Basingstoke and Deane

Green Infrastructure Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane (2018 to 2029)

November 2018

Front Cover Image – View of Bourne Rivulet, near Hurstbourne Priors

Executive Summary

Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as an interconnected network of natural areas and other green open spaces that is integral to the health and quality of life of people in local communities and which supports and enhances natural and ecological processes.

The borough's network of parks, open spaces and habitats provide an important resource for people, wildlife and plants, GI benefits the public and wildlife by providing attractive environments for outdoor recreation and exercise; helping to create a sense of place; providing biodiversity and habitat enhancement opportunities; as well as presenting other environmental benefits such as assisting natural drainage to reduce flooding and help us adapt to climate change.

Overall, the borough has a very good range of green infrastructure assets, including Green Flag awarded parks in the heart of Basingstoke, the Forestry Commission's Basing Wood to the north of Popley, some of the country's most precious wildlife habitats, registered parks and gardens, an extensive network of public rights of way, as well as publicly accessible open countryside areas.

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment of the borough is important. It is essential that we make a step change in restoring, protecting and improving the ecological fabric and adopt practices that underpin the delivery of a richer, healthier and biodiverse landscape, contributing to our sustainable development and protecting our natural heritage.

The borough already has a significant network of green infrastructure assets, ranging from Green Flag awarded parks in the heart of Basingstoke to some of the country's most precious wildlife habitats. This is complemented by an extensive network of public rights of way and publicly accessible open countryside areas. The extent, type and quality of GI and its benefits, however, are not evenly distributed and the maximum benefits are not always realised for reasons including accessibility, lack of awareness, poor linkages or inadequate management.

There are also external pressures which could affect GI assets, including on-going trends in biodiversity loss, conflicts between the differing priorities of wildlife and people as well as high levels of growth and new development. These trends could reduce the value of the GI resource if appropriate and pro-active measures are not taken.

The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy sets out a framework for the management of our network of spaces and habitats, reflecting the priorities and objectives of the Council Plan and the borough's adopted Local Plan.

The Strategy's Vision is to provide a planned and managed network of GI across Basingstoke and Deane which:

- provides residents with adequate local access to a network of high quality parks, open spaces, green links and corridors;
- protects the health and attractiveness of our natural environment, enhancing those areas which can make a positive contribution to biodiversity; and,
- allows the natural environment to thrive alongside the built environment.

In order to achieve this, the strategy aims to:-

- manage, protect and restore existing green infrastructure;
- achieve measurable net gain for biodiversity within all new major development schemes; and,
- expand and reconnect green infrastructure where there is an identified deficit or where housing growth is planned and additional provision is needed.

Building on the borough's previous GI Strategy adopted in 2013, this strategy set out proposals on how GI can be improved, for example, by the creation of better links in the existing network, together with focussed improvements in potential project areas. This builds upon further assessments of the nature, benefit, extent and distribution of the borough's existing GI, including an assessment of where current deficiencies exist.

The strategy also recognises that improving the borough's GI resource requires the input of a range of external groups and organisations. The document sets out how the council will work in partnership to address relevant issues. Work with external partners will be particularly important, as networks, habitats and spaces often cross boundaries of ownership and responsibility.

The strategy gives protection to those parks and open spaces that are considered particularly important by local communities and also looks to develop greater engagement in the protection and development of the borough's GI network, for example by local conservation volunteer groups. This is supported by the inclusion of targets and standards for biodiversity and green space provision, and an action plan which identifies priorities for the next five years.

The strategy supports the Local Plan ensuring that provision for GI is made within new development as part of the planning process. This includes policies that seek to conserve, protect and enhance the natural environment along with quantity and accessibility standards for green space provision.

Glossary

Ecosystem services are the benefits provided to humans by natural systems that range from food provision, management of flooding, recreation and climate regulation.

Natural capital involves elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans.
(The UK Natural Capital Committee)

River Catchment Management Plans are plans created by organisations, stakeholders and communities to protect and improve the quality of the water environment in an identified area

Multi-functional green space (MFGS) types

Amenity Green Space – green space suitable for team games and robust play including level mown grass minimum rectangular area 1600 sq.m plus a buffer of 10m to housing, tree planting and shrub planting.

Parks - green spaces that have well defined boundaries and a strong sense of place and design. They contain a range of facilities which cater for a wide range of users including young children, teenagers, families, office workers and the elderly.

Accessible Natural Green Space (ANGS) - green space which is designed and/or managed to encourage biodiversity but is freely accessible to people and where a sense of naturalness is allowed to predominate.

Wildlife areas and landscape features, green corridors and buffers – areas whose primary purpose is for wildlife protection/enhancement; protection of important landscape features; providing pedestrian, cycle and/or wildlife transport links and/or buffering, but where public access for informal recreation can be accommodated.

Equipped Play - outdoor sites with equipment and facilities aimed specifically at children and young people and where play is the predominant use of the site.

Allotments – a suitable site for growing fruit and vegetables with facilities to meet the needs of allotment holders including appropriate perimeter fencing and gates to prevent unauthorised access, water supply, waste storage, hard access for pedestrians and vehicles.

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Green Infrastructure in Basingstoke and Deane.

Green Infrastructure (GI) is vital to the quality of life, biodiversity and business of Basingstoke and Deane Borough. Recognising its importance, the council first adopted a strategy to sustain and enhance GI in 2013. This document is a review and update of the original version, and continues to identify the opportunities for planning and implementing GI in the borough, where investment in GI will support growth and deliver the widest public benefits, environmental improvements and enhancement of the economy. It supports and informs the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

1.2 Definition

Green Infrastructure is *'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities' NPPF 2018*.

1.3 Vision

Basingstoke and Deane's GI strategy will protect and enhance the borough's urban and rural environment and area beyond, providing residents with access to a network of high quality parks, nature reserves, open spaces and green links, whilst enabling the natural environment to thrive alongside the built environment and to become more connected and resilient to climate change. The comprehensive and connected network of GI will support the economic development of the town, attracting new investors, residents and visitors to the Borough.

1.4 Aims

The aims of the strategy are to:

- Manage, protect and restore existing GI assets for widest public and biodiversity benefit; and
- Create a comprehensive and connected GI network responding to need in Basingstoke, outlying settlements and rural area.

1.5 Objectives

In support of the aims, the strategy seeks to:

- Implement the shared vision for Green Infrastructure in the borough: GI will contribute to a range of local and regional priorities through partnership working;
- Maximise benefits to residents in the borough and create healthy communities;
- Improve economic prosperity and support regeneration in Basingstoke and Deane;
- Enhance biodiversity, ecosystems, landscape character and natural heritage; and
- Adapt to climate change: GI will offer mechanisms to limit possible effects of climate change.

1.6 Scope

This strategy covers the whole of Basingstoke and Deane Borough. As GI does not stop at the borough boundary, consideration is given to the GI strategies of neighbouring authorities to ensure an integrated approach. Where appropriate, this strategy's action plan includes projects and topics that span the borough's boundaries and adjacent districts.

1.7 What is Green Infrastructure?

Green Infrastructure is the network of green and blue spaces that surround, pass through and create the structure and form of our settlements and landscapes, connecting our towns and villages and connections between habitats. The GI approach can be employed from neighbourhoods through to regions, as its multiple benefits and vital functions are applicable at all geographic levels.

GI planning recognises that networks of green and blue spaces are vital to our economic, environmental and community well-being through providing the setting for healthy and sustainable communities, enhancing and creating a sense of place, supporting ecosystem services and helping to adapt to a changing climate. Biodiversity will be better able to adapt to potential impacts of climate change if the habitats in the landscape are well connected, in good condition and of a scale able to support species vulnerable to disturbance and predation.

Transcending administrative and geographical boundaries, GI incorporates unbuilt land and other features such as recreational networks, public rights of way and cycle ways. GI planning can offer low impact and often low cost solutions to many of the issues that affect our environment, society and economy.

The value of GI is recognised in the Government's 2011 Environment White Paper **'The Natural Choice' (2011) (see 2.2)** and in several independent economic appraisals and is part of planning documents, concerned with biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the value and multiple benefits of GI and ecosystem services, and requires local authorities to take a strategic approach to its delivery.

There are many types of GI (Box 2). Detailed consideration of these types in Basingstoke and Deane is presented in Chapter 3.0.

1.8 Functions and multifunctionality

One of the principal drivers of GI planning is to manage land in a more sustainable way. While most GI assets will have a primary function it is usually possible for functions to co-exist, leading to multifunctional GI and the ability to use land more effectively and efficiently.

For example street trees have an aesthetic function in an urban area but also support wildlife, improve environmental health by reducing airborne pollution, provide shade for people and wildlife, and even have a role in reducing stresses associated with urban living.

A multifunctioning GI increases the natural capital of an area. Natural Capital is the collective value of the environment to society and "natural capital accounting" provides a means of valuing the "services" that ecosystems provide to society. Natural Capital is considered in more detail at 5.5 Economy.

Box 1 – Types of Green Infrastructure

GI refers to many different types of green and blue space, in public and private ownership, with and without public access, in urban and rural locations:

Parks and gardens – urban parks, pocket parks,

Amenity space- play areas, communal gardens,

Natural and semi-natural green space – Woodland, wetlands, water bodies, nature

Green Corridors – Rivers, roadside verges,

Others – churchyards, allotments, moorland,

1.9 The Benefits of GI

The benefits of GI to people and wildlife have been valued by Natural England in their Green Infrastructure Valuation Tools Assessment 2013[1]. The eleven benefits are presented at Figure 1.1 showing how they link to key policies for economic, social and environmental health in Basingstoke and Deane.

Investment
High quality GI creates a setting for business. It provides a positive impression for would-be investors, entrepreneurs and workers. Its successful implementation and design raises the borough's profile.

Land and Property Values
Property near accessible, attractive and well-managed greenspaces generally has a higher value and is more appealing to buyers than areas with less provision. A high standard of green space is associated with more settled communities, reducing outward "demographic flight".

Labour Productivity
Employees whose workplaces are located near clean and attractive green space are less likely to suffer stress, absenteeism and illness. Highly skilled staff are more likely to remain in the borough if their workplaces and their domestic neighbourhoods are within an attractive setting, reducing employers' costs associated with staff turnover and recruitment.

Tourism
GI sustains a healthy tourism/visitor industry, through direct expenditure by visitors to the Borough's parks, users of long-distance routes and visitors to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Land Management
A significant proportion of the Borough is rural, and sympathetic management of natural resources within the farmed environment helps to support a robust sustainable green network throughout the borough

Health and Well-Being
Accessible and cared-for green spaces provide opportunity for physical activity and contact with nature which has direct health benefits, reducing (in combination with other factors) the occurrence of heart and respiratory disease, stress, mental illnesses and obesity and associated economic benefits

Recreation and Leisure
Green spaces close to residential areas provide opportunities for children's play, vital to their social and physical development. They provide a venue for formal sports and many arts and cultural activities are enhanced by an attractive outdoor setting.
Place and communities
Green spaces can become the focus for neighbourhood and family events which can aid community cohesion. They can represent a place's character and can generate civic pride within communities and reduce the occurrence of anti-social behaviour.

Biodiversity
Green spaces and habitat networks are essential to healthy ecosystems. Habitats are essential for the species that they support and connectivity allows for foraging, dispersal and reduces vulnerability to local species extinction through genetic exchange and repopulation. Accessible green spaces allow people to experience nature, which in turn encourages environmental stewardship.

Water and Flood Management
The increased need for housing and other development puts pressure on the environment's capacity to deal with rainfall. In highly built up areas, the extent of impervious surfaces makes property vulnerable to pluvial flooding. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) incorporated into new development, or retrofitted into urban streets, can manage surface water better, and if integrated into greenspace, can also benefit communities and wildlife. Drought could also be an issue in the future and opportunity to retain water in meadows or temporary water bodies should be investigated through upper catchment management.

[1] Valuation Tools Assessment (2013), Natural England

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
Greening of urban areas, including new water bodies and street trees, green roofs on new buildings, reduces the urban 'heat island' effect and the potency of airborne pollution, both of which affect the most vulnerable members of society. GI can also help store carbon in timber and soil; and encourages alternatives to motorised transport, such as cycling and walking for short journeys.

Each of the benefits listed above has a direct relationship with many other policies, programmes, strategies and initiatives across sectors such as health, education and regeneration, as illustrated in the graphic overleaf.

A multifunctioning GI increases the natural capital of an area. Natural Capital is the collective value of the environment to society and "natural capital accounting" provides a means of valuing the "services" that ecosystems provide to society.

1.10 Method

The tasks below highlight the approach taken in preparing this strategy.

- A review was undertaken of the 2013 GI Strategy for Basingstoke and Deane. The need for any updates or gaps in information was highlighted;
- A review was undertaken of national policy and local strategies relating to green infrastructure;
- A baseline review and update of information on the borough's green infrastructure assets, taking account of plans of neighbouring authorities and considering green infrastructure at a landscape scale and across political boundaries;
- The importance of a number of valued parks and open spaces has been reinforced, through their inclusion in the review;
- Analysis of themes and areas were undertaken to identify deficiencies in provision and opportunities articulated that will provide multifunctional benefits and enhance connectivity;
- Setting out themes, strategic aims and high-level priorities to guide the planning and prioritising of green infrastructure;
- Proposing a strategic multifunctional green infrastructure network; and
- Setting out an action plan, approach to delivery, implementation and funding.

1.11 Stakeholder Consultation

The GI Strategy is based on work over a 9 month period during 2017, and has been informed by consultations with over 40 local stakeholders involved in planning, managing and delivering GI and sustainable development across the borough and Hampshire.
Stakeholder views have been gathered in the following ways:

- Steering group meetings;
- Interviews;
- Two workshops held in Basingstoke, where over 30 representatives from environmental, community and local authorities provided comment on the interim findings of the Strategy; and
- A study tour with Natural Basingstoke.

Some of the key recommendations from stakeholders are highlighted throughout the Chapter 5 'Green Infrastructure Strategy'. A more detailed account of the workshops are included in Appendix A.

1.12 Structure of the document

Chapter 2 summarises the national and local GI policy context, including key paragraphs from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Chapter 3 highlights Basingstoke and Deane's existing GI resource.

Chapter 4 considers the opportunity for providing different types of GI in the Borough.

Chapter 5 presents the strategy themes and contribution to be made by GI to the life of the borough

Chapter 6 considers how the strategy can be implemented and includes an action plan for delivery.

Throughout the document there are references to the evidence base underpinning the strategy and case studies which advocate the benefits of GI.

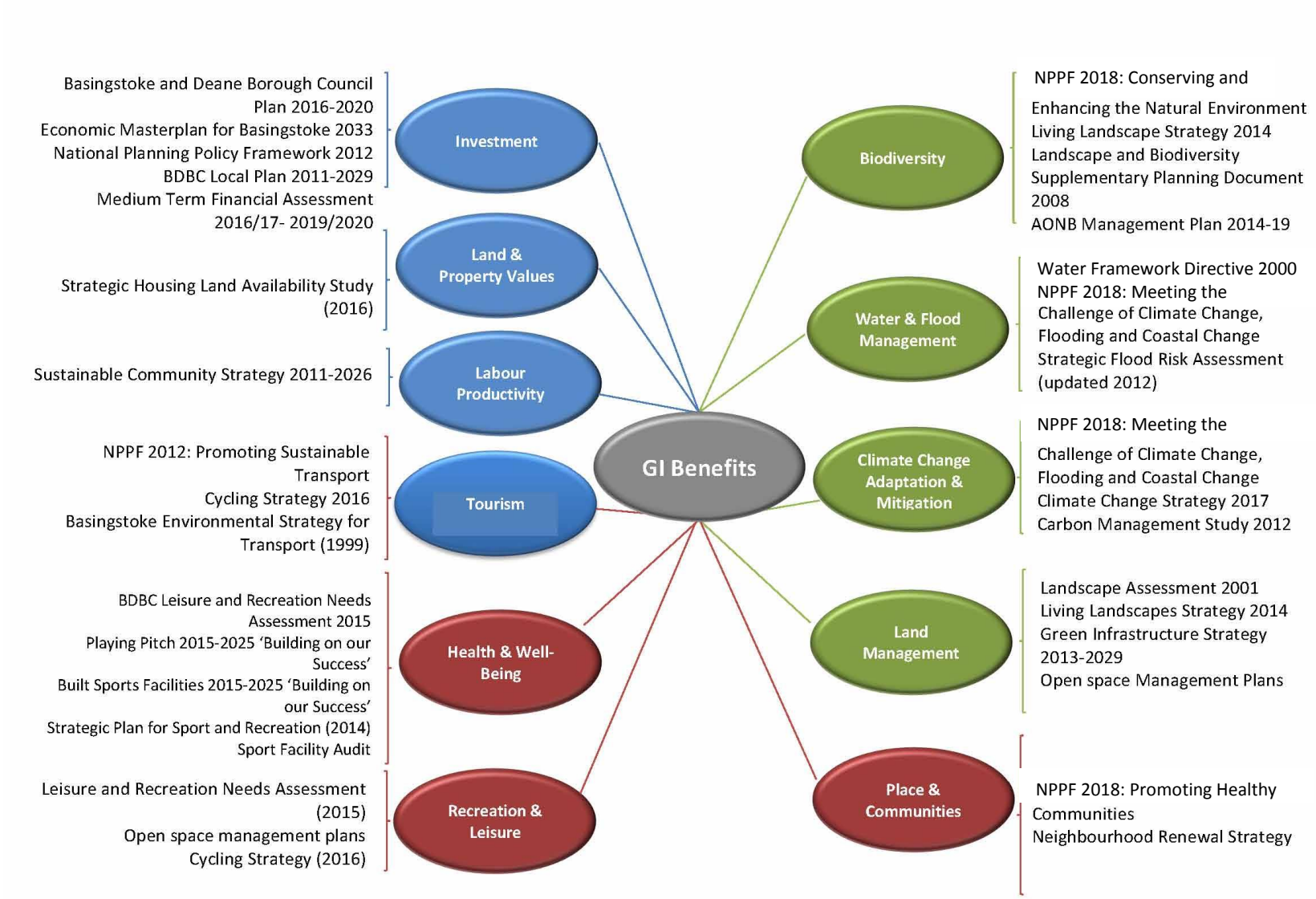


Figure 1.1 – Policy relationship to green infrastructure benefits

2.0 Legal and Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

Green Infrastructure (GI) has a number of legal and policy drivers and forms of protection. These range from European to local level and include Government, planning and council priorities.

This chapter covers:

- European Legislation and Regulation;
- National Legislation and Regulation;
- National Policies; and
- Local Policies.

Some aspects of GI have already been adopted as discrete policies for Basingstoke and Deane, such as the Strategy for Basingstoke Parks**.** As GI encompasses a wide range of themes, these 'precursor' policies have been summarised. Fuller extracts have been provided in Appendix B.

2.2 European Legislation and Regulation

European legislation promoting GI is wide ranging, including the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, the Water Framework Directive as well as several indirectly related statutes. At the time of writing (autumn 2017), the UK Government has prepared The Repeal Bill White Paper setting out their proposal for ensuring a functioning statute book once the UK has left the EU and it is anticipated these Directives will be retained in UK Law. Further details of European legislation is provided in Appendix B.

2.3 National Legislation and Regulation

The following legislation has relevance to GI:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Equality Act 2010

Further commentary on their relevance is provided in Appendix B.

The Council has a duty under The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in exercising its functions. It evidences delivery of its duty to have regard for conserving biodiversity by integrating biodiversity into:

- developing policies and strategies and putting them into practice
- managing the planning system
- managing:
    - council land and buildings
    - community amenities e.g. sports grounds and cemeteries
    - waste and pollution
    - energy and water
    - wood and plant products
- developing infrastructure ie roads, buildings or flood defences
- making decisions about procurement
- implement economic, environmental and social programmes

Many of the actions within this strategy seek to deliver this duty and the evidence will be gathered through the annual review.

2.4 National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF requires local authorities to make every effort to promote healthy communities, meet the challenge of climate change and flooding and conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment through the planning process. The NPPF directs local authorities to make every effort to allocate land for development where it is of low environmental value. The following NPPF policies influence the objectives and outcomes of this strategy:

- Core land use principles;
- Promoting healthy communities;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; and
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Relevant extracts from those policies are provided in Appendix B.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

PPG sets out the importance of promoting healthy communities, meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding, conserving and enhancing the natural environment and the historic environment and these should be taken into account through plan-making and decision-taking. Given Basingstoke and Deane's diverse landscape and environment, these considerations are key to the Local Plan.

PPG notes that Local Plans should identify the strategic location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks. The aim of identifying and upholding GI in Local Plan documents is to help deliver a range of social, economic and natural policy priorities, including new housing, jobs, climate-change adaptation, resilience to flooding and restoration of biodiversity and pollinator networks.

Relevant extracts from this guidance is provided in Appendix B.

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)

The 25 Year Environment Plan sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in the UK's cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It calls for an approach to agriculture, forestry, land use and fishing that puts the environment first.

The Plan details proposals for tackling waste and soil degradation, in addition to addressing pollution for people living in less favourable areas. The Plan covers the approach to tackling the effects of climate change, including higher land and sea temperatures, rising sea levels, extreme weather patterns and ocean acidification.

Natural Environment White Paper – 'The Natural Choice' (2011)

The White Paper outlines the government's vision for the natural environment over the next 50 years. Entitled 'The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature' it is a key document promoting the delivery of green infrastructure.

The Natural Choice sets out measures to protect and improve the natural environment by taking actions across sectors rather than treating environmental concerns in isolation. Three of the four aims of the document are directly relevant to this GI Strategy, as follows:

- facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature;
- creating a green economy, in which economic growth and the health of our natural resources sustain each other, and markets, business and Government better reflect the value of nature; and,
- strengthening the connections between people and nature to the benefit of both.

The document acknowledges that to improve the natural environment there is a need to take on a more integrated approach to it, providing networks and links, along with reforms to the planning system. It reinforces the role that the green economy plays in GI, and also highlights the important role that nature plays in communities, for health, and education.

The approach advocates that ecological networks are to be integrated with existing land uses and economic activities. Networks have five components:

- core areas
- corridors and stepping stones
- restoration areas
- buffer zones
- sustainable use areas

These components are illustrated in the graphic below, which is derived from the White Paper, but with modifications to show community interaction with the network.

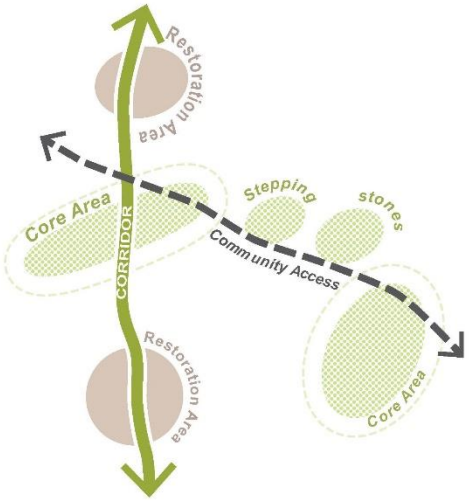


Figure 2.1, An Ecological Network: derived from "Making Space for Nature" (Lawton, 2010)

Hampshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) promotes the ecological network within Basingstoke and Deane, and more details of their approach are presented at chapter 4.3.

Biodiversity 2020

Biodiversity 2020 is the biodiversity strategy for England and sets the strategic direction for biodiversity policy. The strategy builds on the Natural Environment White Paper, which highlighted the need to properly value nature, following the strong economic arguments for safeguarding and enhancing the natural environment presented in the UK National Ecosystem Assessment. The biodiversity strategy sets out a series of outcomes for 2020 and relevant extracts are provided in Appendix B.

South East Biodiversity Strategy (2009)

The Strategy set out an integrated approach to priority species and habitat work using an ecosystem approach. It recognised that this approach needs a partnership working with the integration of national, regional and local delivery. The Strategy informed spatial policies for the South East Plan (2009), and whilst providing a relevant framework, is not now being actively promoted.

2.5 Local Policy and Guidance

Council Plan 2016-2020

The Council Plan is a high level document which outlines our ambition for the borough, identifying key themes and priorities.

Three themes of the Council Plan are highly relevant to GI:

- improving residents' quality of life;
- maintaining and enhancing our built and natural environment; and
- meeting healthcare needs.

In terms of improving residents' quality of life:

"We have a predominantly green borough with less than 10% of the area developed. Crime rates are low and people feel safe where they live. We know that these are all important factors in making somewhere a good place to live and are valued by our communities, as is the need to provide services in an effective and accessible way that meets local need."

Maintaining and enhancing our built and natural environment:

"Protecting and enhancing the attractive environment we enjoy is important; the council manages 80,000 trees growing within our streets and parks and over 100 hectares of woodland across the borough, and we are committed to increase biodiversity in the land we manage. We are improving council owned green spaces in key areas to create a network of appropriately managed spaces and launching a community managed green spaces pilot. The work of volunteers and the need to foster awareness and understanding of the natural environment in future generations is recognised."

In terms of healthcare needs by 2020 we want to see:

"Healthcare needs are addressed, with initiatives improving lifestyles and physical and mental wellbeing for people of all ages."

Basingstoke and Deane **Local Plan (2011-2029) adopted 26th May 2016**

The importance of GI within the borough is emphasised by the inclusion of a number of specific policies in the Local Plan. The Plan's spatial objectives together with specific policies relating to biodiversity, open space provision and landscape character set out how the council and community will address GI provision in relation to new development, how existing deficiencies will be addressed and how the existing GI resource will be protected. Policy EM4 Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation and Policy EM5 Green Infrastructure are outlined below.

Policy EM4 – Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation

1. Development proposals will only be permitted if significant harm to biodiversity and/ or geodiversity resulting from a development can be avoided or, if that is not possible, adequately mitigated and where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

a) There will be no adverse impact on the conservation status of key species; and
b) There will be no adverse impact on the integrity of designated and proposed European designated sites; and
c) There will be no harm to nationally designated sites; and
d) There will be no harm to locally designated sites including Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); and
e) There will be no loss or deterioration of a key habitat type, including irreplaceable habitats; and
f) There will be no harm to the integrity of linkages between designated sites and key habitats.

The weight given to the protection of nature conservation interests will depend on the national or local significance and any designation or protection applying to the site, habitat or species concerned.

2. Where development proposals do not comply with the above they will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that there is an overriding public need for the proposal which outweighs the need to safeguard biodiversity and/ or geodiversity and there is no satisfactory alternative with less or no harmful impacts. In such cases, as a last resort, compensatory measures will be secured to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and, where possible, provide a net gain.

3. Applications for development must include adequate and proportionate information to enable a proper assessment of the implications for biodiversity and geodiversity.

4. In order to secure opportunities for biodiversity improvement, relevant development proposals will be required to include proportionate measures to contribute, where possible, to a net gain in biodiversity, through creation, restoration, enhancement and management of habitats and features including measures that help to link key habitats. Approaches to secure improvements could be achieved through:

a) A focus on identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and Biodiversity Priority Areas as identified in the councils Green Infrastructure Strategy (and subsequent updates) where appropriate; and through
b) On-site and/ or off-site provision linked to new development in accordance with the council's adopted green space standards.

Policy EM5 – Green Infrastructure

Development proposals will only be permitted where they do not;

a) prejudice the delivery of the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (and subsequent updates);
b) result in the fragmentation of the green infrastructure network by severing important corridors/links; or
c) result in undue pressure on the network which cannot be fully mitigated.

The Council will support proposals which seek to improve links and remedy identified deficiencies in the green infrastructure network in accordance with the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy.

The council will seek to protect and enhance the quality and extent of public open space and public rights of way.

Proposals for the redevelopment of public and private green spaces will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

d) replacement areas will be at least equivalent in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, and there will be no overall negative impact on the provision of green infrastructure; or
e) a robust assessment clearly demonstrates that the space is surplus to local requirements and will not be needed in the longer term, in accordance with the Council's local standards; or
f) the proposal is for alternative recreational provision which meets evidence of local need in such a way as to outweigh the loss.

Development proposals will be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that green infrastructure can be provided and phased to support the requirements of proposed development and be in accordance with the Council's adopted green space standards. Green space and equipped play will normally be provided on-site.

Consideration will be given to an off-site financial contribution towards the enhancement of existing facilities, in addition to, or instead of, provision of new green space on site but only where:

g) The quantity standard for the number of proposed dwellings does not result in a requirement for green space which meets the minimum size standard for a particular type; or
h) It can be demonstrated that the needs of new residents can be met in this way without adversely impacting on the needs of existing residents.

Further extracts from the Local Plan concerned with multi-functionality of green space are provided in Appendix B.

Neighbourhood Plans - Local Green Spaces
Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act in November 2011. It is a way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. It enables local communities to have more say in where new houses, businesses, shops and community facilities should go in their local area and can allocate sites for development. They can also look to provide or protect green spaces within the community.

There are currently 9 adopted neighbourhood plans, all of which have reference to green spaces identified within policies;-

- Bramley – Policy CVA1 Bramley Community-Valued Assets
- Kingsclere – Policy K6, K7
- Overton – Policy LBE1
- Oakley and Deane - Policy 7 – Protection and Enhancement of the Environment
- Old Basing and Lychpit – Policies LB04 and LB05
- Sherborne St John – SSJ Policy 2: The Rural Character of The Parish
- Sherfield-on-Loddon – Policies D1, G1, G2, G3, T1, T2
- St Mary Bourne – Policy P5
- Whitchurch – WNDP LD1 - Protection and Enhancement of Open Spaces

Progress on other Neighbourhood Plans is at various stages of preparation, and the above list will be extended over time.

Other Relevant Strategies

Living Landscapes Strategy (2014)

The Living Landscapes Strategy links to the Green Infrastructure Strategy but its sole focus is on biodiversity aspects within the borough. It provides a greater degree of detail about the habitats and species communities that occur in the borough. It sets out more detailed actions, which relate to the strategic policies within the GI Strategy, targeted at conserving and enhancing biodiversity.

<u>Horizon 2050</u>

The council has started working with a wide range of residents, public services, businesses, voluntary and community groups and local national and regional organisations on Horizon 2050 to plan together for the borough's future. Through this work the council is gathering views about the different ways in which the borough may change and are working with residents to understand their ambitions and priorities for Basingstoke and Deane.

This involves looking closely at areas such as:

- transport
- work patterns and jobs
- wellbeing and health
- lifestyle
- where and how we want to live
- sustainability
- local services
- the impact of technology

The GI Strategy can contribute to Horizon 2050 and the mechanisms to ensure occurs is covered under the Economy theme in Chapter 5.0.

There are a number of other relevant strategies that are highly relevant to GI, these are:

- Climate Change Strategy (2014);
- Living Landscapes Strategy (2014);
- Tree Strategy (2015);
- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019
- Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2008); and
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Basingstoke and Deane (2015).
- Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan (2011)
- Kennet Catchment Management Action Plan (2012)
- Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership Action Plan (2014)
- Loddon Catchment Partnership Action Plan (2014)

A brief outline of each of these is provided in Appendix B.

Accessible natural green space, near Marl's Lane, Popley

3.0 Existing GI Resource

3.1 Overview

The borough of Basingstoke and Deane covers an area of over 245 square miles of north Hampshire, over 90% of which is rural (predominantly agricultural with significant areas of woodland). The borough's population is approximately 173,860[2], with over 60% of people residing in Basingstoke town, Chineham and Basing. The remainder live in the borough's large rural areas, including the towns and larger villages of Bramley, Kingsclere, Oakley, Overton, Tadley and Whitchurch, and many smaller villages and hamlets.

The borough straddles the geological areas of the Thames Basin and the Hampshire Downs with the southern half of the borough dominated by chalk downland and the northern half influenced by deposits of clays and sands. The landscape of the west of the borough is recognised as nationally important, including 80 square miles of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The borough supports varied types of GI owing to its varied geology and important river systems. This includes the River Test and Pamber Forest – both designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the River Loddon - designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Tributaries of these such as Bourne Rivulet and the River Lyde, also contribute to the GI resource. Both the Test and the Loddon are classified as European 'Salmonid Waters' on the basis of their importance for freshwater fish conservation.

Extensive areas of the borough's GI are protected by designations including; 19 SSSI's, one National Nature Reserve (NNR), over 820 SINC's wholly or partly within the borough and nine Local Nature Reserves (LNR).

The borough's residents and visitors benefit from urban parks and green spaces, historic parks and gardens, registered common land and "Access Land" i.e. areas of open countryside, such as chalk downland that are generally open for walking. A network of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways, including some long-distance routes, form part of the borough's 853km network of public rights of way.

The borough's river systems and extensive rights of way network, together with significant transport infrastructure of rail and road corridors provide a network of greenways and green corridors contribute significantly to the connected network of GI in the borough. These act as the stepping stones and corridors that form part of the ecological network illustrated at Figure 2.1.

3.2 **The State of Nature in the borough**
The extent of the various types of GI throughout the borough will be one of a number of measures that will help to assess change in the GI resource over time. Using data from HBiC and Ordnance Survey, the following 4 tables show existing (2018) coverage in the borough of the principle biodiversity habitats to be measured. It should be noted that these will be updated and where appropriate, added to, as part of the monitoring process.

Table 1: Land Use in the Borough

Land Use Type	**Percentage Cover of BDBC**
Man Made	5.2
Multiple Surface	4.3
Total Natural Surfaces	90.3
Break Down of Natural Surfaces	
Agriculture	57.9
Trees and Woodland (of which Ancient Woodland)	17.3 (7.6)
Other greenfield use	15.1

[2] Office for National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates 2015

Table 2: Priority Habitats in the borough (to 2017)

Habitat	Total Area
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	222ha
Lowland Acid Grassland	24ha
Other Grassland	1022ha
Lowland Heathland	180ha
Woodland	6698ha
Parkland and Wood Pasture	506ha
Lowland Fens	3ha

Table 3:Extent of designated nature conservation sites in 2017

Designation	Coverage in hectares
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	806
National nature Reserves (NNR)	23
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	268.5
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)	6201

Table 4: Numbers of protected and notable species recorded in the borough.

Class	Number of protected or notable species
Invertebrates	488
Flowering Plants	207
Birds	119
Mammals	13
Amphibians and Reptiles	6
Fish	4

The above tables show that approximately 90% of the borough is covered with natural surfaces – including agriculture, woodland, and public open spaces. The most extensive area of priority habitat within the borough is woodland. The percentage of priority habitats within designated sites was 56% for 2017. With respect to Basingstoke and Deane's SSSIs, at least 95% are in favourable or unfavourable but recovering condition.

Fifty species are being utilised on a county wide basis to give indications as to the health of the regions biodiversity. A table in Appendix C – Biodiversity gives the county trends for those species found within Basingstoke for the period 2007 to 2017.

3.2 Types of Green Infrastructure

There are many types of GI, as described below.

<u>Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space</u>

Natural green spaces result from natural regenerative processes, whilst semi-natural green space refers to natural habitats that have been partially created or manipulated by people. The following types are present in the borough:

- Semi-natural Woodlands
- Unimproved and Semi-improved Grasslands
- Rivers, water bodies and wetlands
- Heathland
- Chalk downland (Open Access Land)

Some areas of natural or semi natural green space will be important specifically for their biodiversity value and due to their sensitivity should be managed primarily for species and habitats with restricted public access and other safeguards in place through management plans. Spaces where public access is feasible are known as accessible natural green space (ANGS).

<u>Parks and Gardens</u>

Parks and gardens are green spaces with well-defined boundaries and tend to have an ornamental character. They contain facilities which cater for a wide range of users and typical elements include open grassed areas, tree and shrub planting, wooded areas, play and sports facilities, sitting areas, space for events, and wildlife areas.

The council owns a number of parks and gardens including several in Basingstoke town

centre which attract people from the wider area, such as War Memorial Park and Eastrop Park, both of which have received Green Flag awards.

Other types of GI in this category are:

- Country parks
- Neighbourhood parks
- Village greens

Amenity green space

Amenity green space refers to areas that are typically managed through mowing and may have grass, formal planting beds and/or ornamental trees (but not exclusively). These spaces can range from small grassed areas with an element of trees and shrubs or wildlife habitat, typically found in and around housing estates, business parks and commercial areas, such as can be found in areas of Basingstoke such as Hatch Warren, Brighton Hill or Chineham to larger green spaces that are not classified or managed as a park. Some of these areas lack a dominant principal use, but are valuable locally for recreation, visual amenity and flora/fauna and can include areas that are managed as habitat for wildlife.

Other types of GI in this category are:

- Recreation grounds and playing fields
- Play areas

Green corridors

These are vegetated linear features within the borough's landscape such as highway and railway verges, river systems, cycle routes and the rights of way network. Major Examples include the M3, A34, London to Southampton main line, National Cycle Route 23 and River Loddon corridor. They act as a network of greenways and green corridors that provide significant areas of important habitat for wildlife. They can also provide migratory linkages between areas of high biodiversity value and enable access by residents of the borough to the wider countryside. Reconfigured disused railway lines serves as routes for walking, cycling and wildlife.

Hedgerows

A hedgerow is a line of closely spaced shrubs and tree species, planted and trained to form a barrier or to mark the boundary of an area, such as between neighbouring properties. Hedgerows are used to separate a road from adjoining fields or one field from another, and are of sufficient width to incorporate larger trees. A connected network of hedgerows is a common feature of the borough's landscape and can also provide an important habitat and migratory linkage for wildlife. Hedgerows form a component of a green corridor. New hedgerow planting is welcomed and should be encouraged as it also helps to define boundaries and makes efficient use of space. New hedgerows should be planted in a double staggered row.

Other types of GI

These include:

- Equipped play
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Allotments and Orchards
- Historic features such as ancient hedgerows and ditches

All the above GI types are generally publicly owned or publicly accessible. There are two types of privately-owned green infrastructure, namely gardens and farmland.

Private and communal residential gardens can collectively be considered as urban green infrastructure types which maintain important wildlife links in urban areas. They deliver some GI benefits to society at large, and it is appropriate for a GI strategy to promote householder actions which enhance these benefits, whilst respecting individual property rights.

Agricultural land is a rural green infrastructure type, delivering a range of GI benefits. Government support funding to farmers and landowners incentivises specific environmental and social actions.

Given the extent of farmland in the Borough, the national importance of rural landscapes in and around the AONB, and the water quality in the rivers Test and Loddon, it is appropriate for this GI strategy to promote actions which will enhance the multi-functionality of farmland, whilst respecting its primary food-growing function.

Figure 3.1 maps the national and some of the county level GI related designations in the borough. It also includes the extent of the North Wessex Downs AONB.

River Loddon, near Hartley Wespall

Sign for Wayfarer's Walk at Stubbington Down

Play area near Avington Way, Chineham

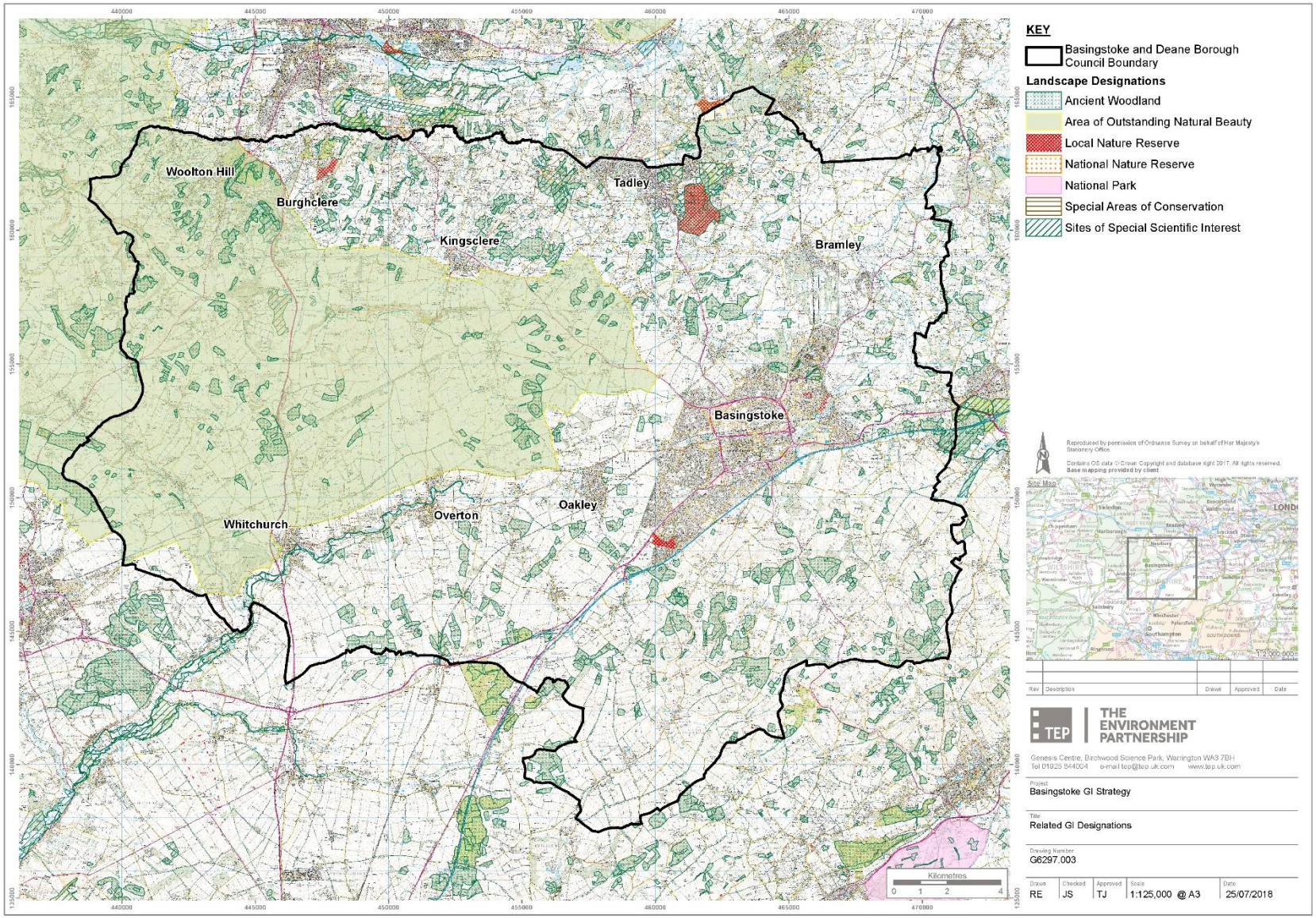


Figure 3.1 – Related GI Designations

4.0 Providing GI Strategically

4.1 Introduction

This section considers Basingstoke and Deane's GI resource in respect of monitoring current biodiversity provision and considering how GI can be extended and improved strategically at a broad landscape scale and also at a smaller local scale.

4.2 Current biodiversity provision

Chapter 3.0 highlighted the wide range of habitats and species owing to the varied geological influences and the important river systems which run through the borough. Many of these habitats and species are protected through designation.

In common with much of the country, the borough has suffered a significant net loss of biodiversity assets during the last century, especially during the post war years of agricultural intensification and expansion of urban areas. Whilst the borough contains many designated sites, many are small, isolated, fragmented and/or subject to pressures arising from human activity.

Strategic biodiversity priorities for the borough have been identified through the Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and its associated Habitat and Species Action Plans (HAPs and SAPs) The BAP also contains a Topic Action Plan (TAP) relating to urban areas. In parallel with the BAP, the council has its own Natural Environment Strategy – 'Living Landscapes', outlined in chapter 2.5.

The borough is subject to an annual programme of habitat survey through the council's Service Level Agreement with the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC). Much of the survey effort is focused on sites of high biodiversity value such as SSSIs and SINCs. Sites that have not previously been considered are surveyed at the request of the council, for instance based on an indication of potential biodiversity value or to establish if land managed by the council has any biodiversity interest. All survey information is assessed by the Hampshire SINC Panel, comprising representatives from Natural England, Hampshire County Council and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, to identify and designate new SINCs that meet the designation criteria.

HBIC also provide a variety of information on priority habitats and species through an annual reporting basis. This can be utilised by the council to monitor habitat trends in terms of area and quality and to monitor 50 priority species which are being used county wide as indicators of biodiversity.

4.3 Landscape Scale

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that planning policies should promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats linked to national and local targets.

Wildlife that depends upon small and isolated islands of habitat is vulnerable to environmental change and disease as a result of their restricted environment and the constraints on population expansion and genetic exchange. In Chapter 2, Lawton's 'Making Space for Nature' introduced the concept of ecological networks looking beyond just protecting the most pristine sites and individual endangered species, and moving towards a more integrated approach, working to link sites, buffer sites, restore areas of habitat and allow wildlife to move more easily through the landscape. This can only be achieved if efforts are coordinated across a number of agencies and with many differing stakeholders, including landowners.

In response to 'Making Space for Nature' Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) has produced a detailed Ecological Network Map on behalf of the Hampshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP). The network aims to:

- Improve current wildlife sites through better habitat management
- Increase the size of existing wildlife sites
- Enhance connections between sites, either through physical corridors or through stepping stones
- Create new sites
- Reduce the pressure on wildlife by improving the wider environment around sites

The Hampshire Ecological Network Mapping (supported by the borough council's mapping) is based on the following hierarchy:

- Core - Statutory Sites
- Core - Non-statutory Sites

- Corridors
- Restoration areas
- Stepping stones

Core Statutory Sites (relevant to the borough) are:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserves
- Local Nature Reserves

Core non-statutory sites are:

- Ancient woodlands from the Ancient Woodland Inventory
- All Local Wildlife Sites (SINCs)
- All inland water bodies
- All defined areas from HBICs priority habitat area
- All defined areas from HBICs broad habitat area

Corridors (including opportunities)

- River corridors (River Test and River Loddon) under the Biodiversity Priority Area (BPA) initiative (see below)
- Watercourses
- Potential restoration of Basingstoke Canal
- Road corridors (M3, A30, A34 and A339)
- Rail corridors

Stepping stones:

- Small blocks of woodlands
- Grassland
- Heathland
- Hedgerows
- Wetland
- Ponds and pond margins

Mapping of the network is in progress and the latest map is shown at chapter 5.2.

More detail on the method for the Hampshire Ecological Network and ongoing actions are provided in Appendix D and mapping of stepping stones in Appendix G.

Preceding some of the Hampshire Ecological Network Mapping are the Biodiversity Priority Areas (BPAs). The BPAs are based on the borough's two main river corridors (River Test and Loddon) and have been chosen because these represent cohesive linear geographic areas that contain interrelated habitats, linked by the ecological function of the rivers, both of which are of major importance for biodiversity but are identified in River Catchment Management Plans as requiring better management to retain and restore their ecological status.

The BPAs originate from the earlier Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) that aim to provide a landscape-scale framework for the delivery of targets from the South East Biodiversity Strategy (2009) (see plan in Appendix F, Part 3).

The purpose of the BPAs is to promote concerted effort to manage existing high value habitats, restore degraded habitats that once had high value and to create new habitats in the place of those that have been completely lost. This will create two major linear corridors across the borough from which many species will be able to spread out and take advantage of habitat improvements in the wider Hampshire Ecological Network.

<u>The River Loddon BPA</u>

This BPA encompasses the entire reach of the River Loddon and its associated floodplain within the borough from its source in Basingstoke to where it leaves the borough in the northeast and flows north into Berkshire until its confluence with the River Thames.

The BPA incorporates urban parks including Victory Gardens and Eastrop Park, and numerous SINCS, including Basing Fen and the Mill Field. The upper reaches of the river are associated with the occurrence of chalk peatland, which is a rare type of feature, also associated with the Rivers Test and Itchen.

The River Lyde is a tributary of the Loddon and joins the main river channel at Sherfield on Loddon. Other tributaries include Petty's Brook and Bow Brook which form part of the BPA. The River Loddon has suffered from the effects of urbanisation with a significant proportion of its upper reaches having been canalised, and subjected to culverting in places. Habitats along the corridor have become fragmented by development and roads and intensive agricultural practices. Remaining habitats are threatened by lack of appropriate management. The river itself is affected by urban drainage, sewage works and agricultural run-off.

In addition to biodiversity considerations, there are rights of way along the river corridor, which provide important opportunities for people to

walk, cycle or ride in the countryside. However, these routes are somewhat fragmented and blighted by roads and unsightly underpasses.

The Thames River Basin Management Plan (2015) includes existing funded measures to 2021 to address the above problems and also tackle poor water quality arising from rural diffuse pollution. It has aspirational measures to improve fishery status, tackle a wide range of diffuse pollutants, develop flood mitigation projects and increase community engagement.

The River Test BPA

This BPA covers the River Test corridor from its source near Overton to where it crosses the southwest borough boundary near Whitchurch. From here the river flows south until it reaches the sea at the head of Southampton Water.

The River Test is a nationally renowned chalk river, which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The river is one of the most species-rich lowland rivers in England, supporting a high diversity of invertebrate species and other fauna. It has numerous water meadows and some wet woodlands which provide linear habitats of particular value for birds and invertebrates.

The Bourne Rivulet is a tributary of the River Test which flows through the villages of St Mary Bourne and Hurstbourne Priors before joining with the River Test near Tufton.

Whilst the upper reaches are less affected by urbanisation than the River Loddon, the River Test has been affected by development, especially in Whitchurch. The fragmentation and variable management of the habitats along the river corridor are factors which prevent it from achieving its full biodiversity value.

The River Test BPA focuses on the section of river within the borough and its associated floodplain, which links or has the potential to link the habitats within it as part of a fully functioning river ecosystem.

Objectives for the BPAs

The following objectives will be pursued by the council and its partners within each of the Biodiversity Priority Areas:

- Protect and manage existing key habitats within each BPA;
- When opportunities arise, create new habitat to expand and link isolated areas of key habitats;
- Support sustainable land management; and
- Improve public access to the countryside/natural green space within each of the BPA's where this can be achieved without adversely affecting the natural environment.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Provision

In 2016, the council approved a priority list of sites to be declared as LNRs, as per the National Park Act 1949. The strategic aim of this project will lead to an enlarged network of LNRs throughout the borough through the protection of wildlife and its interaction with the local population. Each of these sites will have management plans that set out how the aims are to be achieved and actions for delivery.

4.4 Local Scale - Green Space Standards

Whereas providing GI at landscape scale tends to more wildlife-led, providing local scale GI tends to be more people-led. The driver for providing local scale GI for people (and wildlife) is expressed through green space standards under three aspects:

- Is green space accessible?
- Is there a sufficient quantity of green space?
- Is the green space of sufficient quality?

The process for identifying improvements needed to create an accessible, integrated network of green spaces, green links and corridors is outlined below. It was first necessary to assess the existing green space resource against the set of accessibility, quantity and quality standards and targets for green space provision.

This identified where there are **deficiencies in provision** and highlighted **priorities for improvements**. This section provides the assessment of the GI resource in June 2017,

An agreed set of green space standards is a fundamental tool in addressing inequalities in provision. Standards provide a benchmark against which it is possible to assess current green space provision, identify deficiencies and maximise opportunities for improvement as well as planning for future needs in response to new development. Although they can only be

a guide, as no two communities are likely to have exactly the same requirements, standards nonetheless help to support an equitable approach to green space planning and management.

Green space standards need to cover not only quantity but also accessibility and quality. Clearly, for a green space to meet the needs of the residents it is intended to serve, it must be accessible within a reasonable distance and it needs to be designed and maintained in a way that will deliver the benefits required. For example, one large green space within a particular development may meet the quantity standard but if it is too far away from many of the residents for whom it is provided and consists of only short mown grass it will not meet the needs of all the residents or be able to provide the full range of benefits. There are consequently three aspects which are necessary to ensure the provision of green space that will fully meet the needs of residents:

- **Accessibility** - It is desirable that spaces and facilities should be accessible to those who may wish to use them, but at the same time every local resident cannot expect to have all the various forms of provision "on their doorstep". The distance that most people are willing to travel to something varies with what it is and how frequently it is visited. This gives rise to the concept of 'distance thresholds'.
- **Quantity** - Quantity standards are useful for planning purposes as they allow the amount or quantity of provision needed by any given population to be estimated.
- **Quality** - The quality of provision is hugely important to potential users; higher quality facilities normally generate a higher level use than poor ones and are more highly valued and cared for. Quality standards can help to ensure that individual green spaces and facilities are designed appropriately to fulfil the function for which they have been provided.

The quantity and accessibility standards used within the GI Strategy have been based on those in the Leisure and Recreational Needs Assessment (LRNA) which was undertaken in 2008. The LRNA gathered information on current provision in Basingstoke and the larger rural settlements, national and regional policy, trends in recreation and open space use, and the views of Ward Members and parish and town councils. This then resulted in recommendations for revised open space standards and targets.

These recommendations were modified to provide a more comprehensive set of quantity and accessibility standards, and these were adopted by the Council in the Local Plan. The standards set out below have therefore been used to assess current GI provision and to enable areas of deficiency and priority to be identified within the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Old Down, Kempshott – Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

Stepping stones, Eastrop Park

Table 4.1: Adopted Green Space Standards

Maximum Distance Thresholds

Multifunctional Green Space (MFGS) made up of: • Amenity Green Space (including informal play space and kick-about) • Accessible Natural Green Space • Parks	5mins (300m walking) 10mins (600m walking, 1500m cycling) 15mins (900m walking, 2250m cycling, 5625m car)
Equipped play areas	10mins (600m walking) to nearest facility
Allotments	10 mins (600m walking, 1500m cycling, 3750m by car)

Quantity Standard

Multifunctional Green Space (MFGS) made up of: • Amenity Green Space (including informal play space and kick-about) • Accessible Natural Green Space • Parks • Green corridors and buffers • Important biodiversity sites and landscape features	65m^2 per person (in/adjacent to Basingstoke) 32m^2 per person (rural)

Absolute Minimum Requirement

Multifunctional Green Space (MFGS) made up of: • Amenity Green Space (including informal play space and kick-about) • Accessible Natural Green Space • Parks	20m^2 per person (all areas)
Equipped play areas	0.5m^2 per person (all areas)
Allotments	3.4m^{2}per person (all areas)

Minimum Sizes

Multi-functional Green Space	0.2ha (2000m^2) with no dimension less than 15m
Neighbourhood Parks	2ha
Strategic equipped play areas including provision for teenagers	1250m^2 in/adjacent to Basingstoke
Neighbourhood equipped play areas including provision for teenagers	750m^2 in/adjacent to Basingstoke 1000m^2 in rural settlements to allow for the lack of strategic sites
Local equipped play areas	300m^2 in/adjacent to Basingstoke 450m^2 in rural settlements to allow for the lack of strategic sites
Allotments	10 plots (approx. 1375m^2) min 5 rods

Notes

1. The Borough Council will require developments to meet the identified **Quantity Standard** in all situations and will only accept a variation from this requirement in exceptional circumstances where this is fully justified by the applicant. The Local Plan 2011 – 2029 provides the policy context for this.

2. In no circumstances will the provision of green space below the identified **Absolute Minimum Requirement** be accepted.

3. Multi-functional green space and equipped play will normally be provided on site.

4. Consideration will be given to an off-site financial contribution towards the enhancement of existing facilities, but only where:
   a. the quantity standard for the number of proposed dwellings does not result in a requirement for green space which meets the minimum size standard for a particular type; or
   b. it can be demonstrated that the needs of new residents can be met in this way without adversely impacting on the quality of life of existing residents. For example, this may be acceptable if there is a surplus of multi-functional green space and or play provision within the distance thresholds, and/or the capacity of existing open space within the distance thresholds can be increased through enhancement.

5. When new development takes place, opportunities to improve existing green space in surrounding areas will be considered in addition to, or instead of, provision of new green space on site in order to ensure the best access to high quality green spaces for all residents.

6. When assessing which standards to apply to a new development, any site that is within or immediately adjacent to Basingstoke will be required to fulfill the 'Urban' standards. Similarly, if a development would become linked to Basingstoke by the development of an intervening Local Plan housing allocation site, then again, the 'Urban' standards will apply. For other developments outside Basingstoke, the 'rural' standards' will apply.

7. For the purposes of green space planning, ‘Basingstoke’ is considered to include, Basingstoke, Chineham and Old Basing.

8. Enhancement of existing green space provision in lieu of new provision on site, where this is considered appropriate, would be achieved through developer contributions via S106 agreement.

9. **Definition of green space types:**

Amenity Green Space *– green space suitable for team games and robust play including kickabout space (rectangular area of mown grass minimum 1600 sq.m. plus a buffer of 10m to housing, minimum width 25m, maximum gradient 1:40), with tree and shrub planting.*

Parks *- green spaces that have well defined boundaries and a strong sense of place and design. They contain a range of facilities which cater for a wide range of users including young children, teenagers, families, office workers and the elderly. Facilities should include:*

- *Open grassed areas including space for informal team games;*
- *Tree and shrub planting;*
- *NEAP and informal sports facilities (e.g. multi-use games areas, basketball hoops and ball walls);*
- *Sitting areas and ornamental garden areas;*
- *Space for community and cultural events;*
- *Wildlife areas;*
- *Signage.*

The precise combination of facilities will depend on existing provision and local need.

Accessible Natural Green Space (ANGS*) - green space which is designed and/or managed to encourage biodiversity but is freely accessible to people for informal recreation (subject to ecological sensitivities) and where a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate. Provision for informal recreation may include a network of paths, seating, interpretation etc. Types of ANGS include:*

- *Woodlands*
- *Grasslands (managed for floristic diversity)*
- *Waterways, water bodies and wetlands.*
- *Heathland*
- *Landscape features, green corridors and buffers – areas whose primary purpose is for wildlife protection/enhancement; protection of important landscape features; provision of pedestrian, cycle and/or wildlife transport links and/or buffering.*

Equipped Play *- outdoor sites with equipment and facilities aimed specifically at children and young people and where play is the predominant use of the site:*

- *Local Play Area (LEAP) provides for children aged 0–10 (20m buffer to housing)*

- *Neighbourhood (NEAP) and Strategic Play Areas provide for children and young people aged 0–18 (30m buffer to housing)*

Allotments – *a suitable site for growing fruit and vegetables with facilities to meet the needs of allotment holders including appropriate perimeter fencing and gates to prevent unauthorised access, water supply, waste storage, hard access for pedestrians and vehicles.*

4.5 Assessment of Green Space Provision – Quantity

Existing green space provision is measured against the adopted standards in table 4.1.

Multifunctional green space

The assessment shows that the rural area of the borough is generally well provided for in terms of multifunctional green space with the exception of three wards. Baughurst and Tadley North falls marginally below the standard, whereas both Overton, Laverstoke and Steventon and Tadley Central fall well below the standard.

The assessment shows that Basingstoke is less well provided for. Only Kempshott exceeds the standard, with Chineham, Eastrop and Hatch Warren falling marginally below. The remaining 11 wards fall well below the standard.

Play areas

In respect of play areas all the rural wards meet the standard with the exception of East Woodhay. Whereas five of the 15 wards in Basingstoke fall below the standard. Further details on play areas is provided in Appendix E.

However, play provision is not only made up by equipped play areas, but also by well-designed green spaces which can provide as much or greater play value, by providing natural features and a safe environment for more creative and imaginative play.

The identification of those areas of the borough with deficiencies in quantity of multi-functional green space or equipped play will help to provide direction for improvements in green infrastructure. However, due to the nature of these locations, an increase in the quantity of multi-functional green space may or may not be possible. Any improvements will instead need to be targeted at improved quality of provision and by increasing the range of functions that some open spaces provide.

Due to the nature of many spaces, i.e. close to housing and/or small in size, an increase in the quantity of equipped play facilities may not be possible in which case opportunities would be sought to:

a) Enhance existing equipped play areas (strategic or neighbourhood facilities) by increasing the amount and range of equipment where appropriate; or
b) Ensure that existing green space close to homes is improved to be safe and provide maximum informal or natural play value; or
c) To create new multi-functional green space suitable for play where possible.

More detail of the June 2017 study is provided in Appendix E.

Allotment sites

There are 42 sites managed by the Council. Provision in Basingstoke town based on a traditional 10 rod / 250m2 plot is approximately one plot per 164 residents - equates to 0.6 plot per 100 residents.

However, many of the 10 rod / 250m2 plots have been reduced to smaller sizes (predominately 5 rod / 125m2) resulting in a provision of approx. 1 plot per 100 residents in the town.

There is a deficit in provision in the wards of Beggarwood and Hatch Warren, Kempshott, Brighton Hill, Popley and Marnel Park.

Demand remains high with waiting lists for all sites.

Multifunctional green space, next to Amport Road, Chineham

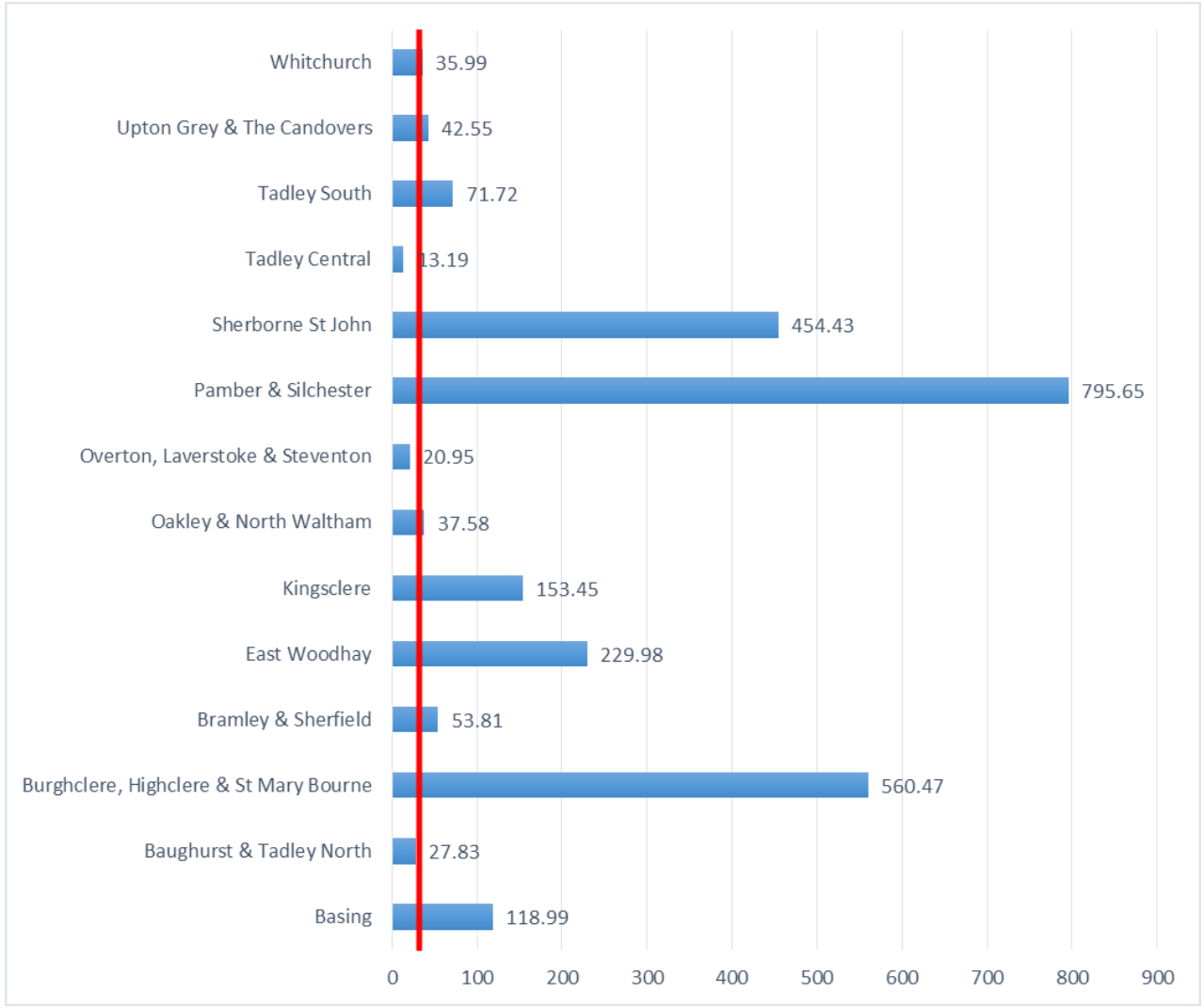


Figure 4.1 – Existing provision for existing multifunctional green space in rural settlements (standard (vertical red line) – 32m2/person). The assessment shows that the rural area is generally well provided for with the exception of three wards. Baughurst and Tadley North fall marginally below the standard, whereas Overton, Laverstoke and Steventon and Tadley Central fall well below the standard.

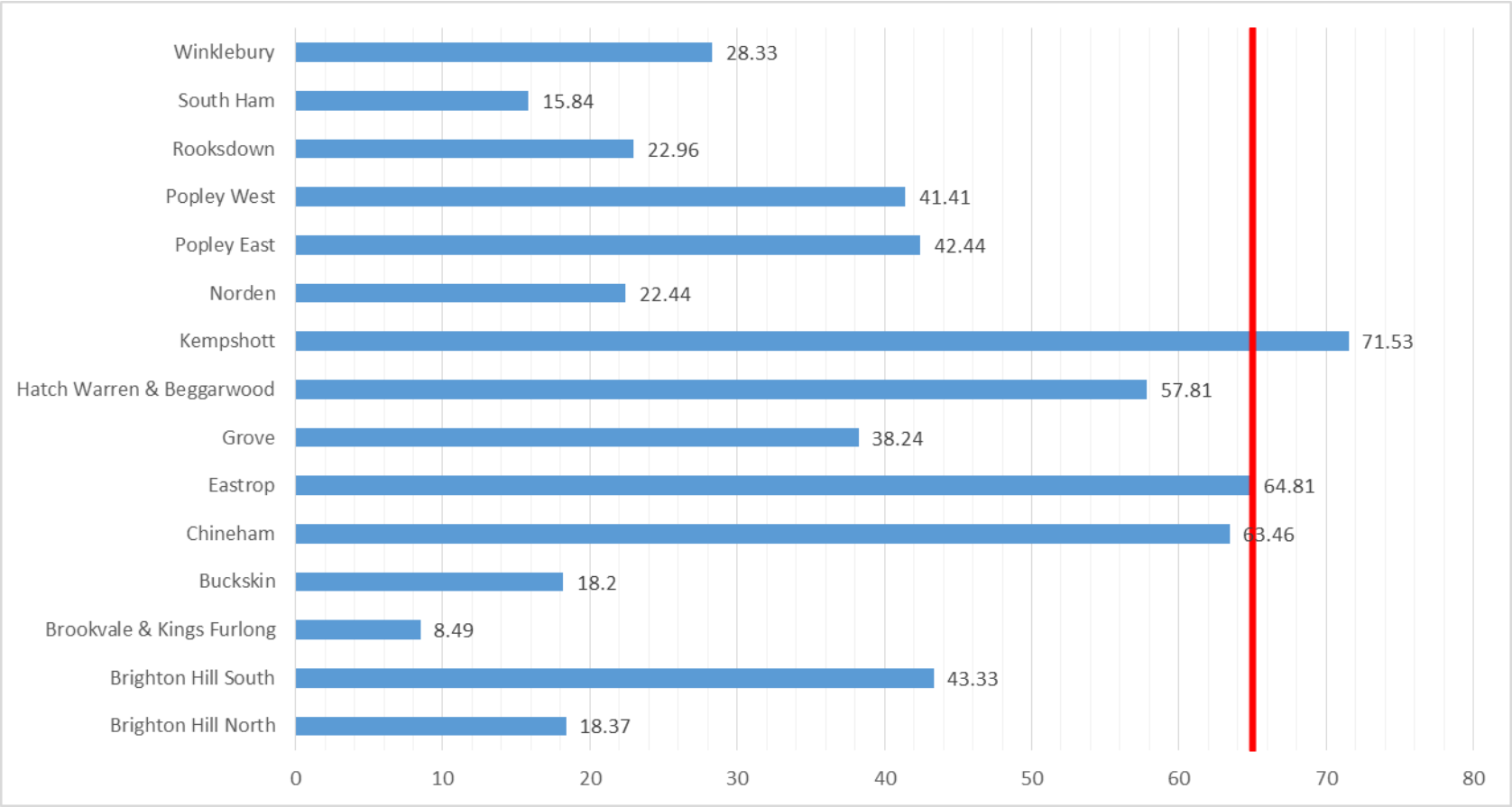


Figure 4.2 – Existing provision for existing multifunctional green space in Basingstoke (standard (vertical red line) – 65m2/person. Only Kempshott exceeds the standard, with Chineham, Eastrop and Hatch Warren falling marginally below. The remaining 11 wards fall well below the standard.

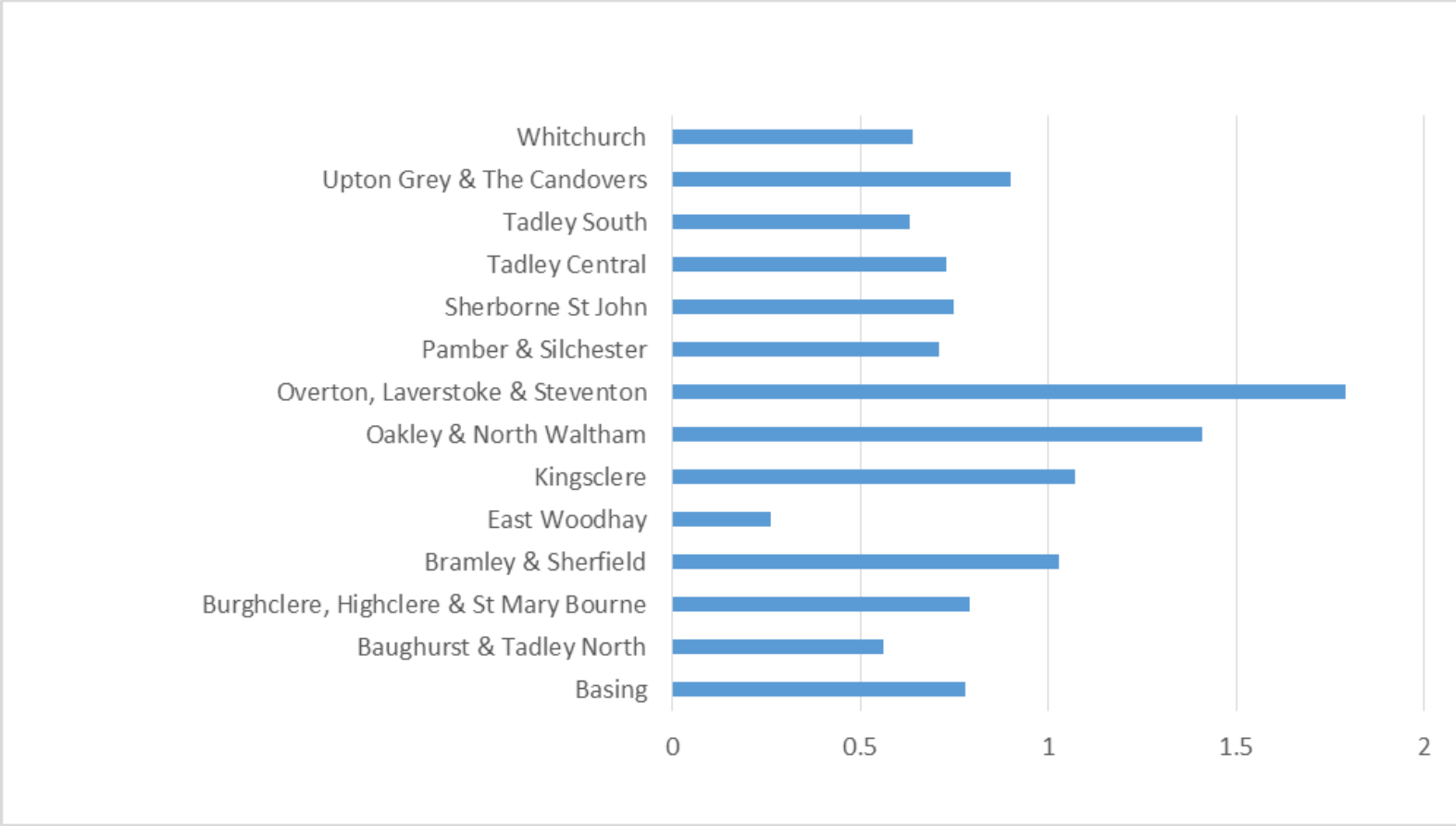


Figure 4.3 – Existing provision for play areas in rural settlements. The standard is 0.5m2 per person and only East Woodhay falls below the standard.

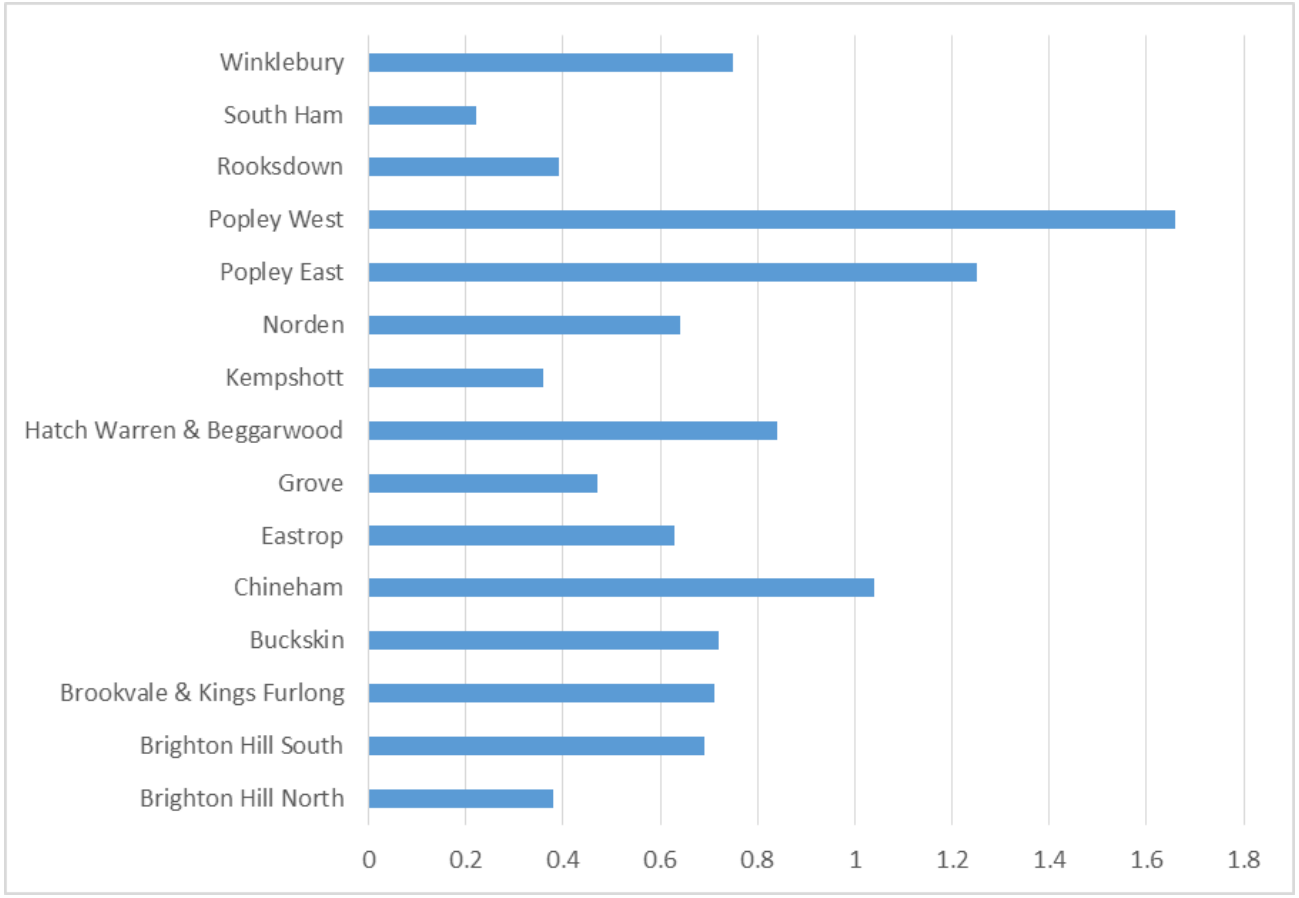
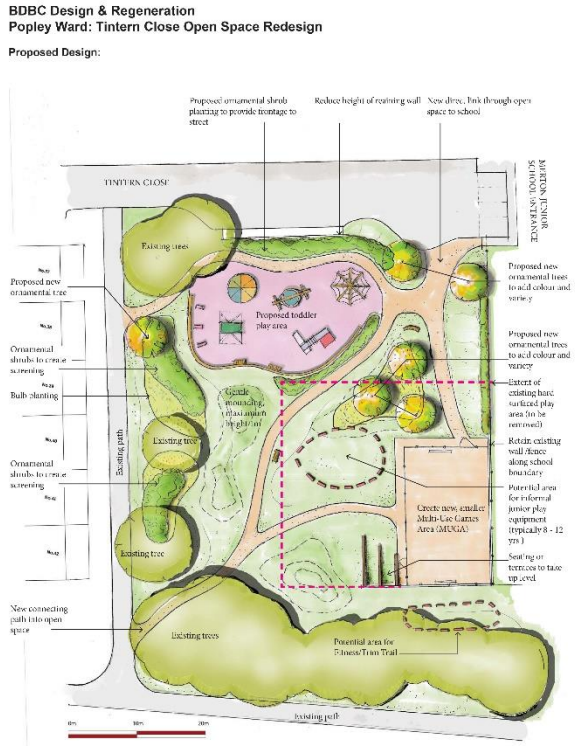


Figure 4.4 - Existing provision for play areas in Basingstoke. The standard is 0.5m2 per person and Brighton Hill North, Grove, Kempshott, Rooksdown and South Ham fall below the standard.

Case study – Tintern Close Open Space

The Tintern Close Open Space in Popley was identified as a facility in need of refurbishment in the light of the council's quantity and quality standards. The play area had very limited equipment for toddlers which was old and dated. In addition, next to it were two ball courts which dominated the rest of the open space, both of which were of poor quality and tended to be misused. The proximity of the ball courts and play area to housing was causing conflict with residents. In order to enhance the play value of the area as a whole and to enable the green space to be enjoyed by a wider cross section of the community, the space was redesigned to create an improved toddler and junior play area, a multi-use ball games area that was smaller than the ball courts but of much improved quality and an attractive green space which provides an attractive area for informal recreation and play and creates a buffer between adjacent housing and the new facilities. The work was funded through Section 106 monies.



Tintern Close – Proposals

Tintern Close - Visualisations

4.6 Accessibility

In order to meet the distance thresholds proposed in table 4.1 above, every resident should be within certain maximum distances of different types of multi-functional green space made up of:--

- Amenity green space (including informal play space and kickabout)
- Accessible natural green space; and
- Parks

The plans referred to in 4.7 Accessibility are located in Appendix G. Plans numbered 14-22 show existing green space and distance thresholds in Basingstoke and Chineham and the largest rural settlements in the borough. The plans highlight residential areas outside the distance thresholds. The conclusions can be summarised as follows:-

Within Basingstoke Plans 14 to 16 plans indicate that:

- There is generally good access to parks within the maximum distance threshold; the areas of deficiency are in Chineham, Winklebury and western parts of Buckskin.
- There is good access to accessible natural green space around the edges of the town. Chineham and the east of Basingstoke have significant areas of woodland and other wildlife habitats; northern parts of Popley have access to Basing Forest; and southern parts of Kempshott together with Beggarwood and parts of Hatch Warren have access to Old Down and Beggarwood Park. However the centre of the town has deficiencies in access to accessible natural greenspace
- Access to amenity green space is very variable across Basingstoke with particular deficiencies indicated in Chineham ; Eastrop; Grove; Hatch Warren; parts of Brighton Hill; Kings Furlong; Buckskin; South Ham; parts of Black Dam; parts of Norden; Brookvale and parts of Winklebury

There are many areas of green space (naturalistic and formal) throughout Basingstoke, especially along highways and other linear routes that are not necessarily accessible, but are nevertheless of visual importance. In some cases, these play an important role in creating visual separation between roads, housing and the surrounding countryside, as well as providing additional wildlife habitats s and corridors.

Within Bramley Plan 17 indicates that:

- There is no park within Bramley.
- There is good access to accessible natural green space within the distance thresholds with the exception of the very west of the settlement, including Bramley Green and a SINC off German Road.
- There is good access to amenity green space within the distance thresholds to the east of the railway line but there is poor provision to the west.

Within Kingsclere Plan 18 indicates that:

- There is no park in Kingsclere.
- Access to accessible natural green space within the distance threshold is good. There are a number of SINC's along the periphery of the village and a good network of footpaths to the south and west provide links to the countryside beyond.
- Access to amenity green space within the central area of the village is poor with most amenity green spaces located at the edge of the village.

The A339 bypass to the north of the village provides the most significant barrier to the provision of GI, as it is a wide road corridor that severs access and habitats. The Fieldgate Centre provides a limited contribution to GI because of its current primary function as playing fields, although there are opportunities for improvements.

Within Oakley Plan 19 indicates that:

- There is no park in Oakley.
- There is good access to accessible natural green space within the distance threshold with SINCs at Cow Down Copse and St Johns Copse and there is a good footpath network in the countryside around the village.
- However residents in the western and northern parts of Oakley are not within 300m of an amenity green space.

Within Overton Plan 20 indicates that:

- The neighbourhood park at London Road provides good access within the distance threshold to the main part of the village. However most of Foxdown to the north is outside the threshold as is the very south western corner of the village.
- There is poor access to accessible natural green space in the main village. The River Test SSSI runs through the village but is not generally accessible. Any additional access to this sensitive habitat must not have a detrimental impact on the features for which the site is designated.

- There is generally good access to amenity green space within the distance threshold with only dwellings to the west of the school and in the south western corner of the village outside the threshold.

Within Tadley, Plan 21 indicates that:

- There are no park in Tadley.
- Access to accessible natural green space within the distance threshold is good in Pamber Heath and Baughurst as well as the east of Tadley, as a result of large green spaces such as Pamber Forest, Tadley and Silchester Commons and Wigmore Heath; however dwellings in the west and south of Tadley are not within the distance threshold.
- Access to amenity green space within the distance threshold is reasonable although dwellings in the north of Pamber Heath, the eastern and western edges of Tadley and the north of Baughurst are not within the distance threshold.

Within Whitchurch, Plan 22 indicates that:

- There is no park in Whitchurch.
- There is good access to accessible natural green space within the distance threshold; this is supported by an extensive public rights of way network linking the town to the surrounding countryside, including good routes along the River Test corridor.
- There is generally good access to amenity green space within the distance threshold although dwellings in the far south east, north east and centre/west of the town are outside the threshold.

Current distribution of allotments is as follows:

- Most of Basingstoke town, is within a 10-minute walk of at least one allotment site, apart from the south-western areas
- Most of Kingsclere, the central area of Overton, the central part of Tadley and Whitchurch are also within a 10-minute walk of a site.
- There are particular accessibility deficiencies in north east and south west Basingstoke, Baughurst, Sherfield on Loddon and Ecchinswell, together with a number of the smaller settlements.
- Overall, the percentage of properties within the distance threshold of at least one site is:
    - 600 m walking - 50% of properties
    - 1500 m cycling - 72% of properties
    - 3750 m driving - 86% of properties
- The green spaces standards will be used to address deficiencies, with improvements in provision coming from developers' S106 contributions.

4.7 Quality

In addition to the quantity and accessibility of green spaces, their quality is an important aspect when considering the overall sufficiency of GI provision within the borough. Quality can be assessed by looking at the characteristics of green spaces and how well they fulfil their functions within GI.
In general good quality spaces will possess the following attributes:

- Accessible and connected: A quality space should be easily accessible by walking or cycling, and should be well connected to its surroundings and wider open space network.
- Multi-functional: For spaces to thrive and fulfill their purpose they should provide a variety of functions and activities which should relate well together and provide opportunities for people of all ages, but only where this does not compromise sites with specific sensitivities.
- Attractive and appealing: Quality green spaces will be stimulating and appealing places to visit, welcoming and interesting places to spend time in.
- Bio-diverse: Quality green spaces will provide a variety of habitats for wildlife, and function as areas for nature conservation. In addition these spaces have a key role to play acting as 'green lungs' in more urban locations.
- Provide community benefit: Quality spaces should benefit local communities by being distinctive, memorable and by feeling safe and discouraging anti-social behaviour.
- Promote health and well-being: In order to promote healthy living and the social development of children, there should be opportunities for informal play and recreation.
- Well designed: A quality space will have been well considered in order to provide all of the elements above in a coherent and well planned way, allowing different uses and functions to co-exist in close proximity, linked by well-connected routes and landscape structure, and providing a distinctive space for the surrounding community to enjoy and be proud of.

An understanding of quality is important as in many cases in existing urban areas it will not be possible to make good deficiencies in quantity of provision. In these instances improvements to the quality of provision will be particularly important.

In order to ensure consistency in the assessment of the quality of multi-functional green spaces (MFGS) criteria have been established along with a process of auditing and data recording – the Green Space Audit.

A set of ten audit categories has been developed to undertake the quality assessment of individual sites. This takes into account strategic planning guidance, policies and objectives included within the NPPF, Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan and the supporting Green Infrastructure Strategy. It also draws on nationally recognised quality standards used for the Green Flag Award Scheme and past national good practice guidance prepared by CABE Space. The ten survey categories are:

01 Access and Wayfinding
02 Safety and Security
03 Design, Character and Visual Appeal
04 Content and Condition of Planting
05 Content and Condition of Hard Landscape
06 Content and Condition of Facilities
07 Standards of Maintenance
08 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation
09 Community Health and Wellbeing
10 GI Functionality and Sustainability

Each criteria is given a score as part of the site assessment and this results in a cumulative score for the site which is divided into Poor Quality Site (0-39%), Average Quality Site (40-59%) and Good Quality Site (60-100%).

A written assessment is also prepared which provides further detail on the particular qualities and characteristics of individual green spaces, the strengths and weaknesses of the site and the opportunities for improvement. Opportunities for improvements are costed and included in a separate spreadsheet.

More detail as to the approach and result of the green space audits (undertaken between end of 2015 and summer 2017) is provided in appendix E.

To date 94 of the 200 MFGS SITES (approximate) owned by the Borough Council have been audited.

Of those audited, 25.5% of the sites were considered good, 53.2% average and 21.3% poor.

The next steps for the council will be to identify sources of funding to address the sites assessed as poor. An approach to addressing deficiencies is provided under Access and Recreation in chapter 5.0.

Case study - Rooksdown Masterplan

Rooksdown Park was an existing open space which had been used for cricket in the past. When the surrounding land was developed for housing the open space was redesigned to create a Neighbourhood Park for the new community with a range of facilities which would meet the needs of the new residents. The overall size of the open space has not changed and yet the qualitative improvements have resulted in a park that meets the needs of an increased number of users. The Master Plan (see overleaf) includes a new play area, a skate park, a multi-use games area, new footpaths and seating, wildflowers areas and space for community events.

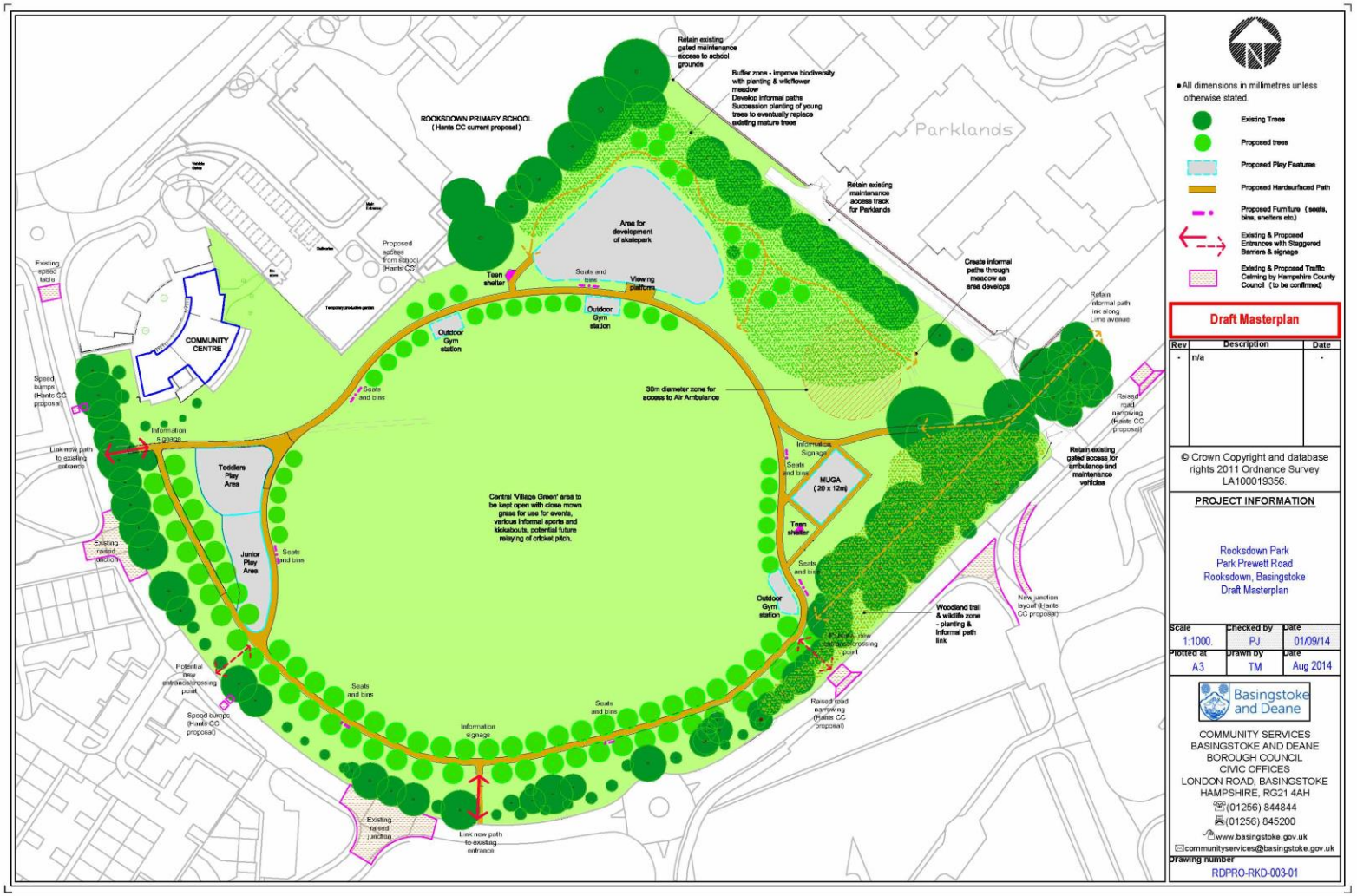


Figure 4.5 – Rooksdown Masterplan

4.8 Valued Parks and Open Spaces

In 2013, a Motion was considered at Full Council, seeking to afford protection for a number of long established parks and open spaces from development.

It was considered that the Motion could be addressed via policies within the Local Plan and in parallel, via a review of the GI Strategy with criteria developed as an evidence base to be assessed against existing Local Plan policy related to parks and open spaces. The parks and open spaces that relate to the Motion are shown at Figure 4.6 (overleaf).

A number of sites were identified as being valued by local communities, and as the cultural importance of spaces is one of the considerations in the assessment of the GI resource, they have been included as part of the review of the strategy.
The sites are offered protection under the following policies of the adopted local plan (2011-2029).

EM1 – Landscape
EM4 – Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Conservation
EM5 – Green Infrastructure

Policies EM1 and EM4 each include elements that would address specific aspects of the valued parks and open spaces. For example, EM1 states that, amongst others, development must respect, enhance and not be detrimental to;-
b) The visual amenity and scenic quality;
g) Historic landscapes, parks and gardens and features.

Policy EM4 seeks protection for a number of important habitats, species and designations which are sometimes found on parks and open spaces.

Policy EM5 states in a), that development proposals will only be permitted where they do not prejudice the delivery of a Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) so including key spaces as part of this review document would provide part of a key evidence base to reference when applying this policy.

4.9 Valued Parks and Open Spaces Protection and the GI Strategy

Of the 51 Sites identified as being of local value and importance. 23 of these are afforded protection from development through existing covenants and easements restricting what the sites can be used for and are included on the list of protected valued parks and open spaces. The remaining 28 sites have been assessed within this strategy.

This strategy includes a set of green space standards and have been used to assess the 28 remaining sites. The standard covers the following:

- amount of open space required in wards (Chapter 4.6 - Quantity);
- minimum distances that residents should travel to an open space (Chapter 4.7 - Accessibility); and
- the quality (Chapter 4.8 – Quality) that open spaces should provide (including facilities that they should provide).

Therefore the four relevant criteria for the protection of sites are as below;-

Criterion 1: Is the site afforded protection in the form of a covenant or easement that restricts such sites being used for development.
If the answer is yes, then site added to list.
If the answer is no, then assess against criterion 2.

Criterion 2: Is the site afforded protection due to being within an area where there is a deficit of open space provision, when measured against the council's adopted green space standards.
If the answer is yes, then site added to list.
If the answer is no, then assess against criterion 3.

Criterion 3: Is the site afforded protection due to being within an area that is outside the distance thresholds for accessibility, when measured against the council's adopted green space standards.
If the answer is yes, then site added to list.
If the answer is no, then assess against criterion 4.

Criterion 4: Is the site afforded protection due to being a site where the quality of facilities within it do not meet the standards required when measured against the council's adopted green space standards.
If the answer is yes, then site added to list.

If the answer is no, then site will not be added to the list of valued parks and open spaces.

Table 4.2 show the results of the assessment. This demonstrates that 25 of the sites referred to in the Motion fall into areas where there is a deficit in green space provision. Four of the remaining five sites need to be retained in order that the accessibility criteria can be met. The remaining site not covered by either of the quantity and accessibility criteria is Basing Lime Pits. The nature conservation interests on this site are protected and enhanced via a green space management plan, which is one of the actions within the GI strategy.

The protected parks demonstrate multifunctionality, a concept described at paragraph 1.8, where the effective design and management of GI can bring many benefits to people and nature, including recreation, health and wellbeing, flood attenuation and natural habitats. Further actions for the protected parks are considered in Chapter 5.6 Access and Recreation.

Furthermore the benefits accruing from the 'natural capital' of GI helps to reveal the full value of network of parks and green spaces. The concept of natural capital is covered in more detail in Chapter 5.0 under Economy as it is increasingly being recognised in the UK.

The council encourages all local communities in the borough to get involved in shaping their local areas. In most cases, residents prize high quality and easily accessible green spaces.

Eastrop Park, Basingstoke

Popley Community Park, Basingstoke

Beggarwood Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Basingstoke

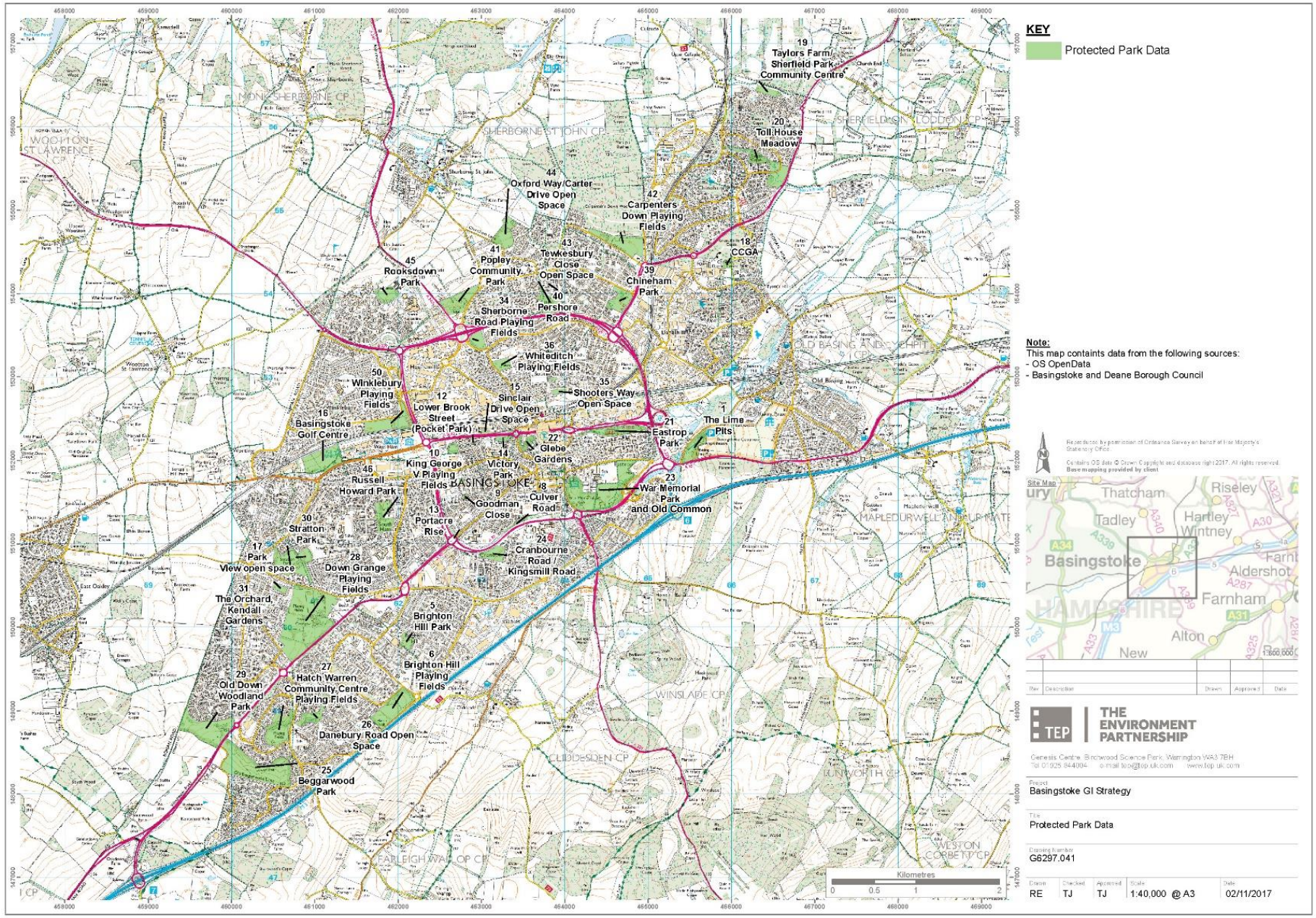
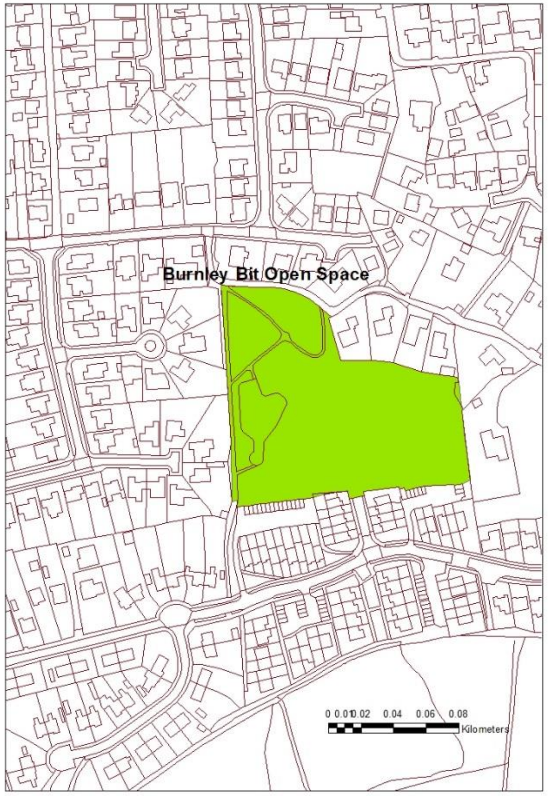
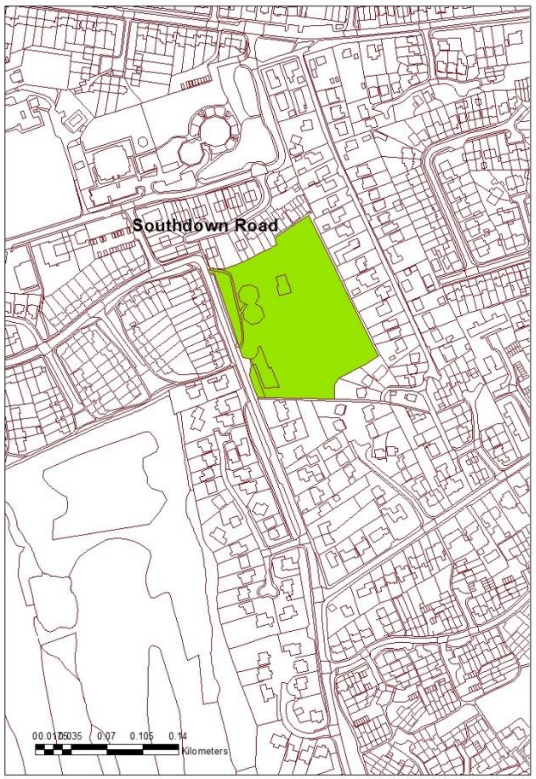


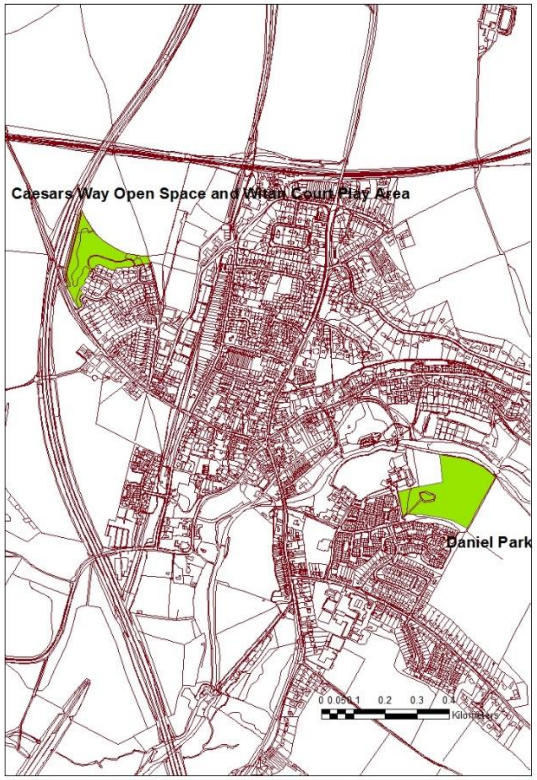
Figure 4.6 – Valued Parks and Open Spaces (Basingstoke and Chineham)

BRAMLEY *KINGSCLERE* *OVERTON*

Figure 4.6a – Valued Parks and Open Spaces (Bramley, Kingsclere and Overton)







PAMBER AND SILCHESTER *TADLEY* *WHITCHURCH*

Figure 4.6b – Valued Parks and Open Spaces (Pamber and Silchester, Tadley and Whitchurch)

Table 4.2: Assessment of Valued Parks and Open Spaces

Site Ref	Ward	Location	Easement or Covenant Protection	Protection afforded as site is within area of quantity deficiency or its loss would result in quantity deficiency	Protection afforded as site is outside accessibility threshold	Protection afforded as site does not meet quality criteria
1	Basing	The Lime Pits				Yes
2	Bramley & Sherfield	Forge Field open space, Bramley			Yes	
3	Bramley & Sherfield	St Mary's Avenue open space, Bramley	Yes			
4	Bramley & Sherfield	Yew tree Close open space, Bramley	Yes			
5	Brighton Hill North/South	Brighton Hill Park (adjacent to Asda)		Yes		
6	Brighton Hill North/South	Brighton Hill Playing Fields		Yes		
7	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Alencon Link (Pocket Park)	Yes			
8	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Culver Road, Play Area at the side of 36 Culver Road		Yes		
9	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Goodman Close, Play Area to rear of 22 Goodman Close		Yes		
10	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	King George V playing Fields		Yes		
11	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Knight Street Play Area		Yes		
12	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Lower Brook Street open space (pocket park)		Yes		
13	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Portacre Rise open space		Yes		
14	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Victory Park		Yes		
15	Brookvale & Kings Furlong	Sinclair Drive Open Space		Yes		

Site Ref	Ward	Location	Easement or Covenant Protection	Protection afforded as site is within area of quantity deficiency or its loss would result in quantity deficiency	Protection afforded as site is outside accessibility threshold	Protection afforded as site doesn't meet quality criteria
16	Buckskin	Basingstoke Golf Centre		Yes		
17	Buckskin	Park View open space (extension to Stratton Park)		Yes		
18	Chineham	CCGA	Yes			
19	Chineham	Taylors Farm Community Centre Playing Fields	Yes			
20	Chineham	Toll House Meadow	Yes			
21	Eastrop	Eastrop Park		Yes		
22	Eastrop	Glebe Gardens		Yes		
23	Eastrop	War Memorial Park and Old Common		Yes		
24	Grove	Cranbourne Road/Kingsmill Road open space		Yes		
25	Hatch Warren & Beggarwood	Beggarwood Park		Yes		
26	Hatch Warren & Beggarwood	Danebury Road open space		Yes		
27	Hatch Warren & Beggarwood	Hatch Warren Community Centre Playing Fields		Yes		
28	Kempshott	Down Grange Playing Fields		Yes		
29	Kempshott	Old Down Park		Yes		
30	Kempshott	Stratton Park		Yes		
31	Kempshott	The Orchard, Kendall Gardens		Yes		
32	Kingsclere	Fieldgate Centre Playing Fields	Yes			
33	Norden	Queen Mary Avenue open space (adjacent to The Vyne School)		Yes		
34	Norden	Sherborne Road Playing Fields		Yes		

Site Ref	Ward	Location	Easement or Covenant Protection	Protection afforded as site is within area of quantity deficiency or its loss would result in quantity deficiency	Protection afforded as site is outside accessibility threshold	Protection afforded as site doesn't meet quality criteria
35	Norden	Shooters Road open space (adjacent to The Vyne School)		Yes		
36	Norden	Whiteditch Playing Fields		Yes		
37	Overton	London Road, Overton		Yes		
38	Pamber & Silchester	Burney Bit Open Space, Pamber			Yes	
39	Popley	Chineham Park		Yes		
40	Popley	Pershore Road – play are in front of 46 Pershore Road		Yes		
41	Popley	Popley Community Park		Yes		
42	Popley	Carpenters Down Playing Fields		Yes		
43	Popley	Tewkesbury Close open space		Yes		
44	Popley	Oxford Way/Carter Drive Open Space		Yes		
45	Rooksdown	Rooksdown Park		Yes		
46	South Ham	Russell Howard Park		Yes		
47	Tadley Central	Southdown Road, Tadley		Yes		
48	Whitchurch	Caesars Way open space and Witan Court Play Area	Yes			
49	Whitchurch	Daniel Park, Whitchurch	Yes			
50	Winklebury	Winklebury Playing Fields		Yes		
51	Chineham	Sherfield Park Open Space	Yes			

5.0 Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Local Plan's vision for Basingstoke and Deane identifies a significant opportunity for a more comprehensive and connected network that can deliver many social, economic and environmental benefits. The green infrastructure (GI) strategy aims to maintain and create a greener setting for the future growth of the borough and address some of the GI deficiencies which currently impact on economy, environment, health and biodiversity. This is conveyed through a number of themes that stakeholders have confirmed as meeting the priorities of the Borough. The themes are:

1. Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place;
2. Biodiversity;
3. Water Resources;
4. Tree and woodland resource;
5. Economy;
6. Access and Recreation;
7. Health and Well-being; and
8. Local Awareness and Involvement.

The recommendations in this chapter are informed by the policy context (chapter 2.0), the existing GI resource (chapter 3.0), the provision of strategic GI (chapter 4.0) and stakeholder consultation. Reference is also made to the National Character Areas published by Natural England (NCAs) which provide a strategic overview and aid local decision making. NCAs arrange England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow logical lines in the landscape, often natural features, rather than administrative boundaries. As well as summarising the key environmental characteristics, each NCA provides a statement of environmental opportunity and details the range of 'ecosystem services' benefits that flow from each NCA to society and nature.

NCA 129 (Thames Basin Heaths) covers the northern part of the borough and NCA 130 (Hampshire Downs) covers the south.

https://www.gov.uk/topic/planning-development/landscape

The North Wessex AONB Management Plan 2014-19 lists objectives and policies that partners can apply to help conserve and enhance this nationally important landscape.

Stakeholder views regarding each theme were sought in 2017. Comments are summarised for each theme and used to inform priorities and actions.

For each theme the needs, opportunities, targets and potential actions are detailed, along with delivery mechanisms, parties involved and timescale. These are set out as follows (making reference to the recommendations from NCA descriptions):

- Strategic Aim – the overarching aim for each theme;
- Strategic Priorities – the high level priorities for that theme;
- Potential Actions – a list of potential key projects or plans, both new and existing, which will help make a tangible improvement to the quality and functionality of the Borough's GI;
- Delivery mechanism;
- Parties involved; and
- Timescales (period in which the action should commence)

This process then leads into the production of a consolidated action plan that will guide activities in the delivery of GI (See chapter 7.0)

Timescales have been arranged into four categories:

- Ongoing (currently active)
- Short term (1-2 years)
- Medium term (2-5 years)
- Long term (5+ years)

Many of the potential actions are cross-cutting and maximise the benefits gained from investment. An assessment of the provision and distribution of GI in Basingstoke and Deane has revealed some areas where improvements are needed. In taking a strategic approach to developing a functioning GI network, opportunities for improvements are considered under the themes, whilst targeting areas of need or GI deficiency

Appendix G provides a series of maps which provide detailed evidence in relation to each theme (where relevant).

5.1 Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place

Basingstoke and Deane is a predominantly rural borough, known for its distinctive landscapes. Approximately 32% of the borough is in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) reflecting the exceptional national quality of the natural and cultural landscape.

The borough has a wide range of landscapes, including rolling chalk downland in the AONB, heathland Tadley and Silchester, pastoral river valleys Test and Loddon, historic parkland The Vine, remnants of ancient forests Pamber Forest and intimate mosaics of lowland farmland and woodland south of Basingstoke. Across these landscapes are a scattering of farms, villages and hamlets, and a few larger settlements, including Basingstoke.

Landscape character is the complex interplay of physical and human influences which have shaped the landscape. Physical aspects are geology and soils, landform, hydrology, land use and land cover, and woodland and trees; human aspects are buildings and settlement, heritage features, boundaries, communications, and infrastructure and recreation. The borough's landscape character assessment (2001) defined 20 landscape character areas, each with their own distinctiveness and sense of place.

The AONB has an integrated landscape character assessment that establishes the identity of the AONB as a whole and provides a summary of the main influences on contemporary landscape character.

One of the statutory duties of the AONB Board is to prepare a Management Plan with a review every five years. One of the key aims of the plan is to conserve and enhance the AONB's special qualities which includes enhancing the setting of heritage assets and interpreting the historic landscape.

Issues and Opportunities
The landscape is changing partly as a result of agricultural intensification with field enlargement and the removal of hedgerows, meadows, riparian trees and wooded areas. Existing areas of woodland suffer from lack of management, increased traffic on local roads and recreational pressures on key visitor sites. There is also the urbanising effect on the landscape from the expansion of Basingstoke and extension of road and power infrastructure.

The borough and AONB landscape character assessments recommend the following measures to support landscape, heritage and sense of place:

- Strengthen landscape condition and landscape quality
- Reverse the loss of habitats such as broadleaved woodland, heathland, herb rich and rough grasslands
- Retain the mosaic of land uses
- Conserve water meadows
- Conserve and enhance floodplain habitats
- Maintain important views across the landscape
- Conserve and enhance road verges and hedge-banks
- Landscape investment to enhance the setting of heritage assets

Chapter 4.0 'Providing Strategic GI' highlights a number of habitat-based interventions including the Hampshire Ecological Network and the biodiversity priority areas for the River Test and River Loddon which will enhance and restore the distinctiveness of the borough's landscape character.

Stakeholder Comments
Officers from the North Wessex Downs AONB unit are keen to protect the setting of the AONB. The "setting" is land outside the physical boundary of the designation but present in views. The AONB unit requested that any strategic development, should be mapped and consideration given to conserving the setting and special qualities of the AONB.

Another priority for the AONB unit is tranquillity, in respect of the adverse effects of noise and light pollution. The AONB promotes 'dark skies' both for people and for biodiversity. The unit advises that effects of light pollution be considered for any new development in the AONB or in its setting.

Plan
The plan shows the landscape character areas in the borough, the extent of the AONB designation, location of scheduled monuments and watercourse network. It also shows the proximity of the South Downs National Park within 10km of the south eastern borough boundary. Refer also to Figure 5.7 Heritage designations in Appendix G.

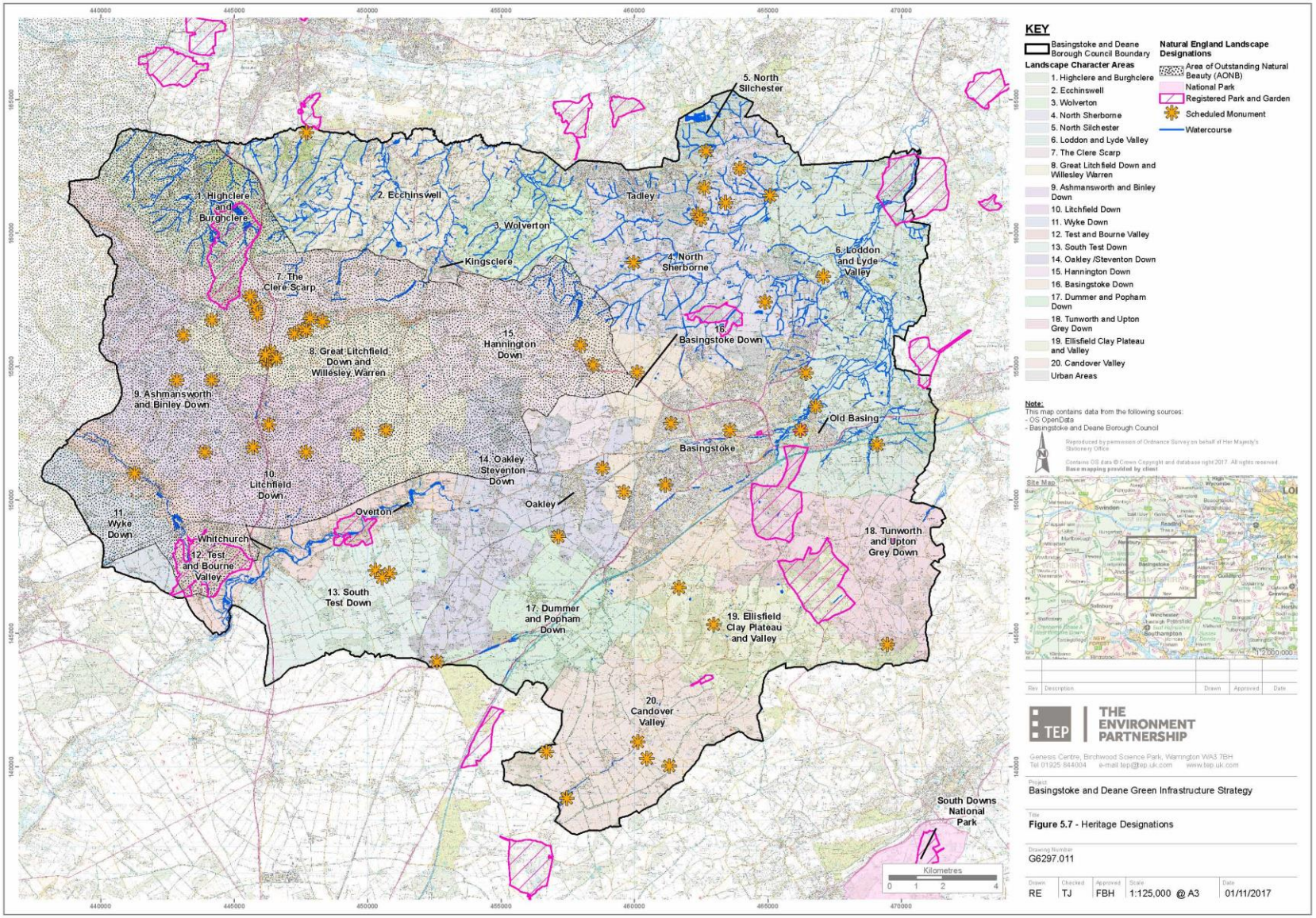


Figure 5.1 - Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place (Indicating the landscape character of the borough and other landscape and heritage designations)

Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place - Strategic Aim: **Deliver a GI Network that will conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the Basingstoke and Deane landscape and heritage**					
Strategic Priorities		**Potential Actions**	**Delivery Mechanism**	**Parties involved**	**Timescale**
1a.	Delivery of Borough wide GI network	Ensure delivery of Borough wide GI network is in keeping with guidelines of the BDBC's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and AONB LCA (strategic issues) and AONB. Involve the AONB unit to ensure any strategic GI proposals help conserve the setting to the AONB and the special qualities of the designation.	Planning policy; AONB Management Plan	Natural England, BDBC & AONB unit	Ongoing
1b.	Delivery of Borough wide GI network	Ensure delivery of the GI network helps is consistent with guidelines in the Landscape Character Assessments for Basingstoke and Deane, and for the AONB; specifically site-based interventions such as roadside verges, field boundaries, woodland edges.	Management Plans for council-owned assets; Management Plans for sites under private ownership; AONB Management plan	BDBC, AONB unit, Land owners, land managers, Hampshire County Council (Highways), parish councils	Ongoing
2.	Enhancing the setting of scheduled monuments	Working with landowners and land managers responsible for scheduled monuments on the heritage at risk register. Secure the positive management of the setting to the scheduled monument, consistent with Historic England guidance – for example, appropriate grazing, managed recreational access and control of burrowing animals.	Planning application process	Landowner, Hampshire County Council Archaeologist, Historic England	Medium term

5.2 Biodiversity

A coherent and resilient ecological network is essential for the future of our wildlife and our enjoyment of it. A network that is indistinguishable from the green and open spaces within and around our settlements brings with it the opportunity for human contact with a wide variety of wildlife and habitats, provides an educational resource and ensures that species can move between and through our settlements. A schedule of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the borough's settlements is provided in Appendix E.

Issues and Opportunities

Beyond our urban area there is a pressing need to consider a landscape-scale approach to increasing the size and scope of the ecological network that connects our natural habitat resources with urban habitat networks. It is essential that we make a step change in protecting and improving the ecological fabric of our landscapes and adopt practices that underpin the delivery of a richer, healthier and biodiverse landscape contributing to our sustainable development and protecting our natural heritage.

Biodiversity is essential for prosperity, because of the numerous ecosystem services it supplies (e.g. pollination, soil fertility, and waste recycling). A bio-diverse environment also provides communities with access to natural greenspace, a component of mental health and well-being. Areas of high biodiversity can become destinations popular with visitors.

Despite some positive trends, the overall prospect for biodiversity nationally is poor. Defra's research concludes[3] that England's collection of wildlife areas is not coherent and lacks a robust and resilient ecological network. This is acknowledged by HM Government's 25 Year Environment Plan[4] in which Government has committed to making sure the existing requirements for net gain for biodiversity in national planning policy are strengthened and the current trend of biodiversity loss is halted.

Chapter 4.0 highlights current biodiversity provision in the Borough in the context of the wider Hampshire Ecological Network. It also describes the biodiversity priority areas (BPA's) of the borough's two main river corridors (the Test and Loddon). The rivers are landscape-scale connecting features, providing corridors through the rural countryside into the rest of Hampshire and the Thames Valley.

A large proportion of the borough is under agricultural use and this type of land management can conflict with promoting connected ecological networks. A modest proportion of landowners are engaged in countryside stewardship schemes, with a greater concentration in the west of the borough. Schemes as of 2016 covered some 18,400 hectares. An aim within this strategy should be to extend those schemes across the borough so they are more connected, particularly to the east and within the river corridors.

An opportunity exists to improve the understanding and knowledge of the coverage of flora and fauna throughout the borough.

Various avenues exist to seek further funding opportunities through partnerships and council initiatives to fund habitat improvements throughout the borough. S106 and CIL funding linked to development can be utilised for projects. Grant funding such as the Test Partnerships Heritage Lottery Funded Watercress and Winterbournes Project can be utilised to target linked habitats to effect change throughout the countryside. Strategic Aims within the strategy will seek to further encourage partnership led funding bids and development funding delivery

Stakeholder Comments

<u>Bias towards certain species</u>
Stakeholders commented that the focus of the planning system and the type of data collected was too focused on those species that receive

[3] Making Space for Nature: A review of England's wildlife sites and ecological networks (2010): Research report by Lawton J.et. al for Defra

[4] A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018): HM Government

legislative protection and planning decisions should focus on (re)building ecological networks and maximising ecosystem services flowing from the natural environment, in line with NPPF.

Landscape scale mitigation

Natural England is moving away from requiring developers to provide all mitigation within their site and diverting funding into mitigation at a wider scale to ensure that favourable conservation status is maintained. This approach could be used to support the expansion of GI networks. This would require a land-owning body with enduring powers and an environmental objective to purchase and/or dedicate land for GI management and thereby receive funding from development and infrastructure towards GI.

Hedgerow networks

Stakeholders noted that in farmland, much of the remaining GI and habitat linkages are characterised by the hedgerow network. The network should be prioritised for enhancement with new planting of hedgerow trees.

Engagement with land owners

Much of the land within which GI networks could be established is in private ownership. Engagement with farmers and landowners is needed to facilitate opportunities for GI in the rural areas. This would be a role for a GI champion, typically a body operating at arms-length from the Council.

Volunteering

Stakeholders noted that private landowners were more likely to engage if projects did not come with significant financial implications. There may be scope for GI projects on private land to use a voluntary workforce, and that Basingstoke has a strong culture of volunteering and local engagement.

Plan

The plan below shows core biodiversity areas and the strategic networks connecting those core areas following Lawton's 'Making Space for Nature'. It includes the networks for four broad habitat groups: ancient woodland, heathland, grassland and river corridors. The strategic networks have been devised by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre and the council.

Refer also to Appendix G for evidence base mapping:

- Figure 5.8 - Sites of importance for nature conservation (SINCS)
- Figure 5.9 - Priority habitats (HBIC))
- Figure 5.10 - Broad Habitats (HBIC)
- Figure 5.11 - Agri-environment schemes

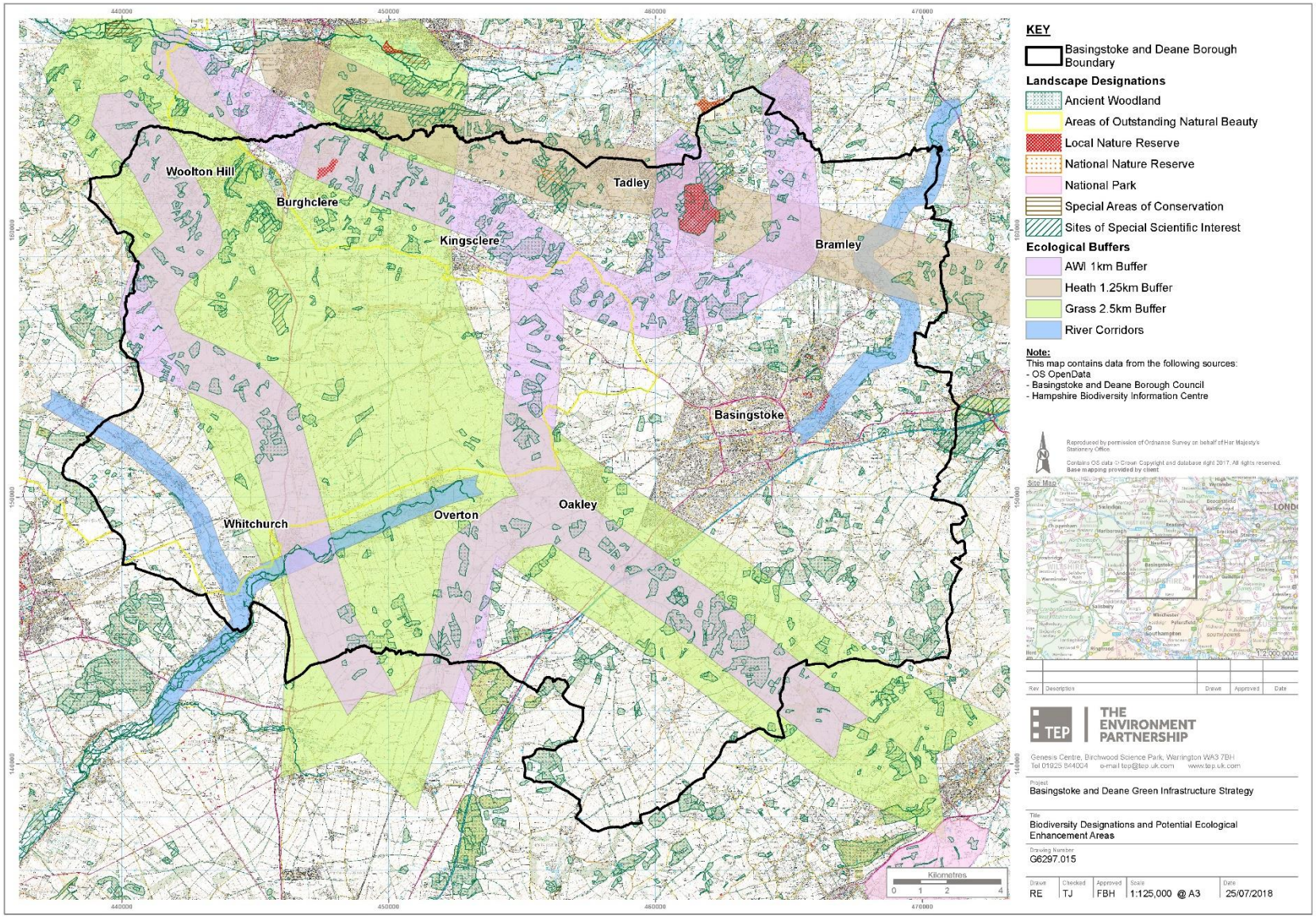


Figure 5.2 – Biodiversity (Indicating the principle areas designated for biodiversity and prospective connective areas for the ecological enhancement of woodlands, heathland, grassland and rivers)

Biodiversity - Strategic Aim

At a landscape scale, strengthen the network of biodiverse habitats across Basingstoke and Deane, improving ecological connectivity, facilitating recolonisation and restoration of viable and sustainable populations, reducing habitat fragmentation and managing threats to habitats.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
3.	Support HIWWT and the AONB through funding and the management of specific habitat enhancement schemes in encouraging environment friendly farming throughout the borough	• Supporting engagement with farmers and landowners, where possible, on a landscape-scale basis with the aim of creating linked, or clustered, areas of farmland to be targeted for biodiversity improvement and other ecosystem benefits. Through initiatives with the AONB, and HIWWT. • Supporting the River Test and Loddon catchment partnerships in encouraging catchment sensitive farming	Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) Countryside Stewardship Grants BDB Service Level Agreements with HIWWT and North Wessex Downs AONB	BDBC, HIWWT, Natural England, AONB, Landowners, land managers	Ongoing
4	Embed Ecological Networks and Strategic Biodiversity Enhancements into planning decisions	• Ensure emerging planning policy places greater emphasis on delivering measurable net gain for biodiversity by investigating the use of DEFRA measurement metrics when looking at biodiversity enhancement schemes within developments. Work with the Local Nature Partnership to utilise the new Ecological Network Map when addressing how proposed future development may effect ecological networks and where enhancements can be made to strengthen this network. • Integrate corridor aspects of B-line approach into working with ecological networks where this is feasible within the borough	Planning Policy and Development Management	BDBC, Natural England, HCC Ecology team, HIWWT	Ongoing
4a	Net Biodiversity Gain	• Ensure all development in BDBC over 0.1ha delivers a net measurable gain for biodiversity (in line with NPPF and HM Government 25 year Environment Plan) • Promote urban and peri-urban green networks	Planning Policy and Development Management	BDBC, HCC Ecology team, HIWWT	Ongoing

Biodiversity - Strategic Aim

At a landscape scale, strengthen the network of biodiverse habitats across Basingstoke and Deane, improving ecological connectivity, facilitating recolonisation and restoration of viable and sustainable populations, reducing habitat fragmentation and managing threats to habitats.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
5	Biodiversity orientated management of council owned SINC's, corridors and key parks	• Update management of council owned sites onto CMSI software system. Use software to develop survey, monitoring and reporting systems • Explore opportunities to improve green corridors on council owned land	CMSI system	BDBC, Natural Basingstoke	Medium term
5a	Biodiversity orientated management of all SINC's.	• Investigate possibilities for creating interactive map depicting SINCs on the council website to enable stakeholders and partners to propose new opportunities,	Council website	BDBC	Ongoing
5b	Biodiversity Priority Areas (BPA)	• Protect and manage existing key habitats within each BPA; • When opportunities arise, create new habitat to expand and link isolated areas of key habitats; • Support sustainable land management; and • Improve public access to the countryside/natural green space within each of the BPA's where this can be achieved without adversely affecting the natural environment.	Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) Countryside Stewardship Grants Planning policy	BDBC, Landowners, land managers, Natural England, Environment Agency.	Ongoing
6	Support cross boundary biodiversity initiatives through the Local Nature Partnership	• Attend and support the Hampshire Local Nature Partnership in delivering any cross boundary biodiversity initiatives as and when they come into being in partnership with adjacent boroughs	Local Nature Partnership	Local Nature Partnership, adjacent Councils – Test Valley , Hart , East Hampshire and Winchester City,	Ongoing
7	Support the maintenance of access restricted	• Undertake a review of access and other impacting factors on biodiversity within council owned natural	Management Planning	BDBC	Medium Term

Biodiversity - Strategic Aim

At a landscape scale, strengthen the network of biodiverse habitats across Basingstoke and Deane, improving ecological connectivity, facilitating recolonisation and restoration of viable and sustainable populations, reducing habitat fragmentation and managing threats to habitats.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
	wildlife areas and corridors for sensitive species and habitats within natural green space	green space areas and identify management actions to alleviate them			

8	Create a baseline picture of the state of natural resources within the borough	• Undertake an audit of baseline data contained within HBIC and other sources to give an indication of the present state of natural resources within the borough and any trends that are evident through analysis of the information.	HBIC SLA	HBIC Other recording bodies BDBC	Short term
9	Seek to introduce traditional habitat management techniques where these are feasible	• Investigate with HIWWT the possibilities of introducing small grazing herd on to BDBC sites in order to better manage grassland and scrub communities	BDB partnership with HIWWT	BDBC HIWWT	Medium Term

5.3 Water resources

Strategic blue corridors consist of rivers, streams and static water bodies, including lakes, ponds and springs. They may link with networks of green infrastructure, including sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS) to provide a dynamic water environment with a wealth of multifunctional benefits, including water supply, landscape, ecosystem enhancement, flood control and recreation. Blue corridors are critical for maintaining the diversity and abundance of wildlife populations, and also provide a place for people to connect with nature and enjoy recreational and water based activities. Basingstoke and Deane has two notable rivers that have extensive upper catchments in the borough. The River Test has its source west of Oakley and flows south west towards Southampton. The River Loddon has its source at the western edge of Basingstoke and flows through the town and then north east towards the Thames valley. The tributaries to The River Enborne also flows towards the Thames Valley and its catchment extends along the north western edges of the borough.

The 'Catchment Based Approach' is part of the UK's solution to improving the chemical and ecological status of our waters under the European Union's Water Framework Directive (WFD). The WFD is designed to drive improvements to the status of rivers, lakes and groundwater, providing an opportunity to enhance the ecological and chemical quality. We assume the WFD will form part of the proposed Repeal Bill referred to at paragraph 2.2.

The Test and Itchen are exemplary chalk streams supporting a diverse flora and fauna. The Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership was set up in 2012 bringing together a range of stakeholders, including Hampshire County Council, Environment Agency, waterbody managers and local groups to collectively plan and deliver actions at a catchment scale. The Action Plan was produced in 2014.

The River Loddon Catchment Partnership covers parts of the counties of Hampshire, Berkshire and Surrey. It was set up in 2015 and its Action Plan is still under production. To date most activity has been focussed in the lower catchment, outside the borough.

The Kennet Catchment Partnership stretches from the upper reaches of the Winterbournes above Avebury west of Marlborough in Wiltshire, to Reading in Berkshire where the Kennet flows into the Thames. The catchment includes the River Enborne. The Partnership was formed in 2011 and the Kennet Catchment Management Plan was set up in 2012.

Issues and Opportunities

The Environment Agency's (EA) catchment data explorer for the upper and middle Test catchment has a 2016 summary of water quality measurements. Of the 12 water bodies assessed, 8 are classified as good, with the remainder achieving moderate status. Better management of farming practices and urban discharges, using GI where appropriate, can help overcome the cumulative negative effects of diffuse source pollution and assist the UK towards its obligations under the WFD.

The Action Plan for the Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership addresses some of the EA's findings with proposals under four themes. Those with relevance to the GI Strategy are listed below:

- Water quality;
- Water quantity;
- Channel habitat and biodiversity; and
- Recreation and community engagement.

These actions are included on the table below with more consideration of specific locations, delivery mechanisms, parties involved and timescales.

Stakeholder comments

The water policy and catchment specialist from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) noted that the Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership (TICP) has recently submitted a Landscape Scale bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for Watercress and Winterbournes, with a decision due in autumn 2017. The main focus of the bid is to develop management plans for the upper catchment for both rivers to address flooding, invasive species and engage and involve local communities. Much of the upper catchment of the River Test is in the borough and TICP intends to improve management of the headwater channels as this has been previously neglected.

The priority for the upper Loddon catchment is to address stream habitats in the Basingstoke's urban parks. Many of these watercourses are culverted or canalised and there would be opportunity to 'open up' these culverts and/or

re-profile them to aid flood management and encourage biodiversity.

The work of TICP would greatly benefit from more ongoing liaison with businesses, communities and local authority officers to make those parties more aware of the myriad of opportunities to enhance the ecological and chemical quality of watercourses.

Thames Water recognises the environmental and economic benefits of surface water source control, and encourages its appropriate application, where it is to the overall benefit of their customers. However, it should also be recognised that SuDS is not appropriate for use in all areas, for example areas with high ground water levels or clay soils which do not allow free drainage. SuDS also require regular maintenance to ensure its effectiveness. Limiting the opportunity for surface water entering the foul and combined sewer networks is of critical importance to Thames Water. Thames Water has advocated an approach to SuDS that limits as far as possible the volume of and rate at which surface water enters the public sewer system. By doing this, SuDS has the potential to play an important role in helping to ensure the sewerage network has the capacity to cater for population growth and the effects of climate change.
SUDS not only helps to mitigate flooding, it can also help to:

- improve water quality
- provide opportunities for water efficiency
- provide enhanced landscape and visual features
- support biodiversity
- and provide amenity and recreational benefits.

Plan
The plan shows the extent of the Loddon and the Test and Itchen Catchment areas. It also shows the flood zones (2 and 3) associated with those rivers. Flood zone 2 has a 0.1-1% annual probability of flooding. Flood zone 3 has a 1% or greater probability of flooding.


River Loddon, near Stratfield Saye Park

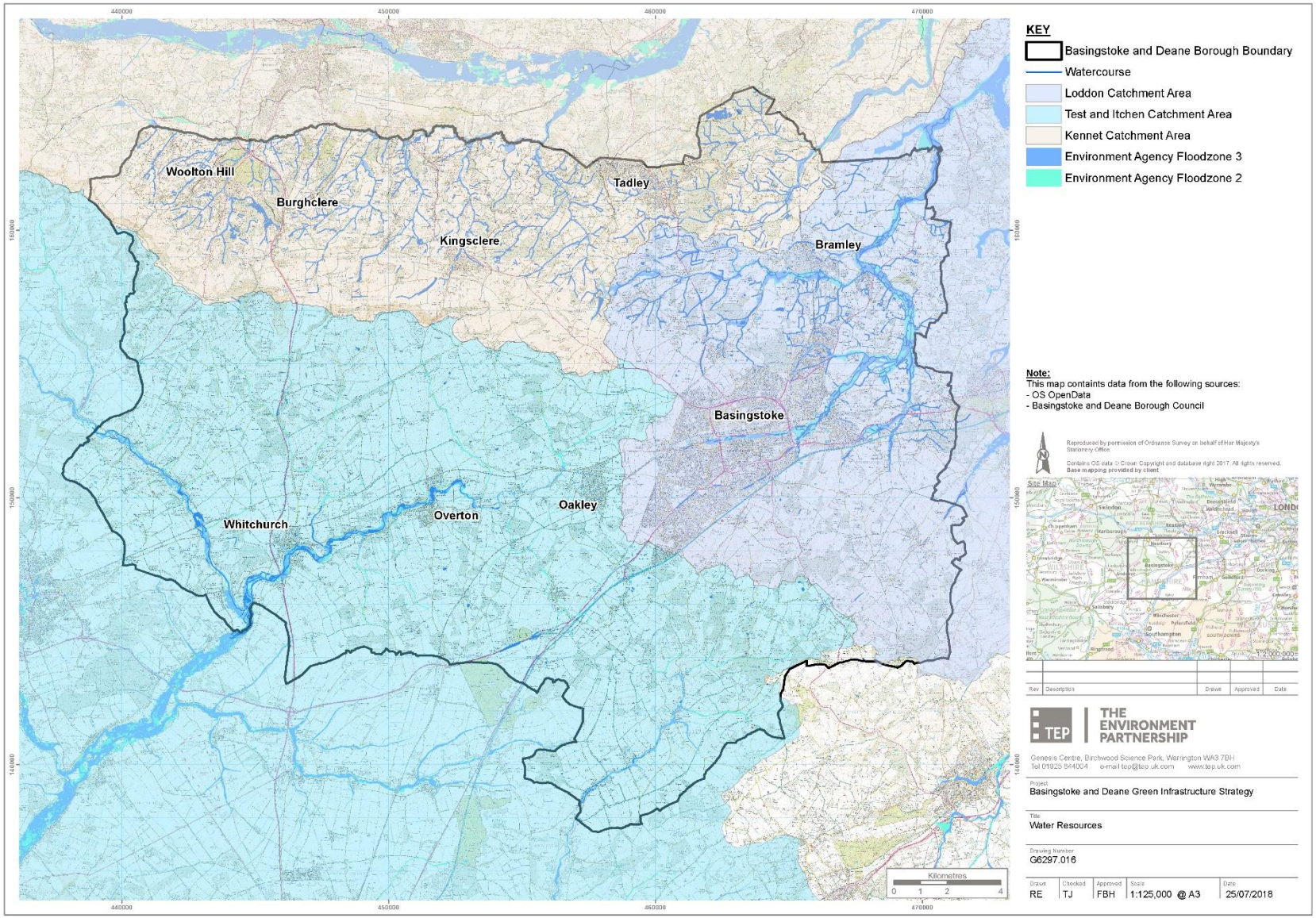


Figure 5.3 – Water Resources (indicating the catchment areas for the Rivers Loddon, Test and Kennet and flood zones of these various rivers)

Water Resources - Strategic Aim **Deliver a GI Network in Basingstoke and Deane that will help to provide high quality resources, increase water retention and manage flood risk.**					
Strategic Priorities		**Potential Actions**	**Delivery Mechanism**	**Parties involved**	**Timescale**
10	To participate in the Test and Itchen, Loddon and Kennet catchment partnerships in delivering priority habitat and species enhancements throughout the river catchments	Conserving, and expanding where appropriate, the areas of semi-natural habitat in the watercourses and flood plains of the catchments. Supporting management intervention and practices aimed at restoring favourable habitat conditions and meeting Water Framework Directive objectives for good surface water and groundwater status. <u>Specific to Loddon</u> Address stream habitats in the Basingstoke's urban parks. 'open up' these culverts and/or re-profile them to aid flood management and encourage biodiversity.	Test and Itchen and Loddon Catchment Partnership Action Plan Heritage Lottery Fund for Watercress and Winterbournes (if successful) Management Plans of Council owned sites	BDBC; Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT); Canal and River Trust; Environment Agency; Kennet Valley Fishery Association; Reading and District Anglers; Southern Water; Thames Water; Natural England; Hampshire County Council; and local communities.	Ongoing
		Water quantity • Natural flood management: increase water attenuation with strategic woodland and wetland creation.	Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership Action Plan	As above	Medium term
		Channel habitat and biodiversity • River restoration: explore collaborative opportunities to deliver river restoration works	Test and Itchen Catchment Partnership Action Plan	As above	Medium term
		Recreation and community engagement • Community engagement and education to promote opportunities for local communities to learn about and enjoy the water environment.	Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for Watercress and Winterbournes (if successful)	As above	Short term

5.4 Tree and Woodland Resource

Woodland is an essential component of Basingstoke and Deane's landscape character and covers over 10,000 hectares (16.4%) of the borough. Most woodlands are in private ownership and although some are neglected all are a valuable resource for wildlife, timber, wood fuel and access.

Woodlands deliver many green infrastructure benefits, including recreation opportunities, supporting healthy living, climate change adaptation and mitigation, providing and restoring biodiversity, providing local timber products and wood fuel and reducing flows of diffuse source pollution into watercourses. There are three large publically accessible woodland in the borough; Great Pen Wood, Pamber Forest and Basing Wood (described in more detail below).

Issues and Opportunities
Many woodland sites are small and fragmented and undermanaged, leaving wildlife habitats vulnerable to degradation and loss, affecting their resilience to climate change and pests and diseases. Fragmentation is particularly prevalent to the west and north west of Basingstoke

Ancient woodland accounts for 7.5% of woodland cover in the borough and is important for nature conservation and rare species. The future management of this irreplaceable resource is critical.

Improvements to the management of woodlands would help restore degraded ancient woodland, maximise the use of private woodlands for access, timber and wood fuel production and enhance biodiversity. The woodland economy in Basingstoke and Deane, including timber on council land, could be developed on a co-operative basis to provide the economies of scale to encourage investment in equipment and machinery and provide long term sustainable markets for woodland products.

With future planned housing growth and a recognition of the physical and mental health benefits of contact with nature, there is a need for increasing public access to the natural environment. Most accessible woodlands have potential for carefully managed informal recreational activity with relatively limited investment in signage and paths.

Management of woodland across borough boundaries could enhance access and recreation, landscape character, wildlife linkages and provide a valuable access and recreation resource.

Urban Tree Cover
Tree canopies can bring many benefits including shade, locking carbon, filtering pollutants and reducing surface water flooding.

'Forest Research and Treeconomics' data on tree canopy in British towns[5] indicates Basingstoke has 15.8% cover, less than Reading (18.6%) and Newbury (22%). This information is valuable for communicating the current state of urban canopy cover and is useful for triggering conversations about why canopy cover is at a certain level and what needs to be done to conserve and expand it.

Forest Research suggests that if local authorities or town councils, are considering setting an urban tree canopy cover target, they should aim for a minimum level of 20%. This suggests that urban tree cover in Basingstoke should be increased.

There would be opportunities for new planting on the existing "public estate" within the town, and within new developments.

Management of the publicly accessible woodland estate
The Council manages 100 hectares of its own woodland and 85,000 individual trees, often supporting parish and town councils with management, for example at Little Penwood, which is managed with Highclere Parish Council. The Council's strategy for its own

[5] http://www.urbantreecover.org/comparison-table/

trees was articulated in 2014 and includes commitments to manage trees to improve their biodiversity and amenity values and their resilience to climate change, whilst dealing promptly with "neighbour" issues caused by urban trees (https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/1325.pdf).

The Council leases Pamber Forest from the Englefield Estate. Pamber Forest is a 190ha ancient woodland and designated SSSI, leased by BDBC and managed on the council's behalf by HIWWT. The Woodland Trust manages two woodlands at Ramsdell and Glebe Wood near Mattingley.

Forestry Commission (FC) owns and manages the 100ha Basing Wood, north of Basingstoke and the 86ha Great Pen Wood, near Kingsclere. These woods have trails and recreational areas. FC also own and manage smaller ancient woodlands and plantations.

There are opportunities to increase accessibility and usage of woodlands by organised groups, schools, health-walkers.

North Wessex AONB Management Plan

A survey[6] of local woodland professionals indicated that below 50% of the woodland area was being managed in the AONB (of which Basingstoke and Deane forms a proportion).

The long-term decline in the market for UK timber has had a pronounced effect on the area's woodlands, with many suffering from a lack of management.

Timber quality in most AONB woodlands is not high, many of the woodlands are extremely small and a number of the woodlands comprise crops for which there is no longer a viable market. Consequently, the economics of forestry operations are problematic.

The promotion of wood as a renewable fuel may stimulate improved management of small woodlands. Partners have made progress in supporting the forestry sector through initiatives such as the North Wessex Leader programme which is experiencing a rise in demand for wood fuel and woodland products.

The AONB Partnership encourages woodland owners to undertake Management Plans and will promote the accreditation of woodlands under the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Scheme.

New woodland planting is welcomed in the North Wessex Downs AONB especially where it meets the objectives of the AONB Woodland Strategy. This values woodland designated for nature conservation interest, and all ancient and semi-natural woodland. New woodlands can act as a buffer to protect these woodlands and enhance wildlife connectivity.

Stakeholder Comments

BDBC manage trees on highway and green space land and stakeholders recommended that products from these operations are used for wood fuel and woodland products. Tree management skills could be extended to woodlands in the rural areas.

Plan

The plan highlights the ancient woodland corridor, river catchments and wards (excluding Basingstoke town) that are deficient in the quantity standard for multifunctional green space. These are the priority areas for woodland management and new planting (see also Actions under Water Resources for strategic woodland and wetland creation).

Refer also to Appendix G for evidence base mapping:

- Figure 5.12 – Undermanaged woodland
- Figure 5.13 – Woodland for access and recreation

[6] North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan (2014-19)

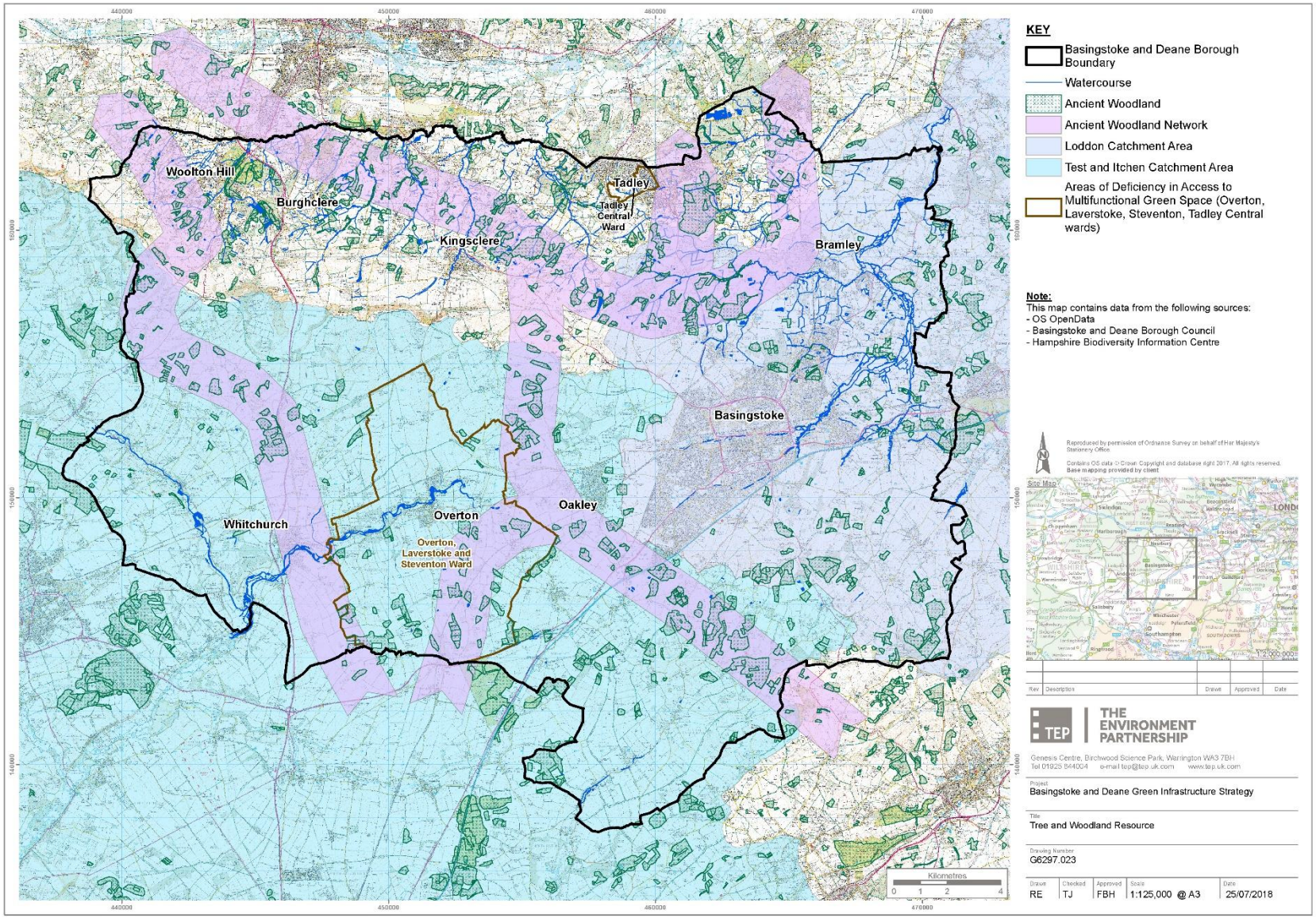


Figure 5.4 – Tree and Woodland Resource (indicating the main connective corridors for ancient woodland and highlighting river catchments and council wards that are priority areas for woodland management and new planting)

Tree and Woodland Resource - Strategic Aim **To improve the extent and management of the tree and woodland resource to increase the Borough's natural capital, biodiversity and people's use of woodlands**					
Strategic Priorities		**Potential Actions**	**Delivery Mechanism**	**Parties involved**	**Timescale**
11.	Bring more of the Borough's woodlands into management, especially undermanaged: • Ancient Woodlands and woodland SINC's • Woodlands in and around towns and rural settlements • Floodplain woodlands • Woodlands in the North Downs AONB	Engage the full range of stakeholders – including woodland owners, managers, contractors and consumers – in bringing undermanaged woods into sustainable long-term management, increasing the range and diversity of species in them. Articulate "Natural Capital" uplifts and enterprise opportunities arising from woodland management. Increase utilisation of woodland resource on council owned woodlands through production of timber products	BDBC Tree Strategy Living Landscape Strategy FC Woodland Grant Schemes Rural Enterprise Funding available to woodland owners (including farmers) AONB Management Plan Woodland Management Plans	BDBC; Forestry Commission Woodland Trust HIWWT Natural Basingstoke National Farmers Union Rivers Trusts Ancient Tree Forum North Downs AONB team	Advocacy and Identification of Woodland Owners: Medium term Articulate Natural Capital and markets for ecosystem services: Short Term
12	Increase enjoyment of woodlands. Promote access to woodlands for education, informal recreation and health benefits, where there is no detriment to any sensitive habitat.	Increase uptake of recreational, cultural, arts, educational and CSR opportunities in existing open-access woodlands (e.g. Pamber Forest, Basing Wood, Great Pen Wood Focus on demographic groups who traditionally have not used woodlands and open spaces Increase number of Forest Schools and other opportunities for nature engagement and learning activities.	FC Woodland Management Grant Schemes Forest Schools programme Parish Planning process Neighbourhood Planning process	BDBC; Forestry Commission Woodland Trust HIWWT Natural Basingstoke Hampshire County Education Services	Woodland engagement programme: short to medium term Forest Schools programme: Short to

Tree and Woodland Resource - Strategic Aim **To improve the extent and management of the tree and woodland resource to increase the Borough's natural capital, biodiversity and people's use of woodlands**					
Strategic Priorities		**Potential Actions**	**Delivery Mechanism**	**Parties involved**	**Timescale**
12 (cont).	Priorities are woodlands: • In areas deficient in access to natural green space • Within 400m of urban areas where public rights of way exist	Promote surfacing, signage and fencing improvements along woodland rights of way in priority areas, especially if these can be used as "green travel routes" utilising council processed timber	Local Transport Plans and s106 contributions		medium term Parish Plans and Local Transport Plan – on cyclical basis
13	Promote healthy urban tree populations, bearing in mind general FC recommendation that urban tree canopy should be at least 20%	Establish quantity of existing urban tree canopy by ward (in Basingstoke and larger settlements). Provide broad recommendations for locating new tree planting. Advise on total number of trees needed to meet the FC target and number of trees to be planted per year. Maintain a positive perception of urban trees as assets by continuing to deal with "neighbour-problem" trees as per the Council's Tree Strategy	BDBC Tree Strategy; Management plans; Parks and open space improvements	BDBC; Natural Basingstoke	Urban Tree Audit and Canopy Target-setting – short-term
14.	Plant new woodlands where they bring multiple benefits. Priority areas are:	Ensure new planting to meet parish/neighbourhood/town-wide targets for woodland cover achieved by on-site planting and contribution to off-site woodlands	FC Woodland Grant Schemes Planning Application process	BDBC; Forestry Commission Woodland Trust HIWWT Rivers Trusts Environment Agency	Advocacy and Identification of Landowners:

Tree and Woodland Resource - Strategic Aim **To improve the extent and management of the tree and woodland resource to increase the Borough's natural capital, biodiversity and people's use of woodlands**					
Strategic Priorities		**Potential Actions**	**Delivery Mechanism**	**Parties involved**	**Timescale**
	• New developments • Riparian zone, floodplain and catchments of the Test, Itchen and Loddon • In and around towns and rural settlements In the HBIC and BDBC ancient woodland corridor mapping	Encourage land owners in priority areas to apply for grants to invest in new woodland planting. Seek opportunities arising from natural capital and ecosystem service markets to secure funding.	Natural Capital funds (perhaps a Hampshire-wide approach may be most efficient) Riparian woodlands enabled through Rivers Trust activity, fundraising and advocacy	Natural England Parish and Town Councils	Medium term Articulate Natural Capital and markets for ecosystem services: Short Term Devise Planning policy and implement new targets – medium term

5.5 Economy

Within Basingstoke and Deane GI can improve the quality of places and the competiveness of areas of economic activity, particularly employment areas, regeneration and development areas and those subject to future housing growth.

Multi-functioning GI increases the natural capital of an area. Natural Capital is the actual stock of natural resources which includes geology, soils, water and living organisms and "natural capital accounting" provides a means of valuing the natural resources and the related natural systems (ecosystems services) provide to society.

Green Infrastructure and Inward Investment

The most direct economic argument for GI is its contribution to Gross Value Added[7] (GVA). GI is credited in helping to attract, create and safeguard new jobs and is important in influencing perceptions of quality of place[8]. Workforce productivity and retention rates increase in a higher quality environment. Ongoing inward investment requires the ability to offer attractive employment and development land. It can improve environmental performance and help resolve environmental risks and pressures, thus unlocking development value.

The 26 hectare Basing View business area in Basingstoke town centre is an example. Promotional material boasts about the opportunities for a healthy working environment and makes the case for Basingstoke's existing rural and urban GI network: *"Basing View is surrounded by beautiful Hampshire countryside and the more formal town centre parks, and there is plenty of opportunity for playing sport and exercising outside."*

Recent investment in Basing View has included the John Lewis at Home and Waitrose store which opened in 2015 and is the partnership's largest combined store in the UK. Other developments include the Network Rail Operating and National Training Centre and Village Hotel Club. The Council and its partner Muse Developments are committed to a £2.3 million investment in public realm. This will include GI such as street trees, hedges, shrubs and rain gardens.

Basingstoke was voted 'Town of the Year' by the Thames Valley Property Awards 2017. The judges cited the successful town centre strategy that has enhanced the town's brand, with improved transportation links and opportunities for economic growth. To maintain primary status, there is opportunity for the Council to reinforce the town's GI resource for attracting inward investment.
Rural landscapes within the borough also offer economic opportunities, particularly in relation to farm diversification, woodland-based recreation, tourism, energy generation and harvesting and processing of food and forest products.

GI is an important aspect of supporting and preserving the area's valuable "outdoor" tourism assets, particularly the North Wessex Downs AONB. GI creates a quality setting for such assets and provides additional destinations and activities that support jobs. GI also enhances journeys to such destinations. In Hampshire, in 2014, the visitor economy was worth £3.26bn[9] a year (induced expenditure), supporting 67,200 full time jobs supporting 10% of the county's employment.

Natural Capital

The system is being promoted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and ONS recognises that accounting for natural capital is important as many of the most valuable services are intangible. Strategic decisions are often taken without the best representation of the environment. Natural capital accounting seeks to redress that balance.

[7] The Economic Value of Green Infrastructure (2009), Ecotec for North West Development Agency and Natural Economy Northwest

[8] Natural Capital Committee, 2015, The State of Natural Capital: Protecting and Improving Natural Capital for Prosperity and Wellbeing, 3rd Report

[9] Hampshire County Council (2014), Hantsweb

Several local authorities in England have undertaken natural capital studies into the cost of maintaining their green spaces. The London Borough of Barnet established that the values flowing from GI exceeded the cost of maintenance by a factor of 13:1. This included the benefits of GI in respect of air quality, carbon sequestration, flood alleviation, recreation and mental health.

Given development pressures there are opportunities for Basingstoke to use a natural capital approach to safeguard GI resources and generate funds to pay for ecosystem services that benefit infrastructure and economic development (the concept of Payment for Ecosystem Services).

Stakeholder comments

The borough might seem to be well endowed with GI, given its access to nearby areas of designated countryside. However, GI in the town is a limited resource and is an important factor in attracting businesses and people to the town. So there must be a balance between conserving and enhancing the green environment within the borough and providing space for future development.

The borough should capture ‘stop-offs’ from visitors travelling through the borough towards the North Wessex AONB, South Downs and New Forest. National Parks.

Economy - Strategic Aim

Deliver a GI Network in Basingstoke and Deane that will attract inward investment and promote natural capital.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
15.	Raising awareness that GI attracts inward investment	Set up and sustain a working group that promotes GI in Basingstoke town. Group to include council officers from landscape, planning and economic development. Private sector involvement from Muse Developments and other developers.	Planning policy, Section 106,	BDBC, developers,	Ongoing
16.	GI in development	Produce guidelines setting out best practice in design, delivery and management of GI for use by internal and external partners.	Planning policy Landscape and Biodiversity SPD	BDBC, developers,	Short term
17.	Promote natural capital accounting in Basingstoke (town)	Set up a method for accounting for the annual cost of maintaining GI in Basingstoke (town) and compare this with the natural capital value of those assets.	Council policy	BDBC,	Short term
18.	Ensure the GI strategy contributes to the Horizon 2050 Plan	Set up a mechanism to ensure the findings and recommendations of the GI Strategy inform the Horizon 2050 Plan	Council policy	BDBC	Short term

5.6 Access and Recreation

Access to the countryside is important, both for Basingstoke and Deane's residents and as a major attraction for visitors. The borough has extensive areas of countryside which can be accessed by a comprehensive network of public rights of way network. Route 23 (Reading to Southampton) forms part of the Sustrans network and runs in a north to south direction linking Basingstoke to Reading and Winchester. Basingstoke promotes a cycle network that uses a range of off road, minor and more major roads. There are a number of long distance recreational footpaths including Wayfarer's Walk linking the AONB with the South Downs National Park. Brenda Parker Way links neighbouring Hart District with Bramley and Tadley and the Three Castles Path links Great Windsor Park with Winchester and passes through the borough.

Issues and Opportunities

Many residents would like to have access to open spaces within walking distance of home. This is particularly important in areas of poorer health, as there is evidence that the ease of access to greenspace results in improved mental and physical health[10]. Availability of accessible greenspace is not, however, consistent throughout the borough. Some of the rural settlements such as Overton, Laverstoke and Steventon and Tadley are less well provided for in terms of local accessible greenspace, making it difficult for those without cars to visit open spaces and the countryside. In Basingstoke there is generally poor access to natural green space with the exception of Chineham, northern parts of Popley and parts of Kempshott, Hatch Warren and Beggarwood.

The council's recent green space audits (undertaken 2015 to 2017) highlighted that 21.3% of those spaces were considered to be of poor quality. These spaces will require landscape design and management expertise and funding to lift their quality.

Chapter 4.10 introduced Basingstoke's valued parks and open spaces. Some of these are afforded protection from development through existing covenants and easements. However, 28 of the remaining sites have no such protection and chapter 4.10 highlighted three tests for the protection of sites as to whether they:

- Meet a deficit of open space quantity;
- Are in an area outside an accessibility threshold; and
- Meet the qualitative threshold.

Cycle routes between settlements, visitor destinations, railway stations and national cycle routes and Sustrans Route 23 also enhance the network and encourage use. However, currently there are no east-west cycle routes across the borough and no links to Hart District. A cycle route along the minor roads in the River Test valley would provide a distinctive and convivial east-west route for cyclists.

Major road corridors can create barriers and a survey of road crossing points and junctions could highlight where improvements to the access network are needed to make it safer.

Pressure on key visitor sites is likely to increase with planned development and population increases. War Memorial Park and Eastrop Park are already heavily used for recreation. Currently there is no country park in the borough but there are proposals for Manydown Country Park next to the proposed new Manydown community (of over 3,000 new homes) on the western edge of Basingstoke. Other opportunities include improvements to a collection of green spaces, including Basingstoke Common, to the east of the town and the potential formation of the Basing Country Park.

A strategic approach to GI to support visitor management in the borough, including the AONB, would help to target activities and resources and to focus improvements on key visitor facilities. This will also bring benefits to local rural tourism and local economies. The AONB website includes an interactive map that advises of walking, horse-riding and cycling routes; wildlife sites and nature reserves and sites of visitor interest. This could be extended to cover the whole of the borough.

[10] Health in All Policy (2016), Public Health England

Stakeholder Comments

The restoration of the redundant Basingstoke Canal was highlighted as an important project to provide access to the countryside from the eastern edge of the town. There would be opportunity to restore the canal towards Greywell in Hart District where the canal is operational and connects with the River Thames at Weybridge in Surrey.

Officers at the AONB unit are promoting the use of sustainable transport modes for access to recreation. This includes encouraging the borough's residents to use the PRoW network, including bridleways (for cycles) to access the countryside. This would reduce the need to use motor vehicles with their adverse effects on biodiversity and air quality. Officers are also promoting 'transfer stations' at public transport hubs to enable people arriving by public transport to find convenient routes into the countryside by foot or bicycle.

Plan

The plan shows the borough's PRoW network differentiating between footpaths (pedestrian access only), bridleways and restricted byways (pedestrian, cycling, horse-riding access) and byways open to all (pedestrian, cycling, horse-riding and car access). The PRoW network within 1km of Basingstoke and rural settlement edges is highlighted to promote sustainable access to the countryside.

The section of the Basingstoke Canal for potential restoration extends from the eastern edge of Basingstoke to the borough boundary at Up Nately. Sustrans Route 23 and long distance recreational footpaths are also indicated.

Refer also to Appendix G for evidence base mapping:

- Figure 5.14 – Public right of way (PRoW) network

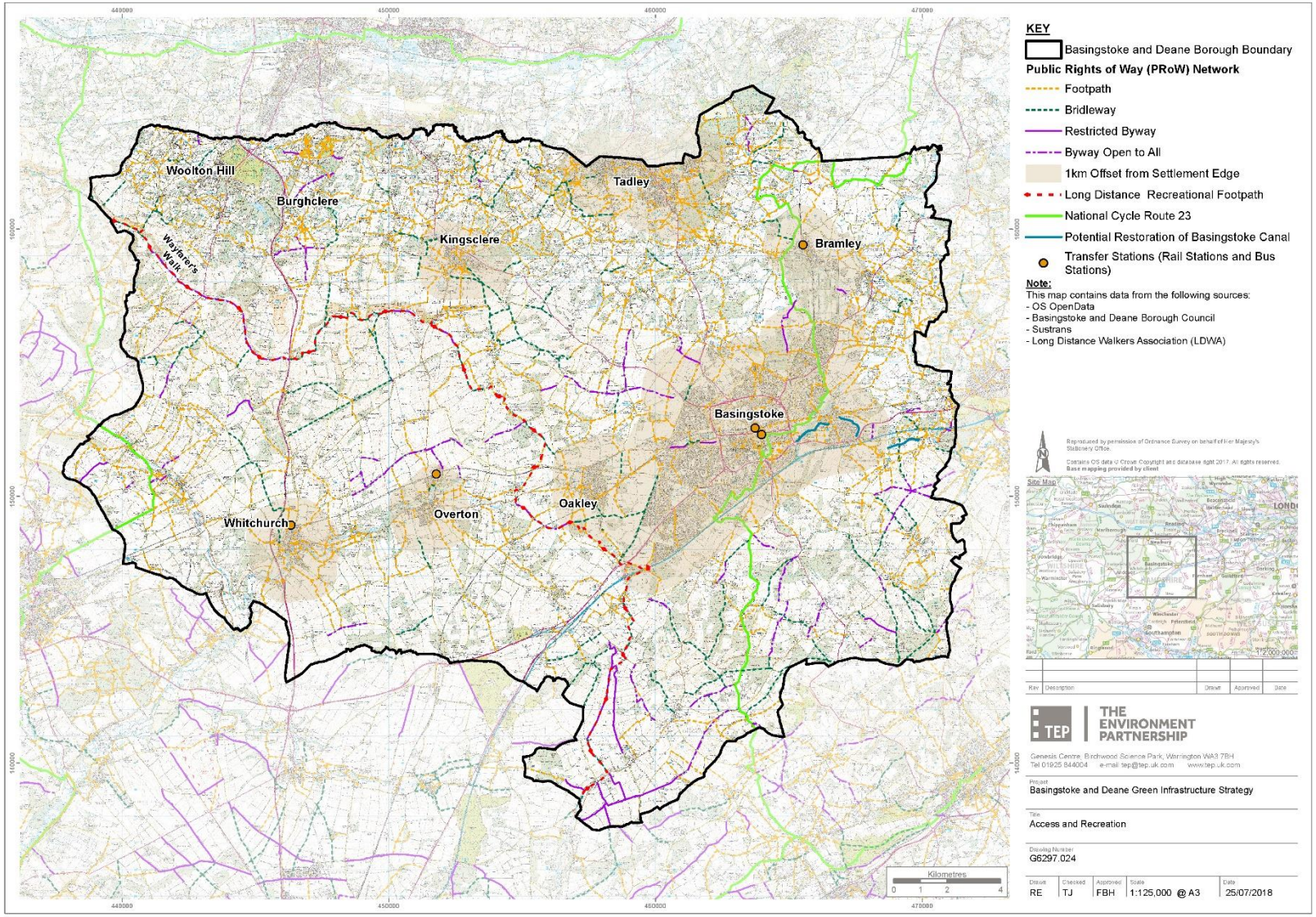


Figure 5.5 – Access and Recreation (indicating the various public rights of way and major transfer stations to access these routes)

Access and Recreation - Strategic Aim

Deliver a GI Network in Basingstoke and Deane that will provide accessible and high quality green space for all residents and visitors to the borough.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
19.	Access to country park facilities	Delivery of the Manydown Country Park to western edge of Basingstoke. Investigate feasibility to assemble green space sites to the eastern edge of Basingstoke and the potential formation of the Basing Country Park.	Requirements of SPD and Section 106	BDBC, developer	Medium & long term Long Term
20.	Providing multifunctional green space (quantity)	Through new development seek to increase the provision of multifunctional green space in the settlements of Overton, Laverstoke and Steventon and Tadley Central and the Basingstoke wards of South Ham, Rooksdown, Popley West, Popley East, Norden, Grove, Buckskin, Brookvale and Kings Furlong, Brighton Hill South and Brighton Hill North. Refer to appendices of the GI Strategy (2013).	Planning policy, Section 106	BDBC, developer	Ongoing
21.	Providing play space (quantity)	Through new development increase the areas of play space in five of Basingstoke's wards: Brighton Hill North, Grove, Kempshott, Rooksdown and South Ham. Ensure sufficient green spaces across the borough provide areas for 'natural' play. Refer to appendices of the GI Strategy (2013).	Planning policy, Section 106	BDBC	Ongoing
22.	Providing accessible green space (accessibility)	Establish areas in the borough that fall outside the accessibility standard. Investigate opportunities for new green space to meet the standard. Where new provision not feasible, promote high quality pedestrian and cycle links from areas of need to existing green spaces. Refer to appendices of the GI Strategy (2013).	Planning policy, Section 106	BDBC	Ongoing
23.	Enhancing the quality of green space (quality)	Explore opportunities to re-design proposals to green spaces assessed as poor quality. Involve local residents in the design process to secure their local knowledge and needs.	Section 106	BDBC and local residents	Ongoing
24	Rationale for valued parks and open spaces	Articulate a rationale for ongoing protection of parks; they are an essential component of the council's green spaces standards,	Planning policy	BDBC	Ongoing

Access and Recreation - Strategic Aim

Deliver a GI Network in Basingstoke and Deane that will provide accessible and high quality green space for all residents and visitors to the borough.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
		they deliver many GI functions and they contribute to natural capital.			
25.	Basingstoke Canal Route Feasibility Study	Update feasibility study for restoration of Basingstoke Canal from Old Basing to Up Nately. Include opportunities for waymarking, opening up of discrete sections, routes along old lengths of towpaths and vegetation management, could provide a new recreation feature.	s106	BDBC, Local community groups	Medium term
26.	Promote use of sustainable transport modes to access the countryside	Promote PRoW network, including bridleways, for access to the countryside from Basingstoke and rural settlements. Promote 'transfer stations' at public transport hubs. Investigate opportunities to extend the PRoW & cycle network to better serve new areas of development.	Section 106 Local transport plan	BDBC, AONB unit	Ongoing

5.7 Health and Well-being

Numerous studies show that safe and attractive green space and proximity to nature increases levels of physical activity and provides mental health benefits and well-being; with consequent reductions in cardiac, respiratory disease stress and mental health issues. For young people, attention deficit disorders can be managed better in schools with a good natural environment. Significantly, green space can reduce the health inequality gap which is prevalent in Basingstoke, notably Popley East and Rooksdown (see figure overleaf).

There is much evidence of the positive relationship between active use of green space and general health but there are concerns about the increasing cost of treating obesity, heart disease and diabetes, sometimes caused by inactivity. A study in 2012[11] by the Canadian Public Health Association highlighted that it costs 27 times more to achieve a reduction in cardiovascular mortality through clinical intervention than it does to achieve the same result through local public preventative health spending. It is an imperative, therefore, that green spaces and areas close to nature within the borough are designed and managed to be more attractive and engaging for people to choose to be physically active. At a national policy level hard choices need to be made about providing more funding towards tackling some of the causes of poor health such as inactivity. Progress in this area would enable local decision makers to follow suit.

At a local level, poorly managed spaces become the focus for anti-social behaviour and cause barriers to people engaging in physical activity. Tintern Close, referred to in 4.6, is an example of a poor quality green space that was attracting anti-social behaviour resulting in local people being reluctant to use the space. Not only by improving the management of such green spaces but also through promoting ownership, stewardship and better understanding and appreciation of green spaces, anti-social behaviour can be addressed. For example, by working with volunteers from the local community to increase understanding of the value of green spaces and encourage involvement in their care, green spaces such as Millfields, Old Down, South View Cemetery and the town centre parks have benefited in terms of improved quality and levels of use.

Safe and well-used greenspace, accessible by walking from people's homes, provides a setting for physical activity and social networking, including sport, food-growing, crafts, horticulture, music, arts and education. War Memorial Park hosts a range of music and other events throughout the year, Stratton Park has a community garden which allows local people to grow food and learn about horticulture and the biennial Bioblitz event held at Crabtree teaches local people and especially children about biodiversity and care for the environment. In addition involvement in managing green spaces through volunteering offers opportunities to acquire skills which many volunteers have used to access new jobs and careers In some cases these activities can also be managed as social enterprises, providing additional benefits such as training, jobs and products which can be sold into local markets. The work being done by Inspero (a local charity managing the community garden at Stratton Park) and Mencap (who manage a nursery on one of the Council's allotments) are examples of this in Basingstoke. These charities provide training and jobs in horticulture and produce products which are donated to or sold to the local community. In addition the Oakley Woodlands Group produces woodland products, including charcoal, for sale in order to support their management work.

The challenge is to engage the widest possible section of the local community in using and managing existing spaces. This may include making space for social and commercial entrepreneurs who are willing to use parks and open spaces for activities that create jobs while sustaining the quality of the environment. In an era of austerity, the commitment and

[11] Landscape Institute (2015), Public Health and Landscape

enthusiasm of environmental activists is critical.

Stakeholder Comments

The Hampshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (HJSN) addresses the current and future health and well-being needs and inequalities within local populations. It is used to inform and guide the planning and commissioning of health, well-being and social care within the local authority area. HJSN is clear about the need for active lifestyles to improve health. However it makes no explicit reference to GI as a network of spaces to engage in exercise. At one of the GI Strategy workshops, stakeholders discussed how the Hampshire Public Health team might use opportunities to make a connection between high quality GI and active lifestyles.

Better links are required between clinical commissioning groups (primary care) and healthy living activities promoted by the council and third sector in the borough.

There are many physically based activities organised by the council and third sector in Basingstoke and the rural settlements but these could be promoted better to increase awareness and participation.

Guided walks and signed trails between green spaces could encourage people to walk or cycle between facilities.

Some noted that popularity of organised runs in parks can undermine the footpath infrastructure, resulting in the need to find additional venues for popular and beneficial sporting and leisure activities.

Plan

Health deprivation and the town's green spaces are mapped. Analysis shows that some of the wards with a shortfall of green space also have a relatively high level of health deprivation. These are South Ham, Rooksdown, Popley West, Popley East, Norden, Grove, Buckskin, Brookvale and Kings Furlong and Brighton Hill South. These wards should be prioritised in the action plan.

Refer also to Appendix G for evidence base mapping:

- Figure 5.15 – Health deprivation and multifunctional green space (Borough)_

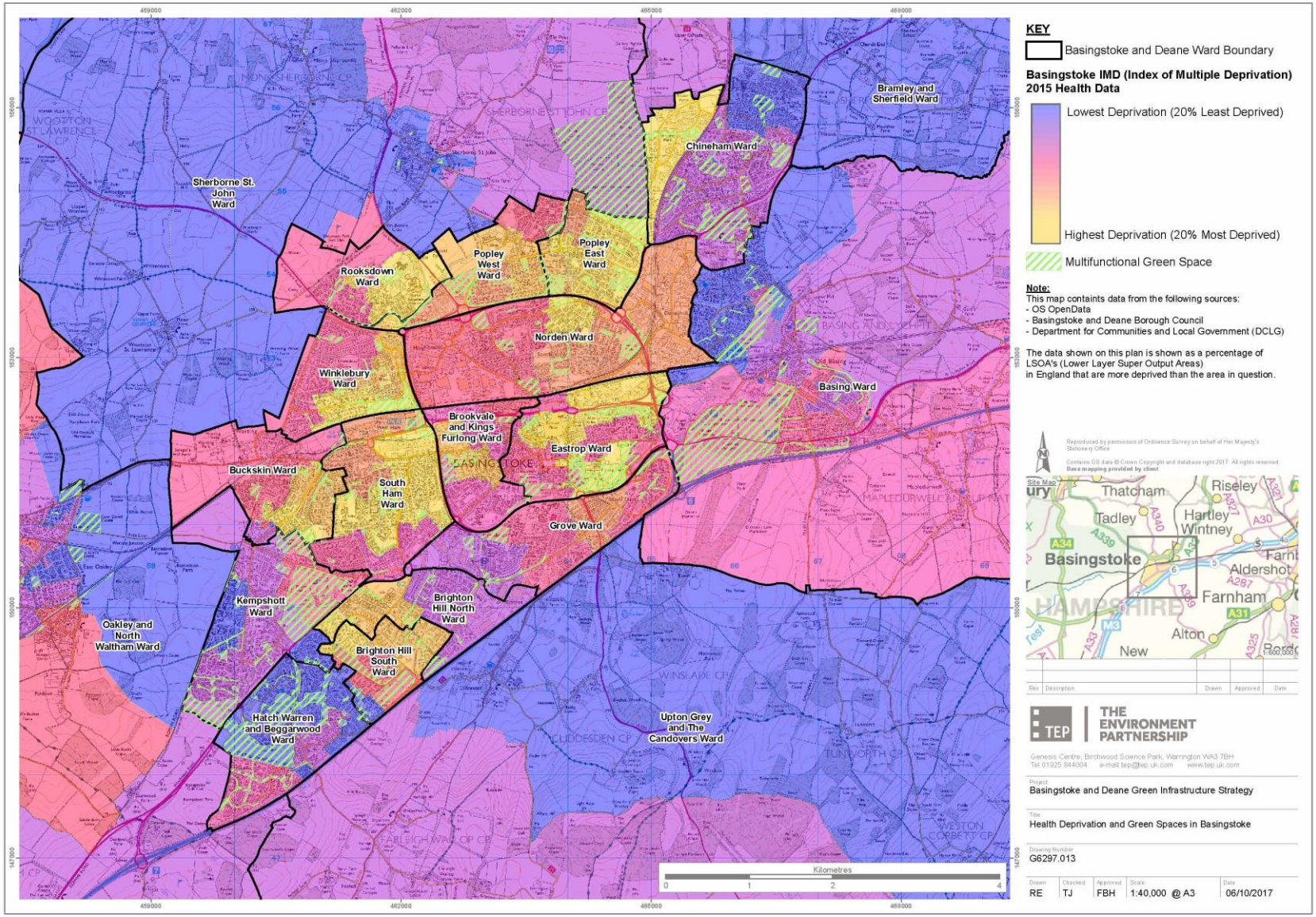


Figure 5.6 – Health and Well-being (indicating how levels of health deprivation relate to green space provision)

Health & Wellbeing - Strategic Aim

To increase the levels of physical, mental and social well-being for the residents, workers and visitors to Basingstoke and Deane by providing opportunities for access to and enjoyment of greenspaces.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
27.	Lobbying of Hampshire Public Health body	Establish more explicit link between healthy and active lifestyle strategies with high quality GI network. Investigate opportunity for more funding to be directed towards GI. – projects such as Green Gyms, Circular Routes for walking and running in green spaces.	Council policy	BDBC and Hampshire County Council	Short term
28.	Ensure promotion of active lifestyles embedded in spatial planning	Engage with spatial planners to ensure link between GI networks and active lifestyles is made in planning policy.	Planning policy	BDBC	Short term
29.	Health improvement through GI	Expansion of health improvement activities in parks and green spaces through closer working with the Health Improvement Team and partnership involvement with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) –projects such as Green Gyms, Circular Routes for walking and running in green spaces.	Section 106 Council policy and CCGs	BDBC and CCGs	Short term
30.	Promotion of programme of physical activity	Mapping of all activities taking place and joint promotion by all organisations involved in physical activity.	Council policy	BDBC, CCGs, third sector (Natural Basingstoke and sports clubs)	Short term

5.8 Local Awareness and Involvement

Volunteering in Basingstoke and Deane borough takes many forms, from community action groups to working with charities and improving the local environment. Community engagement is vital in the creation and management of new GI as local people have a detailed knowledge of their local neighbourhoods. Involving the community in the planning and design of GI can ensure that green spaces function more successfully.

With the right approach to engagement, local people enjoy participating in voluntary green space activity, get a high level of satisfaction in achievement and gain a sense of ownership of their local greenspaces. Children and young people, in particular, are able to learn about the natural environment, enjoy playing in the open air and retain a positive perception of their local green spaces. There is evidence[12] that children engaging with green spaces from a young age are more likely to stay engaged in later life.

Deprivation is a factor influencing whether people choose to engage in green space. Research by Public Health England[13] indicates that people living in a deprived community are six times more likely to have had no previous experience of outdoors activity. The most deprived wards are Popley East and South Ham. This needs to be considered by the council and third sector groups when planning their engagement programmes.

Increasing the use of GI may require behaviour changes e.g. shifting from driving to walking and cycling can bring multiple benefits, such as a reduction in carbon emissions, reduced congestion and improvements to health.

Natural Basingstoke (NB) is an active third sector organisation promoting and supporting community nature conservation work in the borough. Set up in 2013, NB works with 19 conservation groups. There are over 200 active volunteers and over 1,000 people on the NB mailing list.

Natural Basingstoke has three aims:

- Conservation - acting as a champion and a voice for nature, to create, restore, maintain and expand a network of wildlife-rich habitats
- Community – supporting local volunteers who deliver hands-on community led conservation.
- Consultation - working with the local authority and building partnerships to protect and promote biodiversity.

HIWWT provides the main focus for volunteering outside Basingstoke. This includes the volunteer group at Pamber Forest which receives some funding from the council's service level agreement (SLA) with the wildlife trust.

Stakeholder comments

Social media and smart phone apps are an effective way to increase awareness and involvement in the GI network. The council hosts the Love Basingstoke Facebook page to raise awareness about activities and programmes in the borough's green spaces. This includes the Love Parks Week in July, an initiative run by Keep Britain Tidy. Social media could be used to recruit new volunteers or elicit comments on a new GI or green space proposal.

Smart phone apps can make residents aware of activities in green spaces and can be used to navigate people in and around green spaces.

Once completed the GI Strategy could be uploaded onto the web with facility for online engagement for residents, workers and visitors. It would remain a live document and updated regularly.

Natural Basingstoke volunteers has commented on the perennial need to recruit volunteers and sustain interest in activities throughout the year. The Council supports

[12] Davison, K.K and C. T. Lawson (2006), "Do attributes in the physical environment influence children's physical activity?

[13] Public Health England (2016), Health in All Policy

skills and team building training wherever possible.

Refer also to Appendix G for evidence base mapping:

- Figure 5.16 – Ward boundaries – Basingstoke
- Figure 5.17 - Ward boundaries – Borough
- Figure 5.18 – Multiple deprivation – Basingstoke
- Figure 5.19 - Multiple deprivation – Borough

Local Awareness and Involvement - Strategic Aim

To increase the level and diversity of community participation in the planning, development and use of Basingstoke and Deane's green infrastructure.

Strategic Priorities		Potential Actions	Delivery Mechanism	Parties involved	Timescale
31	Support to third sector organisations	• Provide expertise, training, equipment, & accommodation to third sector organisations to help them develop skills in GI and nature conservation. • Where opportunities arise, explore the potential for third parties, including communities to be involved in the management and decision making for their local green spaces and woodlands	Council policy	BDBC, third sector organisations	Ongoing
32	Promoting the benefits of GI through social media	Raise awareness about the borough's GI Strategy. Opportunity to recruit new volunteers.	Council policy	BDBC	Short term
33	Access to council database and GI apps	Investigate possibilities of providing greater access for public to GI data on the council website. Resource phone apps to raise awareness and involvement in GI activity. Resource 'Sat Nav' app that provides GI 'trail' for pedestrians	Council policy	BDBC	Med term
34	Extend network of conservation groups	Seek to support the establishment new wildlife conservation groups where there is no coverage in the borough	Council policy	BDBC, Natural Basingstoke HIWWT	Short term
35	Increase enjoyment of GI Promote access to GI for education, informal recreation and health benefits.	Increase uptake of recreational, cultural, arts, educational and CSR opportunities in existing GI. Focus on demographic groups who traditionally have not used woodlands and open spaces- projects: off road running and cycling, adventure trails, tree planting, outward bound activities.	Parish Planning process Neighbourhood Planning process Local Transport Plans and s106 contributions	BDBC Environment and Planning & Infrastructure Services HIWWT Natural Basingstoke Hampshire County Education Services	GI engagement programme: short to medium term Schools programme: Short to medium term Parish Plans– on cyclical basis

6.0 Next Steps, Delivery and Implementation

6.1 Introduction

This Basingstoke and Deane Green Infrastructure Strategy is part of a suite of documents that are relevant to the borough's wider GI resource, including the borough's Climate Change Strategy, Living Landscapes Strategy, Tree Strategy and the Hampshire Ecological Network. It provides direction for a number of actions that will add to the social, economic and environmental value of the borough's GI resource. Alongside this Strategy, it is necessary to champion GI within the local authority, businesses and the community.

Experience in the field shows the sustained success of a GI partnership approach; underpinned by Local Authority resources, but with a public brand that is arms-length from the authority, embraced by community groups, residents, businesses, funders and non-governmental bodies. This "co-delivery" approach is already used by the Council through its partnership with Natural Basingstoke, HIWWT and others.

Given current pressures on public-sector budgets, a GI partnership offers added value with relatively little added cost incurred by the Local Authority.

Partnership working is particularly appropriate for management of a multi-functional asset such as GI. Many of the actions described in Chapter 5 involve cross-sector working, notably with biodiversity, health, education, economic and highways teams.

There are a number of organisations in Basingstoke and Deane focussing on nature and landscape conservation that coordinates actions and maximises cross-sector working and the benefits and cost savings associated with such an approach. It consists of BDBC, Natural Basingstoke, Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and North Wessex Downs AONB as well as representatives from the Council. The economy and health and wellbeing themes in chapter 5.0 recommended the setting up of wider partnerships to promote GI benefits, including businesses, developers, community groups and health providers.

This section reviews a range of potential funding, partnership and other resources that may be needed to deliver the recommended GI interventions in the borough.

We consider:

- GI in proposed development;
- Retrofitting GI in existing development;
- Land management;
- Planning conditions, obligations and tariffs;
- GI Targets and Monitoring;
- Biodiversity Offsetting;
- Partnership working;
- Funding; and
- Plans, programmes and projects.

6.2 GI in new development

As highlighted in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the planning system has a crucial role to play in implementation of GI, aiming to maximise design quality, environmental sustainability and ecological networks while enabling developers to achieve their objectives. Local Plan policy EM5 promotes GI in new development. (refer to chapter 2.5).

To avoid incremental loss of GI, development should proceed on a 'net-gain' principle; this could be either in terms of the quantity of GI or its functionality.

The following is a four-step approach to considering GI in development design

In order to re-inforce this the council has reviewed and further developed its Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. This links to objectives within this strategy and provides guidance for developers about the requirements of planning applications relating to the themes of landscape, biodiversity and tree protection

Stage 1 - Understanding the sites importance for all aspects of GI. Identifying aspects of GI both on and off site through survey which may be affected by development

Stage 2 - Evaluating the site in terms of all GI constraints and opportunities. Utilising the survey information to evaluate the constraints

on the development caused by present GI and opportunities for enhancement of GI

Stage 3 - Designing for GI – To involve the safeguarding of GI assets already present on site. The mitigation of any GI loss to ensure net gains for GI aspects such as biodiversity and accessible green space. Ensuring long term management and governance arrangements for GI on and where relevant off site.

Stage 4 – Reinforce Strategic GI functions Look to address deficiencies in local and borough wide GI networks where feasible. Seek to ensure active access linkages from future development to GI Networks.

6.3 Retrofitting GI in existing development

Retrofitting GI in existing development would apply to areas of higher density development where there is limited opportunity to create new green spaces. Street trees and hedges require limited space but can bring much added value to the public realm in urban areas.

Provision needs to be made for the construction of underground tree pits and trenches to insert growing medium and drainage. Where space is particularly limited, there may be opportunity to remodel existing built structures to accommodate green roofs, green walls and wildlife “boxes”.

Loss of GI in existing development is also an issue particularly with front gardens being paved over for parking. This has implications on loss of habitats for wildlife and increasing risk of surface water flooding.

Planning permission is now required for a new or replacement impermeable driveway of over five square metres that does not provide for water to run to a permeable area.

6.4 Management of land in council ownership

There are a number of parks and open spaces within council ownership, including much of the land in the upper reaches of the River Loddon BPA (including, Eastrop Park, Glebe Gardens and Victory Park). Similarly within the River Test BPA the council owns land at Daniel Park in Whitchurch an area of grassland which borders the river.

The management of many of these spaces is set out within plans that provides an assessment of the site, establishes a vision and a series of aims and objectives that identify tasks and actions that seek to improve GI within them.

Table at 6.1 (below), sets out sites where management plans have been produced along with a schedule for future production and implementation. The management of the sites is included as an action within the plan.

6.5 Planning Conditions, Obligations and Tariffs

GI can be delivered as a co-product of investment in new or refurbished infrastructure. Development creates opportunities in the form of new or improved assets as well as threats related to the loss, damage or other alteration of environmental features. This justifies seeking contributions from developers to assist in both the continuing management of existing GI assets and in the creation of new assets – particularly where deficiencies have been identified.

Planning conditions allow the Council to direct, control and manage sustainable development patterns in accordance with its planning policies, especially policy EM5.

Planning obligations traditionally take the form of Section 106 (s106) agreements. These are private agreements negotiated between local planning authorities and persons with an interest in a piece of land (usually in the context of planning applications), and are intended to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms.

Section 106 agreements can provide land and long-term funding for the implementation of new greenspace assets and improvements to existing greenspace assets.

A review of how the Council applies contributions, specifically how borough-wide spatial issues could be addressed through the agreements would be useful. A flexible approach to the application of such financial contributions to priority projects across the borough rather than restricting their use to the particular locality of the development would be beneficial, although this will require legal

review to ensure consistency with Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) guidance.

6.6 GI Targets and Monitoring

In order to set meaningful and reasonable goals for achieving GI improvements, habitat targets on a landscape scale have been developed for the restoration, creation and maintenance of key habitat types over the period of the strategy (to 2032) to help meet the Ecological Network and BPA objectives, contribute to a net gain in biodiversity and to contribute to other GI themes such as Landscape, Heritage and Sense of Place and Health and Wellbeing.

The habitat targets fall into two types;

- Specific targets where known mechanisms have been identified to help deliver the targets within each of the BPAs or the wider borough, and
- Aspirational targets where no current mechanism to deliver the targets has been identified but where targets will be pursued should opportunities arise.

An appraisal of the delivery of GI through the strategy will be produced annually. This will address the delivery of the strategic aims within the plan and any factors that have effected them during the year.

More details on targets and monitoring are provided in Appendix D.

6.7 Biodiversity Offsetting

Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to deliver biodiversity benefits in compensation for losses of biodiversity that are not currently addressed by the planning system. It is a process that has been piloted by DEFRA, prior to advice being offered by government as to whether it is a viable tool for addressing biodiversity impacts.

These are residual impacts that are left over after applying the NPPF hierarchical requirement to avoid, mitigate and then compensate as a last resort for damage to biodiversity.

Current planning guidance makes it clear that new development should make a positive contribution to biodiversity improvements wherever possible, as well as avoiding net losses. This approach relies on incorporating new habitats and features into development schemes and to achieve this with on-site mitigation measures being applied in order to enable development. However, it is not always possible to fully offset impacts on biodiversity by on-site mitigation measures and residual impacts often remain.

. To compensate for this loss, the developer would secure compensatory habitat expansion or restoration elsewhere via financial contributions (see Trumpet Junction case study). Even in the absence of central government recommendations on offsetting, it is possible for Local Authorities to formulate and adopt a local biodiversity offsetting policy and experience from the DEFRA pilots is that a coordinated county-wide approach is beneficial for advocacy and management of biodiversity offsets.

More detail on Biodiversity Offsetting is provided in Appendix E.

6.8 Partnerships

The council will continue to work in partnership with other organisations and agencies to help conserve and enhance GI within the borough. In addition to working with Natural Basingstoke and volunteer conservation groups, the management of Pamber Forest involves working with HIWWT, who manage the area leased to the council. Service Level Agreements with HIWWT and HBiC also contribute to the development and enhancement of the borough's GI in addition to engaging with private landowners to seek to improve biodiversity on their land.

6.9 Funding

In addition to direct funds secured from the planning process (s106 or Community Infrastructure Levy) and the indirect funding available via existing initiatives, the following organisations and programmes may provide funding for the establishment and management of existing and new assets as part of a GI Strategy. It should be noted that these are correct at the time of publication, however, may change during the lifetime of the strategy.

Council:

- Local Infrastructure Fund
- Environmental Renewal Scheme Fund

- Parks Improvement Budget

External:

- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Landfill Communities Fund
- Countryside Stewardship
- Woodland Grant Schemes

Commercial sponsorship

- Local fund raising
- Corporate Social action funds

More details on funding are provided in Appendix G.

6.10 Plans, Programmes and Projects

There are a number of national, regional, county and local plans, programmes and projects that are committed to the ethos of creating, protecting and managing GI. These include:

- Biodiversity 2020
- South East Biodiversity Strategy
- North Wessex AONB Management Plan (2014-2019)
- Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan
- Basingstoke and Deane Living Landscapes Strategy (2014)
- East Hampshire GI Strategy (2013)
- Hart GI Strategy (2017)

Further information on plans, programmes and projects is located in Appendix B.

Table 6.1: Site Management Plans

Site	Status of Plan Production
Popley ponds and Marnel Newt Corridors, Popley	Habitat management plan in action
Millfield, Lychpit	Habitat management plan in action
Down Grange, Kempshott	Habitat management plan in action
Daniel Park, Whitchurch	Green space management plan in action
Eastrop Park, Eastrop	Green space management plan in action
Beggarwood, Hatch Warren and Beggarwood	Green space management plan in action
Old Down, Kempshott	Green space management plan in action
Little Penwood, Highclere	Green space management plan in action
Black Dam Ponds and Crabtree Plantation, Black Dam/Old Basing	Green space management plan in action
Glebe Gardens, Brookvale	Green space management plan in action
South View Cemetery, Norden	Green space management plan in action
Wigmore Heath, Tadley	Green space management plan proposed 18/19
War Memorial Park, Eastrop	Green space management plan in action – update proposed 2017-18
Tollhouse Meadow, Chineham	Habitat management plan proposed 2019/20
Chineham Park, Chineham	Green space management plan proposed 2019/20
Chineham Woods, Chineham	Habitat management plan in action – update proposed 2020/21
Great Binfields Woodland Park, Chineham	Green space management plan in action - update proposed 2020/21
Daneshill Woods, Daneshill	Habitat management plan in action – update proposed 2020/21
Victory Park, Brookvale	Green space management plan proposed 2021/22
Aldermaston Road open space, Popley	Green space management plan proposed 2021/22
Park Prewett, Rooksdown	Green space management plan proposed 2021/22
Down Grange Walled Garden, Kempshott	Green space management plan proposed 2022/23
Stratton Park, Buckskin	Green space management plan proposed 2022/23

7.0 Action Plan

7.1 Introduction

The action plan (overleaf) consolidates the priorities and actions from Chapter 5.0 with the actions from the GI Strategy (2013).

ACTION PLAN (2018)

STRATEGIC AIM	Project	Description (key tasks and comments)	Stakeholders	Timescales	Principle Funding Source
	GI DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING				
1a, 1b, 29	Strategies and policies	At next review of existing strategies and policies (including Living Landscapes, Tree Strategy) and in the development of new strategies, ensure that opportunities to maximise contribution to GI is incorporated. Work with other strategy owners to identify how GI can contribute to the delivery of local strategies and policies and vice versa.	Internal	Timescales dependent on review date of existing strategies.	Not applicable
1a, 1b, 16	Development of GI Management guidelines	Continue to review internal maintenance practices and measures to enhance Green Infrastructure. Produce guidelines setting out best practice in design, delivery and management of GI for use by internal and external partners.	Internal	0- 2 years	Existing internal revenue budgets
5, 17	GI Mapping and accounting	Continue to maintain and update GI mapping database. Roll out software to enable more efficient management of GI and data collection for monitoring and accounting. Explore potential for setting up Natural Capital accounting of borough's GI resource. Increase Public access to GI information by improving access mapping data on the councils website	Internal	Maintaining and updating database - Ongoing. Software development - year 0-2 Natural Capital - Year 2 onwards Improving public access to mapping data 0-1 years	Existing revenue budgets
3,4	B-line corridor mapping and identification	Utilising ongoing Local Nature Partnership Environmental network mapping and identified BOAs to map b-line corridors for proposed increased insect community connectivity and distribution	Internal, Local Nature Partnership	0-2 years	Existing revenue budgets

STRATEGIC AIM	Project	Description (key tasks and comments)	Stakeholders	Timescales	Principle Funding Source
5	Monitoring and review	Continue to develop mechanisms to monitor progress on the implementation of the GI Strategy via the action plan. In addition carry out a periodic review of the strategy (5 years). Details of amount of GI gained/lost will be used to help monitor Local Plan Delivery	Internal, external partners e.g. HCC, HWT,	Ongoing	Existing revenue budgets
9,10, 15,18, 31, 32, 33,34,35	Engagement	Continue to support communities and volunteer groups in the development and delivery of GI within the borough	Internal. External partners to include - Volunteer groups, Community groups, GPs, Businesses, Members, Parish and Town Councils, Field Society, Heritage Society, County Council, Housing Associations.	Yr 1 Onwards	Not applicable
4, 5, 6,8, 9, 23	Skills Review and Training Plan	Continue staff development to ensure that all staff involved in the planning and management of parks and green spaces have appropriate training.	Internal	Ongoing	Existing training budgets
12,28, 29,30	Health improvement through GI	Expansion of health improvement activities in parks and green spaces through closer working with relevant health improvement teams and partnerships involvement with the Hampshire Local Nature Partnership and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).Explore potential of setting up working group to deliver this.	Internal, Local Nature Partnership, and Clinical Commissioning Groups	Yr1-2	Not applicable
All relevant Strategic Aims requiring further funding	Funding	Explore further external funding opportunities to support various green infrastructure projects, this will include partnership and commercial funding	Internal, relevant external partners	Ongoing	Not applicable

STRATEGIC AIM	Project	Description (key tasks and comments)	Stakeholders	Timescales	Principle Funding Source
25,31, 32	Delivery of Green Infrastructure	Take opportunities to different models of governance and management of green spaces, such as community trusts, forest schools and parks trusts. Continue to support existing volunteer groups in managing open spaces (including Old Down)	Internal, relevant external partners	Ongoing	Not applicable
	PHYSICAL PROJECTS				
1b, 3, 6, 7, 10, 14	Development of projects within Biodiversity Priority Areas	Identification and development of projects where opportunities arise within Biodiversity Priority Areas based on set habitat targets. This will involve delivering GI improvements through existing mechanisms such as funding partnerships (providing advice to farmers); Work on BDBC land and partner projects. New projects will be developed via new housing allocations in the local plan	Landowners; Hampshire Wildlife Trust; Hampshire County Council; Environment Agency	Ongoing	Community Infrastructure Levy; Section 106 Legal Agreements
1b, 5, 7 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 30	Development of projects within urban green spaces	Prioritise and implement improvement projects based on Assessment of need, assessment of potential, community support and deliverability. (this would include those sites identified as part of the valued parks and open spaces motion)	Internal; Parish and Town Councils, Community groups and individuals; HCC; Housing Associations	Ongoing	Section 106 Allocations; Parks and Open Spaces budget, Community Heritage and Environment Fund (CHEF).
1b, 4, 7, 13, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24	GI Improvements in areas of new development	Work with Forward Planning and Development Control to ensure opportunities to address GI needs through new development are maximised (part of planning process).	Internal; Developers	Ongoing	Requirements as part of any planning consent
4	Production and implementation of biodiversity compensation framework	Through actions within the new Landscape and Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document. Deliver a biodiversity compensation framework which identifies through a metric net losses and gains in biodiversity through development and provides for measured net gain for biodiversity in terms of on site and off site mitigation	Internal, developers	Ongoing	Requirements as part of planning consent

5, 10, 11, 30	Green Space Management Plans	Production of management plans for all significant green spaces within the borough. Roll out mechanism for effective management of sites (CMSI software)	Internal; volunteer groups; community groups;	Ongoing	Parks and Open Spaces Budget, Community Heritage and Environment Fund
11	Woodland Management	Explore opportunities for greater utilisation of council owned woodland resource through production of timber products and woodfuel	Internal, relevant external partners	Yr 2	Not Applicable

STRATEGIC AIM	**Project**	**Description (key tasks and comments)**	**Stakeholders**	**Timescales**	**Principle Funding Source**
1a, 1b, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27	GI Improvements linked to existing work programmes and projects	Review of internal work programmes (such as ERS) to ensure that opportunities to improve Green Infrastructure are maximised.	Internal	Ongoing	Existing ERS funding programme
10,26	Basingstoke Canal Route Feasibility Study	Undertake a study to investigate the feasibility of preserving a Basingstoke Canal route for potential future canal restoration.	Internal, Basingstoke Canal Authority, Basingstoke Canal Society	Yr 0-2	To be confirmed
1a, 1b	Section 106 Improvements	Implement approved projects to improve green spaces arising from Section 106 contributions	Internal, Parish and Town Councils, local community groups and residents.	Ongoing	Section 106 contributions from planning applications
1a, 1b, 2, 3, 27	Other Partnership Projects	Engagement with external partners to develop and implement Green Infrastructure Improvements. To include linking with GI strategies and plans in adjacent boroughs. Explore potential of setting up working group to deliver this.	External Partners (HCC, HWT, HBIC EA, adjacent authorities)	Ongoing	Not applicable
3,4,6	Development of B-line networks	Develop identified b-line networks once they have been mapped through a series of avenues including development opportunities, environmental stewardship networks, transport networks and improved management of council owned sites	Landowners, Developers, HCC, Internal	Yr 2 onwards	Section 106 Legal agreements, Environmental Stewardship, Parks and Open Spaces Budget

www.basingstoke.gov.uk | 01256 844844
customer.service@basingstoke.gov.uk
@BasingstokeGov

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