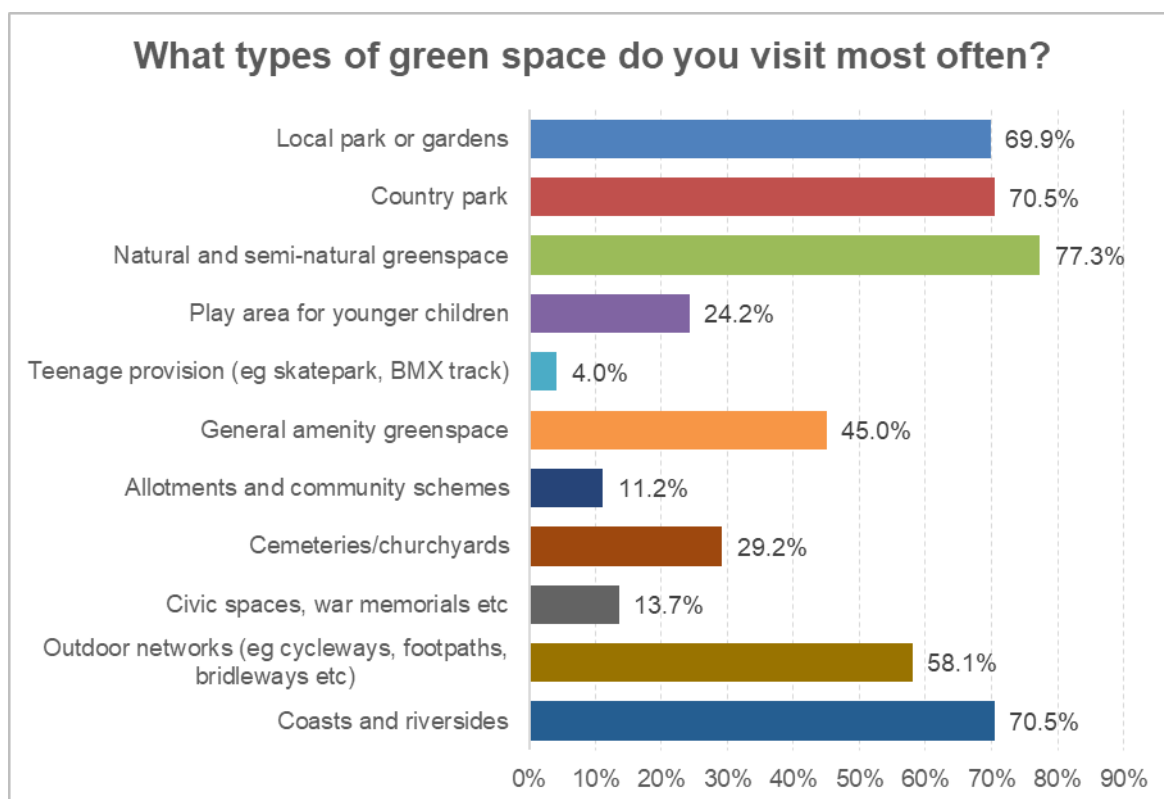
An online community survey was hosted on the Council website and promoted via social media and the Council's communication team. The use of a questionnaire was considered a good approach to providing a widespread opportunity for people to provide their thoughts towards open space provision.

The questionnaire consisted of a series of multiple choice and open-ended questions asking respondents their thoughts on topics such as types of open space visited, frequency and quality etc. A total of 318 responses were received. A summary of the responses is set out on the following pages.

Usage

Popular forms of open space provision to visit most often are nature and semi-natural greenspace (77%), coasts and riversides (71%), country parks (71%) and parks and gardens (70%).

Figure 3.1.1: Types of open space to visit



The main reasons for visiting open space are to go for a walk or stroll (95%) for fresh air (95%), and for peace and quiet/to relax (85%).

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The reason ‘to grow fresh fruits and vegetables’ received the lowest percentage with only 8.1% of respondents. This is a specific reason relating to those respondents stating they visit an allotment (with most people not being an allotment holder). Consequently, it is not a common reason for people visiting open space.

Table 3.1.1: Reasons for visits

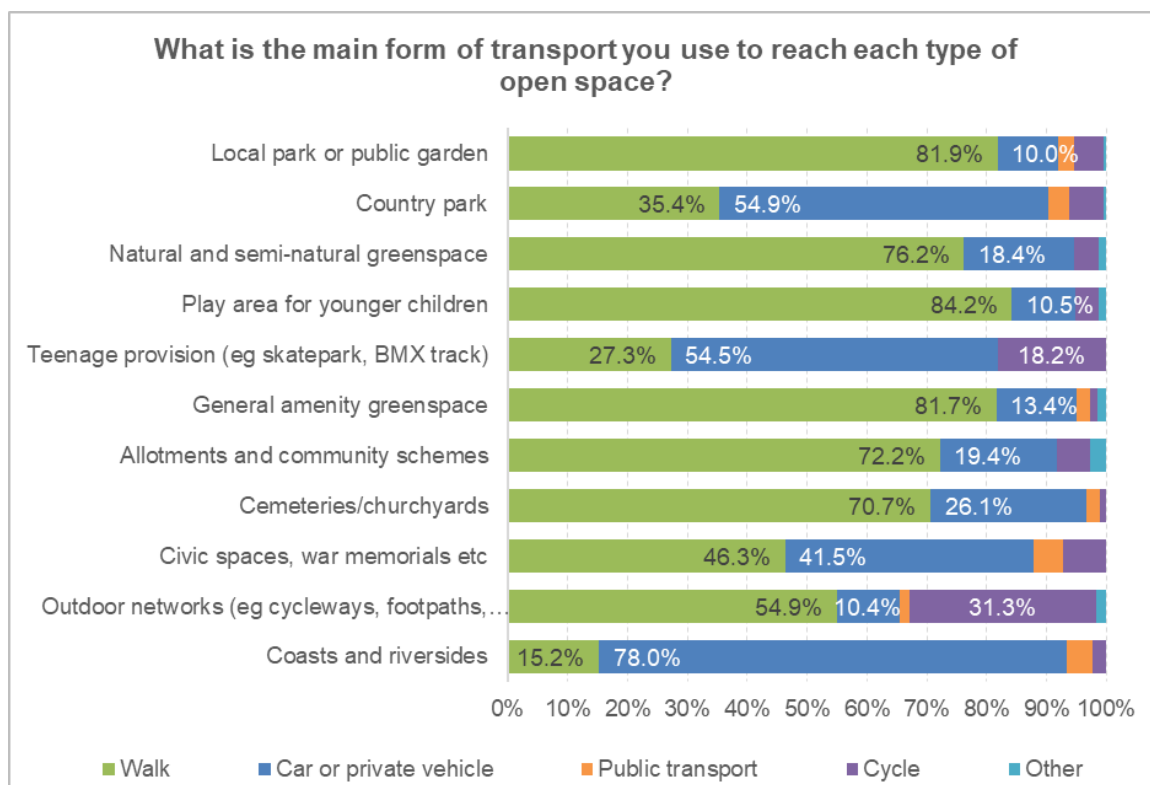
Why do you visit green spaces?	%
Walk/stroll	95.3%
Fresh air	95.3%
Peace and quiet/relax	84.7%
To experience/see nature	84.1%
Time with family/friends	63.6%
Exercise/sport	57.0%
Other (please state)	14.3%
To grow my own fresh fruits and vegetables	8.1%

Accessibility

Individuals generally walk to access provision of play areas for young children (84%), parks (82%), amenity greenspace (82%), natural and semi-natural greenspace (76%), allotments (72%), cemeteries (71%), outdoor networks (55%) and civic space (46%).

The exception to this is for coasts and riversides (78%), country parks (55%) and teenage provision (55%) which individuals are more willing to travel by car to access.

Figure 3.1.2: Mode of travel to open space sites

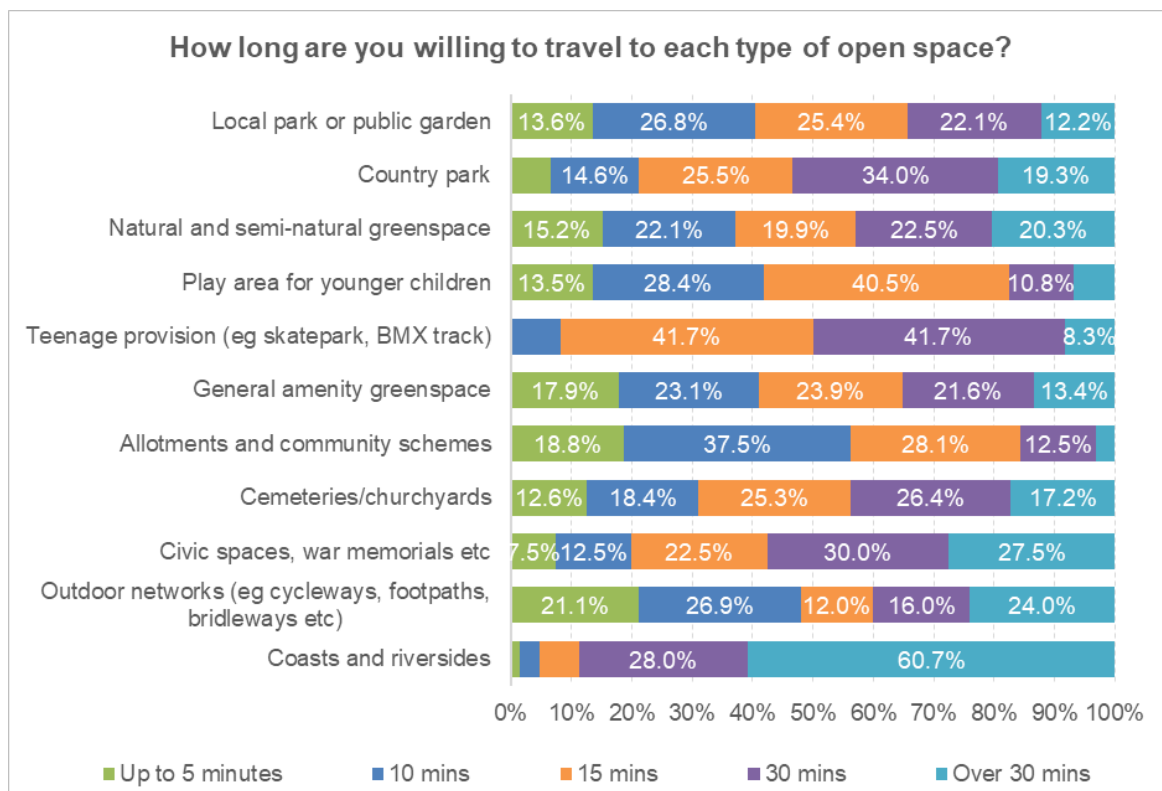


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For some provision such as coasts and riversides and country parks, there is a willingness to travel further distances, with 61% of respondents stating they would travel over 30 minutes to visit coasts and riversides and 34% willing to travel 30 minutes to a country park.

For other forms of provision, respondents show a willingness to travel a shorter amount of time (i.e. 10 to 15 minutes). This is particularly noticeable for parks, allotments, amenity greenspace and play provision.

Figure 3.1.3: Time willing to travel to open space sites



Availability and Quality

In general, respondents consider the amount of open space provision where they live to be quite satisfactory with nearly half (45%) stating they are quite satisfactory. Less than a quarter of respondents (23%) rate availability of open space provision as very satisfactory.

Table 3.1.2: Satisfaction with availability of open space provision

Very satisfactory	Quite satisfactory	Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory	Quite unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory
23.1%	44.7%	13.8%	14.1%	4.4%

Over half of survey respondents (54%) consider the quality of open space provision to be generally quite satisfactory. A further 4% rate quality as very satisfactory. Only small proportions of respondents view quality as quite unsatisfactory (7%) or very unsatisfactory (2%).

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Table 3.1.3: Satisfaction with quality of open space provision

Very satisfactory	Quite satisfactory	Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory	Quite unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory
4.2%	53.8%	13.5%	6.9%	1.6%

Respondents to the survey were asked what they thought would improve open space provision. The most common answers include more wildlife/habitat promotion (76%), better maintenance and care of features (39%) and greater attractiveness (36%). Overwhelmingly, more wildlife/habitat promotion gained the majority of votes.

Table 3.1.4: What would improve open space provision for you?

Answer option	Percentage of respondents
More wildlife/habitat promotion	75.6%
Better maintenance and care of features	38.6%
Greater attractiveness (e.g. flowers, trees)	36.0%
Improved access to and within sites	32.5%
Better and wider range of facilities (i.e. play equipment, seating, refreshments)	23.4%
Greater information on sites	20.8%
Greater community involvement	15.9%
Other (please state below)	13.6%
More public events	8.1%

3.2 Audit overview

Within Colchester, this audit has captured a total of 440 sites equating to approximately 954 hectares of open space. The largest contributor to provision is natural/semi-natural greenspace (604 hectares); accounting for 63%.

Table 3.2: Overview of open space provision

Open space typology	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares)*
Allotments	23	28
Amenity greenspace	134	267
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	62	604
Park and gardens	3	49
Provision for children & young people	118	6
TOTAL	440	954

* Rounded to the nearest whole number

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3.3 Quality

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

Table 3.3: Quality scores for all open space typologies

Typology	Scores			No. of sites	
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Low	High
Amenity greenspace	20%	53%	89%	47	83
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	21%	41%	79%	41	21
Park and gardens	43%	55%	67%	1	1
Provision for children & young people	23%	57%	87%	56	61
				145	166

There is a mixed quality of open space across all typologies. This is reflected in 53% of sites scoring above their set thresholds for quality.

Proportionally there are more natural/semi-natural greenspace sites to rate below the quality thresholds. This is reflective of the purpose of these sites which tends to focus on encouraging greater biodiversity and conservation and can in some instances be intentionally without ancillary facilities.

3.4 Value

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

Table 3.4: Value scores for all open space typologies

Typology	Scores			No. of sites	
	Lowest	Average	Highest	Low	High
Amenity greenspace	7%	35%	78%	25	105
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	7%	39%	83%	13	49
Park and gardens	53%	71%	89%	0	2
Provision for children & young people	13%	43%	82%	6	111
				44	267

Most sites (86%) are assessed as being above the threshold for value, reflecting the role and importance of open space provision to local communities and environments.

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

PART 4: PARKS AND GARDENS

4.1 Introduction

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

4.2 Current provision

There are three sites classified as parks and gardens across Colchester, the equivalent of over 48 hectares (Table 4.1). No site size threshold has been applied and, as such, all sites have been included within the typology. Only the Central/East analysis area has parks provision.

Table 4.1: Current parks provision in Colchester

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		
	Number of sites	Total hectares (ha)	Current provision (ha per 1,000 population)
Central/East	3	48.56	0.34
North	-	-	-
South	-	-	-
West	-	-	-
Colchester	3	48.56	0.25

For parks and gardens, there is a current provision level of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 head of population.

The largest site is Wivenhoe Park (28.76 ha) located in the Central/East Analysis Area. Note the site is part of the campus at the University of Essex with many signs stating private property. If excluded, there would be two sites across Colchester, to a total to 19.80 hectares, equating 0.10 hectares per 1,000 population.

It is important to note that some open space sites across Colchester will help to serve a similar function to parks provision but are primarily classified as a natural/semi-natural greenspace or amenity greenspace. For example, High Woods Country Park has similar features to a park however is classified as natural/semi-natural greenspace.

Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 0.80 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Table 4.1 shows that overall, the borough is below this. This is also the case when considering each analysis area separately.

However, as recognised above, the reality is that parks provision, particularly ‘destination’ parks, are only going to exist in areas of greater population density. Consequently, some analysis areas not meeting the FIT suggestion does not mean a true deficiency exists. It is therefore important to also consider accessibility and quality of provision.

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4.3 Accessibility

For the purpose of mapping, a 15-minute walk and a 15-minute drive time catchment have been applied to parks and gardens. Figure 4.1 shows the catchments applied to parks and gardens to help inform where potential deficiencies in provision may be located. This should be treated as an approximation as it does not take account of topography or walking routes.

Figure 4.1: Parks and gardens mapped with catchments

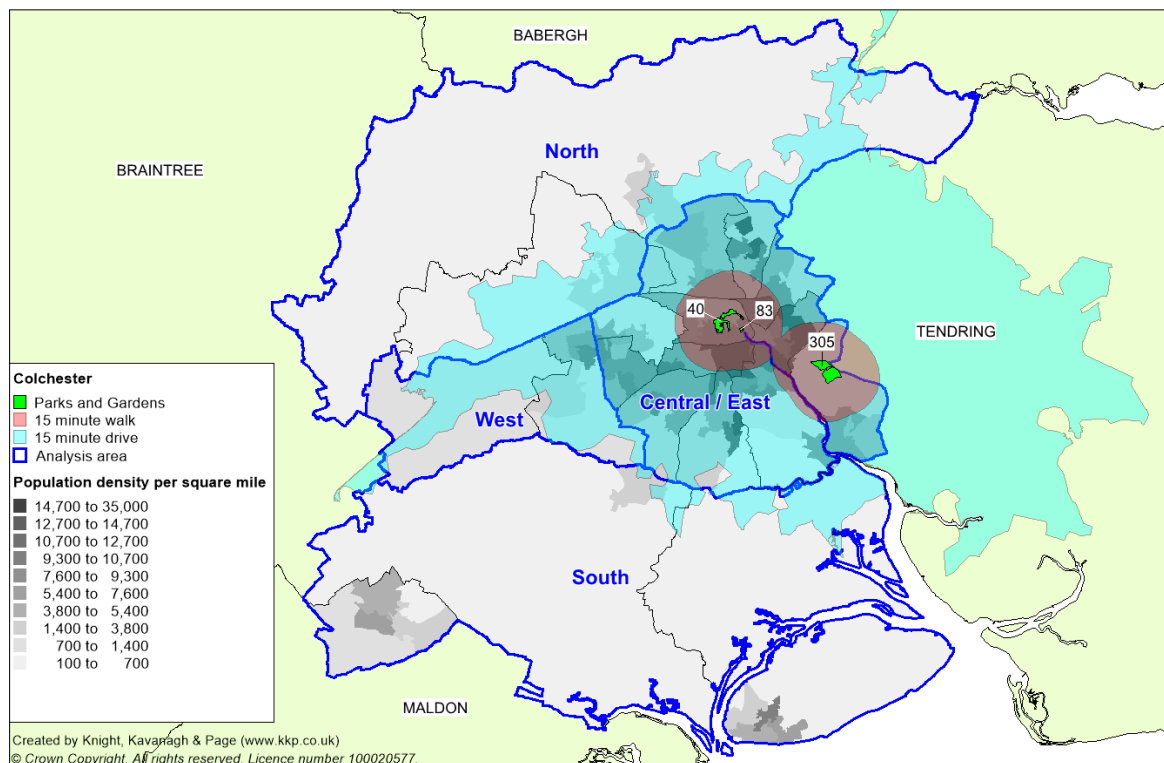


Table 4.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
40	Castle Park	Central/East	18.74	70.9%	88.9%
83	East Hill Park	Central/East	1.05	45.4%	53.3%
305	Wivenhoe Park*	Central/East	28.76		

In previous studies East Hill Park was included as part of Castle Park. However, to distinguish the difference in location and appearance it has been included as its own entry.

Figure 4.1 highlights some gaps in walk and drive time catchments across the borough. In larger areas of greater population density such as the Central/East Analysis Area gaps in walk time catchments are noted. However, the area is covered by the drive time catchment.

* No quality or value score due to uncertainty to the levels of public access

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There are also some gaps to areas of greater population density in the South Analysis Area. However, other types of open space provision are identified (Table 4.3) within most of these areas. Such sites may help to serve as an alternative within the accessibility gap for parks.

Exploring the potential to formalise or strengthen features associated with parks on some of these sites could be considered in order to increase a sites secondary function as a park. This could include ensuring sufficient signage and seating as well as play opportunities.

Table 4.3: Other open spaces serving gaps in park catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Abbey Field (ID 1)	Amenity
	Berechurch Road (ID 15)	Amenity
	Chestnut Field (ID 55)	Natural
	High Woods Country Park (ID 129)	Natural
	King George V Playing Fields (ID 147)	Amenity
	Lexden King George Field (ID 161)	Amenity
	Lilianna Road (ID 167)	Amenity
	Mile End Recreation Ground (ID 189)	Amenity
	Old Heath Recreation Ground (ID 207)	Amenity
	Saint John's Playing Field (ID 241)	Amenity
	Sandmartin Crescent (ID 246)	Amenity
	Spring Lane Park (ID 258)	Amenity
Westlands Country Park (ID 299)	Natural	
South	West Mersea Park (ID 296)	Amenity
	Glebe View Sports Ground AGS (ID 106.2)	Amenity

4.4 Quality

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

Table 4.4: Quality ratings for parks and gardens

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	43%	55%	67%	1	1
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Colchester	43%	55%	67%	1	1

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Wivenhoe Park does not receive a quality/value score due to uncertainty over the level of public access. It forms part of the university complex with several signs citing it as private property.

East Hill Park (45%) scores below the quality threshold due to a lack of signage and maintenance of bins and benches. Drainage scores quite low. However, the park benefits from good boundary fencing, a path through the site and a play area. There is a bus stop right outside the park, a safe crossing and the site has a wide entrance benefiting physical and safe access to and within the site for numerous users. The site would benefit from signage, better maintained facilities and features and some lighting along the path.

The criteria used to assess parks and gardens is intended to be high, reflecting the Green Flag Award assessment. As such, IT is more likely for flagship 'destination' sites to score highly. There are three Green Flag Award sites in Colchester, one of which is classified as a park in this study:

- ◀ Castle Park
- ◀ Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium
- ◀ High Woods Country Park

Castle Park (70%) scores highly for quality. It is observed as a large, attractive site with many features including a play area, footpaths, a bandstand, and benches. The Green Flag Award site has the additional benefits of a boating lake, mini golf, café, toilets, and disabled car parking, further adding to the quality of the site. Consultation with CBC highlights plans to improve the site, in particular the play area which contains very well used equipment.

4.5 Value

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

Table 4.5: Value ratings for parks and gardens

Analysis area	Scores			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	53%	71%	89%	0	2
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Colchester	53%	71%	89%	0	2

Wivenhoe Park does not receive a quality/value score due to uncertainty over the level of public access. It forms part of the university complex with several signs citing it as private property.

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Both assessed sites rate above the threshold for value. Both Castle Park (89%) and East Hill Park (53%) have high amenity and social value due to featuring good paths, recreational and exercise opportunities. Also, both contain play equipment enhancing amenity and health benefits. Castle Park provides a greater amount and range.

Castle Park is observed as an attractive park that is well used and maintained. It scores highly for visual and landscape benefits. The site features a band stand, Roman Townhouses and a castle providing high cultural and heritage value. Furthermore, it is identified as having an active Friends Group, helping to support its range of benefits. The numerous trees on site as well as the boating lake offer ecological benefits whilst the café provides economic value.

One of the key aspects of the value placed on parks provision is their ability to function as a multipurpose form of open space provision. Parks provide opportunities for local communities and individuals to socialise and undertake a range of different activities, such as exercise, dog walking and taking children to the play area. Consequently, sites with a greater diverse range of features and ancillary facilities rate higher for value.

PART 5: NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE

5.1 Introduction

The natural and semi-natural greenspace typology can include woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. down-land, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), wastelands (including disturbed ground), and bare rock habitats (e.g. quarries) and commons. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on sites providing wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

5.2 Current provision

In total, there are 62 natural and semi-natural greenspace sites identified in the borough, equating to over 604 hectares.

Table 5.1: Natural and semi-natural greenspace in Colchester

Analysis area	Natural and semi-natural greenspace		
	Number of sites	Total hectares (ha)	Current provision (ha per 1,000 population)
Central/East	47	465.06	3.27
North	4	48.23	2.95
South	8	72.18	3.10
West	3	18.98	1.22
Colchester	62	604.45	3.07

The Central/East Analysis Area has the most natural and semi-natural provision with a total of over 465 hectares. This makes up 77% of identified provision across Colchester.

The largest sites are High Woods Country Park (152 hectares) and Cymbeline Meadows (59 hectares), both in the Central/East Analysis Area. Collectively, these make up just over a third (35%) of the natural and semi-natural greenspace provision.

Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 1.80 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Within the borough, there is an overall current provision level of 3.07 hectares per 1,000 head of population which exceeds the FIT guidelines. This is also the case for all the analysis areas except for the West Analysis Area (1.22 ha per 1,000 population).

Consultation with CBC identifies that Stanway Country Park is currently being constructed as a new open space site however, it will be a few years until completion. The site will be located west of Warren Lane. Part of Phase One involves the construction of the community centre which is being built on this (west) side of Warren Lane whilst Phase 2 entails future plans for land off Warren Lane to become part of the country park.

5.3 Accessibility

For the purpose of catchment mapping, a 15-minute walk catchment has been applied. Figure 5.1 shows catchments to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

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Figure 5.1: Natural and semi-natural greenspace with 15-minute walk time

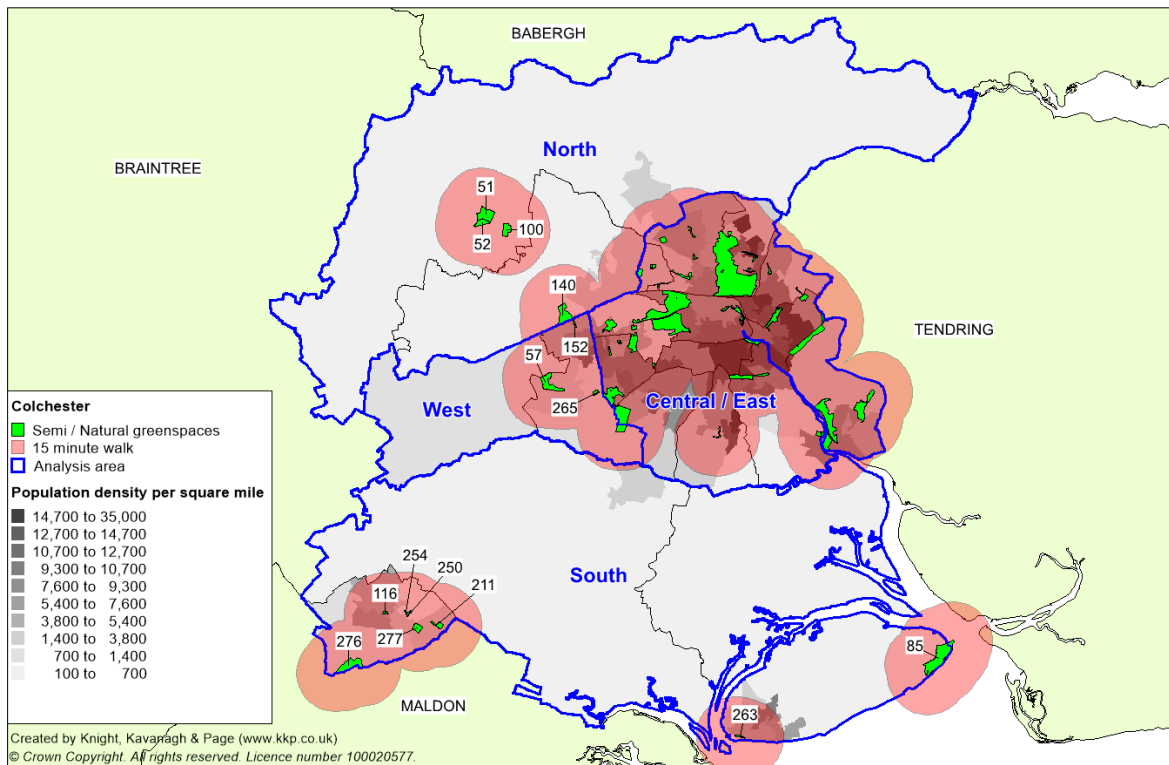
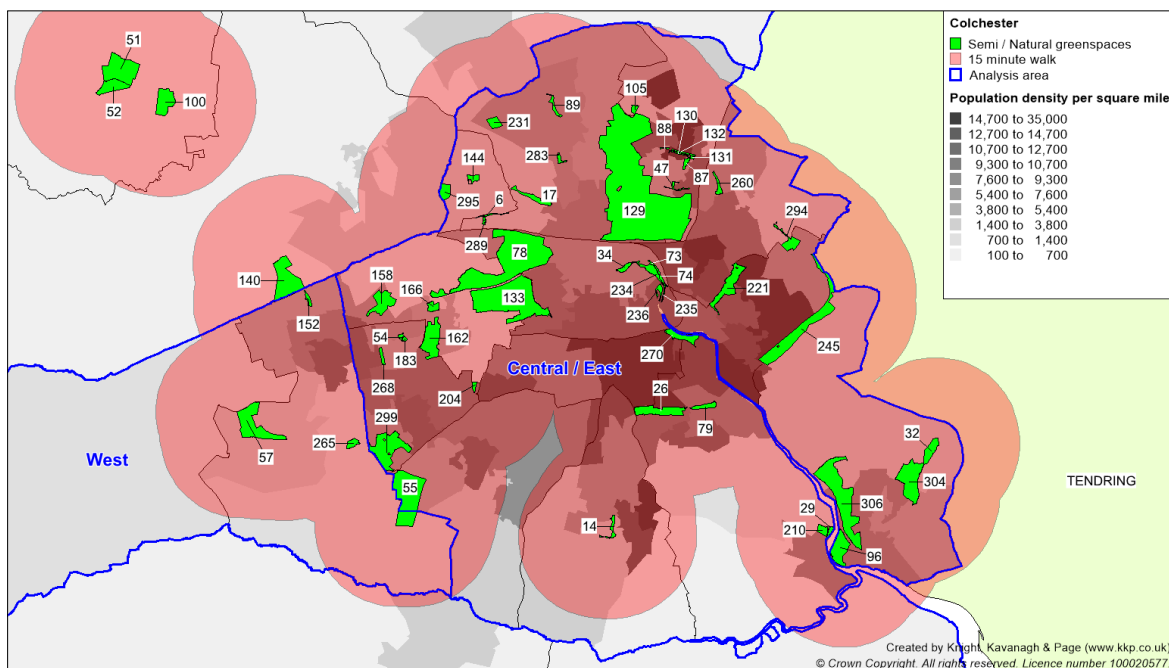


Figure 5.2: Natural and semi-natural greenspace with 15-minute walk time (Central/East)



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Table 5.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
6	Apprentice Drive NSN	Central/East	0.56	21.2%	12.2%
14	Berechurch Hall Road	Central/East	1.69	34.1%	24.4%
17	Bergholt Road	Central/East	4.58	28.8%	17.8%
26	Bourne Valley Local Wildlife Site	Central/East	8.48	59.1%	64.4%
29	Brich Brook	Central/East	0.72	45.7%	50.0%
32	Broadfields Nature Reserve	Central/East	4.56	40.2%	41.1%
34	Bull Meadow	Central/East	1.45	36.4%	17.8%
47	Chanterelle	Central/East	0.81	48.5%	58.9%
51	Chappel Road (a)	North	16.53	38.6%	46.7%
52	Chappel Road (b)	North	6.44	35.6%	52.2%
54	Chaucer Way	Central/East	0.54	35.6%	25.6%
55	Chesthunt Field	Central/East	27.13	59.8%	55.6%
57	Church Lane, Stanway	West	16.13	34.1%	31.1%
73	Cowdray Avenue (a)	Central/East	0.30	27.3%	12.2%
74	Cowdray Avenue (b)	Central/East	0.86	29.3%	6.7%
78	Cymbeline Meadows	Central/East	59.09	57.3%	58.9%
79	Distillery Lane and pond	Central/East	2.28	37.9%	30.0%
85	Cudmore Grove Country Park	South	38.49	51.5%	66.7%
87	Eastwood Drive (b)	Central/East	0.83	32.6%	17.8%
88	Eastwood Drive (a)	Central/East	0.20	35.6%	25.6%
89	Echelon Walk	Central/East	1.45	51.5%	47.8%
96	Ferry Marsh Nature Reserve	Central/East	8.84	31.1%	42.2%
100	Fordham woodland	North	8.38	34.1%	63.3%
105	Gavin Way	Central/East	0.92	26.5%	46.7%
116	Grove Pond	South	1.15	60.6%	55.6%
129	High Woods Country Park	Central/East	151.71	79.0%	83.3%
130	Highwoods Approach (b)	Central/East	0.46	47.7%	36.7%
131	Highwoods Approach (c)	Central/East	0.39	43.2%	25.6%
132	Highwoods Approach (a)	Central/East	0.48	31.8%	20.0%
133	Hilly Fields Nature Reserve	Central/East	43.57	51.0%	60.0%
140	Iron Latch Nature Reserve	North	16.88	22.7%	42.2%
144	Keepers Green NSN	Central/East	1.54	32.1%	24.4%
152	Lacewing Gardens	West	1.05	39.1%	14.4%
158	Lexden Gathering Grounds	Central/East	8.40	34.8%	46.7%
162	Lexden Park	Central/East	11.53	65.9%	48.9%
166	Lexden Springs Nature Reserve	Central/East	2.00	45.5%	42.2%
183	Marlowe Way	Central/East	0.32	34.1%	25.6%
204	Norman Way NSN	Central/East	0.77	31.1%	6.7%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
210	Oxton Close	Central/East	1.81	30.3%	12.2%
211	Park Lane Nature Reserve	South	3.94	50.5%	61.1%
221	Porters Brook	Central/East	9.61	37.9%	31.1%
231	Redora Lane	Central/East	2.50	43.2%	46.7%
234	River Bank Walk	Central/East	3.09	37.4%	35.6%
235	River Colne	Central/East	0.25	36.4%	18.9%
236	Riverside Place	Central/East	1.01	50.0%	61.1%
245	Salary Brook LNR	Central/East	22.82	61.4%	47.8%
250	Shelley Avenue	South	1.19	34.1%	36.7%
254	Southgate Crescent	South	0.23	38.6%	31.1%
260	St Cyrus Road	Central/East	1.62	29.3%	53.3%
263	St Peter's Well Meadow	South	1.15	67.9%	61.1%
265	Stanway Green	West	1.79	30.1%	42.2%
268	Straight Road	Central/East	1.04	46.2%	54.4%
270	Tarrett Drive	Central/East	4.91	34.8%	14.4%
276	Tiptree Heath	South	20.36	58.1%	50.0%
277	Tiptree Reservoir	South	5.68	34.1%	37.8%
283	Tranter Drive NSN	Central/East	0.83	34.8%	18.9%
289	Vortex Road	Central/East	0.42	33.3%	30.0%
294	Welsh Wood	Central/East	3.83	53.5%	58.9%
295	West House Wood	Central/East	3.29	22.7%	12.2%
299	Westlands Country Park	Central/East	16.84	44.7%	44.4%
304	Wivenhoe Cross	Central/East	14.94	30.3%	43.3%
306	Wivenhoe Woods Colne LNR	Central/East	29.81	57.3%	54.4%

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 highlight that nearly all areas of greater population are served by provision.

A minor gap to the south of the Central/East Analysis Area is noted. However, other types of open space provision are identified (Table 5.3) within this area. Such sites may help to serve as an alternative within the accessibility gap for natural greenspace.

Table 5.3: Other open spaces serving gaps in natural greenspace catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Camulodunum Way (ID 36)	Amenity
	Cassinio Road (ID 39)	Amenity
	Catherine Hunt Way (ID 42)	Amenity
	Elmwood Avenue (ID 93)	Amenity
	Layer Road (ID 157)	Amenity
	Reed Hall Avenue (ID 232)	Amenity

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5.4 Quality

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

Table 5.3: Quality ratings for assessed natural and semi-natural greenspace

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	21%	41%	79%	31	16
North	23%	33%	39%	4	0
South	34%	49%	68%	3	5
West	30%	34%	39%	3	0
Colchester	21%	41%	79%	41	21

Of natural and semi-natural sites assessed, just over a third (34%) rate above the quality threshold, indicating a low level of quality.

The four lowest scoring sites for quality are:

- ◀ Apprentice Drive NSN (21%)
- ◀ West House Wood (23%)
- ◀ Iron Latch Nature Reserve (23%)
- ◀ Gavin Way (27%)

Sites scoring below the quality threshold tend to be devoid of ancillary features such as benches and signage. In some instances, natural and semi-natural sites can be intentionally without ancillary facilities to reduce misuse/inappropriate behaviour whilst encouraging greater conservation.

The lower rating sites do so due to low scores for entrances, boundary fencing, controls to prevent illegal use and user security. Furthermore, none of the sites have signage. Consultation with CBC highlights that Iron Latch Nature Reserve has only recently (August) been adopted by the Council. The site features a dog circuit and informal BMX track. These add to its quality however due to reasons above, the site scores below the threshold.

The highest scoring natural and semi-natural sites for quality are:

- ◀ High Woods Country Park (79%)
- ◀ St Peter's Well Meadow (68%)
- ◀ Lexden Park (66%)
- ◀ Salary Brook LNR (61%)

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These sites, alongside other high scoring sites, have the added benefit of ancillary features such as informative signage, litter bins and dog bins. The sites are also observed as having good access for all, with well-maintained pathways and levels of personal security. All three sites, with the exception of Salary Brook LNR, have the additional benefit of benches.

High Woods Country Park and Lexden Park both have picnic tables and car parking further adding to their quality. High Woods Country Park is the highest scoring site for quality due to being observed as an excellent large woodland and greenspace featuring a good network of paths, adventure and toddler play equipment, car parking and toilet facilities. This Green Flag Award site also has several picnic tables. The site contains a visitor centre, great signage and disabled car parking. It likely attracts large visitor numbers.

Lexden Park (66%) is a nature reserve featuring signage, benches, picnic benches, good paths, litter bins, dog bins and an ornamental lake. The site also contains a historical landmark (Lexden Earthworks and Bluebottle Grove).

Similarly, St Peter's Well Meadow (68%) is also a nature reserve and scores well above the quality threshold. The site benefits from paths, numerous benches, informative signage, and coastal views.

5.5 Value

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

Table 5.4: Value scores for assessed natural and semi-natural greenspace

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	7%	36%	83%	12	35
North	42%	51%	63%	0	4
South	31%	50%	67%	0	8
West	14%	29%	42%	1	2
Colchester	7%	39%	83%	13	49

Over three quarters (79%) of assessed natural and semi-natural sites score above the threshold for value. Numerous sites have ecological value, contributing to flora and fauna, as well as providing habitats for local wildlife.

Sites can also provide benefits to the health and wellbeing of residents and those visiting from further afield. This is a result of the exercise opportunities they provide, for example, through walking and biking trails. Furthermore, they break up the urban form creating peaceful spaces to relax and reflect.

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The highest scoring natural and semi-natural sites for value are:

- ◀ High Woods Country Park (83%)
- ◀ Cudmore Grove Country Park (67%)
- ◀ Bourne Valley Local Wildlife Site (64%)

These sites offer high amenity and social value due to good paths and recreation and exercise opportunities. All are well located and of high quality, providing attractive landscapes, and enhancing structural and landscape benefits. In addition, each has high ecological value due to providing habitats for a flora and fauna and all contain a water feature.

High Woods Country Park (83%) is the highest scoring site for both quality and value as it has added social and amenity value due to its play provision and well used large space for a variety of exercise. It has additional educational value due to offering environmental education programmes and forest schools. The site features tree sculptures, walking trails and provides a variety of habitats including woodland, wildflower meadows and scrubland providing an attractive welcoming landscape for a range of users including families and walkers.

Cudmore Grove Country Park (67%) is designated as a Special Site of Scientific Interest, a Ramsar site, a National Nature Reserve and Special Protection Area, and features a great variety of wildlife and wildfowl providing high biodiversity and ecological value. The car park and café provide economic value. The site is rich in historic features including WWII pillboxes.

Bourne Valley Local Wildlife Site (64%) is a site of nature conservation importance and offers Audio Trails for visitors further adding to the amenity and educational benefits.

Some of the lowest scoring sites include Cowdray Avenue (b) (7%), Norman Way NSN (7%) and Apprentice Drive NSN (12%). These sites have poor paths and a lack of facilities limiting amenity and social benefits. All are perceived as hardly used. Apprentice Drive NSN and Cowdray Avenue (b) are highway buffers.

PART 6: AMENITY GREENSPACE

6.1 Introduction

Amenity greenspace is defined as sites offering opportunities for informal activities close to home, work or enhancement of the appearance of residential and other areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and other incidental spaces.

6.2 Current provision

There are 134 amenity greenspace sites in Colchester equating to over 266 hectares of provision. Sites are most often found within areas of housing and function as informal recreation space or along highways providing a visual amenity. A number of recreation grounds and playing fields are also classified as amenity greenspace.

Table 6.1: Current amenity greenspace in Colchester

Analysis area	Amenity greenspace		
	Number	Total hectares (ha)	Current provision (ha per 1,000 population)
Central/East	86	187.11	1.32
North	15	33.74	2.06
South	16	21.67	0.93
West	17	24.16	1.55
Colchester	134	266.69	1.35

This typology has a broad range of purposes and as such varies significantly in size. For example, Camomile Way at 0.54 hectares, acts as an important visual/communal amenity. In contrast, Abbey Field at 26 hectares, is a large recreation ground with a range of recreational and sport opportunities.

Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 0.60 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Table 6.1 shows that overall, the borough is sufficient on this basis. This is also the case for all four of the analysis areas.

It is important to highlight that it is not always clear to distinguish a site's primary typology. Some sites can bridge the definition of typologies such as natural greenspace and amenity greenspace. For example, a grassed area left unmaintained can start to have characteristics associated with natural greenspace.

6.3 Accessibility

For the purpose of mapping, a 10-minute walk time catchment is applied. Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2 show the catchments applied to amenity greenspace provision to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

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Figure 6.1: Amenity greenspaces with 10-minute walk time catchment

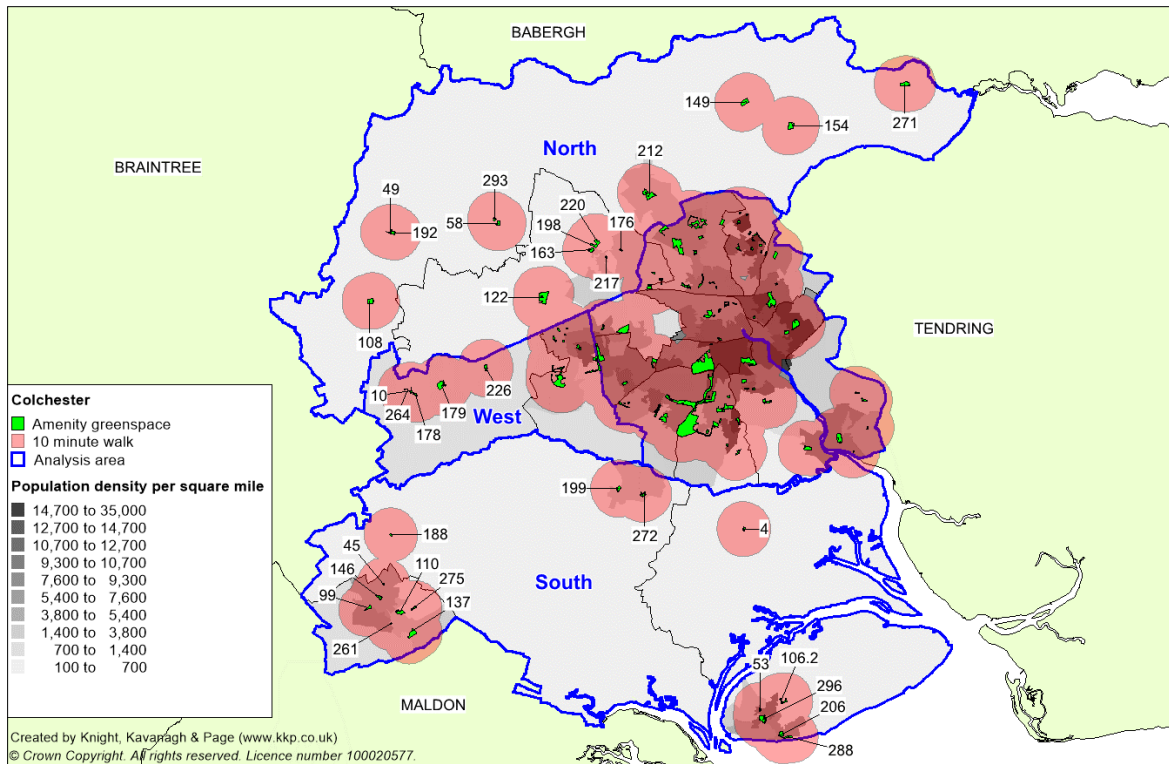
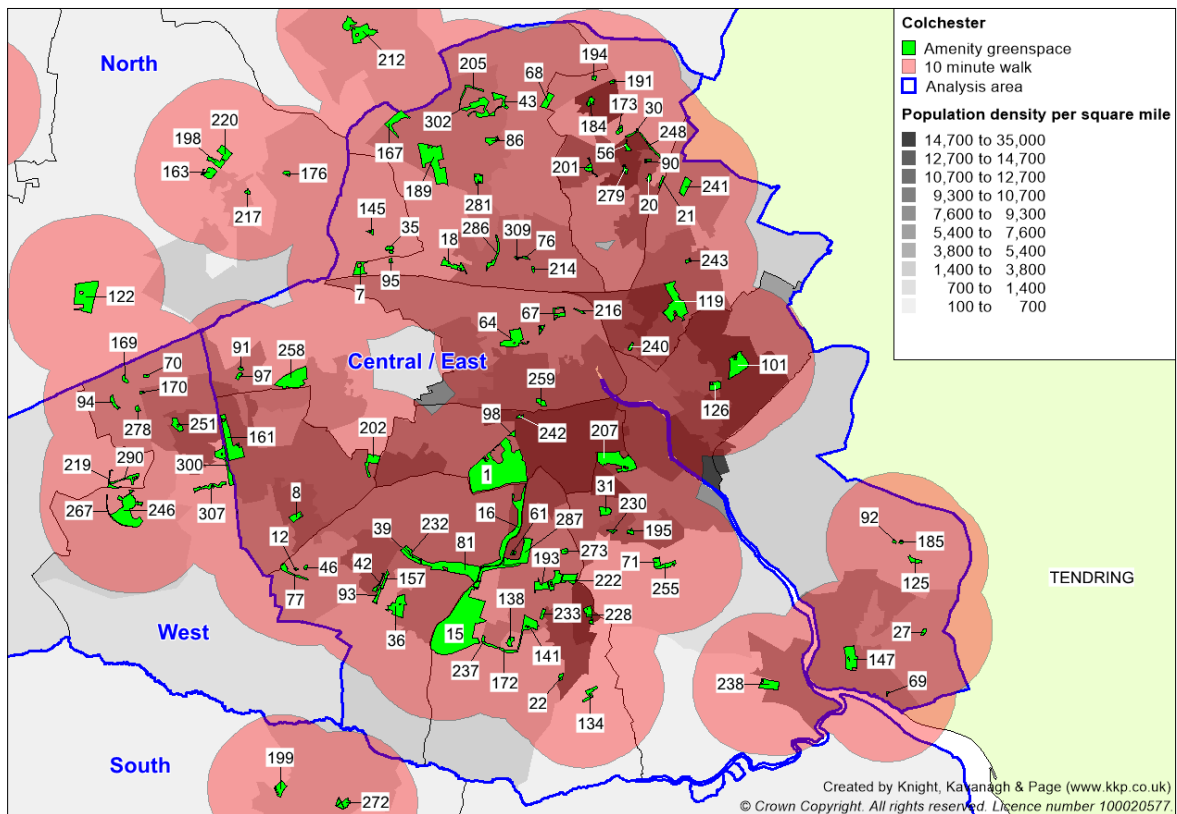


Figure 6.2: Amenity greenspaces with 10-minute walk time catchment (Central/East)



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Table 6.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
1	Abbey Field	Central/East	26.21	76.6%	60.2%
4	Abberton and Langenhoe Village Hall	South	0.39	76.9%	28.9%
7	Apprentice Drive	Central/East	1.54	52.9%	57.8%
8	Baden Powell Drive	Central/East	1.05	49.0%	39.8%
10	Badgers Green, Marks Tey	West	0.63	55.1%	34.9%
12	Barbour Gardens	Central/East	0.09		
15	Berechurch Road (a)	Central/East	32.30	55.8%	45.8%
16	Berechurch Road (b)	Central/East	6.68	58.7%	54.2%
18	Bergholt Road Park	Central/East	1.62	59.5%	59.0%
20	Berkley Close	Central/East	0.36	56.1%	57.8%
21	Bilsdale Close	Central/East	0.38	48.1%	8.4%
22	Blackheath AGS	Central/East	0.35	45.8%	15.7%
27	Bowes Road	Central/East	0.29	49.7%	15.7%
30	Brinkley Lane	Central/East	0.37	64.4%	41.0%
31	Brittany Way	Central/East	1.22	55.8%	33.7%
35	Camomile Way	Central/East	0.54	44.7%	27.7%
36	Camulodunum Way	Central/East	3.53	45.2%	28.9%
39	Cassino Road	Central/East	1.43	46.2%	30.1%
42	Catherine Hunt Way	Central/East	0.50	55.4%	24.1%
43	Cavell Avenue	Central/East	1.35	27.9%	50.6%
45	Cedar Avenue, Tiptree	South	0.19	51.1%	27.7%
46	Centurion Way	Central/East	0.19	51.9%	33.7%
49	Chappel Hill, Wakes Colne	North	0.48	54.8%	57.8%
53	Chatsworth Road, West Mersea	South	0.38	51.0%	15.7%
56	Chinook	Central/East	0.45	53.5%	33.7%
58	Church Road, Fordham	North	1.11	56.7%	50.6%
61	Circus Square	Central/East	0.23	60.4%	63.9%
64	Colchester & East Essex Cricket Club	Central/East	4.12	67.9%	71.1%
67	Colchester skatepark AGS	Central/East	0.88	33.7%	8.4%
68	Comyns Close	Central/East	1.49	20.2%	7.2%
69	Cooks Crescent	Central/East	0.13	55.9%	9.6%
70	Cornflower Close, Colchester	West	0.19	42.9%	26.5%
71	Cottage Drive	Central/East	0.78		
76	Cranborne Close	Central/East	0.24	40.7%	14.5%
77	Cunobelin Way	Central/East	1.07	54.8%	15.7%
81	Earlswood Way	Central/East	7.95	69.7%	39.8%
86	Echelon Walk AGS	Central/East	0.99	58.7%	47.0%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
90	Elizabeth Close	Central/East	0.27	42.8%	38.6%
91	Firstore Drive/Beaver Close	Central/East	0.22	42.3%	26.5%
92	Elizabeth Way	Central/East	0.16	60.9%	8.4%
93	Elmwood Avenue	Central/East	0.63	52.6%	24.1%
94	Essex Yeomanry Way, Colchester	West	0.71	39.9%	8.4%
95	Fan Avenue	Central/East	0.20	55.5%	38.6%
97	Firstore Drive	Central/East	0.37	37.8%	20.5%
98	Flagstaff Road	Central/East	0.33	53.2%	21.7%
99	Florence Park, Tiptree	South	1.35	40.4%	27.7%
101	Gardenia Walk	Central/East	4.70	39.1%	45.8%
106.2	Glebe View Sports Ground AGS, West Mersea	South	1.37	65.1%	53.0%
108	Greenfield Drive, Great Tey	North	2.49	52.2%	63.9%
110	Grove Park, Tiptree	South	2.49	60.7%	48.2%
119	Hazelton Road	Central/East	6.98	30.4%	39.8%
122	Heath Road, Eight Ash Green	North	7.96	34.6%	20.5%
125	Henrietta Close	Central/East	0.77	57.0%	16.9%
126	Hickory Avenue	Central/East	1.20	58.3%	27.7%
134	Holt Drive	Central/East	0.99	62.5%	27.7%
137	Honey Lane, Tiptree	South	3.66		
138	Hooper Avenue	Central/East	0.67	62.0%	22.9%
141	John Mace	Central/East	2.46	67.6%	41.0%
145	Keepers Green	Central/East	0.28	47.4%	32.5%
146	Kelvedon Road, Tiptree	South	1.36	69.5%	33.7%
147	King George V Playing Fields	Central/East	3.59	67.3%	72.3%
149	King George's Field, Boxted	North	3.22	58.7%	59.0%
154	Langham Community Centre	North	2.86	56.1%	57.8%
157	Layer Road	Central/East	0.68	50.0%	24.1%
161	Lexden King George Field	Central/East	6.00	55.8%	42.2%
163	Lexden Road, West Bergholt	North	1.49	58.7%	53.0%
167	Lilianna Road	Central/East	2.72	49.7%	45.8%
169	Lucy Lane North, Colchester	West	0.38	41.4%	32.5%
170	Lucy Lane South, Colchester	West	0.12	54.5%	14.5%
172	Lungley Rise/Berechurch Hall Road	Central/East	0.75	57.7%	34.9%
173	Mabbitt Way	Central/East	0.47	51.9%	53.0%
176	Maltings Park, West Bergholt	North	0.39	53.5%	45.8%
178	Mandeville Road, Marks Tey	West	0.64	51.0%	30.1%
179	Marks Tey	West	3.81	69.9%	47.0%
184	Maximus Drive	Central/East	0.64	54.2%	57.8%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
185	Mede Way	Central/East	0.16	67.0%	20.5%
188	Messing Green, Messing	South	0.35	56.1%	39.8%
189	Mile End Recreation Ground	Central/East	9.31	55.4%	51.8%
191	Mill Road	Central/East	0.21	43.6%	8.4%
192	Millennium Green, Wakes Colne	North	1.03	54.5%	75.9%
193	Monkwick Infant School	Central/East	1.52	35.6%	16.9%
194	Mortimer Gardens	Central/East	0.24	51.9%	47.0%
195	Mountbatten Drive	Central/East	0.37	42.8%	21.7%
198	New Church Road, West Bergholt	North	1.30	41.0%	20.5%
199	New Cut, Layer-de-la-Haye	South	1.51	70.2%	33.7%
201	Northfield Gardens	Central/East	0.74	54.8%	47.0%
202	Norman Way AG	Central/East	1.88	58.3%	28.9%
205	Oakhouse Close	Central/East	0.80	37.2%	8.4%
206	Oakwood Avenue, West Mersea	South	1.61	79.2%	24.1%
207	Old Heath Recreation Ground	Central/East	7.10	88.6%	78.3%
212	Pattinson Walk, Great Horkeley	North	5.51	65.1%	48.2%
214	Peto Avenue	Central/East	0.19	29.8%	14.5%
216	Pillbox Walk	Central/East	0.23	38.5%	8.4%
217	Pirie Road, West Bergholt	North	0.27	36.5%	15.7%
219	Plover Road, Colchester	West	0.71	54.2%	24.1%
220	Poor's Field, West Bergholt	North	1.72	48.7%	34.9%
222	Queen Elizabeth Way	Central/East	3.68	59.3%	10.8%
226	Queensbury Avenue, Copford	West	1.35	51.0%	53.0%
228	Queensland Drive	Central/East	1.19	57.0%	33.7%
230	Ranger Walk	Central/East	0.29	39.4%	20.5%
232	Reed Hall Avenue	Central/East	0.50	45.2%	8.4%
233	Ridgewell Way	Central/East	0.43	65.1%	10.8%
237	Roman Way/Berechurch Hall Road	Central/East	0.70	60.6%	34.9%
238	Rowhedge Recreation Ground	Central/East	2.28	83.3%	59.0%
240	Saint Andrews Gardens	Central/East	0.35	26.9%	21.7%
241	Saint John's Playing Field	Central/East	1.67	55.4%	57.8%
242	Saint Johns Green	Central/East	0.23	40.7%	9.6%
243	Saint Neots Close	Central/East	0.23	36.2%	21.7%
246	Sandmartin Crescent, Colchester	West	8.16	61.9%	48.2%
248	Severalls Lane	Central/East	0.64	51.9%	33.7%
251	Silver Witch Garden, Colchester	West	1.28	79.2%	36.1%
255	Speedwell Road	Central/East	1.04	52.7%	39.8%
258	Spring Lane Park	Central/East	6.02	46.2%	57.8%
259	St Botolph's Priory	Central/East	0.67	68.9%	27.7%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
261	St Luke's Chase, Tiptree	South	0.13	64.7%	45.8%
264	Stane Field, Marks Tey	West	0.38	41.4%	36.1%
267	Stanway Western Bypass	West	0.45		
271	The Duchy Field, Dedham	North	3.27	63.5%	57.8%
272	The Folley, Layer-de-la-Haye	South	1.41	48.4%	39.8%
273	The Willows	Central/East	0.45	53.5%	15.7%
275	Tiffin Drive, Tiptree	South	0.76	46.6%	33.7%
278	Tollgate Drive, Colchester	West	0.34	45.5%	21.7%
279	Tony Webb Close	Central/East	0.38	57.7%	38.6%
281	Tranter Drive	Central/East	0.99	61.5%	53.0%
286	Turner Road	Central/East	1.28	31.4%	7.2%
287	Valentinus Crescent	Central/East	4.21	56.4%	45.8%
288	Victoria Esplanade, West Mersea	South	1.25	74.4%	30.1%
290	Wagtail Mews, Colchester	West	0.94	61.2%	36.1%
293	Weavers Green, Fordham	North	0.62	46.2%	26.5%
296	West Mersea Park	South	3.45	81.1%	78.3%
300	Wheatfield Road Park, Colchester	West	2.65	42.0%	33.7%
302	Whitmore Drive	Central/East	3.63	46.8%	50.6%
307	Woden Avenue, Colchester	West	1.43	55.1%	36.1%
309	Worsdell Way	Central/East	0.12	33.7%	26.5%

The following sites do not receive a quality or value rating:

- ◀ Barbour Gardens (ID12) <0.2ha, no facilities
- ◀ Cottage Drive (ID 71) appears to be part of Old Heath Primary School – no access.
- ◀ Honey Lane (ID 137) does not look like open space
- ◀ Stanway Western Bypass (ID 267) a path between other sites

Despite Comyns Close (ID 68) being assessed, observations identify it looks private.

Catchment mapping shows that areas with denser populations are generally covered by amenity greenspace catchments. A minor catchment gap is noted in the Central/East Analysis Area. It is recognised that this gap is met by other forms of open space provision.

Table 6.3: Other open spaces serving gaps in amenity greenspace catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Cymbeline Meadows (ID 78) Hilly Fields Nature Reserve (ID 133)	Natural Natural

6.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance), the scores from site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for amenity greenspaces. A threshold of 50% is applied to divide high from low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 6.4: Quality ratings for amenity greenspaces

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	20%	52%	89%	33	51
North	35%	52%	65%	5	10
South	40%	62%	81%	3	12
West	40%	53%	79%	6	10
Colchester	20%	53%	89%	47	83

Over half of assessed amenity greenspaces (64%) rate above the quality threshold.

The highest scoring sites for quality are:

- ◀ Old Heath Recreation Ground (89%)
- ◀ Rowhedge Recreation Ground (83%)
- ◀ West Mersea Park (81%)

All three of these sites are observed as having high standards of maintenance and cleanliness, resulting in a good overall appearance. In addition, they provide good levels of user security, and benefit from signage. All three sites have benches, bins to prevent excessive littering and pathways suitable for various users.

Old Heath Recreation Ground (89%) features a MUGA, play area, outdoor gym, table tennis, café and community garden, further adding to its quality. Rowhedge Recreation Ground (83%) and West Mersea Park (81%) also have a play area, with the latter also containing a skate park.

Larger amenity greenspace sites often lend themselves to sporting opportunities such as football. These sporting opportunities as well as other added features on site, such as good quality play areas, provide increased reasons for people to visit such provision.

There are several sites (29) that score just below the threshold between 40% and 49%. With some minor improvements, many would meet the quality threshold of 50%.

Just over a third of assessed of sites (36%) rate below the quality threshold indicating some sites potentially having a poor general standard of quality.

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The lowest scoring amenity greenspace sites for quality are:

- ◀ Comyns Close (20%)
- ◀ Saint Andrews Gardens (27%)
- ◀ Cavell Avenue (28%)
- ◀ Peto Avenue (30%)
- ◀ Hazelton Road (30%)

All these sites score lower for entrances and a lack of controls to prevent illegal use. None of them are identified as having signage, bins, or benches. The exception is Hazelton Road which has dog bins. Cavell Avenue (28%) has the benefit of a play area and footpaths.

Comyns Close, the lowest scoring amenity greenspace site (20%) is observed as having quite a large space which is fenced. There does not appear to be access and is potentially privately owned.

6.5 Value

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

Table 6.5: Value ratings for amenity greenspace

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	7%	33%	78%	21	63
North	16%	46%	76%	1	14
South	16%	37%	78%	1	14
West	8%	32%	53%	2	14
Colchester	7%	35%	78%	25	105

Most amenity greenspace sites (81%) rate above the threshold for value. Some of the highest scoring sites for value are

- ◀ Old Heath Recreation Ground (78%)
- ◀ West Mersea Park (78%)
- ◀ Millennium Green (76%)
- ◀ King George V Playing Fields (72%)

These sites are recognised for the accessible, good quality recreational opportunities they offer (such as sports and play provision) for a wide range of users. With the exception of Millennium Green, the sites have enhanced amenity and social benefits due to containing play equipment.

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Millennium Green has good paths around the site providing health benefits through exercise opportunities. It also features an interpretation board with information about the site including its diverse habitats which provides educational value.

King George V Playing Fields (72%) contains a play area, skate park and basketball area. Likewise, Old Heath Recreation Ground (78%) also features a range of play equipment such as a play area, outdoor gym equipment, a MUGA and two table tennis tables. All are noted as attractive greenspaces enhancing structural and landscape benefits.

The lowest scoring sites for value have no paths and/or are unattractive and have access difficulties or questions over whether they are accessible. These include Turner Road and Comyns Close (both scoring 7%).

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

These attributes add to the quality, accessibility, and visibility of amenity greenspace. Combined with the presence of facilities (e.g. benches, landscaping and trees) this means that the better-quality sites are likely to be more respected and valued.

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PART 7: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.1 Introduction

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

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

7.2 Current provision

A total of 118 sites are identified in Colchester as provision for children and young people. This combines to create a total of over six hectares. No site size threshold has been applied and as such, all provision is identified and included within the audit.

Table 7.1: Distribution of provision for children and young people in Colchester

Analysis area	Provision for children and young people		
	Number	Total hectares (ha)	Current provision (ha per 1,000 population)
Central/East	73	3.93	0.03
North	16	0.90	0.06
South	13	0.76	0.03
West	16	0.62	0.04
Colchester	118	6.21	0.03

Play areas can be classified in the following ways to identify their effective target audience utilising Fields In Trust (FIT) guidance.

FIT provides widely endorsed guidance on the minimum standards for play space.

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

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

Provision for children and young people				
LAP	LEAP	NEAP	Casual	TOTAL
11	54	15	38	118

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Cottage Drive play area, included as a LEAP in Table 7.2 but it appears to be part of Old Heath Primary School.

7.3 Accessibility

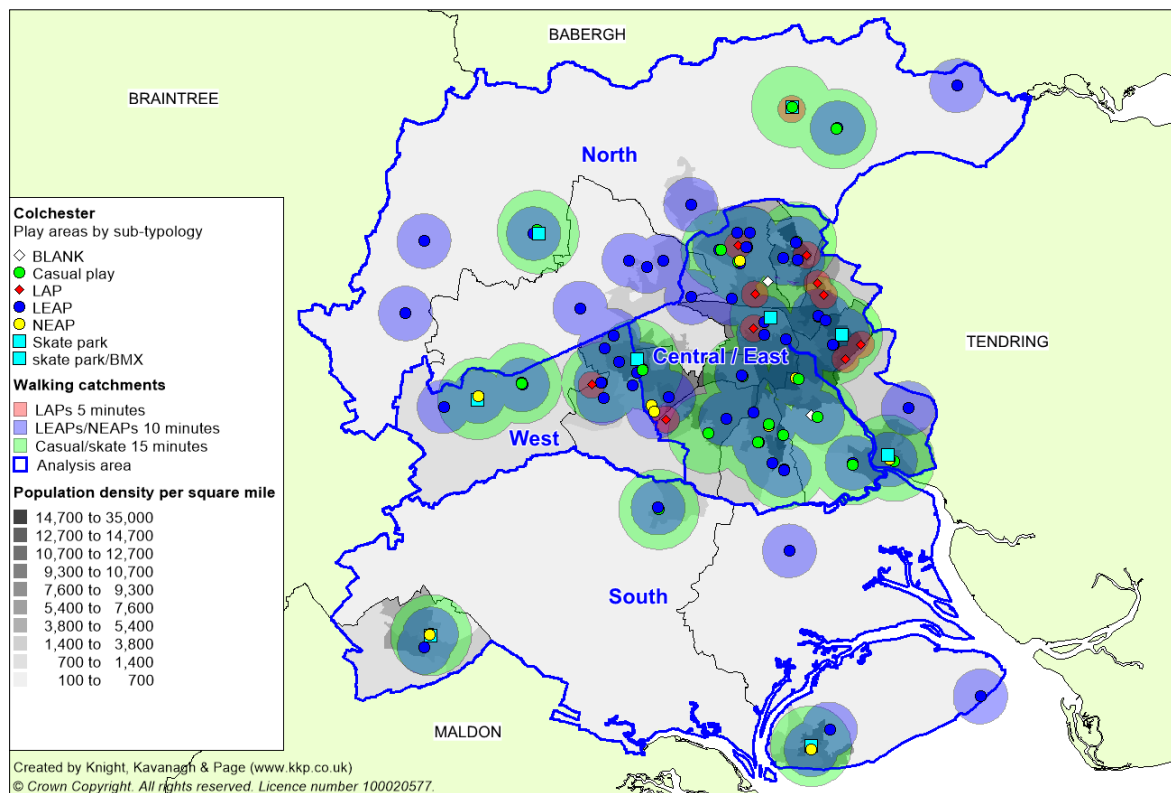
For the purpose of mapping, a range of walk time catchments based on the play provision designation (LAP, LEAP, NEAP or Casual provision) are used.

Table 7.3: Catchments for play provision

Form of play provision	Catchment
LAP	5 minutes
LEAP	10 minutes
NEAP	10 minutes
Casual (e.g. MUGA)	15 minutes

Figure 7.1 shows the catchments applied to provision for children and young people to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 7.1: Provision for children and young people with walk times



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Table 7.4: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
1.1	Abbey Field basketball	Central/East	0.007	40.0%	47.3%
1.2	Abbey Field play area	Central/East	0.05	70.9%	50.9%
4.1	Aberton & Langenhoe Village Hall play area	South	0.03	76.1%	47.3%
7.1	Apprentice Drive play area	Central/East	0.20	30.0%	43.6%
8.1	Baden Powell Drive play area	Central/East	0.05	70.9%	50.9%
10.1	Badgers Green play area	West	0.03	77.0%	63.6%
12.1	Barbour Gardens play area	Central/East	0.02	77.6%	47.3%
18.1	Bergholt Road Park play area	Central/East	0.10	57.6%	50.9%
22.1	Blackheath AGS play area	Central/East	0.02	77.9%	47.3%
36.1	Camulodunum Way basketball	Central/East	0.007	31.8%	25.5%
36.2	Camulodunum Way youth shelter	Central/East	0.007		
40.1	Castle Park play areas	Central/East	0.36	61.5%	81.8%
43.1	Cavell Avenue play area	Central/East	0.01	51.2%	52.7%
49.1	Chappel Hill play area	North	0.06	40.0%	47.3%
58.1	Church Road play area	North	0.044	64.2%	29.1%
58.2	Church Road basketball	North	0.008	22.7%	25.5%
58.3	Church Road BMX	North	0.15	38.2%	34.5%
61.1	Circus Square play area	Central/East	0.04	79.1%	50.9%
63	Clairmont Road play area	Central/East	0.07	79.4%	54.5%
64.1	Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club play area	Central/East	0.02	38.2%	38.2%
64.2	Castle Meadow play area	Central/East	0.02	63.0%	32.7%
67.1	Colchester skatepark	Central/East	0.12	43.3%	54.5%
71.1	Cottage Drive play area*	Central/East	0.03		
81.1	Earlswood Way play area	Central/East	0.16	75.2%	47.3%
83.1	East Hill Park play area	Central/East	0.02	67.6%	32.7%
85.1	Cudmore Grove Country Park	South	0.16	66.7%	60.0%
86.1	Echelon Walk play area	Central/East	0.06	57.3%	47.3%
86.2	Echelon Walk basketball area	Central/East	0.01		
89.1	Birchwood Drive play area	Central/East	0.02	52.7%	20.0%
90.1	Elizabeth Close play area	Central/East	0.03	56.1%	16.4%
101.1	Gardenia Walk play area	Central/East	0.04	58.8%	41.8%
101.2	Gardenia Walk MUGA	Central/East	0.03	39.7%	47.3%
101.3	Gardenia Walk skate park	Central/East	0.04	31.8%	47.3%
101.4	Gardenia Walk outdoor gym	Central/East	0.02	47.6%	47.3%
106.1	Glebe View Sports Ground play area	South	0.09	87.0%	50.9%

* Not assessed as appears to be part of Old Heath Primary School

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
108.1	Greenfield Drive play area	North	0.09	62.4%	47.3%
110.1	Grove Park play area 1	South	0.03	64.2%	81.8%
110.2	Grove Park play area 2	South	0.04		
110.3	Grove Park skate park	South	0.07		
110.4	Grove Park basketball	South	0.009		
110.5	Grove Park youth shelter	South	0.003		
119.1	Hazelton Road play area	Central/East	0.06	25.8%	50.9%
119.2	Hazelton Road MUGA	Central/East	0.09	37.6%	47.3%
122.1	Heath Road play area	North	0.11	61.5%	43.6%
126.1	Hickory Avenue play area	Central/East	0.07	73.0%	50.9%
126.2	Hickory Avenue basketball	Central/East	0.007	33.6%	29.1%
129.1	High Woods Country Park play area	Central/East	0.25	65.2%	50.9%
134.1	Holt Drive play area	Central/East	0.03	74.2%	47.3%
134.2	Holt Drive basketball	Central/East	0.007	37.3%	25.5%
141.1	John Mace play area	Central/East	0.04	71.8%	54.5%
141.2	John Mace basketball	Central/East	0.02	41.8%	47.3%
147.1	King George V Playing Fields play area	Central/East	0.18	75.8%	54.5%
147.2	King George V Playing Fields skate park	Central/East	0.03		
147.3	King George V Playing Fields basketball area	Central/East	0.004		
149.1	King George's Field skate park	North	0.03	50.0%	52.7%
149.2	King George's Field basketball	North	0.009	35.5%	43.6%
149.3	King George's Field play area	North	0.04	66.4%	63.6%
152.1	Lacewing Gardens play area	West	0.06	57.9%	43.6%
154.1	Langham Community Centre play area	North	0.07	54.2%	25.5%
154.2	Langham Community Centre basketball	North	0.006	29.1%	43.6%
161.1	Lexden King George BMX	Central/East	0.12	44.5%	47.3%
161.2	Lexden King George basketball	Central/East	0.007	34.6%	21.8%
163.1	Lexden Road play area	North	0.05	44.5%	54.5%
170.1	Lucy Lane South play area	West	0.03	83.3%	50.9%
173.1	Mabbitt Way play area	Central/East	0.03	63.6%	50.9%
173.2	Mabbitt Way basketball	Central/East	0.01	32.7%	47.3%
176.1	Maltings Park play area	North	0.03	60.0%	38.2%
179.1	Marks Tey play area	West	0.04	77.9%	60.0%
179.2	Marks Tey skate park	West	0.06	50.6%	47.3%
179.3	Marks Tey basketball	West	0.06	39.1%	47.3%
185.1	Mede Way play area	Central/East	0.04	68.5%	47.3%
189.1	Mile End Recreation Ground play area	Central/East	0.06	64.5%	29.1%
189.2	Mile End Recreation Ground basketball area	Central/East	0.01	43.6%	43.6%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
190	Myland Court play area	Central/East	0.11	58.2%	38.2%
199.1	New Cut play area	South	0.06	40.9%	50.9%
199.2	New Cut basketball	South	0.03	32.7%	25.5%
201.1	Northfield Gardens play area	Central/East	0.02	50.9%	38.2%
207.1	Old Heath Recreation Ground play area	Central/East	0.26	73.9%	60.0%
207.2	Old Heath Recreation Ground MUGA	Central/East	0.09	52.7%	50.9%
207.3	Old Heath Recreation Ground gym	Central/East	0.03		
207.4	Old Heath Recreation Ground table tennis	Central/East	0.004		
212.1	Pattinson Walk play area	North	0.09	55.8%	65.5%
215	Phillip Road MUGA	Central/East	0.05	43.6%	34.5%
217.1	Pirie Road play area	North	0.008	70.9%	47.3%
219.1	Plover Road play area	West	0.009	47.3%	16.4%
221.1	Greenstead Slopes play area	Central/East	0.05	47.6%	16.4%
222.1	Queen Elizabeth Way play area	Central/East	0.04	74.9%	54.5%
222.2	Queen Elizabeth Way basketball	Central/East	0.02	32.7%	38.2%
222.3	Queen Elizabeth Way outdoor gym	Central/East	0.05	60.0%	43.6%
226.1	Queensbury Avenue play area	West	0.06	76.1%	50.9%
226.2	Queensbury Avenue basketball	West	0.005		
226.3	Queensbury Avenue youth shelter	West	0.002		
228.1	Queensland Drive basketball	Central/East	0.007	33.6%	25.5%
238.1	Rowhedge Recreation Ground MUGA	Central/East	0.04	41.8%	50.9%
239	Rowhedge playground	Central/East	0.16	78.2%	54.5%
243.1	St Bride's Close play area	Central/East	0.03	56.7%	29.1%
245.1	Buffet Way play area	Central/East	0.04	68.2%	25.5%
251.1	Silver Witch Garden play area	West	0.03	85.2%	54.5%
255.1	Speedwell Road play area	Central/East	0.02	69.7%	12.7%
255.2	Speedwell Road basketball	Central/East	0.009	34.6%	34.5%
260.1	St Cyrus Road play area	Central/East	0.01	63.6%	41.8%
261.1	St Luke's Chase play area	South	0.04	50.6%	47.3%
269	Swift Avenue play area	West	0.07	78.8%	47.3%
271.1	The Duchy Field play area	North	0.09	61.8%	34.5%
279.1	Tony Webb Close play area	Central/East	0.02	63.9%	16.4%
280	Titania Close play area	Central/East	0.02	60.0%	47.3%
281.1	Tranter Drive play area	Central/East	0.04	75.2%	38.2%
281.2	Tranter Drive basketball	Central/East	0.0	40.9%	50.9%
281.3	Tranter Drive outdoor gym	Central/East	0.01	50.3%	38.2%
290.1	Wagtail Mews play area	West	0.05	56.7%	50.9%
290.2	Wagtail Mews basketball	West	0.06	48.8%	50.9%

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)	Quality score	Value score
296.1	West Mersea Park play area	South	0.15	62.7%	54.5%
296.2	West Mersea Park skate park	South	0.04	58.2%	47.3%
299.1	Westlands Country Park play area 1	Central/East	0.05	70.6%	47.3%
299.2	Westlands Country Park play area 2	Central/East	0.08		
300.1	Wheatfield Road Park play area	West	0.02	81.8%	47.3%
307.1	Woden Avenue play area	West	0.04	86.7%	50.9%
309.1	Worsdell Way play area	Central/East	0.01	67.6%	16.4%

There is overall a good spread of play provision across the borough. Areas with a greater population density are generally within a walking distance catchment of a form of play provision.

7.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guide), the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for play provision for children and young people. A threshold of 60% is applied to divide high from low quality. Further explanation of the quality scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

The quality assessment of play sites does not include a detailed technical risk assessment of equipment. For an informed report on the condition of play equipment the Council's own inspection reports should be sought.

Table 7.5: Quality ratings for provision for children and young people

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	26%	56%	79%	37	35
North	23%	51%	71%	9	7
South	33%	60%	87%	4	9
West	39%	68%	87%	6	10
Colchester	23%	57%	87%	56	61

Just over half of play sites (52%) rate above the quality threshold. Some of the highest scoring sites are:

- ◀ Wellhouse Park Playground (87%)
- ◀ Woden Avenue play area (87%)
- ◀ Silver Witch Garden play area (85%)
- ◀ Lucy Lane South play area (83%)
- ◀ Wheatfield Road Park play area (82%)

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These sites are observed as being safe and secure with sufficient litter bins (contributing to the sites' cleanliness), seating, signage, and good quality play equipment. The sites also score highly for drainage, equipment quality and surface quality. All have good fencing and controls to prevent illegal use.

Wellhouse Park Playground and Woden Avenue play area (both 87%) are located in new housing areas. Silver Witch Garden play area (85%) has the additional benefits of safe crossing places and outdoor fitness equipment. The site is perceived to be well used given its location in a residential area and opposite Stanway Primary School.

Other high scoring sites include Clairmont Road play area, Swift Avenue play area and Circus Square play area (all scoring 79%). Clairmont Road play area, in particular, is seen as very well used due to being adjacent to Lexden King George Field and close to Home Farm Primary School. There is also a small basketball area (site 161.2) adjacent to Clairmont Road play area.

Noticeably there are a number of sites which contain provision catering for older age ranges such as skateparks and MUGAs. Church Road features a BMX track and basketball area. Gardenia Walk contains a MUGA, skate park and outdoor gym, further adding to the quality of the sites.

Despite Buffet Way play area (65%) scoring above the quality threshold, the site scores low for general site appearance and surface quality. There is not much equipment, and the bench onsite is poorly maintained. Consultation with CBC identifies that they are looking to invest in the site enhance its quality.

Similarly, High Woods Country Park, scores just above the quality threshold. This site has a decent amount of equipment, but it is in need of upgrading. The Council highlight the equipment is circa 12 years old and has rotted. There is a capital bid to replace all the wooden play equipment (including the trim trails). In addition, there is a desire to cater for toddlers and younger age ranges as these are not well served at the site.

The Council have completed minor improvements with small upgrades of equipment across the borough. It recognises the need to invest in good quality sites and wants to invest where possible in equipment which has a longer lifespan. For example, there will be new play areas at Garrison Gym through Section 106 money. However, the challenge is maintaining numerous sites across the area. Consequently, small LAP sites are sometimes left in a less than ideal condition.

There are 56 sites rating below the threshold. Sites rating lower for quality is often due to maintenance/appearance observations and/or the range and quality of equipment on site.

The lower scoring sites are:

- ◀ Church Road basketball (23%)
- ◀ Hazelton Road play area (26%)
- ◀ Langham Community Centre basketball (29%)

The sites are all noted as having few ancillary features and maintenance issues. All score low for surface quality and none have signage.

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Church Road basketball (23%) scores low for user security and entrances due to being in the corner of an amenity greenspace and not overlooked. It also scores low for perceived usage. Hazelton Road play area (26%) has the additional benefit of bins whilst Langham Community Centre basketball (29%) has the added benefit of car parking (including disabled parking).

There are several play sites that score just below the quality threshold with 19 sites scoring between 50% and 59%. Enhancements to play areas rating slightly below the threshold would boost their quality scoring. Despite West Mersea Park skate park (58%) scoring just below the threshold, it scores quite high for overall site appearance, surface and drainage. However, the site is devoid of signage, seating and bins which lowers its quality rating.

7.5 Value

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

Table 7.6: Value ratings for provision for children and young people

Analysis area	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Central/East	13%	42%	82%	5	67
North	25%	44%	65%	0	16
South	25%	52%	82%	0	13
West	16%	49%	64%	1	15
Colchester	13%	43%	82%	6	111

Most play sites rate above the threshold for value. This demonstrates the role play provision provides in allowing children to play but also the contribution sites make in terms of giving children and young people safe places to learn, for physical and mental activity, to socialise with others and in creating aesthetically pleasing local environments.

Sites scoring particularly high for value tend to reflect a good range of quality equipment available at sites. The highest scoring sites for value are:

- ◀ Castle Park play areas (82%)
- ◀ Grove Park play area 1 (82%)
- ◀ Pattinson Walk play area (66%)
- ◀ King George's Field play area (64%)
- ◀ Badgers Green play area (64%)

The sites above are observed as being well maintained with a good to reasonable variety of equipment, as well as having sufficient access. The sites are also assumed to be well used given their range and quality of equipment, particularly for the highest scoring sites.

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Castle Park play areas are seen as in an attractive landscape and well located, enhancing structural and landscape benefits.

Diverse equipment to cater for a range of ages and abilities is important and can significantly impact on value. Provision such as skate park facilities and MUGAs are often highly valued forms of play. For example, Grove Park caters for a wide age range of children as it contains an unenclosed basketball area, fenced play area, spider web climber, fitness equipment and agility areas. Likewise, King George's Field also features a range of play provision featuring a play area, skate park and basketball area, enhancing amenity and health value benefits.

PART 8: ALLOTMENTS

8.1 Introduction

The allotments typology provides opportunities for people who wish to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction.

8.2 Current provision

There are 23 sites classified as allotments in Colchester, equating to over 28 hectares. No site size threshold has been applied to allotments and as such all provision is identified and included within the audit.

Table 8.1: Current allotments in Colchester

Analysis area	Allotments		
	Number of sites	Total hectares (ha)	Current provision (Ha per 1,000 population)
Central/East	18	21.63	0.15
North	2	2.68	0.16
South	2	2.55	0.11
West	1	1.67	0.11
Colchester	23	28.53	0.14

The largest site in Colchester is Chapel Road allotments (2.04 hectares).

Furthermore, at the time of writing it is understood that two new allotment sites are being created in the Tiptree area.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) suggests a national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households (20 per 2,000 people based on two people per house or one per 100 people). This equates to 0.25 hectares per 1,000 populations based on an average plot-size of 250 square metres (0.025 hectares per plot).

Colchester, based on its current population (197,200), is below the NSALG standard. Using this suggested standard, the minimum amount of allotment provision for Colchester is 49 hectares. Existing provision of 28 hectares therefore is below this guideline.

8.3 Accessibility

For the purpose of mapping, a 15-minute walk time and 15-minute drive time catchment is applied. Figure 8.1 shows the catchments applied to allotment provision to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

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Figure 8.1: Allotments with catchments

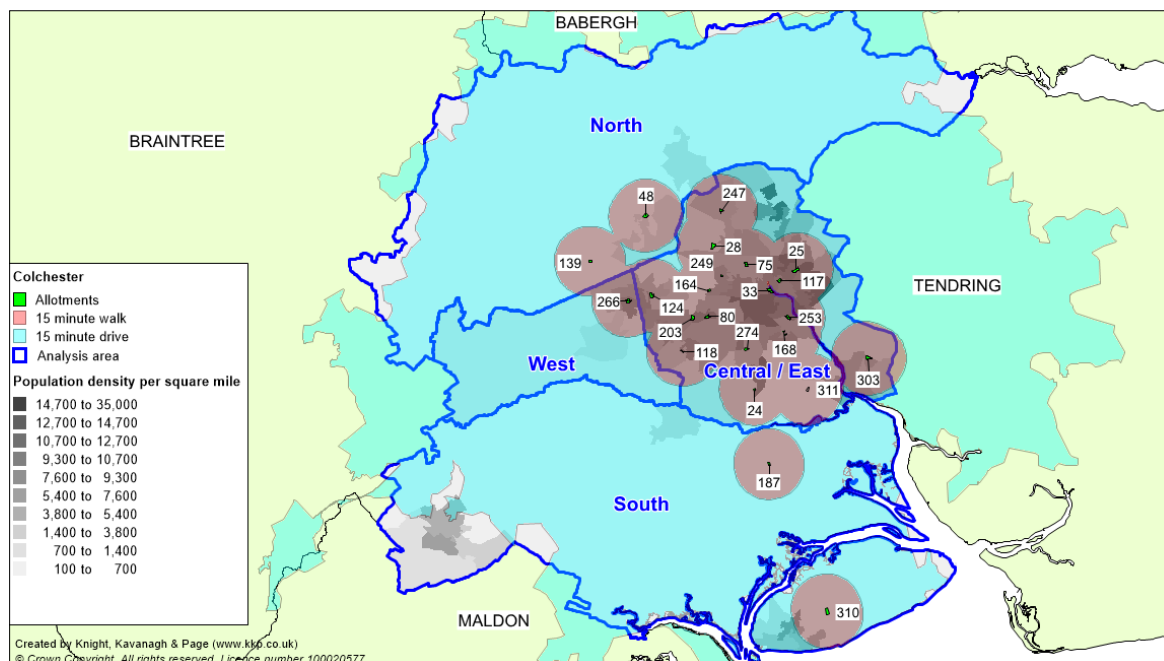


Table 8.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)
24	Blackheath Allotments	Central/East	0.47
25	Booth Avenue allotments	Central/East	2.01
28	Braiswick allotments	Central/East	1.94
33	Brook Street allotments	Central/East	1.76
48	Chapel Road allotments	North	2.04
75	Cowdray Avenue allotments	Central/East	1.18
80	Drury Road allotments	Central/East	1.43
117	Harwich Road allotments	Central/East	1.24
118	Hazell Avenue Allotments	Central/East	0.21
124	Henley Court allotments	Central/East	1.85
139	Huxtables Lane Allotments	North	0.64
164	Lexden Road allotments	Central/East	0.77
168	Littlebury Gardens Allotments	Central/East	0.35
187	Mersea Road allotments	South	0.60
203	Norman Way allotments	Central/East	1.77
247	Severalls Allotments	Central/East	1.03
249	Sheepen Road Allotments	Central/East	0.38
253	Smiths Field allotments	Central/East	1.50
266	Stanway Rovers FC	West	1.67
274	The Willows allotments	Central/East	0.94

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Size (ha)
303	Wivenhoe Allotments	Central/East	1.90
310	West Mersea Allotments	South	1.95
311	Rowhedge Allotments	Central/East	0.91

Figure 8.1 highlights most of the borough is served by allotment provision. however, a gap in walk time catchment is noted to the north of the Central/East Analysis Area. This is however served by the drive time catchment. A gap in walk and drive time catchments are noted to parts of the South Analysis Area (i.e. Tiptree). However, at the time of writing it is understood that two new allotment sites are being created in the Tiptree area.

Allotments should generally be considered as highly valued as they are often important forms of open space provision recognised for their social opportunities as well as the broad range of community members they can service. Allotments can be used by families, as well as the older generation.

PART 9: GREEN CORRIDORS

9.1 Introduction

The green corridors typology includes sites that offer opportunities for walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.

No quality or value ratings are provided for such forms of provision as it cannot be assessed in the same way as an open space site.

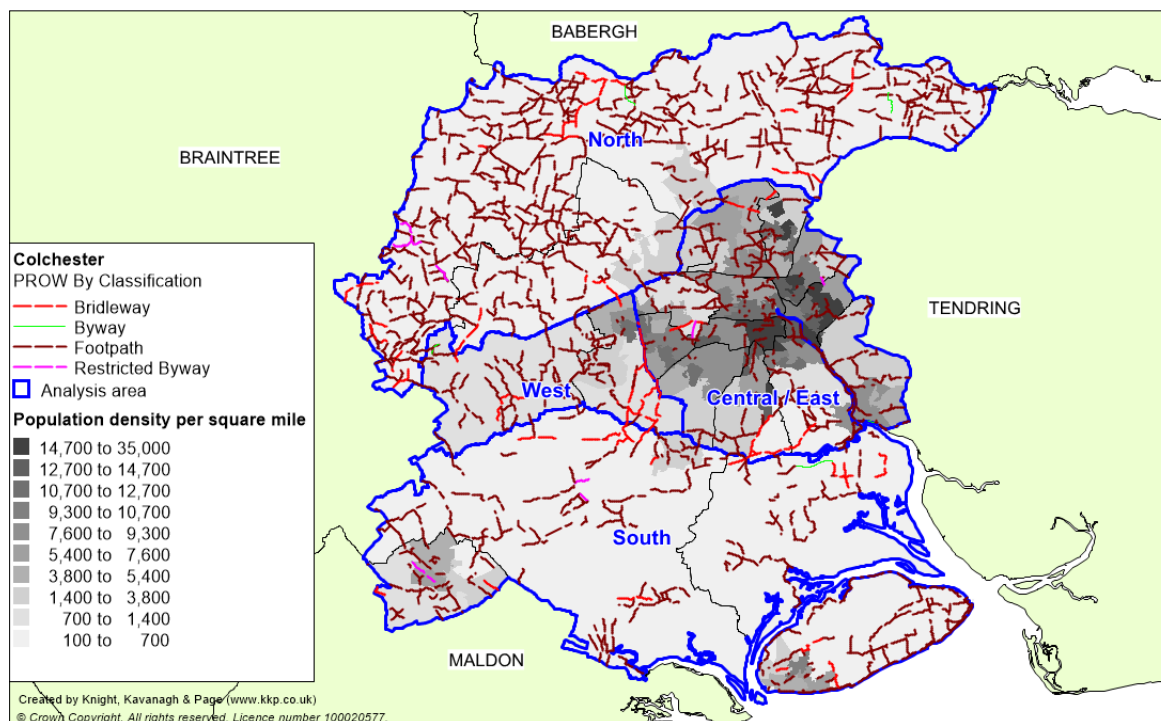
9.2 Current provision

There is an extensive public rights of way network across the borough particularly in rural areas. The majority of the network is noted as being classified as footpaths. The area is also served by the National Cycle Network routes. Some sections are also recognised as part of the EuroVelo network of long-distance cycle routes across Europe.

9.3 Accessibility

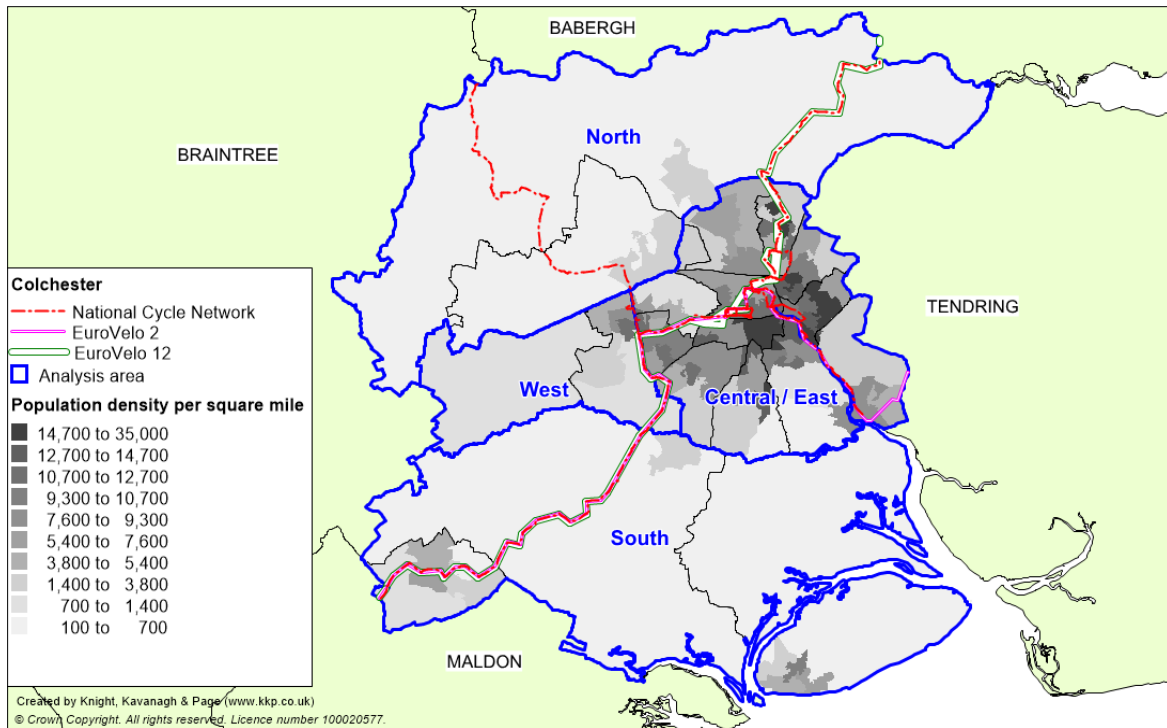
It is difficult to assess green corridors against catchment areas due to their linear nature and usage. Figures 9.1 and 9.2 show the PROW and cycle networks across the area.

Figure 9.1: Public Rights of Way network



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Figure 9.2: National cycle network



PART 10: PROVISION STANDARDS

The provision standards used to determine deficiencies and surpluses for open space are set in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity.

10.1: Quality and value

Each type of open space receives a separate quality and value score. This also allows for application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus as a particular open space type.

Quality and value matrix

Assessing the quality and value of open spaces is used to identify those sites which should be given the highest level of protection, those which require enhancement and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose. When analysing the quality/value of a site, it should be done in conjunction with regard to the quantity and/or accessibility of provision in the area (i.e., whether there is a deficiency).

The high/low classification gives the following possible combinations of quality and value:

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	All sites should have an aspiration to come into this category. Many sites of this category are likely to be viewed as key forms of open space provision.	The approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality to the applied standard. The priority will be those sites providing a key role in terms of access to provision.
	Low	The preferred approach to a site in this category should be to enhance its value in terms of its present primary function. If this is not possible, consideration to a change of primary function should be given (i.e. a change to another open space typology).	The approach to these sites in areas of identified shortfall should be to enhance their quality provided it is possible also to enhance their value. In areas of sufficiency a change of primary typology should be considered first. If no shortfall of other open space typologies is noted than the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

There is a need for flexibility to the enhancement of low-quality sites. In some instances, a better use of resources and investment may be to focus on more suitable sites for enhancement as opposed to trying to enhance sites where it is not appropriate or cost effective to do so. Please refer to the individual typology sections as well as the supporting excel database for a breakdown of the matrix.

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10.2: Accessibility

Accessibility catchments are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors underpinning catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process the concept of 'effective catchments' are used, defined as the distance that most users would travel. The accessibility catchments do not consider if a distance is on an incline or decline. They are therefore intended to act as an initial form of analysis to help identify potential gaps.

Table 10.2.1: Accessibility catchments

Open space type		Catchments
Parks & Gardens		15-minute walk
		15-minute drive
Amenity Greenspace		10-minute walk
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace		15-minute walk
Play provision	LAP	5-minute walk
	LEAP / NEAP	10-minute walk
	Casual provision (e.g. MUGA, Skate park)	15-minute walk
Allotments		15-minute walk
		15-minute drive

If an area does not have access to provision (consistent with the catchments) it is deemed deficient. KKP has identified instances where new sites may be needed, or potential opportunities could be explored in order to provide comprehensive access (i.e. a gap in one form of provision may exist but the area in question may be served by another form of open space). Please refer to the associated mapping to view site catchments.

The following tables summarise the deficiencies identified from the application of the accessibility standards. In determining any subsequent actions for identified gaps, the following are key principles for consideration:

- ◀ Increase capacity/usage in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◀ Enhance quality in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◀ Commuted sum for ongoing maintenance/repairs to mitigate impact of new demand

These principles are intended to mitigate for the impact of increases in demand on existing provision. An increase in population will reduce the lifespan of certain sites and/or features (e.g. play equipment, maintenance regimes etc). This will lead to the increased requirement to refurbish and/or replace such forms of provision.

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Table 10.2.2: Sites helping to serve gaps in park catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Abbey Field (ID 1)	Amenity
	Berechurch Road (ID 15)	Amenity
	Chestnut Field (ID 55)	Natural
	High Woods Country Park (ID 129)	Natural
	King George V Playing Fields (ID 147)	Amenity
	Lexden King George Field (ID 161)	Amenity
	Lilianna Road (ID 167)	Amenity
	Mile End Recreation Ground (ID 189)	Amenity
	Old Heath Recreation Ground (ID 207)	Amenity
	Saint John's Playing Field (ID 241)	Amenity
	Sandmartin Crescent (ID 246)	Amenity
	Spring Lane Park (ID 258)	Amenity
Westlands Country Park (ID 299)	Natural	
South	West Mersea Park (ID 296)	Amenity
	Glebe View Sports Ground AGS (ID 106.2)	Amenity

Table 10.2.3: Sites helping to serve gaps in natural greenspace catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Camulodunum Way (ID 36)	Amenity
	Cassinio Road (ID 39)	Amenity
	Catherine Hunt Way (ID 42)	Amenity
	Elmwood Avenue (ID 93)	Amenity
	Layer Road (ID 157)	Amenity
	Reed Hall Avenue (ID 232)	Amenity

Table 10.2.4: Sites helping to serve gaps in amenity greenspace catchments

Analysis area	Other open spaces in gap	Open space type
Central/East	Cymbeline Meadows (ID 78)	Natural
	Hilly Fields Nature Reserve (ID 133)	Natural

No significant gap in catchment mapping is noted for play provision.

For gaps in allotment provision (i.e., Tiptree), no alternative open spaces can serve the same function. Exploring opportunities for new provision if local demand warrants it should be encouraged.

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10.3: Quantity

Quantity standards can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with determining requirements for future developments.

Setting quantity standards

The setting and application of quantity standards is necessary to determine shortfalls in provision and to ensure new developments contribute to the provision of open space across the area.

Shortfalls in quality and accessibility standards are identified across the borough for different types of open space (as set out in Parts 10.1 and 10.2). Consequently, the Council should seek to ensure new developments contribute to the overall provision of open space.

The current provision levels are used as a basis to inform and identify potential shortfalls in existing provision. These can also look to be used to help determine future requirements as part of new developments.

Table 10.3.1: Summary of current provision levels

Typology	Quantity level (hectares per 1,000 population)
Parks & gardens	0.25
Amenity greenspace	1.35
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	3.07
Provision for children & young people	0.03
Allotment	0.14

The current provision levels can be used to help identify where areas may have a shortfall. Table 10.3.2 shows the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall for each type of open space.

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Table 10.3.2: Current parks, natural and amenity quantity levels by analysis area

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		Natural & Semi-natural		Amenity greenspace		Combined	
	0.25		3.07		1.35		4.67	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Central/East	0.34	+0.09	3.27	+0.20	1.32	+0.03	4.93	+0.26
North	-	-0.25	2.95	-0.12	2.06	+0.71	5.01	+0.34
South	-	-0.25	3.10	+0.03	0.93	-0.42	4.03	-0.64
West	-	-0.25	1.22	-1.85	1.55	+0.20	2.77	-1.90

Table 10.3.3: Current allotment and play provision quantity levels by analysis area

Analysis area	Allotments		Play provision	
	0.14		0.03	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Central/East	0.15	+0.01	0.03	Level
North	0.16	+0.02	0.06	+0.03
South	0.11	-0.03	0.03	Level
West	0.11	-0.03	0.04	+0.01

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The tables show the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall. Shortfalls are noted however, no analysis area is highlighted as having shortfalls across all open space types. The combined totals (parks, natural and amenity) show that the south and west analysis areas have an overall shortfall.

In terms of provision for children and young people all areas are shown as having a sufficiency or as being level.

Identifying priorities

Several quantity shortfalls in the open space typologies are highlighted. However, creating new provision to address these shortfalls (particularly any quantity shortfalls) is often challenging (as significant amounts of new forms of provision would need to be created). A more realistic approach is to ensure sufficient accessibility and quality of existing provision.

Exploring opportunities to enhance existing provision and linkages to these sites should be endorsed. Further insight to the shortfalls is provided within each provision standard summary (Parts 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3).

Quantity levels should still be utilised to indicate the potential lack of provision any given area may have. However, this should be done in conjunction with the accessibility and quality of provision in the area.

The current provision levels could also be used to determine the open space requirements as part of new housing developments. In the first instance, all types of provision should look to be provided as part of new housing developments.

If this is not considered viable, the column signalling whether an area is sufficient or has a quantity shortfall may be used to help inform the priorities for each type of open space within each area (i.e. the priorities may be where a shortfall has been identified).

10.4: Recommendations

The following section provides a summary on the key findings through the application of the standards. It incorporates and recommends what the Council should be seeking to achieve in order to help address the issues highlighted.

Recommendation 1

- ◀ *Sites helping or with the potential to help serve areas identified as having gaps in catchment mapping should be prioritised as opportunities for enhancement*

Part 10.2 identifies sites that help or have the potential to serve identified gaps in provision.

Table 10.4.1: Summary of sites helping to serve catchment gaps

Site ID	Site name	Typology	Helps to serve provision gap in:
1	Abbey Field	Amenity	Parks
15	Berechurch Road (a)	Amenity	Parks
36	Camulodunum Way	Amenity	Natural

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Site ID	Site name	Typology	Helps to serve provision gap in:
39	Cassino Road	Amenity	Natural
42	Catherine Hunt Way	Amenity	Natural
55	Chesthunt Field	Natural	Parks
78	Cymbeline Meadows	Natural	Amenity
93	Elmwood Avenue	Amenity	Natural
106.2	Glebe View Sports Ground AGS	Amenity	Parks
129	High Woods Country Park	Natural	Parks
133	Hilly Fields Nature Reserve	Natural	Amenity
147	King George V Playing Fields	Amenity	Parks
157	Layer Road	Amenity	Natural
161	Lexden King George Field	Amenity	Parks
167	Lilianna Road	Amenity	Parks
189	Mile End Recreation Ground	Amenity	Parks
207	Old Heath Recreation Ground	Amenity	Parks
232	Reed Hall Avenue	Amenity	Natural
241	Saint John's Playing Field	Amenity	Parks
246	Sandmartin Crescent	Amenity	Parks
258	Spring Lane Park	Amenity	Parks
296	West Mersea Park	Amenity	Parks
299	Westlands Country Park	Natural	Parks

These sites currently help to meet the identified catchment gaps for other open space typologies. Where possible, the Council may seek to adapt these sites to provide a stronger secondary role, to help meet the gaps highlighted. This should be done in conjunction with the quantity levels in each sub-area to ensure any existing quantity shortfalls are not made worse.

These sites should therefore be viewed as open space provision that are likely to provide multiple social and value benefits. It is also important that the quality and value of these sites is secured and enhanced (Recommendation 2).

Recommendation 2

- ◀ *Ensure low quality/value sites helping to serve potential gaps in accessibility catchments are prioritised for enhancement*

The approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality/value to the applied standards. The supporting database sets out the site specific scores and comments which may help to inform areas to explore for improvement. A list of low quality and/or value sites currently helping to serve catchment gaps in provision is set out in Table 10.4.2 below.

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Table 10.4.2: Summary of low quality/value sites helping to serve catchment gaps

Site ID	Site name	Typology	Helps to serve provision gap in:
36	Camulodunum Way	Amenity	Natural
39	Cassino Road	Amenity	Natural
167	Lilianna Road	Amenity	Parks
232	Reed Hall Avenue	Amenity	Natural
258	Spring Lane Park	Amenity	Parks
299	Westlands Country Park	Natural	Parks

Recommendation 3

- ◀ *Recognise areas with sufficient provision in open space and how they may be able to meet other areas of need*

For an area with a sufficiency in one type of open space, and where opportunities allow, a change of primary typology could be considered for some sites of that type.

For instance, the North Analysis Area has a potential sufficiency in amenity greenspace but a potential shortfall in natural greenspace. Consequently, the function of some amenity greenspace could look to be strengthened to act as natural greenspace provision.

It is important that other factors, such as the potential typology change of a site creating a different catchment gap and/or the potential to help serve deficiencies in other types of provision should also be considered. The Council may also be aware of other issues, such as the importance of a site for heritage, biodiversity or as a visual amenity, that may also indicate that a site should continue to stay the same typology.

Next steps

Supplementary Planning Document

The Council may wish to update/establish a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide further detail on the policies and proposals within the Local Plan. An SPD focusing on open space provision standards and how they will be applied could assist in the consideration and determining of planning applications.

The following topics may wish to be considered as part of the Council's updated SPD:

- ◀ Policy context – where does the requirement for open space sit in terms of national and local planning policy
- ◀ Overview of the evidence base used to inform setting of standards (i.e. this report)
- ◀ Explanation to how the standards are applied and how contributions are calculated
- ◀ Setting process for calculating the financial contribution for off-site provision or improvements
- ◀ Design principles for open space provision
- ◀ Setting process for calculating maintenance costs required

