



CABINET

Monday, 11th November, 2013

7.00 pm

Town Hall Watford

Publication date: 1 November 2013

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Pat Thornton Democratic Services Manager on 01923 278372 or by email – legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk .

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

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CABINET MEMBERSHIP

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Mayor | D Thornhill | (Chair) |
| Councillor | D Scudder | (Deputy Mayor) |
| Councillors | K Crout, I Sharpe and M Watkin | |

AGENDA

PART A - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST (IF ANY)

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2013

4. CONDUCT OF MEETING

The Cabinet may wish to consider whether there are any items on which there is general agreement which could be considered now, to enable discussion to focus on those items where the Cabinet sees a need for further debate.

5. ADOPTION OF THE WATFORD GREEN SPACES STRATEGY (Pages 1 - 170)

Report of Environmental Services Manager (Parks and Streets)

6. AGREED AMENDMENTS TO THE ALLOTMENT FAQs (Pages 171 - 180)

Report of the Environmental Services Client Manager (Parks and Streets)

7. NEW WATFORD MARKET UPDATE (Pages 181 - 186)

Report of the Property Development Project Manager

8. APPROVAL TO APPOINT GREENHILL'S ASSET MANAGER (GAM) BY EXCEPTION TO LEAD IN THE PREPARATION OF A STRATEGIC REPORT ON WATFORD BUSINESS PARK ITS AIM WILL BE TO FACILITATE THE REGENERATION AND IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO REALISE GREATER FINANCIAL RETURNS (Pages 187 - 196)

Report of the Programme Manager Regeneration Projects

9. APPOINTMENT OF A TOWN CENTRE MANAGER, WITH ASSOCIATED BUDGET IMPLICATIONS, AND THE POSTS CO-LOCATION WITHIN THE COUNCILS JOINT INITIATIVE WITH WATFORD & WEST HERTS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - THE CREATION OF A ONE STOP BUSINESS ADVICE AND SIGNPOSTING (Pages 197 - 208)

Report of the Economic Development Manager

10. PERIOD 6 FINANCE DIGEST (Pages 209 - 236)

Report of Senior Accountant, Finance Shared Services

11. WRITE OFFS (Pages 237 - 238)

Report of the Director of Finance

Agenda Item 5

PART A

AGENDA

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 11th November 2013

Report of: Environmental Services Manager (Parks and Streets)

Title: Adoption of a Final Green Spaces Strategy for Watford for 2013-2023

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.2 The previous 2007-2013 Green Space Strategy is now out of date and required considerable revising and updating taking into account national and local policy changes such as the Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework as well as revised Corporate Priorities and our Core Strategy that has recently been found to be sound and legal by the Government inspector. The previous strategy has therefore been reviewed and Action Plans assessed and revised.

1.3 A new Green Spaces Strategy was drafted and is based on qualitative and value assessments carried out as well as incorporating the Council's new Corporate Priorities and Green Infrastructure principles. It also recognises the significant current reductions in core funding the Council is facing, and the recent outsourcing to Veolia of the parks and open spaces service.

1.4 A report was presented to Cabinet in April 2013 with a Draft 10 year Strategy which was approved for wider consultation. Consultation was carried out internally and externally and the feedback has been fed into the new FINAL strategy with a new 10 year Action Plan to be adopted by November 2013. It is proposed that now wider public consultation has been carried out on the draft Green Spaces Strategy that Cabinet approve and formally adopt this new 10 year strategy.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1 Approve the final Green Spaces Strategy

2.2 Delegate to the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services in consultation with the Portfolioholder any minor changes required to the documentation prior to publication along with the content of the summarised

version of the Strategy to be made available for local residents.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Paul Rabbitts,
Environmental Services Client Manager (Parks and Streets)

Telephone extension: 8250 Email: paul.rabbitts@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Lesley Palumbo, Head of Corporate Strategy and
Client Services

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

3.1 The report of 3rd April 2013 highlighted details in relation to the need for Watford to update its Green Spaces Strategy. Watford adopted its first Green Spaces Strategy in 2007 with an aim *'to provide green spaces to be proud of, which will benefit the whole community, improving health, well-being and quality of life'*. It identified a number of objectives and outlined an Action Plan that has already achieved much but has also identified further work that needs carrying forward. This has now been reviewed and recognised that a number of successes have been achieved which were outlined in the April report. Since then, successes have continued:-

- Improvements to children's playgrounds and youth facilities at Harwoods Rec, Harebreaks Rec and Leavesden Green MUGA.
- The ongoing development of the £6.5 million Cassiobury Park Restoration Round 2 HLF bid;
- Continued retention of Green Flag for Cassiobury Park, Woodside Playing Fields and Cheslyn House and Gardens for 2013;
- Adoption of the Allotments Strategy;
- The £1.5 million Parks Improvement Programme, including Oxhey Park, Callowland Recreation Ground, King George V Playing Fields, Vicarage Road Cemetery, North Watford Cemetery, and Waterfields Recreation Ground that will be completed by December 2013 and will see many of our Community Parks transformed; and
- The £800,000 Allotments Investment Programme, now underway with consultation with tenants ongoing and due to start in early 2014.

3.2 A new and updated strategy was therefore developed and had to consider the following:-

- Reductions in core funding to the Council and what it can now realistically achieve in relation to green spaces management;
- Alternative funding mechanisms and income generation opportunities;
- The impact of service redesign and outsourcing;
- Changes in service delivery;
- Continued high public expectations;
- Changes to Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy;
- Green Infrastructure approach to green space planning; and
- Quality, accessibility and quantity evidence base.

A new and updated green spaces vision has therefore been developed:-

“Watford will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the town.”

3.3 Progress to Date

- 3.3.1 Work began on updating the strategy in September 2011 with a thorough review of the previous strategy and action plans completed as well as those outstanding. A review of the Open Spaces Study that was completed by officers in 2010 was also completed. Part of that review highlighted that a full and comprehensive Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation Study compliant with PPG17 had never been fully completed for Watford, although the 2010 Open Spaces Study had partly fulfilled this through comprehensive mapping on GIS of all open space typologies in Watford as well as quantity and accessibility thresholds.

As part of the Core Strategy development, Kit Campbell Associates (KCA) were engaged to carry out a qualitative and value analysis of all Watford open spaces and to map the results on GIS having already carried out significant work in Watford. Quality and Value mapping has been analysed and with the quantitative and accessibility work already completed in 2010, this data now forms the basis of the new Green Spaces Strategy and has helped determine strategic priorities based on a new strategic network of green spaces. See Page 55 of the Strategy document.

- 3.3.2 KCA also carried out a thorough review of current national policy relating to green spaces, including The National Planning Policy Framework, The Natural Environment White Paper, The Localism Act and a review on guidance related to Green Infrastructure.

Officers have also carried out a review of current Corporate Priorities related to the revised Corporate Plan and policy linkages to Green Spaces as well as other corporate priorities such as Carbon Management, sustainability and equalities.

A revised draft strategy was therefore drafted and included the following:-

- A Policy Review;
- Analysis of findings – The Audit Results;
- Setting, developing and applying provision standards;

- Policies and aspirations;
- Strategic borough wide network;
- Our Vision and Strategy; and
- Action Plans.

3.3.3 Further consultation was required in further developing the new Green Spaces Strategy and in particular in determining local views and this was carried out from April 2013 after approval by Cabinet to consult on the Draft Strategy:-

- Further officer consultation (Planning, Property Services, Buildings and Projects, Culture and Community);
- Citizens Panel;
- Member consultation on quality and value;
- Friends Groups and Residents Associations; and
- Survey Monkey online consultation.

This consultation assessed local peoples views on quantity of open space, their perceptions on quality and accessibility, addressing such issues as how far local users will walk to a park, play area or allotment both in relation to their local green spaces as well as Watford as a whole. We also looked at why people visited our green spaces. The results are summarised on Page 11 of the Strategy document. The overall feedback was excellent. We also asked for feedback on the draft strategy as part of the online consultation. Although the feedback was limited, it was overall positive and the value of green spaces recognised.

3.3.4 The strategy also details the need to work in partnership with other providers and organisations such as the Wildlife Trust, Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Groundwork as well as to develop further partnerships to deliver this ambitious 10 year strategy. It also acknowledges the need to work with Veolia Environmental Services in the delivery of many of the Actions. A summarised 4 page version of the Strategy will also be available for local residents.

3.4 **Conclusions**

3.4.1 The revised and Final Green Spaces Strategy recognises the difficulties faced by the Council as well as the importance of green spaces to local people and communities. However, the final Strategy is ambitious yet seeks to build on the continued successes in Watford in managing, maintaining and developing its green spaces.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.2 The Director of Finance comments that a considerable financial investment has been made over the past few years in upgrading our green spaces 'offer'. This ability to invest 'in the future health and well being of our community' will be constrained as available

local authority funding continues to reduce.

- 4.1.3 Any detailed Action Plan necessarily requires a financial commitment and, with the reductions in funding, the Action Plan for 2013-23 will need to recognise a longer delivery period. Alternative funding mechanisms such as government funding and partnerships will need to be further developed in order to make the Action Plan a reality.

- 4.1.4 Traditional funding through Section 106 capital receipts and the community infrastructure levy will be used wherever possible and this Green Spaces Strategy will provide the evidence base to justify such investment.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 Head of Democracy and Governance comments that any legal implications are contained within the Strategy.

4.3 **Equalities**

- 4.3.1 See EIA (background paper)

4.4 **Risk**

- 4.4.1 The Environmental Services Client team will develop a detailed risk register for the delivery of the Green Spaces Strategy and Action Plan which will set out all the current risks and identifies the mitigating actions needed to manage the risks. This will continue to be monitored and updated throughout the life of the Strategy.

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall score |
|--|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Unable to secure capital funding | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| Changes in policy locally and nationally | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Staff pressures and lack of resources to deliver | 1 | 4 | 4 |

4.5 **Staffing**

- 4.5.1 With outsourcing recommended by Cabinet at the meeting of 3rd April 2013, the responsibility for delivery and management of the Green Spaces Strategy with Action Plan has transferred to Veolia Environmental Services. The delivery of the Strategy will be monitored in partnership by the Environmental Services Client Manager (Parks and Streets).

4.6 **Accommodation**

- 4.6.1 Not applicable

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 Not applicable

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 Not applicable

Appendices

- 1) Green spaces survey results
- 2) Green Spaces Strategy














Background Papers: EIA

File Reference: None







1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | Response Count |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| | 164 |
| answered question | 164 |
| skipped question | 4 |






2. Which of the following activities do you currently take part in regularly (at least 6 or more times a year)? Tick all that apply

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|------------------------------------|---|------------------|----------------|
| Golf |  | 12.3% | 20 |
| Water sports (outdoor) |  | 4.9% | 8 |
| Bowls/ Croquet |  | 1.9% | 3 |
| Wildlife observation |  | 37.0% | 60 |
| Nature conservation work |  | 10.5% | 17 |
| Running / jogging |  | 24.1% | 39 |
| Rugby, football, cricket or hockey |  | 8.0% | 13 |
| Walking |  | 92.6% | 150 |
| Skate boarding / roller blading | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Athletics |  | 2.5% | 4 |
| Tennis |  | 5.6% | 9 |
| Cycling |  | 32.7% | 53 |
| Meeting friends |  | 71.0% | 115 |
| Other (please write in) |  | 19.8% | 32 |
| answered question | | | 162 |
| skipped question | | | 6 |

3. Are you a member of any of the following?

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| Friends of group |  | 20.6% | 33 |
| Neighbourhood / residents association |  | 28.8% | 46 |
| Local environment group |  | 6.3% | 10 |
| Nature conservation group |  | 8.1% | 13 |
| Not a member of any group/association |  | 45.6% | 73 |
| Other group (please write in) |  | 20.0% | 32 |
| answered question | | | 160 |
| skipped question | | | 8 |

4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|---|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| Name and details of group / association (1) |  | 100.0% | 80 |
| Name and details of group / association (2) |  | 37.5% | 30 |
| Name and details of group / association (3) |  | 16.3% | 13 |
| Name and details of group / association (4) |  | 6.3% | 5 |
| Name and details of group / association (5) |  | 3.8% | 3 |
| | | answered question | 80 |
| | | skipped question | 88 |

5. Thinking about the types of green / open space in your LOCAL AREA (within a 10-15 minute walk of your home) please tell us what you think about the quality of the following

| | Very good | Good | Poor | Very Poor | Don't know | Not in my local area | Rating Count |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Allotments | 11.3% (18) | 32.5% (52) | 10.0% (16) | 1.9% (3) | 28.8% (46) | 15.6% (25) | 160 |
| Children's play areas | 30.6% (49) | 51.9% (83) | 8.8% (14) | 1.9% (3) | 6.9% (11) | 0.0% (0) | 160 |
| Churchyards and cemeteries | 9.6% (15) | 42.9% (67) | 3.8% (6) | 1.3% (2) | 23.7% (37) | 18.6% (29) | 156 |
| Green spaces in housing areas | 6.3% (10) | 41.3% (66) | 20.6% (33) | 8.8% (14) | 16.3% (26) | 6.9% (11) | 160 |
| Parks | 48.1% (77) | 40.6% (65) | 7.5% (12) | 1.9% (3) | 0.6% (1) | 1.3% (2) | 160 |
| Recreation grounds | 18.2% (29) | 54.7% (87) | 11.9% (19) | 1.9% (3) | 9.4% (15) | 3.8% (6) | 159 |
| Woodlands / natural green spaces | 36.5% (58) | 43.4% (69) | 11.9% (19) | 2.5% (4) | 1.9% (3) | 3.8% (6) | 159 |
| answered question | | | | | | | 161 |
| skipped question | | | | | | | 7 |

6. And thinking about some of the facilities and amenities associated with green / open space IN YOUR LOCAL AREA, please tell us what you think about the quality of the following:

| | Very good | Good | Poor | Very Poor | Don't know | Not in my local area | Rating Count |
|--|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Designated pathways / walks / bridle paths | 16.5% (26) | 60.8% (96) | 16.5% (26) | 0.0% (0) | 3.2% (5) | 3.2% (5) | 158 |
| Bowling greens | 6.4% (10) | 26.9% (42) | 3.8% (6) | 2.6% (4) | 47.4% (74) | 12.8% (20) | 156 |
| Youth facilities | 1.9% (3) | 11.4% (18) | 19.0% (30) | 6.3% (10) | 53.2% (84) | 8.2% (13) | 158 |
| Grass sport pitches | 7.6% (12) | 48.4% (76) | 11.5% (18) | 3.2% (5) | 22.9% (36) | 6.4% (10) | 157 |
| Artificial sport pitches | 5.1% (8) | 21.0% (33) | 8.9% (14) | 1.3% (2) | 44.6% (70) | 19.1% (30) | 157 |
| Skateboard areas | 5.8% (9) | 16.1% (25) | 6.5% (10) | 3.2% (5) | 43.2% (67) | 25.2% (39) | 155 |
| Tennis courts | 6.4% (10) | 25.6% (40) | 13.5% (21) | 9.6% (15) | 30.8% (48) | 14.1% (22) | 156 |
| Public changing facilities | 1.9% (3) | 5.1% (8) | 14.6% (23) | 12.1% (19) | 49.0% (77) | 17.2% (27) | 157 |
| answered question | | | | | | | 158 |
| skipped question | | | | | | | 10 |

7. What do you think of the quality of the following types of green / open space in WATFORD AS A WHOLE.

| | Very good | Good | Poor | Very Poor | Don't know | Rating Count |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Allotments | 9.2% (14) | 39.2% (60) | 9.2% (14) | 2.6% (4) | 39.9% (61) | 153 |
| Children's play areas | 19.5% (30) | 59.1% (91) | 4.5% (7) | 0.0% (0) | 16.9% (26) | 154 |
| Churchyards and cemeteries | 8.4% (13) | 46.5% (72) | 7.7% (12) | 1.3% (2) | 36.1% (56) | 155 |
| Green spaces in housing areas | 5.9% (9) | 35.3% (54) | 28.8% (44) | 3.9% (6) | 26.1% (40) | 153 |
| Parks | 45.2% (70) | 48.4% (75) | 4.5% (7) | 0.6% (1) | 1.3% (2) | 155 |
| Recreation grounds | 13.7% (21) | 58.8% (90) | 11.1% (17) | 0.7% (1) | 15.7% (24) | 153 |
| Woodlands / natural green spaces | 34.4% (53) | 49.4% (76) | 11.7% (18) | 1.3% (2) | 3.2% (5) | 154 |
| answered question | | | | | | 156 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 12 |

8. And thinking about some of the facilities and amenities associated with green / open space, please tell us what you think about the quality of the following in WATFORD AS A WHOLE:

| | Very good | Good | Poor | Very Poor | Don't know | Rating Count |
|--|------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Designated pathways / walks / bridle paths | 14.9% (23) | 67.5% (104) | 11.7% (18) | 0.6% (1) | 5.2% (8) | 154 |
| Bowling greens | 5.2% (8) | 28.8% (44) | 4.6% (7) | 0.7% (1) | 60.8% (93) | 153 |
| Youth facilities | 2.0% (3) | 14.4% (22) | 16.3% (25) | 5.2% (8) | 62.1% (95) | 153 |
| Grass sport pitches | 9.2% (14) | 45.8% (70) | 10.5% (16) | 1.3% (2) | 33.3% (51) | 153 |
| Artificial sport pitches | 5.9% (9) | 20.3% (31) | 7.2% (11) | 2.6% (4) | 64.1% (98) | 153 |
| Skateboard areas | 5.2% (8) | 28.1% (43) | 7.8% (12) | 2.0% (3) | 56.9% (87) | 153 |
| Tennis courts | 5.9% (9) | 30.9% (47) | 16.4% (25) | 1.3% (2) | 45.4% (69) | 152 |
| Public changing facilities | 1.3% (2) | 9.2% (14) | 17.6% (27) | 8.5% (13) | 63.4% (97) | 153 |
| answered question | | | | | | 154 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 14 |

9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 81 |
| answered question | 81 |
| skipped question | 87 |

10. Thinking about the types of green / open space in your LOCAL AREA (within a 10-15 minute walk of your home) please tell us what you think about the quantity / amount of the following:

| | A lot more is needed | Slightly more is needed | It is about right | There is more than enough | No opinion | Rating Count |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Allotments | 14.0% (21) | 24.7% (37) | 26.0% (39) | 6.0% (9) | 29.3% (44) | 150 |
| Children's play areas | 6.7% (10) | 23.5% (35) | 51.7% (77) | 5.4% (8) | 12.8% (19) | 149 |
| Churchyards and cemeteries | 2.7% (4) | 10.1% (15) | 39.9% (59) | 4.7% (7) | 42.6% (63) | 148 |
| Green spaces in housing areas | 25.0% (37) | 32.4% (48) | 23.0% (34) | 2.0% (3) | 17.6% (26) | 148 |
| Parks | 8.7% (13) | 24.8% (37) | 59.7% (89) | 4.7% (7) | 2.0% (3) | 149 |
| Recreation grounds | 8.0% (12) | 24.0% (36) | 52.0% (78) | 4.0% (6) | 12.0% (18) | 150 |
| Woodlands / natural green spaces | 22.0% (33) | 22.0% (33) | 48.0% (72) | 4.7% (7) | 3.3% (5) | 150 |
| answered question | | | | | | 150 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

11. And thinking about some of the facilities and amenities associated with green / open space IN YOUR LOCAL AREA, please tell us what you think about the quantity/amount of the following:

| | A lot more is needed | Slightly more is needed | It is about right | There is more than enough | No opinion | Rating Count |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Designated pathways / walks / bridle paths | 13.3% (20) | 29.3% (44) | 50.7% (76) | 3.3% (5) | 3.3% (5) | 150 |
| Bowling greens | 3.4% (5) | 7.4% (11) | 33.6% (50) | 4.0% (6) | 51.7% (77) | 149 |
| Youth facilities | 20.9% (31) | 24.3% (36) | 8.1% (12) | 0.7% (1) | 45.9% (68) | 148 |
| Grass sport pitches | 6.0% (9) | 14.8% (22) | 43.0% (64) | 2.7% (4) | 33.6% (50) | 149 |
| Artificial sport pitches | 2.7% (4) | 13.4% (20) | 24.2% (36) | 0.7% (1) | 59.1% (88) | 149 |
| Skateboard areas | 8.1% (12) | 12.1% (18) | 20.8% (31) | 5.4% (8) | 53.7% (80) | 149 |
| Tennis courts | 7.4% (11) | 17.4% (26) | 35.6% (53) | 3.4% (5) | 36.2% (54) | 149 |
| Public changing facilities | 16.1% (24) | 21.5% (32) | 8.1% (12) | 0.0% (0) | 54.4% (81) | 149 |
| answered question | | | | | | 150 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

12. What do you think of the quantity / amount of the following types of green / open space in WATFORD AS A WHOLE

| | A lot more is needed | Slightly more is needed | It is about right | There is more than enough | No opinion | Rating Count |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Allotments | 11.2% (16) | 25.9% (37) | 30.8% (44) | 3.5% (5) | 28.7% (41) | 143 |
| Children's play areas | 5.6% (8) | 24.5% (35) | 48.3% (69) | 3.5% (5) | 18.2% (26) | 143 |
| Churchyards and cemeteries | 1.4% (2) | 12.7% (18) | 41.5% (59) | 2.1% (3) | 42.3% (60) | 142 |
| Green spaces in housing areas | 19.7% (28) | 36.6% (52) | 21.8% (31) | 2.1% (3) | 19.7% (28) | 142 |
| Parks | 6.9% (10) | 27.1% (39) | 56.9% (82) | 1.4% (2) | 7.6% (11) | 144 |
| Recreation grounds | 5.6% (8) | 29.2% (42) | 48.6% (70) | 1.4% (2) | 15.3% (22) | 144 |
| Woodlands / natural green spaces | 17.4% (25) | 29.2% (42) | 45.1% (65) | 2.1% (3) | 6.3% (9) | 144 |
| answered question | | | | | | 144 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 24 |

13. And thinking about some of the facilities and amenities associated with parks and open spaces, please tell us what you think about the quantity / amount of the following in WATFORD AS A WHOLE:

| | A lot more is needed | Slightly more is needed | It is about right | There is more than enough | No opinion | Rating Count |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Designated pathways / walks / bridle paths | 11.7% (17) | 27.6% (40) | 49.7% (72) | 2.8% (4) | 8.3% (12) | 145 |
| Bowling greens | 2.1% (3) | 8.3% (12) | 32.6% (47) | 5.6% (8) | 51.4% (74) | 144 |
| Youth facilities | 16.0% (23) | 22.2% (32) | 12.5% (18) | 0.7% (1) | 48.6% (70) | 144 |
| Grass sport pitches | 4.2% (6) | 16.0% (23) | 41.0% (59) | 4.2% (6) | 34.7% (50) | 144 |
| Artificial sports pitches | 2.1% (3) | 17.6% (25) | 23.2% (33) | 2.1% (3) | 54.9% (78) | 142 |
| Skateboard areas | 3.5% (5) | 13.2% (19) | 23.6% (34) | 7.6% (11) | 52.1% (75) | 144 |
| Tennis courts | 3.5% (5) | 20.1% (29) | 33.3% (48) | 3.5% (5) | 39.6% (57) | 144 |
| Public changing facilities | 10.6% (15) | 27.7% (39) | 9.9% (14) | 0.0% (0) | 51.8% (73) | 141 |
| answered question | | | | | | 145 |
| skipped question | | | | | | 23 |

14. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quantity / amount of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | Response Count |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | 38 |
| answered question | 38 |
| skipped question | 130 |



15. Thinking about what is available within green / open spaces in the borough, how long would you be willing to walk, on a regular basis, to use the following facilities / amenities?

| | Up to 10 minutes | Up to 20 minutes | More than 20 minutes | Not interested in using | Rating Count |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Allotments | 43.6% (61) | 19.3% (27) | 2.9% (4) | 35.0% (49) | 140 |
| Bowling greens | 13.0% (18) | 18.8% (26) | 5.8% (8) | 63.0% (87) | 138 |
| Children's play areas | 42.1% (59) | 21.4% (30) | 2.9% (4) | 34.3% (48) | 140 |
| Designated pathways / walks / bridle paths | 48.9% (68) | 35.3% (49) | 14.4% (20) | 2.2% (3) | 139 |
| Grass sport pitches | 18.1% (25) | 29.7% (41) | 4.3% (6) | 50.0% (69) | 138 |
| Artificial sport pitches | 8.8% (12) | 21.9% (30) | 8.0% (11) | 63.5% (87) | 137 |
| Woodlands / natural green spaces | 25.5% (36) | 48.9% (69) | 23.4% (33) | 2.8% (4) | 141 |
| Artificial sports pitches | 8.7% (12) | 22.5% (31) | 6.5% (9) | 63.8% (88) | 138 |
| Local Park | 55.4% (77) | 37.4% (52) | 7.2% (10) | 2.2% (3) | 139 |
| Recreation ground | 35.0% (49) | 35.0% (49) | 3.6% (5) | 27.1% (38) | 140 |
| Public garden | 32.6% (45) | 48.6% (67) | 15.9% (22) | 5.1% (7) | 138 |
| Skateboard area | 3.6% (5) | 10.2% (14) | 8.8% (12) | 78.8% (108) | 137 |
| Tennis courts | 11.6% (16) | 28.3% (39) | 7.2% (10) | 55.1% (76) | 138 |
| | | | | answered question | 141 |
| | | | | skipped question | 27 |








16. Is there anything else you would like to add about the accessing / getting to green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 29 |
| answered question | 29 |
| skipped question | 139 |

17. Are you

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-------------------|---|------------------|----------------|
| Male |  | 50.0% | 66 |
| Female |  | 50.0% | 66 |
| answered question | | | 132 |
| skipped question | | | 36 |











18. What is your age group?

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|-----------------------|---|------------------|----------------|
| Under 15 years | | 0.0% | 0 |
| 15 - 19 years | | 0.0% | 0 |
| 20 to 24 years | | 0.0% | 0 |
| 25 to 34 years |  | 5.0% | 7 |
| 35 to 44 years |  | 22.0% | 31 |
| 45 to 54 years |  | 21.3% | 30 |
| 55 to 64 years |  | 24.1% | 34 |
| 65 to 74 years |  | 22.7% | 32 |
| 75 to 79 years |  | 3.5% | 5 |
| 80 years + |  | 1.4% | 2 |
| answered question | | | 141 |
| skipped question | | | 27 |







19. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Please tick.

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Yes, limited a lot | | 4.3% | 6 |
| Yes, limited a little | | 11.5% | 16 |
| No | | 84.2% | 117 |
| answered question | | | 139 |
| skipped question | | | 29 |

20. Which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|
| White or White British English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British |  | 83.0% | 112 |
| Irish | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Gypsy or Irish Traveller | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Any other White background (please write in below) |  | 7.4% | 10 |
| Caribbean |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| African |  | 1.5% | 2 |
| Any other Black background (please write in below) | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Indian |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| Pakistani |  | 2.2% | 3 |
| Bangladeshi | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Chinese |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| Any other Asian background (please write in below) |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| White & Black Caribbean | | 0.0% | 0 |
| White & Black African | | 0.0% | 0 |
| White & Asian | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background (please write in below) |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| Arab | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Other ethnic group (please write in below) |  | 2.2% | 3 |
| | Other (please specify) | | 15 |
| answered question | | | 135 |
| skipped question | | | 33 |

21. Religion or belief – what is your religion or belief

| | | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|---|--------------------------|-------------------|
| No religion |  | 38.5% | 52 |
| Buddhist | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) |  | 49.6% | 67 |
| Hindu |  | 0.7% | 1 |
| Jewish |  | 1.5% | 2 |
| Muslim |  | 3.0% | 4 |
| Sikh | | 0.0% | 0 |
| Any other religion, write in below |  | 6.7% | 9 |
| | | answered question | 135 |
| | | skipped question | 33 |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------------|
| 1 | WD25 9QQ | Aug 5, 2013 8:21 AM |
| 2 | WD24 7BD | Aug 4, 2013 2:53 PM |
| 3 | WD18 0EU | Aug 3, 2013 3:08 PM |
| 4 | wd24 | Aug 2, 2013 5:41 PM |
| 5 | WD17 3DD | Aug 2, 2013 4:22 PM |
| 6 | WD17 3AU | Aug 2, 2013 2:32 PM |
| 7 | WD25 9PX | Aug 2, 2013 9:15 AM |
| 8 | WD25 7AR | Aug 1, 2013 12:33 PM |
| 9 | wd18 7be | Jul 31, 2013 10:11 PM |
| 10 | WD24 7NU | Jul 31, 2013 11:45 AM |
| 11 | wd247pa | Jul 31, 2013 1:51 AM |
| 12 | wd180qe | Jul 31, 2013 12:49 AM |
| 13 | wd173dl | Jul 30, 2013 10:14 PM |
| 14 | WD17 3HN | Jul 30, 2013 8:17 PM |
| 15 | WD18 6PL | Jul 30, 2013 6:00 PM |
| 16 | WD245JD | Jul 30, 2013 3:36 PM |
| 17 | WD 18 7NU | Jul 30, 2013 2:42 PM |
| 18 | Wd180pr | Jul 30, 2013 1:48 PM |
| 19 | wd25 7jn | Jul 30, 2013 12:19 PM |
| 20 | WD18 0FQ | Jul 30, 2013 11:22 AM |
| 21 | wd18 0fq | Jul 30, 2013 11:18 AM |
| 22 | WD24 7BH | Jul 30, 2013 11:13 AM |
| 23 | wd24 6na | Jul 30, 2013 10:46 AM |
| 24 | WD25 7AB | Jul 30, 2013 9:46 AM |
| 25 | WD19 4QQ | Jul 30, 2013 8:58 AM |
| 26 | WD25 0EE | Jul 30, 2013 8:55 AM |
| 27 | WD19 4QQ | Jul 30, 2013 8:54 AM |
| 28 | WD17 1QN | Jul 30, 2013 8:17 AM |
| 29 | WD24 7QY | Jul 30, 2013 8:02 AM |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|----|----------|-----------------------|
| 30 | WD18 7JD | Jul 30, 2013 7:09 AM |
| 31 | WD17 4EP | Jul 30, 2013 6:35 AM |
| 32 | WD17 4EW | Jul 30, 2013 1:18 AM |
| 33 | WD25 0AH | Jul 29, 2013 11:20 PM |
| 34 | wd180bb | Jul 29, 2013 9:53 PM |
| 35 | Wd257dr | Jul 29, 2013 9:45 PM |
| 36 | WD24 5ED | Jul 29, 2013 9:32 PM |
| 37 | Wd24 4pj | Jul 29, 2013 9:30 PM |
| 38 | WD18 0AL | Jul 29, 2013 9:25 PM |
| 39 | WD24 5HR | Jul 29, 2013 8:53 PM |
| 40 | WD17 4LU | Jul 29, 2013 8:44 PM |
| 41 | WD19 4DN | Jul 29, 2013 8:34 PM |
| 42 | wd19 4ju | Jul 29, 2013 8:17 PM |
| 43 | WD194EU | Jul 29, 2013 8:15 PM |
| 44 | WD24 6RH | Jul 29, 2013 7:48 PM |
| 45 | Wd25 0dy | Jul 29, 2013 7:45 PM |
| 46 | wd187sr | Jul 29, 2013 7:43 PM |
| 47 | w24 7bs | Jul 29, 2013 7:43 PM |
| 48 | WD18 | Jul 29, 2013 7:35 PM |
| 49 | Wd172PS | Jul 29, 2013 7:14 PM |
| 50 | WD259QX | Jul 29, 2013 7:11 PM |
| 51 | WD25 0NA | Jul 29, 2013 7:08 PM |
| 52 | WD24 4HN | Jul 29, 2013 7:06 PM |
| 53 | wd33ht | Jul 29, 2013 6:50 PM |
| 54 | WD173BY | Jul 29, 2013 6:41 PM |
| 55 | WD25 0BS | Jul 29, 2013 6:39 PM |
| 56 | WD25 9QH | Jul 29, 2013 6:34 PM |
| 57 | WD174TZ | Jul 29, 2013 6:34 PM |
| 58 | wd174te | Jul 29, 2013 6:24 PM |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------------|
| 59 | wd25 0bs | Jul 29, 2013 6:16 PM |
| 60 | WD25 9SS | Jul 29, 2013 6:11 PM |
| 61 | wd18 0bh | Jul 29, 2013 6:06 PM |
| 62 | WD17 4UZ | Jul 29, 2013 6:00 PM |
| 63 | wd25 9uq | Jul 29, 2013 5:57 PM |
| 64 | wd25 0ae | Jul 29, 2013 5:50 PM |
| 65 | WD24 4AU | Jul 29, 2013 5:41 PM |
| 66 | WD187AT | Jul 29, 2013 5:39 PM |
| 67 | Wd180hu | Jul 29, 2013 5:29 PM |
| 68 | wd24 7pf | Jul 29, 2013 5:29 PM |
| 69 | WD18 7DX | Jul 25, 2013 2:55 PM |
| 70 | WD232NG | Jul 23, 2013 7:45 PM |
| 71 | WD25 7ST | Jul 23, 2013 1:30 PM |
| 72 | Wd19 4ex | Jul 22, 2013 11:58 AM |
| 73 | wd250en | Jul 22, 2013 10:16 AM |
| 74 | WD 17 4LQ | Jul 21, 2013 8:46 PM |
| 75 | wd24 4ds | Jul 21, 2013 9:41 AM |
| 76 | WD17 3HW | Jul 21, 2013 6:50 AM |
| 77 | wd17 4py | Jul 20, 2013 6:50 PM |
| 78 | WD18 7PX | Jul 20, 2013 9:31 AM |
| 79 | WD25 0BU | Jul 19, 2013 4:25 PM |
| 80 | WD18 7UH | Jul 19, 2013 2:47 PM |
| 81 | wd24 7dy | Jul 19, 2013 2:11 PM |
| 82 | WD25 0AG | Jul 19, 2013 9:24 AM |
| 83 | wd174yx | Jul 19, 2013 9:09 AM |
| 84 | WD17 4SY | Jul 18, 2013 2:27 PM |
| 85 | WD18 7RY | Jul 18, 2013 1:46 PM |
| 86 | WD173BA | Jul 18, 2013 12:29 PM |
| 87 | WD25 9AG | Jul 18, 2013 7:39 AM |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|-----|----------|-----------------------|
| 88 | wd245aw | Jul 17, 2013 4:54 PM |
| 89 | wd180hp | Jul 17, 2013 3:17 PM |
| 90 | WD194HE | Jul 17, 2013 1:45 PM |
| 91 | WD25 7LJ | Jul 17, 2013 12:56 PM |
| 92 | WD24 7QR | Jul 17, 2013 12:41 PM |
| 93 | wd24 5by | Jul 17, 2013 9:57 AM |
| 94 | WD19 4EH | Jul 17, 2013 9:24 AM |
| 95 | wd19 4el | Jul 17, 2013 8:32 AM |
| 96 | wd24 | Jul 17, 2013 8:22 AM |
| 97 | WD17 4YA | Jul 17, 2013 7:56 AM |
| 98 | Wd23 3ej | Jul 16, 2013 10:52 PM |
| 99 | wd194gs | Jul 16, 2013 9:05 PM |
| 100 | WD18 6PL | Jul 16, 2013 9:04 PM |
| 101 | WD19 4DT | Jul 16, 2013 9:01 PM |
| 102 | WD17 3DU | Jul 16, 2013 6:41 PM |
| 103 | RH8 9AZ | Jul 16, 2013 5:05 PM |
| 104 | WD25 7DR | Jul 16, 2013 2:05 PM |
| 105 | wd18 6ny | Jul 16, 2013 2:01 PM |
| 106 | wd194at | Jul 16, 2013 2:01 PM |
| 107 | WD17 4DE | Jul 16, 2013 12:14 PM |
| 108 | WD19 4QQ | Jul 16, 2013 11:41 AM |
| 109 | wd19 4ed | Jul 16, 2013 11:22 AM |
| 110 | wd25 0bz | Jul 16, 2013 10:13 AM |
| 111 | WD24 4DS | Jul 16, 2013 9:32 AM |
| 112 | WD18 7Ly | Jul 16, 2013 7:31 AM |
| 113 | wd17 3an | Jul 16, 2013 6:14 AM |
| 114 | wd25 9np | Jul 16, 2013 1:58 AM |
| 115 | WD18 7SN | Jul 15, 2013 11:50 PM |
| 116 | WD17 4DF | Jul 15, 2013 11:00 PM |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|-----|----------|-----------------------|
| 117 | WD24 5AU | Jul 15, 2013 11:00 PM |
| 118 | wd187nl | Jul 15, 2013 10:39 PM |
| 119 | Wd24 5et | Jul 15, 2013 10:33 PM |
| 120 | wd180du | Jul 15, 2013 10:05 PM |
| 121 | WD17 3DY | Jul 15, 2013 9:37 PM |
| 122 | WD25 7EZ | Jul 15, 2013 9:07 PM |
| 123 | wd33ht | Jul 15, 2013 8:00 PM |
| 124 | WD17 4SY | Jul 15, 2013 7:59 PM |
| 125 | WD18 0ND | Jul 15, 2013 7:51 PM |
| 126 | WD17 3BD | Jul 15, 2013 7:49 PM |
| 127 | WD18 0HD | Jul 15, 2013 7:36 PM |
| 128 | Wd244et | Jul 15, 2013 7:25 PM |
| 129 | WD17 3EE | Jul 15, 2013 7:07 PM |
| 130 | WD17 3HF | Jul 15, 2013 6:13 PM |
| 131 | wd18 7gf | Jul 15, 2013 6:11 PM |
| 132 | WD17 4LF | Jul 15, 2013 5:54 PM |
| 133 | WD25 9FQ | Jul 15, 2013 5:53 PM |
| 134 | WD17 4HU | Jul 15, 2013 5:49 PM |
| 135 | WD18 0DS | Jul 15, 2013 5:35 PM |
| 136 | wd18 7lh | Jul 15, 2013 5:25 PM |
| 137 | WD17 4NX | Jul 15, 2013 5:09 PM |
| 138 | Wd180pr | Jul 15, 2013 5:08 PM |
| 139 | wd18 7la | Jul 15, 2013 4:57 PM |
| 140 | wd17 2qa | Jul 15, 2013 4:55 PM |
| 141 | wd17 4hq | Jul 15, 2013 4:52 PM |
| 142 | WD17 3DY | Jul 15, 2013 4:35 PM |
| 143 | wd245jj | Jul 11, 2013 9:06 PM |
| 144 | WD17 | Jul 10, 2013 6:54 PM |
| 145 | wd25 9uw | Jul 9, 2013 4:57 PM |

Page 2, Q1. In order for us to understand how your views relate to green / open space in your local area it would be helpful for us to have your postcode. Please write in below. It will only be used to support our overall analysis of this questionnaire.

| | | |
|-----|----------|-----------------------|
| 146 | WD18 0LH | Jul 9, 2013 1:32 PM |
| 147 | WD18 OBB | Jul 9, 2013 1:27 PM |
| 148 | Wd17 | Jul 8, 2013 6:03 PM |
| 149 | WD25 5TD | Jul 8, 2013 4:44 PM |
| 150 | WD172QU | Jul 8, 2013 3:22 PM |
| 151 | wd18 7lh | Jul 8, 2013 2:13 PM |
| 152 | WD24 5NG | Jul 8, 2013 1:01 PM |
| 153 | WD24 6HP | Jul 8, 2013 12:05 PM |
| 154 | wd18 0qb | Jul 7, 2013 10:10 PM |
| 155 | Wd180qb | Jul 7, 2013 10:08 PM |
| 156 | WD18 7JB | Jul 5, 2013 9:59 AM |
| 157 | Wd18 0ba | Jul 4, 2013 8:27 PM |
| 158 | WD25 | Jul 4, 2013 8:05 PM |
| 159 | WD18 7LA | Jul 4, 2013 7:25 PM |
| 160 | WD17 3AQ | Jul 4, 2013 1:46 PM |
| 161 | WD24 5HY | Jul 4, 2013 11:32 AM |
| 162 | WD24 5HY | Jun 23, 2013 11:40 PM |
| 163 | WD172QQ | Jun 19, 2013 7:55 PM |
| 164 | WD18 6GG | Jun 15, 2013 12:56 PM |

Page 3, Q2. Which of the following activities do you currently take part in regularly (at least 6 or more times a year)? Tick all that apply

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | Watching tennis in Cassiobury Park | Jul 31, 2013 10:12 PM |
| 2 | fishing | Jul 31, 2013 1:52 AM |
| 3 | Yoga | Jul 30, 2013 11:14 AM |
| 4 | Playing Table Tennis | Jul 30, 2013 9:47 AM |
| 5 | Allotment | Jul 30, 2013 8:59 AM |
| 6 | I have an allotment where I meet friends | Jul 30, 2013 8:57 AM |
| 7 | dog walking | Jul 29, 2013 9:54 PM |
| 8 | Pigeon racing | Jul 29, 2013 8:18 PM |
| 9 | gardening - allotment and own garden | Jul 29, 2013 7:44 PM |
| 10 | Photography | Jul 29, 2013 6:35 PM |
| 11 | Boot camp | Jul 29, 2013 5:29 PM |
| 12 | Allotment | Jul 23, 2013 1:30 PM |
| 13 | taekwondo...krav maga | Jul 22, 2013 10:17 AM |
| 14 | Taking children to the park for picnics or children's play ground. | Jul 19, 2013 2:51 PM |
| 15 | Only golf in Watford area - cricket away from Watford at my club and with works team | Jul 18, 2013 7:40 AM |
| 16 | martial arts | Jul 17, 2013 9:57 AM |
| 17 | Taking kids to park very regularly | Jul 16, 2013 10:53 PM |
| 18 | Allotments | Jul 16, 2013 9:07 PM |
| 19 | Swimming at Watford Central | Jul 16, 2013 6:41 PM |
| 20 | Dog walking | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 21 | thoguht you might include horse riding picnics dog walking, training | Jul 16, 2013 2:03 PM |
| 22 | Dog walking | Jul 16, 2013 2:02 PM |
| 23 | Photography | Jul 15, 2013 10:40 PM |
| 24 | exercising the dog or him exercising me? | Jul 15, 2013 10:06 PM |
| 25 | Football coaching | Jul 15, 2013 9:38 PM |
| 26 | Dog walking | Jul 15, 2013 4:35 PM |
| 27 | gardening, growing fruit and vegetables | Jul 9, 2013 4:58 PM |
| 28 | Vegetable gardening. | Jul 9, 2013 1:28 PM |
| 29 | Maintaining remaining wild areas in the town/city. | Jul 8, 2013 10:10 PM |

Page 3, Q2. Which of the following activities do you currently take part in regularly (at least 6 or more times a year)? Tick all that apply

| | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 30 | Gardening | Jul 8, 2013 6:03 PM |
| 31 | I work at harebreaks adventure playground the children & young people have been visiting these woods for a number of years in fact generations have used these woods, the children & young people engage in tree planting, bluebell walks, litter picking & other activities where possible. some signs would be useful explaining the charcoal pits,coppiced hazel & what wildlife lives & visits the woods...(hoping they would not be damaged).. I have met lots of local residents who walk there dogs & go there with there children who value this space... | Jul 8, 2013 4:53 PM |
| 32 | Working an allotment. | Jul 8, 2013 3:32 PM |

Page 4, Q3. Are you a member of any of the following?

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | U3A | Jul 31, 2013 10:13 PM |
| 2 | Walking Group | Jul 30, 2013 2:44 PM |
| 3 | U3A Callowland Allotment Society | Jul 30, 2013 9:50 AM |
| 4 | Oxhey Hall Horticultural Society Garden Organic National Trust | Jul 30, 2013 9:00 AM |
| 5 | Watford Philharmonic choir / U3A | Jul 30, 2013 8:19 AM |
| 6 | U3A | Jul 30, 2013 7:10 AM |
| 7 | Walking group | Jul 29, 2013 9:31 PM |
| 8 | Woodcraft Folk (youth group) | Jul 29, 2013 9:26 PM |
| 9 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 29, 2013 8:47 PM |
| 10 | Pigeon club | Jul 29, 2013 8:19 PM |
| 11 | church | Jul 29, 2013 7:44 PM |
| 12 | Member of a Church. | Jul 29, 2013 6:43 PM |
| 13 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 29, 2013 6:42 PM |
| 14 | Camera Club | Jul 29, 2013 6:36 PM |
| 15 | National Trust | Jul 29, 2013 6:36 PM |
| 16 | U 3A | Jul 21, 2013 9:06 PM |
| 17 | ParkU3A | Jul 21, 2013 6:51 AM |
| 18 | OVEG | Jul 17, 2013 8:41 PM |
| 19 | SWHerts U3A | Jul 17, 2013 12:58 PM |
| 20 | Neighbourhood watch | Jul 16, 2013 10:53 PM |
| 21 | Save FARM TERRACE Allotments | Jul 16, 2013 9:09 PM |
| 22 | rugby club but with a wider catchment than just rugby. School governor so school community | Jul 16, 2013 2:05 PM |
| 23 | U3A | Jul 16, 2013 6:17 AM |
| 24 | Golf Club and Bowls Club | Jul 15, 2013 6:13 PM |
| 25 | Allotment Association | Jul 9, 2013 1:29 PM |
| 26 | I work for Watford Borough Council & I am based at Harebreaks Adventure Playground, which is next to the woods & have the same ancient oaks & other trees, plants & wildlife that are in the woods. | Jul 8, 2013 4:56 PM |
| 27 | National Trust | Jul 8, 2013 12:07 PM |
| 28 | West Herts Golf Club | Jul 5, 2013 9:59 AM |

Page 4, Q3. Are you a member of any of the following?

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 29 | Bowls Club Group | Jul 4, 2013 8:06 PM |
| 30 | North Watford Allotment and Gardening Society | Jul 4, 2013 11:34 AM |
| 31 | Various - nor sure how relevant, though. | Jun 23, 2013 11:46 PM |
| 32 | Local coaching group | Jun 19, 2013 7:56 PM |

Page 5, Q4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| Name and details of group / association (1) | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | West Watford Community Association | Aug 3, 2013 3:09 PM |
| 2 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Aug 2, 2013 2:33 PM |
| 3 | Wrinky Lunch Club | Aug 1, 2013 12:35 PM |
| 4 | Various groups of University of the Third Age Watford Central | Jul 31, 2013 10:15 PM |
| 5 | Tudor Resident Association | Jul 31, 2013 11:46 AM |
| 6 | fran | Jul 31, 2013 12:49 AM |
| 7 | Herts& Middx Wildlife Trust | Jul 30, 2013 10:16 PM |
| 8 | Leaseholders group (watford community housing trust) | Jul 30, 2013 6:02 PM |
| 9 | West Watford Community Center | Jul 30, 2013 2:46 PM |
| 10 | Neighbourhood watch | Jul 30, 2013 1:49 PM |
| 11 | Xchange (Wilmington Close) Residences Association | Jul 30, 2013 11:20 AM |
| 12 | Watford & District U3A - Garden Club | Jul 30, 2013 9:51 AM |
| 13 | Oxhey Hall Horticultural Society | Jul 30, 2013 9:00 AM |
| 14 | Watford Philharmonic choir | Jul 30, 2013 8:19 AM |
| 15 | Sarratt U3A | Jul 30, 2013 7:11 AM |
| 16 | Nascot Residents Association | Jul 30, 2013 6:37 AM |
| 17 | Friends of Harebreaks Wood | Jul 30, 2013 1:20 AM |
| 18 | Neighbourhood Wtch | Jul 29, 2013 9:46 PM |
| 19 | Watford joggers | Jul 29, 2013 9:32 PM |
| 20 | Watford Woodcraft Folk | Jul 29, 2013 9:26 PM |
| 21 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 29, 2013 8:48 PM |
| 22 | Croxley Pigeon Club | Jul 29, 2013 8:20 PM |
| 23 | OVEG | Jul 29, 2013 8:16 PM |
| 24 | Leggatts and Foxhill Residents Association | Jul 29, 2013 7:49 PM |
| 25 | watford community church | Jul 29, 2013 7:44 PM |
| 26 | Bumble Bee conservation group | Jul 29, 2013 7:16 PM |
| 27 | Watford Community Church | Jul 29, 2013 6:44 PM |
| 28 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 29, 2013 6:42 PM |

Page 5, Q4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 29 | Watford Camera Club | Jul 29, 2013 6:36 PM |
| 30 | National Trust | Jul 29, 2013 6:36 PM |
| 31 | Nascot association | Jul 29, 2013 6:25 PM |
| 32 | Neighbourhood watch | Jul 29, 2013 6:07 PM |
| 33 | african & caribbean assoc | Jul 29, 2013 6:00 PM |
| 34 | Friends of Croxley Moor | Jul 25, 2013 2:58 PM |
| 35 | Boundary Way Action Group | Jul 23, 2013 1:32 PM |
| 36 | green gym | Jul 22, 2013 10:18 AM |
| 37 | University of the Third Age | Jul 21, 2013 9:07 PM |
| 38 | ParkU3A | Jul 21, 2013 6:52 AM |
| 39 | The Ridge Residents Association | Jul 18, 2013 2:32 PM |
| 40 | Littlebury Residents Association | Jul 18, 2013 1:46 PM |
| 41 | NEIGHBOUR WATCH | Jul 18, 2013 12:30 PM |
| 42 | OVEG | Jul 17, 2013 1:45 PM |
| 43 | South West Herts U3A | Jul 17, 2013 12:58 PM |
| 44 | OVEG | Jul 17, 2013 9:25 AM |
| 45 | OVEG | Jul 17, 2013 8:34 AM |
| 46 | Neighbourhood watch | Jul 16, 2013 10:54 PM |
| 47 | Leaseholders group (watford community housing trust) | Jul 16, 2013 9:07 PM |
| 48 | Neighbourhood Watch on the Cassiobury Estate | Jul 16, 2013 6:43 PM |
| 49 | Friends Of Attenborough Fields Oxhey | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 50 | Watford-Novgorod Freindship Society | Jul 16, 2013 2:03 PM |
| 51 | U3A | Jul 16, 2013 12:18 PM |
| 52 | Oxhey Road Neighbourhood Watch | Jul 16, 2013 11:43 AM |
| 53 | Watford U3A. This has sub-groups on walking, local history, etc, all relating to Watford. | Jul 16, 2013 6:19 AM |
| 54 | Railway Terraces Residents Association | Jul 15, 2013 10:35 PM |
| 55 | Cassiobury Residents Association | Jul 15, 2013 9:39 PM |
| 56 | Friends of Alban Wood | Jul 15, 2013 9:09 PM |
| 57 | Ridge Lane Residents Association | Jul 15, 2013 8:00 PM |

Page 5, Q4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| 58 | Wednesday walkers | Jul 15, 2013 7:50 PM |
| 59 | Friend of watford palace | Jul 15, 2013 7:27 PM |
| 60 | Harpenden Golf Club | Jul 15, 2013 6:14 PM |
| 61 | Neighbour watch | Jul 15, 2013 5:09 PM |
| 62 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 15, 2013 4:58 PM |
| 63 | Neighbourhood watch - southeron road | Jul 15, 2013 4:56 PM |
| 64 | Grange Close Neighbourhood Watch | Jul 15, 2013 4:53 PM |
| 65 | Cassiobury Estate Residents Association | Jul 15, 2013 4:36 PM |
| 66 | Friends of Harebreaks | Jul 11, 2013 9:08 PM |
| 67 | Farm Terrace Community Association | Jul 9, 2013 1:45 PM |
| 68 | Friends of Harebreaks Wood | Jul 8, 2013 10:11 PM |
| 69 | Harebreaks Adventure Playground | Jul 8, 2013 4:57 PM |
| 70 | Friends of Harebreaks Wood | Jul 8, 2013 3:33 PM |
| 71 | triangle residents committee | Jul 8, 2013 2:14 PM |
| 72 | FRIENDS OF HAREBREAKS WOOD | Jul 8, 2013 1:03 PM |
| 73 | National Trust | Jul 8, 2013 12:07 PM |
| 74 | Friends of Oxhey Park | Jul 4, 2013 8:28 PM |
| 75 | Garston Bowls | Jul 4, 2013 8:07 PM |
| 76 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 4, 2013 7:26 PM |
| 77 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 4, 2013 1:47 PM |
| 78 | North Watford Allotment and Garden Society | Jul 4, 2013 11:35 AM |
| 79 | Friends of Harebreaks Wood | Jun 23, 2013 11:50 PM |
| 80 | South Herts Coaching Group | Jun 19, 2013 7:56 PM |
| Name and details of group / association (2) | | |
| 2 | Cassiobury Residents Association | Aug 2, 2013 2:33 PM |
| 4 | Various groups of Watford & District U3A | Jul 31, 2013 10:15 PM |
| 7 | Local Residents Asscn | Jul 30, 2013 10:16 PM |
| 8 | Over 50 club | Jul 30, 2013 6:02 PM |
| 9 | Cassiobury Park Walks | Jul 30, 2013 2:46 PM |

Page 5, Q4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| 12 | Callowland Allotment Society | Jul 30, 2013 9:51 AM |
| 13 | Garden Organic | Jul 30, 2013 9:00 AM |
| 14 | Chorleywood U3A | Jul 30, 2013 8:19 AM |
| 15 | The Green | Jul 30, 2013 7:11 AM |
| 16 | HMWT | Jul 30, 2013 6:37 AM |
| 21 | Watford and District National Trust | Jul 29, 2013 8:48 PM |
| 34 | Friends of Watford Museum | Jul 25, 2013 2:58 PM |
| 35 | Friends of Woodside | Jul 23, 2013 1:32 PM |
| 39 | BTCV | Jul 18, 2013 2:32 PM |
| 41 | CASSIOBURY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION | Jul 18, 2013 12:30 PM |
| 47 | Over 50 club | Jul 16, 2013 9:07 PM |
| 49 | OVEG | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 50 | Holywell residents association | Jul 16, 2013 2:03 PM |
| 51 | Herts & Middx wildlife trust | Jul 16, 2013 12:18 PM |
| 55 | Cassiobury Rangers FC | Jul 15, 2013 9:39 PM |
| 60 | Herts Bowls Club | Jul 15, 2013 6:14 PM |
| 61 | Market street traders and home owners | Jul 15, 2013 5:09 PM |
| 67 | Friends of Harwoods Adventure playground Association | Jul 9, 2013 1:45 PM |
| 71 | herts&Middx wildlife trust | Jul 8, 2013 2:14 PM |
| 72 | GREENPEACE | Jul 8, 2013 1:03 PM |
| 75 | North Watford Bowls | Jul 4, 2013 8:07 PM |
| 76 | Cassiobury Triangle Residents Association | Jul 4, 2013 7:26 PM |
| 77 | Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust | Jul 4, 2013 1:47 PM |
| 78 | Secretary George Woodroofe | Jul 4, 2013 11:35 AM |
| 79 | Friends of the Earth | Jun 23, 2013 11:50 PM |
| Name and details of group / association (3) | | |
| 4 | National Trust | Jul 31, 2013 10:15 PM |
| 13 | National trust | Jul 30, 2013 9:00 AM |
| 15 | Sarratt | Jul 30, 2013 7:11 AM |

Page 5, Q4. If you have indicated you are a member of a group(s) / association please give its name and details below:

| | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| 16 | RSPB | Jul 30, 2013 6:37 AM |
| 21 | Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust | Jul 29, 2013 8:48 PM |
| 34 | Volunteer for the CMS (Footpath Friend) | Jul 25, 2013 2:58 PM |
| 35 | Middlesex + Herts Wildlife Trust | Jul 23, 2013 1:32 PM |
| 39 | Marine Conservaton | Jul 18, 2013 2:32 PM |
| 49 | Neighbourhood Watch | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 51 | Friends of Stockers lake | Jul 16, 2013 12:18 PM |
| 75 | Watford with Cassiobury Ladies Bowls | Jul 4, 2013 8:07 PM |
| 77 | Friends of Stockers Lake | Jul 4, 2013 1:47 PM |
| 79 | Greenpeace | Jun 23, 2013 11:50 PM |
| Name and details of group / association (4) | | |
| 34 | The Ramblers (Footpath Secretary) | Jul 25, 2013 2:58 PM |
| 49 | Fullerians RFC | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 51 | Friends of Cassiobury Park | Jul 16, 2013 12:18 PM |
| 77 | Cassiobury Residents Association | Jul 4, 2013 1:47 PM |
| 79 | North Watford History Group | Jun 23, 2013 11:50 PM |
| Name and details of group / association (5) | | |
| 49 | Bushey Manor School | Jul 16, 2013 2:06 PM |
| 51 | National Trust | Jul 16, 2013 12:18 PM |
| 79 | etc | Jun 23, 2013 11:50 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | Watford council are doing a great job with our Green spaces. Cassiobury Park is lovely but the other local parks are also in a good state. Keep up the good work! | Aug 5, 2013 8:27 AM |
| 2 | I use the green spaces in Watford with my young children, especially the playgrounds. There are some excellent parks and playgrounds in Watford, such as Cassiobury Park and Callowland. However, there are no green spaces that close to my house in WD24. Walking with a 5 year old, it takes at least 15 minutes, and more often 20 mins to walk to the nearest open space (Callowland or Knutsford Playing Fields). This means it is a 40 minute round trip just to pop to the playground, which is quite a long time with small children. There is a tiny playground off Southwold Road, but it is in poor condition (broken tarmac, overgrown plants around the edges, often littered). I would love there to be a proper playground closer to our house. | Aug 4, 2013 2:59 PM |
| 3 | It is appalling that the the Farm Terrace allotments will be concreted over for more flats. West Watford is being starved of the little green space it has. | Aug 3, 2013 3:12 PM |
| 4 | The allotments near the future health campus MUST be kept because they promote a healthy lifestyle. There should be a patients allotment, with food from the allotment used in the hospital and the possibility for the patients to visit it. Don't make the developer do what they want, they would only think about the profit and forget about what is good for the other people. I hope that you will listen. | Aug 2, 2013 5:47 PM |
| 5 | Walkpath in Garston Park is only partially solid pavement, remainder is rather muddy after rain. Also the park could do with a few more rubbish bins to avoid littering. | Aug 2, 2013 9:22 AM |
| 6 | Stop any furthe encroachment by Housing green spaces or childrens playv areas. Trust ie Hill Farm Avenue | Aug 1, 2013 12:41 PM |
| 7 | I really don't get out much into the open spaces, except when I drive for a short walk. I particularly enjoy the Chesnil Garden in Nascot Wood Road | Jul 31, 2013 10:23 PM |
| 8 | We need to have more trees. There is a lot of construction in Watford. People need to allocate places for green spaces in these areas as part of the plan. We had the world looking at Harebreaks development after the war which is beautifully spaced. Watfordians need to be taught to look after these places and appreciate them. The town needs to have more plants during the summer which need to be looked after by the local community. Possible each ward competing with each other. Too many people have used their front gardens as car parks. This needs to be resolved with households having more cars. Some back gardens have been used to build buildings which deprives the birds, animals and insects to thrive. There has been a sharp decline in birds giving the sense of 'Silent Spring' we are next in the chain. So what are the factories producing. Is it harmful? The Cassiobury park is fantastic bonus for Watford. These spaces need to make sure drink and cigarettes are not being used here openly. Dogs are another problem. They need their own separate parks so there is no danger to the public. | Jul 31, 2013 12:04 PM |
| 9 | The area I live in near Cassiobury Park is well served with green space - it would be good if more car parking could be provided so that all people can enjoy this beautiful facility - the car park is too small for hot summer days and is often used by commuters blocking spaces all day. | Jul 30, 2013 10:22 PM |
| 10 | The area would be much the poorer without Cassiobury Park & Whippendell | Jul 30, 2013 8:20 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

Woods

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 11 | I have been told that the skateboard park in Central Watford is used by young people as a area for smoking "weed" and having sex. Some dog walkers do neglect to scoop up the "poo" | Jul 30, 2013 3:02 PM |
| 12 | We need more CLEAR information about traffic free paths and to know where the cycle paths are - the only map I have ever seen of cycle paths in Watford was on such a scale as to be impossible to read! also when walks and cycle ways reach the boarder of Watford some indication of where they go or how to get more information would be useful as many people live in boarder areas. | Jul 30, 2013 11:22 AM |
| 13 | The green spaces are diminishing day by especially in Garston with every piece of land acquired for building. I am concerned that as an allotment holder the greedy grabbing developers, with the help of Pickles with be helping themselves. Open spaces? I will be soon= what open spaces? | Jul 30, 2013 9:08 AM |
| 14 | There is little publicity about public green space facilities available for public use and the conditions of use i.e. hire costs. | Jul 30, 2013 9:04 AM |
| 15 | Cycle routes not "joined up" | Jul 30, 2013 6:41 AM |
| 16 | Harebreaks Wood is amazing, there loads of examples of high quality flora and flora but the council has made a mess of this site: When the laid footpaths were put in they were not put in the correct place to be of use for the new gates which were added, The council did not take the Friends of Harebreks Wood's opinions into account when Cherry Tree School next door expanded/moved its boundary, The council put in a new gate to allow access near the new boundary but placed it where people cannot see it leading to idiots damaging the boundary fence with the field of the former West Herts College site which now allows motorbikes to damage the woodland, When putting the new gate in they dug up plants which are one of the markers of Ancient Woodland: Arun Maculatum (Lords-and-Ladies or Cuckoo Pint), they also damaged a fox set, There were some fences added to protect the amazing native bluebells, they have been repeatedly vandalised and not replaced. | Jul 30, 2013 1:37 AM |
| 17 | The playground ont north westerm avenue/East drive has been fotgotten. It is very shabby and yet most other play areas I've seen have been upgraded recently | Jul 29, 2013 11:24 PM |
| 18 | too much rubbish left on Watford Fields by youths, signs about fines but no one enforces these. Cassiobury park needs to have fox/squirrell proof bins! plus the above also applies here. | Jul 29, 2013 10:03 PM |
| 19 | Need more for 13 year old children and up. | Jul 29, 2013 9:37 PM |
| 20 | Oxhey park, Eastbury Road, is kept very well and the trees have been pruned to a high standard this year. | Jul 29, 2013 8:25 PM |
| 21 | They seem to be building on all the green space in North Watford which is a real shame. Also the space that is here is not well developed eg: Harebreaks Park. Callowland has a parking problem yet they are putting seating in there when they may as well have used the existing sealed ex tennis courts as a parking area for all the overflow of traffic. The rest of the development there is lovely but used by a minority, does not feel safe | Jul 29, 2013 8:07 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| | there. | |
| 22 | Cassiobury park is a fantastic facility - it would benefit from more shade in the paddling pool area. | Jul 29, 2013 7:49 PM |
| 23 | Tree care could be improved. Also leaf collection in the season. | Jul 29, 2013 7:20 PM |
| 24 | we do not have any Green/open spaces in my area. | Jul 29, 2013 7:19 PM |
| 25 | Please do not REMOVE any more of them! | Jul 29, 2013 7:07 PM |
| 26 | Ww live on the Cassiobury estate and feel very priviledged to have such a wonderful park as our back yard. | Jul 29, 2013 6:45 PM |
| 27 | The number and location of our local children's playgrounds is excellent but a little more attention should be given to their cleanliness. Cheslyn Gardens is excellent. | Jul 29, 2013 6:45 PM |
| 28 | trees next to some pathways are allowed to overgrow and restricts easy access. Trees should be trimmed more regularly. Also, why are horses allowed to defecate on footpaths with no clean up afterwards? | Jul 29, 2013 6:17 PM |
| 29 | The open spaces are of generally good standard but are probably at their absolute minimum for a population of Watford's size. | Jul 29, 2013 5:54 PM |
| 30 | They are very overgrown and poorly or inconsistently maintained, there is often lots of rubbish and debri in and around, making it unsafe for young children and pets - dogs | Jul 29, 2013 5:35 PM |
| 31 | Living very close to Cassiobury Park, you couldn't wish for more. | Jul 25, 2013 3:02 PM |
| 32 | The quality and quantity of green space in Watford helps define the area, both as special and unique giving it something different from neighbouring London. | Jul 22, 2013 12:01 PM |
| 33 | Open Air swimming. | Jul 21, 2013 9:09 PM |
| 34 | Poor maintenance and replacement of Trees within urban areas. | Jul 21, 2013 9:46 AM |
| 35 | Standard of care deteriorated in recent years | Jul 21, 2013 6:59 AM |
| 36 | Cassiobury Park is fabulous | Jul 20, 2013 6:53 PM |
| 37 | The green spaces on the estates in my area are mown regularly but that is as far as the maintenance goes. No attempts seem to be made to trim back trees, particularly near road junctions & crossings so that drivers and pedestrians & cyclists have clear views. | Jul 19, 2013 4:32 PM |
| 38 | I have put down 'good' as I feel that there is still room for improvement. Simple regular checks like low overhanging tree branches, decaying trees and when the grass needs to be cut would assist. More advisory notices on the Bins that dog refuse can be put in - there is a huge issue with dog poop. Appreciate that these issues are dependent on finances but there does need to be comparison made to Cassiobury Park which is so often promoted. Adult Playground would be appreciated. | Jul 18, 2013 2:43 PM |
| 39 | Cassiobury Park could do with more wardens or rangers to stop cyclists | Jul 18, 2013 1:48 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| | being on the walking paths and to issue on the spot fines for litter louts. | |
| 40 | Cassiobury Park is magnificent - as all our visitors from other towns confirm. Not exactly green spaces but we also appreciate the way roundabouts and other such areas are planted and tended. | Jul 18, 2013 12:37 PM |
| 41 | The only concern I have is litter. The council does its best to keep up and keep things tidy/clean but it seems to be a community problem - because they always seem to be trying to catch up - the messages don't seem to be getting through to people. Perhaps stronger messages or tougher action against thoughtless people who drop litter is required? | Jul 18, 2013 7:46 AM |
| 42 | exercise stations | Jul 17, 2013 3:22 PM |
| 43 | The council should do more to ensure that dog handlers control dogs responsibly. As a frequent jogger I have been inconvenienced on more than one occasion. | Jul 17, 2013 12:47 PM |
| 44 | Too many spaces that could be utilised to make Watford look more attractive to the residents and those who might visit arte being built on | Jul 17, 2013 8:02 AM |
| 45 | Displaying pictures of the achievement may help to appreciate more the level of standard which has been reached. | Jul 16, 2013 9:14 PM |
| 46 | Save FARM TERRACE Allotments THANKS to all who have donated towards @SaveFarmTerrace on http://www.gofundme.com/3ig1fo Every penny counts so please help if you can Click here to support Farm Terrace Allotment Fighting Fund by Sara Jane Trebar www.gofundme.com Farm Terrace Allotment site Watford has existed since 1896. It stands in the centre of the hugely urbanized town of Watford. An oasis in an Urban Jungle. However we are in the middle of a bitter war with our council and central government who want to build housing on our site. This is becoming an.... Like · · Share · 2 · 10 hours ago · | Jul 16, 2013 9:11 PM |
| 47 | We moved here so we could have Cassiobury Park close by. We were also delighted to discover Cheslyn Gardens. We can walk all the way to Croxley Green and return by a different route straight from our door. | Jul 16, 2013 6:47 PM |
| 48 | Green spaces need to be enjoyed by everyone, some are not due to no footway, Over Attenborough Fields there is a Greenway, which blends into nature, yet in the winter we cant get to this across the fileds due to the nud. A simple not over bearing path behind the allotments would allow people to enjoy these fields all year. also allows wheel chair, buggies to a degree. Tennis courts on watford heath are used but are in poor condition. | Jul 16, 2013 2:14 PM |
| 49 | There is a safety aspect with the green spaces. Even when safety issues are reported they are not dealt with quickly enough. | Jul 16, 2013 2:08 PM |
| 50 | Its a beauty of Watford that it is surrounded by some wonderful parks and open spaces. Clearer/ better footpaths across the moors would be good for dog walkers. | Jul 16, 2013 2:08 PM |
| 51 | fantastic flower displays and hanging baskets etc. | Jul 16, 2013 12:23 PM |
| 52 | Overall, Watford has a good green area and a good children play ground activities but not Adults, however the Facilities in relation to the green areas are very poor, no changing facilities no WC, | Jul 16, 2013 11:29 AM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 53 | Contaminated by broken glass and rubbish. unsafe for children. | Jul 16, 2013 10:18 AM |
| 54 | I live in Salisbury Road and between our road and Hatfield Road there is Buryfield Park, which is a mess. We used to have parking in this area and the park was sold to us as an area for the local community to use and schools to visit, now it is a mess full of stinging nettles, no grass was laid so we could picnic. You have people hanging around drinking and swearing so we have to take the children inside, it is generally an eye soar full of mainly stinging nettles, everytime I have rung about it or spoke to a local councillor I have been told there is no money to finish it. If it is not usable it should be shut, as we spent hours planting bushes, trees etc and now it has been left to rack and ruin. Cassiobury Park the park area is too small to accomodate the amount of children who use it. I recently went to Red Lees park in Houslow which is a smaller area than Cassiobury but what a lovely park area they have created. Spread out with trees, mounds inbetween, plenty of benches, picninc benches etc a joy to sit in and watch the kids play. Cassiobury park could take example from a place like this, we have alot more land and did not develope it nicely, alot of nice play equipment put in an old fashion plain square play area. Parents have to stand around as there is not enough seating and when it is busy not every-one can fit in the area. This is the same with Radlett Road play area alot of nice new equipment in a square old fashion play area, why could this not have been landscaped like Red Lees Hounslow to make it much nice for every-one in the family, | Jul 16, 2013 9:53 AM |
| 55 | Nowhere on survey to tick average meaning we had to choose between poor and good. | Jul 16, 2013 7:34 AM |
| 56 | They are all fairly good, some excellent. | Jul 16, 2013 6:25 AM |
| 57 | We're about to loose one allotment site to housing, if we're not careful others will follow. | Jul 15, 2013 11:55 PM |
| 58 | Callowland allotments needs some serious attention - cutting down weeds on empty plots, installing toilets and increasing uptake of allotments A skateboard park at Callowland would be a great asset and toilets are essential. Also toilets at Cassiobury are at disgrace. | Jul 15, 2013 10:39 PM |
| 59 | the parks in watford are excellent it is a great pity that the the large number of inconsiderate humans who leave their mess all over the place can not be banned or worse! | Jul 15, 2013 10:10 PM |
| 60 | Excellent park near where I live - Cassiobury, but I don't know much about other green spaces in Watford | Jul 15, 2013 7:55 PM |
| 61 | I use Cassiobury park a lot and it's great most of the time - current Waterways Festival industrial area is an eye sore and the temporary parking restrictions are unworkable. | Jul 15, 2013 7:54 PM |
| 62 | I think the uncut grass areas in Cassiobury park are far too large particularly compared with the good old days.Regretfully the rubbish that is left and fires lit are shameful.Some dog owners also have a lot to answer for in terms of fouling.The latter issues would require warden attendance.Not necessarily full time but to make random checks with powers of prosecution. | Jul 15, 2013 6:24 PM |
| 63 | Maximise the areas we ready have by ensuring the maintenance of them for everyone to continue the use if them | Jul 15, 2013 5:14 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|---|----------------------|
| 64 | Cassiobury Park is the best thing about Watford ! The Friends of Cassiobury regularly pick up litter but the bins in the park could be emptied more often at busy times of the year i.e. in hot weather when a lot of extra people visit the park. | Jul 15, 2013 5:01 PM |
| 65 | Sorry my answers have not been much help but I don;t play sport or have young shildren so I don't know abut some of the things you are asking. I do enjoy Cassiobury Park - I walk my small dog there everyevening in the summer and every wekend in winter. | Jul 15, 2013 4:40 PM |
| 66 | I am very lucky in living close to the edge of the Green Belt in an area that was laid out when the need for green spaces and public health was understood. Many of the properties have good sized gardens that allow for food growing as well as recreation, although there are a large number of flats that don't. The only allotment is a community one run by a charity and open for a few hours during office hours, so minimal access for anyone working. The centre of Watford is not nearly so lucky, having been laid out at the turn of last century when public health and sanitation were not nearly so well served. And now one of the few green spaces that serves as a lung, relief from concrete and a haven for biodiversity that is still present in the centre of town is being removed, leaving the dwellers of homes with tiny backyards further impoverished in order to provide space for further executive homes. All of our green space is being squeezed as infill is increased and anything that is green and lovely about Watford is under threat except those areas recognised as somehow prestigious and/or under the auspice of people with influence. Please don't take the green off of our map, we love it and need it, it is as vital to our health as the NHS. It is not just the destruction of the historic Farm Terrace allotments but the use of other green space as transport infrastructure is expanded that should be taken into account as a major deterioration in healthy areas for informal recreation, the informality being extra important as people have less money to spend on formal facilities or the time to fit in with them. We need to balance what might be perceived as progressive with the regression into reduced public green areas. | Jul 9, 2013 5:28 PM |
| 67 | let the residents keep their plots on Farm Terrace Allotments and stop the development of housing on this Precious land. | Jul 9, 2013 2:12 PM |
| 68 | I see no category for my opinion of allotments in the whole Watford area which is poor and declining with the reduction in size allocation and closure of Callowland, Farm Terrace and Willow Lane as well as plans to take land from Holywell for a new station. My local park is Oxhey which is to have a road put through it resulting in the loss of pitches, social club and tennis courts as well as the damage to wildlife, habitat and tranquillity. My nearest Playing fields have recently had changing rooms demolished and football banned. So local provision here is pretty poor | Jul 9, 2013 1:43 PM |
| 69 | I think WBC is perfectly happy to tarmac over the very few remaining oases of green space within the metropolitan area to build housing on. I don't think WBC has an investment strategy beyond developing the remaining green spaces for housing to bring additional revenue in the form of Council Tax. | Jul 8, 2013 10:18 PM |
| 70 | I concider Watford to be a council that takes notice of the importance of green spaces, which is an important personal issue for me & the future generations human, animal & insect, plants & trees!! | Jul 8, 2013 5:00 PM |
| 71 | I totally disagree with the plan to build on Farm Terrace Allotments. | Jul 8, 2013 3:40 PM |

Page 10, Q9. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quality of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 72 | they are already over-used; any further use is in danger of damaging rather than 'enhancing' the areas | Jul 8, 2013 2:18 PM |
| 73 | IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE MAINTAIN AREAS LIKE HAREBREAKS WOOD AND OTHER WOODLAND AREAS AS NATURAL SPACES.....WITHOUT INTERVENTION, AS THEY ARE CRUCIAL FOR PLANT, BIRD AND ANIMAL LIFE - ON WHICH WE, AS HUMANS, ARE ULTIMATELY DEPENDENT. | Jul 8, 2013 1:08 PM |
| 74 | Beautiful Cassiobury Park has not got enough toilets, to use, and they are in extremely poor conditions, with no water running to even wash your hands after the use of WC. | Jul 7, 2013 10:29 PM |
| 75 | Really only know Cassiobury Park and that is an excellent amenity and well-maintained but with insufficient parking | Jul 5, 2013 10:02 AM |
| 76 | In the main the quality of green and open spaces is quite good however some of the lighting and paths which serve the small parks and recreation grounds is quite poor and needs attention. | Jul 4, 2013 8:12 PM |
| 77 | I think it a great shame that Watford Council is going to use the Farm Terrace Allotment for development | Jul 4, 2013 7:28 PM |
| 78 | Green spaces would be better helped by more fining of litter droppers and more education of children not to drop litter. | Jul 4, 2013 1:51 PM |
| 79 | It's quite good, I think, although I can't answer detailed questions about much of it. | Jun 24, 2013 12:01 AM |
| 80 | Cassiobury Park is stunning and the work that has been done to the recreation ground that is parallel to the A41 is great and makes it a great place to go. I cycle a lot and am a big fan of the cycle paths in the area that seem to be well maintained. | Jun 19, 2013 7:58 PM |
| 81 | Takes a long time for the Council to notice parks. The park nearest should be condemned. | Jun 15, 2013 1:03 PM |

Page 15, Q14. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quantity / amount of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | I am really pleased that several of the playgrounds in Watford as a whole have recently been refurbished - my children love to use them. It would be nice if Knutsford Playing Fields Playgroup (the one off Radlett Road) had play equipment suitable for the under 5s. All of the equipment there is suitable for over 5s. | Aug 4, 2013 3:01 PM |
| 2 | Same thing about the allotment I said before, please save the health campus allotment and integrate it within the health campus! | Aug 2, 2013 5:49 PM |
| 3 | The parks could do with more flowers and shrubs. | Aug 2, 2013 9:27 AM |
| 4 | Need to preserve what is there. | Jul 31, 2013 12:08 PM |
| 5 | Lot less now than when I came to Watford as several areas have been used for housing development | Jul 30, 2013 8:24 PM |
| 6 | Nothing to add | Jul 30, 2013 3:08 PM |
| 7 | We need to preserve our woodland and wild spaces and keep as much green and open space as possible, these are the lungs of the planet and preserve physical and mental health in the population. | Jul 30, 2013 11:27 AM |
| 8 | There needs to be far more open spaces with trees. The quality of air in this area as we are surrounded by motorways is appalling. When you open windows you smell the traffic. Is the quality monitored? | Jul 30, 2013 9:15 AM |
| 9 | The questionnaire should read "... more are needed" not "... more is needed". The whole credibility of this exercise has now been downgraded in my view : if the creators cannot grasp basic grammar then how on earth can they analyse complex data ? Also it is pointless asking me about "Watford as a whole" - there is no definition of "Watford as a whole" and, as an ordinary resident how can I possibly have an opinion on children's play areas in ALL other oarts of the town ? | Jul 30, 2013 6:46 AM |
| 10 | It's all very well having public changing facilities and toilets but they need to be open to the public! I had a lovely quiet evening in Cassiobury Park recently and none of the toilets were accessible to the public as they were locked despite the lights being on! | Jul 30, 2013 1:40 AM |
| 11 | Watford has excellent parks and green areas | Jul 29, 2013 9:36 PM |
| 12 | Watford has some lovely green and open spaces like Cassiobury Park however its limited to certain areas. North Watford is too overdeveloped already and what little green space is left should be kept as green space. | Jul 29, 2013 8:11 PM |
| 13 | With the high density of housing planned and already built in Watford, green spaces are fast disappearing and this is to the great detriment of the area. It is already extremely congested with parking and driving problems and this is only getting worse. Allotments are being reduced in Watford with the planned closure of Farm Terrace and no local allotments to replace them - Bushey is too far for many people and not in Watford. The council should be ashamed of itself removing an amazing habitat for wildlife, a green lung within West Watford and a healthy way of life for the allotment holders - exercising and eating fresh vegetables. The space in Tolpits Lane opposite Chessbrook could be a great local resource - a green space could be created for the local people - a mixture of gardens/wild areas and '1 metre square' gardens for the many people in the flats and could be used by the | Jul 29, 2013 8:08 PM |

Page 15, Q14. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quantity / amount of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| | old people in the care home. Opportunities such as this for innovation in using derelict land are rarely used by the council who all too often sell the land to property developers. The local infrastructure of roads, parking, schools, surgery's, etc is insufficient to cope with additional houses planned. Cassiobury park is a huge asset to Watford and there are areas which are open and green such as Cassiobury estate, but West Watford is feeling crowded and congested with the prospect of it only getting worse. | |
| 14 | Not enough provision made in the new developments | Jul 29, 2013 7:26 PM |
| 15 | For Watford to seem green, Watford needs to be actually green! | Jul 29, 2013 7:25 PM |
| 16 | In my area I feel there is a good balance. | Jul 29, 2013 6:51 PM |
| 17 | more funding required for local conservation groups or they will fold . Some of these are more than litter pickers | Jul 22, 2013 10:25 AM |
| 18 | There is a requirement for more footpaths through green surroundings to increase traffic on foot rather than on roads. Many of Watford's roads are unnecessarily car centric and require long pedestrian diversions through subways and around barriers, even on roads with 30mph speed limits. Combined with the lack of trees and plants on these roads they appear as urban dual carriageways to drivers and are treated as such. | Jul 21, 2013 9:58 AM |
| 19 | Lucky to have open spaces near us but paths and general up keep standard falling | Jul 21, 2013 7:07 AM |
| 20 | N/A | Jul 18, 2013 1:50 PM |
| 21 | No | Jul 18, 2013 7:49 AM |
| 22 | No space to increase, so other than paying lip service to this, why are the questions being asked? | Jul 17, 2013 8:05 AM |
| 23 | A lot of work is currently done and very well.We are in the recession and it is a matter of budget and funding.We should not be too fussy. | Jul 16, 2013 9:23 PM |
| 24 | Save FARM TERRACE Allotments THANKS to all who have donated towards @SaveFarmTerrace on http://www.gofundme.com/3ig1fo Every penny counts so please help if you can Click here to support Farm Terrace Allotment Fighting Fund by Sara Jane Trebar www.gofundme.com Farm Terrace Allotment site Watford has existed since 1896. It stands in the centre of the hugely urbanized town of Watford. An oasis in an Urban Jungle. However we are in the middle of a bitter war with our council and central government who want to build housing on our site. This is becoming an.... | Jul 16, 2013 9:13 PM |
| 25 | Quantity is important, but location is more so. As we keep having more and more houses, consideration MUST be given to the location and capacity of existing spaces to ensure they can be enjoyed. Too many people in one area will mean people wont be able to use them. Housing development play areas tend to be too small so not worth having, need to get a balance. | Jul 16, 2013 2:19 PM |
| 26 | There is not enough for young people to do. Young people are often made to feel alienated from the current green spaces or are moved on as if they are common criminals not wanted in that "area". | Jul 16, 2013 2:11 PM |

Page 15, Q14. Is there anything else you would like to add about the quantity / amount of green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 27 | Now in my eighties, I am very satisfied with those that I use. | Jul 16, 2013 6:32 AM |
| 28 | More skateboard parks please and public toilets in all parks | Jul 15, 2013 10:41 PM |
| 29 | Far better parking at Cassiobury Park.It is a digrace that this facility denies local residents the simple right to park and enjoy.The whole position is a digrace to Watford Council. | Jul 15, 2013 6:29 PM |
| 30 | A grassed area in the town centre near the pond would be a good idea. | Jul 15, 2013 5:04 PM |
| 31 | I don't know Watford as a whole well enough to comment. | Jul 15, 2013 4:42 PM |
| 32 | I have lived where I am now for 37yrs and the green spaces ie playing fields, back gardens, Leavesden Aerodrome have been constantly erode for building. More housing in particular is squeezed into even the smallest available space not only in my area but across Watford, | Jul 11, 2013 9:34 PM |
| 33 | As more people move to the area, always more green areas and open spaces are needed. Families like their children to be able to play near to their homes/where they can see them, or they are not allowed out of the house, and for families that do not have gardens this generally means unhealthy children. It is no coincidence that the increase in childhood obesity ties in with the sell off of school playing fields and infill building on local green areas. A balance must be struck, someone needs to say here and no further before Watford turns into an inner-city type area. Those of us who have lived in the Borough all our lives are scared that the time has already passed each time we see a famliar green patch has been built on. | Jul 9, 2013 5:39 PM |
| 34 | Hardly any open spaces in West WATFORD, but plenty of housing going up, in an area already over developed, what green/open space that is there, should stay there and not be build on at all !! | Jul 9, 2013 2:27 PM |
| 35 | WBC has habitually exploited Transiton facilities which should have been re-developed to serve the community to squeeze in additional private housing and therefore increase its income from Coucil Tax. | Jul 8, 2013 10:23 PM |
| 36 | I would like to see children & young people & families..using green spaces more if there were some recreation facilities near to most homes in Watford... | Jul 8, 2013 5:04 PM |
| 37 | All parks/recreation grounds should have public toilets in them. Also picnic tables with chess/checker boards on then. And weatherproof table tennis tables. | Jun 24, 2013 12:22 AM |
| 38 | Stop building flats and houses at every opportunity. Quality not Quantity. | Jun 15, 2013 1:08 PM |

Page 17, Q16. Is there anything else you would like to add about the accessing / getting to green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | As mentioned in my answer to a previous question, if you live in WD24 it is quite a long walk to the nearest children's playground, when you have young children. I would like there to be more children's playgrounds within closer walking distance of my house. | Aug 4, 2013 3:03 PM |
| 2 | Please save the health campus allotments and integrate them into the health campus! | Aug 2, 2013 5:50 PM |
| 3 | In my hometown allotments were partly assigned to schools which were using them in various forms, i.e. as succession gardens, rose gardens or medicinal herb plantations. It is a lot of fun, but also serious work which is highly educative. It also is a way to interest pupils for gardening in general; so a teacher/tutor is imperative. I wonder what Watford schools would say about such an opportunity... | Aug 2, 2013 9:35 AM |
| 4 | I get to the green spaces in the car | Jul 31, 2013 10:34 PM |
| 5 | Car parking problems when main events on in Cassiobury Park | Jul 30, 2013 8:26 PM |
| 6 | As I live near to Cassiobury Park I dont have a problem with this | Jul 30, 2013 3:11 PM |
| 7 | We All need green space as close to home as possible and as the population ages the distance they can walk to such places shortens. Also children need space close to home. | Jul 30, 2013 11:30 AM |
| 8 | I don't know what you mean by a "recreation ground" as opposed to a sports pitch, park, children's play area etc. Also why have you included artificial sports field twice on the previous page ? | Jul 30, 2013 6:48 AM |
| 9 | I cannot walk on Watford due to my disability therefore to acces they sites I must be driven there- any/some/more designated parking would be extremely useful. | Jul 30, 2013 1:42 AM |
| 10 | The open air gym spaces (radlett road) are excellent, there should be more around watford | Jul 29, 2013 9:38 PM |
| 11 | Traffic is an issue however without a car you would not be able to get to most green spaces in North Watford. | Jul 29, 2013 8:12 PM |
| 12 | More 'joined-up' cycle paths would be good. | Jul 29, 2013 8:10 PM |
| 13 | no | Jul 29, 2013 7:28 PM |
| 14 | No. | Jul 29, 2013 6:53 PM |
| 15 | dog excrement is always a problem bigger fines for owners who dont clear up .dogs on a lead at all times in parks . certain breeds to be muzzeled. no dogs in kids play ares | Jul 22, 2013 10:29 AM |
| 16 | N/A | Jul 18, 2013 1:50 PM |
| 17 | No | Jul 18, 2013 7:50 AM |
| 18 | Save FARM TERRACE Allotments THANKS to all who have donated towards @SaveFarmTerrace on http://www.gofundme.com/3ig1fo Every penny counts so please help if you can Click here to support Farm Terrace Allotment Fighting Fund by Sara Jane Trebar www.gofundme.com | Jul 16, 2013 9:14 PM |

Page 17, Q16. Is there anything else you would like to add about the accessing / getting to green / open spaces in your area or in Watford overall. Please write in below.

| | | |
|----|--|-----------------------|
| | Farm Terrace Allotment site Watford has existed since 1896. It stands in the centre of the hugely urbanized town of Watford. An oasis in an Urban Jungle. However we are in the middle of a bitter war with our council and central government who want to build housing on our site. This is becoming an.... . | |
| 19 | You duplicated a question might distort findings. | Jul 16, 2013 2:20 PM |
| 20 | more and better sign posting of walkways/pathways/ canal paths and their start/ access points | Jul 16, 2013 2:16 PM |
| 21 | Please can we have more WC facilities and baby changing facilities thank you very much for the opportunity to express my opinion Kind regards | Jul 16, 2013 11:33 AM |
| 22 | I don't mind walking 20 minutes to Radlett Road park but when I get there, there are no toilets, refreshments etc so you have to carry more and cannot stay as long and relax with the children before they need the toilet. | Jul 16, 2013 9:58 AM |
| 23 | If there were not these spaces, then I would probably choose not to live here. | Jul 16, 2013 6:35 AM |
| 24 | Yes as stated ample Car parking. | Jul 15, 2013 6:32 PM |
| 25 | Car park for Cassiobury Park not big enough at busy times of the year i.e. hot weather, bank holidays, marathons/half marathons. | Jul 15, 2013 5:07 PM |
| 26 | WBC has been gradually eroding the 'quality of life' of residents for years. WBC is enerating most of its income from squeezing in more Council Tax payers. WBC has no interest or role in developing the town commercially. | Jul 8, 2013 10:28 PM |
| 27 | I would like to see the parks, woods & open spaces open to all for future generations.. | Jul 8, 2013 5:13 PM |
| 28 | More events at Cheslyn House Better parking at the Park And, being selfish, fewer public footpaths across thre Golf Course | Jul 5, 2013 10:06 AM |
| 29 | For park and recreation ground users it would be beneficial to increase the amount of public parking available near the facilities in each park next to the access roads especially in Cassiobury Park | Jul 4, 2013 8:19 PM |

Page 19, Q20. Which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 1 | European | Aug 2, 2013 5:51 PM |
| 2 | British | Aug 2, 2013 2:38 PM |
| 3 | German | Aug 2, 2013 9:36 AM |
| 4 | Kenyan of Asian Origin | Jul 31, 2013 12:11 PM |
| 5 | ho posed this ridiculous question?? Politically correct rubbish. Why would anyone think about their ethnicity before going for a walk in a park. Ridiculous | Jul 30, 2013 9:32 AM |
| 6 | Spanish | Jul 30, 2013 8:07 AM |
| 7 | Danish | Jul 29, 2013 9:38 PM |
| 8 | New Zealand | Jul 29, 2013 8:13 PM |
| 9 | Why is that important? | Jul 29, 2013 6:50 PM |
| 10 | French | Jul 29, 2013 6:05 PM |
| 11 | Sri lankan | Jul 29, 2013 5:37 PM |
| 12 | english,not british as in welsh ,scottish,irish | Jul 22, 2013 10:32 AM |
| 13 | croat/serb | Jul 17, 2013 3:25 PM |
| 14 | Please explain the reason behind this question. | Jul 16, 2013 12:00 AM |
| 15 | Hungarian | Jul 15, 2013 7:43 PM |

Page 20, Q21. Religion or belief – what is your religion or belief

| | | |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| 1 | I have spiritual beliefs but am not affiliated to any one religious group although my family is nominally Christian | Jul 30, 2013 11:33 AM |
| 2 | I'm answering questions on openspaces etc. What has this question got to do with anything other than collecting information - Don't be nosey | Jul 30, 2013 9:36 AM |
| 3 | Spiritual but not religious. | Jul 29, 2013 7:53 PM |
| 4 | Why do need to know that? | Jul 29, 2013 6:50 PM |
| 5 | jedi | Jul 22, 2013 10:32 AM |
| 6 | This question is irrelevant to the subject being discussed | Jul 16, 2013 12:00 AM |
| 7 | jedi | Jul 15, 2013 10:13 PM |
| 8 | viashnava & pagan | Jul 8, 2013 5:14 PM |
| 9 | Humanist | Jul 8, 2013 3:50 PM |

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A Green Spaces Strategy for Watford



Green Spaces Better Places

2013-2023



Document Version Control

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| 4 | 07/10/13 | Issued to Cabinet 11/11/13 FINAL |
| 5 | 21/10/13 | Issued to PFH and approved for Cabinet |
| | | |
| | | |

A Green Spaces Vision for Watford

Watford will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the town.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is a Green Spaces Strategy? It sets out how a local authority will invest in and manage the open space in its area. This is exactly what this revised and updated strategy sets out to do. It applies to all open space in Watford and applies to parks and open spaces, squares, play space, allotments and our natural green space assets, especially valuable in an urban community such as ours. It provides the evidence, sets the direction and helps secure funds for investment in open space.

This strategy is ambitious despite challenging economic times that we all face and Watford is not alone in embracing these challenges head on. It recognises and acknowledges the benefits of green spaces to Watford as a town as well as those that live, work and visit. As a town, we are growing and the last census indicated substantial growth in our population and changes in the demographic make up of it. Involving communities is an important aspect of how we manage and provide green spaces and the strategy advocates strong community engagement, from children and young people, to minority groups across the town.

Ongoing research and changes in policy direction at a national level are recognised, in particular, the importance of the National Planning Policy Framework, the importance of Green Infrastructure as well as more locally, our new Corporate Planning Framework from 2013, where our vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit. The important messages from these and others is that green spaces matter and deliver clear benefits for local people, wildlife and the long term sustainability of Watford.

The evidence has been provided through a range of green spaces audits, where we have assessed quality, quantity and accessibility through a comprehensive on site audit and analysis which we have subsequently mapped onto a Geographical Information System (GIS). These audits have covered many issues such as maintenance, cleanliness, biodiversity, usage, recreational value, facilities available and management regimes. A tried and tested methodology, this has given us the evidence we need to build up a picture, identifying what we have and allowing us to prioritise.

First of all, we assessed the quality and value of our green spaces, how good were they and what contribution they were making to local amenity, looking at a range of typologies, which included parks, gardens and recreation grounds, allotments, play areas, natural green space, cemeteries and sports facilities. We categorised each space as to whether it was high or low quality or high or low community value. The results are summarised within the strategy but the overall result was that the quality and value of open spaces across Watford was mixed, with some good examples such as the Green Flag parks and play areas in particular, reflected in the significant investment over the last few years.

There is often a perception among residents that “there is never enough green space”, but when we assessed the amount of green space over the range of typologies, as a town, Watford is very well endowed, and many of our wards have excellent provision of green space over a range of typologies. Some deficiencies do occur, especially with regards to natural green space, but overall, we are well provided for. However, accessibility is an issue for many and the strategy advocates adopting green infrastructure principles and developing a strategic green space network for the town. By setting standards of provision we would expect to maintain in Watford, we can concentrate on those sites that are most important to us which need to be protected at all costs as well as continually enhanced. This allows the council to deliver change through improving the quality, value and accessibility of our green space network, making Watford a better place to live. This network is therefore formed of regional, community and local parks, along with a network of strategic sports hubs and green links with an emphasis on enhancement, accessibility, protection and increasing community and stakeholder involvement.

But what about those sites that are not performing well and are deemed low quality and/or low value? Over 50 sites fall into this category at present. There is a clear policy on how we treat these sites. We should be looking at enhancing the quality of these green spaces as long as it is possible to improve and enhance the value of them. If this is not possible, we should consider the space surplus to requirements in terms of its current use if the value cannot be improved and consider alternative

uses. However, this must be considered in the light of wider planning policies such as the need to determine other typology deficiencies in the area within distance thresholds, whether enhancement is realistic and determine community value by local consultation.

The Council has therefore set a challenging vision with a number of key components, based on stewardship, management, use and environmental protection. It has also identified that because we cannot do it all, we need to work in partnership with local stakeholders. We currently do this in many of our green spaces and communities, but there are significant opportunities to develop further partnerships across Watford. This may range from community tidy ups in open spaces with a Friends group or a joint working arrangement with a major organisation such as Groundwork, Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust or the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Funding is a significant issue, and we have identified ways we can make changes, whether through income generation, partnering, developing self management options or altering management and maintenance regimes.

How will we know if we are making a difference? We see Green Flag as the key performance indicator and we are very proud of the 3 that we have retained annually but we want to build on this and seek further Green Flags for Watford and have set challenging targets to aim for. These include Green Flags for Oxhey Park, Callowland Rec, Garston Park as well as St. Mary’s churchyard. We will also reassess the quality and value scores every 24 months to assess what progress has been made.

The point of a strategy is to get things done and the most important aspect of this is the Action Plan and we have developed a comprehensive, challenging, yet stretched series of actions to ensure this strategy actually “gets things done”.

Progress over the last 5 years has been excellent and Watford’s green spaces are well considered, much loved and the continued improvements are there to be seen. This Green Spaces Strategy, however, provides a realistic, yet challenging target for continued improvement for the next 10 years.



Cheslyn House and Gardens

1 Introduction

Green spaces play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life for local communities in Watford. They improve the appearance of the town, and provide for informal recreation, sport and play. This comprehensive Green Spaces Strategy for 2013 -2023 and Action Plan aims to ensure that Watford achieves an appropriate balance between quantity of provision, quality, and the enhancement of existing green spaces.

This Green Spaces Strategy sets out what the Council aims to do, in conjunction with its partners, to ensure protection of green spaces and sustainable provision, management and maintenance to meet the needs of the Watford community, as well as visitors to the town. It provides a vision and sets directions, priorities and actions for the next ten years.

1.1 The Purpose of this Green Spaces Strategy

The development of a Green Spaces Strategy offers a major opportunity to improve parks and green spaces. Government guidance over recent years has emphasised the need for a more strategic approach to green space. CABE Space (now the Design Council) guidance identified the role of Green Spaces Strategies was to:

- ❑ Generate political and inter-departmental support for parks and green spaces and establish clear lines of responsibility;
- ❑ Develop a vision shared by politicians, officers, key partners, stakeholders and communities;
- ❑ Define the value and role of parks and green spaces in meeting corporate and community aims;
- ❑ Create a comprehensive policy framework for the protection, enhancement, accessibility and use of parks and green spaces;
- ❑ Make sure that green spaces enhance the quality and diversity of the environment, the life of local communities and promote civic pride and social inclusion;
- ❑ Ensure that the green space network meets the needs of local people, now and in the future;
- ❑ Provide a framework for resource allocation that maximises funding to support improvements from internal revenue budgets and external funding; and
- ❑ Create a framework for voluntary and community groups to participate in green space provision and management.

'Green Space Strategies - a good practice guide' CABE Space.

1.2 The Watford Green Spaces Strategy 2007-2012 - A Review

In 2007, Watford adopted its first Green Spaces Strategy with an aim 'to provide green spaces to be proud of, which will benefit the whole community, improving health, well-being and quality of life'. It identified a number of objectives and outlined an Action Plan that has achieved much but has also identified further work that needs 'carrying forward'. Successes have included:

- Spatial mapping of Watford's green spaces, identifying areas of deficiency;
- Improved links to Friends Groups;
- Continued improvements to Woodside Playing Fields;

- Improvements to children’s playgrounds and youth facilities, including outdoor gyms and fitness trails;
- A successful Cassiobury Park Round 1 HLF bid in 2012;
- Charter for the Bereaved for the Cemeteries;
- Continued retention of Green Flag for Cassiobury Park, Woodside Playing Fields and Cheslyn House and Gardens;
- Review and updating of the Allotments Strategy in 2013;
- Self- Management of Cherry Tree allotments;
- Sports Facilities Study completed;
- Program of signage replacement for all parks; and
- Provision of dog bins reviewed.

Other improvements have been introduced with the allocation of Section 106 funding in 2011 and included the following:

- Litter bin replacement across all parks and green spaces;
- £4.6 million improvement program to parks and play areas, including Oxhey Park, Callowland Recreation Ground, King George V Playing Fields, Vicarage Road Cemetery, North Watford Cemetery, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Waterfields Recreation Ground, Knutsford Playing Fields and North Watford Playing Fields;
- Colne River Project and continued support for the Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV);
- Sports Legacy Zone at Meriden Park; and
- New Multi Use Games Areas at Leavesden Green, Callowland Recreation Ground and Radlett Road Playing Fields.

As part of this new strategy, the 2007-12 Green Spaces Strategy and Action Plan has been reviewed and outstanding and relevant actions carried forward. The last few years have brought a number of significant challenges for local authorities as they respond to changing government requirements and expectations, as well as the substantial reduction in government funding.

In 2010, the reduction in funding for Watford corresponded to around £5 million worth of savings due largely to a reduction of 35% in the Council’s general funding from government. This was a challenging savings target and represented a substantial cut to the Council’s budget. The Council has worked hard over the last two years to achieve this saving and to minimise the impact on the council, the services we deliver, the local community and on its staff. However, we have had to take some very difficult decisions and know that there will be more to be made as we work through the announcement of our government funding for the next number of years.

As a result of these national reductions in funding, many local authorities have seen reductions in standards across parks and green spaces and this has also impacted in Watford. However, the Council remains committed to its updated green space vision for Watford underpinned by this revised Green Spaces Strategy, whilst recognising and facing the challenges that the Council, the town and local people now face.

1.3 The Aims and Objectives of the revised Watford Green Spaces Strategy

The aims and objectives for a revised Watford Green Spaces Strategy are;

- To provide and enhance the strategic network of accessible, high quality green space throughout Watford;
- To provide guidance for the effective planning and protection of open space, sport and recreational facilities which meet local needs by:
 - providing appropriate green space planning policies and standards which provide clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners, which will be taken forward as part of the Core Strategy;
 - promoting good green space design and management principles in all new and existing developments.
- To strengthen local community involvement and interest in Watford's green spaces by:
 - encouraging community participation in the design, management and care of their local green spaces;
 - promoting the value of green space as a major contributor to health and social well being, via its use for recreational, educational and sporting activities;
 - promoting awareness and understanding of the heritage of our green spaces;
 - ensuring green spaces are locally valued and well used community assets.
- To improve green spaces by:
 - ensuring green spaces are high quality and locally accessible, clean, attractive, well maintained, fit for purpose and safe;
 - improving the existing green spaces contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of Watford;
 - providing a sustainable approach to green spaces management and maintenance.

1.4 What will this Green Spaces Strategy Cover?

This Green Spaces Strategy covers the following types of accessible green space as listed below. Much of it is owned and managed by Watford Borough Council but some are also owned by other public bodies like the County Council / Police Crime Commissioner with others in private ownership such as Watford Community Housing Trust. The following is based on the typology of open space specified in the former Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17).

■ Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds (PGRG)

These areas of land are normally enclosed, designed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden or recreation ground. Their primary purpose is to provide accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

■ Amenity Green Spaces (AGS)

These are landscaped areas that are a visual amenity and/or have separate land uses e.g. major areas of grass within housing areas and business parks that are usable for informal recreation, social activities and informal play. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for informal recreation close to home or work, or to enhance the appearance of residential and other areas.

■ **Green Corridors (GC)**

These are green routes/linkages including river and canal corridors, major road verges and hedgerows connecting different areas within urban and rural areas and joining green spaces together. Their primary purpose is for walking, cycling or horse riding routes and for wildlife migration.

■ **Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces (NGS)**

These are areas of undeveloped or previously undeveloped land with residual natural habitats. Their primary purpose is for wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

■ **Allotments and Community Gardens (ACG)**

Areas of land rented for growing vegetables, fruits or flowers. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

■ **Churchyards and Cemeteries (CC)**

This category includes municipal cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds with legitimate public access. Their primary purpose is for burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

■ **Civic Space (CS)**

Includes squares and streets, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and civic or cultural events, and can make connections for people and for wildlife.

■ **Play Space for Children and Young People (CYP)**

This includes equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and multi use games areas (MUGA) for children and young people. Where these are within larger parks and gardens or areas of amenity space they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

■ **Outdoor Sports Facilities (OSF)**

These are large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces used for designated sports e.g. playing fields, tennis courts and bowling greens - areas which can generally be booked and whose primary purpose is for playing of sport. Where these are within parks or large recreation grounds they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

■ **School Grounds/Playing Fields (EDUC)**

These are large areas of open space associated with primary and secondary schools and are generally flat areas of grassland with a combination of playing fields, play grounds, play facilities or other areas of sport such as tennis, cricket or football. Most are inaccessible to the public but several have multi-use purposes and are used by the public after school hours and at weekends.

The following green spaces are not covered unless they are accessible to and available for use by the public:

- Large back gardens; and
- Private historic gardens.

This Green Spaces Strategy however, recognises that these areas may contribute significant and wide ranging benefits as part of the broader green infrastructure of the town, and that in some cases, where they are accessible and available for public use, they provide opportunities that meet the requirements and definition of local green space.

1.5 Benefits of Green Spaces

Green spaces are widely accepted as offering lasting social, economic, cultural, educational, environmental and health benefits and this was endorsed by detailed research carried out by the former CABE Space. This is summarised below.

1.5.1 Social Benefits and Opportunities

Perhaps the most obvious benefits and opportunities that green spaces provide for urban living are social - they create opportunities for people to do things, take part in events and activities or just to be.

- **Children's Play** - children's play is one of the main reasons for visiting open spaces. The importance of play for a child's development is supported by a wide range of research and is now increasingly accepted by professionals as well as ordinary people. Despite the importance of play for a child's development, there are some issues in the urban context that restrict the opportunities for play in the external environment for many children including parental anxiety about children's safety to poor provision of play facilities;
- **Passive Recreation** - walking the dog, watching your children play, wildlife, people, looking at views, reading or resting or just meeting people. Research has shown the importance of passive recreation is far more important to individuals lives than active recreation and most parks and open space users will use an open space for passive use rather than sport or events;
- **Active Recreation** - organised sport, children's play, music, and a range of events. Despite being the minority user of parks and open spaces, nationally it is estimated that up to 16% of park users will visit for active recreation alone and account for 7.5 million visitors each year;
- **Community Focus** - festivals, meeting people formally or informally. Research in recent years has confirmed the importance of parks and open spaces as a focus for the community, or as places for people to meet each other, both formally and informally. This may be through organised events which may increase the sense of community. However, it is not only large and formally organised events that are important to the community. Studies have shown that about one third of people entering parks do so on their own, one third with a friend and one third with a large group;
- **Cultural Focus** - different ethnic backgrounds have different requirements from open spaces. There may be approaches related to design and management of parks and open spaces that could be investigated that would encourage wider use of these areas by these groups;
- **Open Spaces as Educational Resources** - The benefits to children have included sensory perception, children's behaviour, outdoor learning opportunities, different patterns of play.

1.5.2 Health Benefits and Opportunities

Research shows that contact with the natural world can benefit mental and physical health. Access to a quality green environment not only benefits health in preventative terms, but speeds recovery and plays a vital part in our mental well being.

Physical inactivity has been estimated to cost the NHS about 2-3% of its total budget, according to Dr. William Bird medical advisor to the British Heart Foundation.

Keeping active greatly reduces the risk of dying from coronary heart disease, and of developing diabetes, hypertension, obesity and certain cancers and helps maintain health and independence in older adults.

1.5.3 Environmental Benefits and Opportunities

Our green spaces and street trees can ameliorate urban environments, making it feel more liveable by screening eyesores, reducing noise and absorbing harmful pollutants. They support diverse wildlife habitats in our town, connecting people with nature close to home, school or work. The environmental benefits of urban open spaces and adjacent countryside are there for all regardless of social class, creed, ethnic background or gender.

1.5.4 Wildlife - Opportunities for Habitats and Human Experience

Watford is a busy and active town and as a result there are significant pressures on wildlife and therefore habitats for wildlife are much more significant. Watford has a range of habitats including two river corridors, 5 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) as well as Whippendell Wood which is our only Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and also a number of County Wildlife Sites. Within these are many habitats and designated wildlife spaces across the town that are managed by the Council and its partners, including Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT), Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and a number of Friends Groups such as the Friends of Cassiobury Park and Friends of Harebreaks Woods who continue to improve our sites for wildlife as well as accessibility, management and visitor potential.

1.5.5 Economic Value of Green Spaces

There has been significant research over recent years between the link of having high quality green spaces and benefits to economic vitality particularly by CABI Space and GreenSpace. It is recognised that a clean attractive green environment not only gives social, recreational and health benefits to our citizens but is a vital part of attracting investments.

“Environmental enhancement not only makes places more attractive and pleasant but green space initiatives can result in community strengthening and local economic stimulation as well as improvement to local environmental quality”

“Improving Urban Parks, Play Areas and Green Spaces” Former ODPM



North Watford Cemetery

2 Background Research and Consultation - The Watford Context

2.1 Local Character and Area Profile

Watford is an urban borough in South West Hertfordshire, on the edge of the East of England region to the north-west of London. It covers an area of 2,142 hectares (8.3 square miles), and is the only non-metropolitan borough wholly contained within the M25. However, about 20% of the Borough forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt and this is supplemented by a variety of open spaces. The Rivers Colne and Gade and the Grand Union Canal give structure to the main open areas, which include the Colne Valley Linear Park/Watling Chase Community Forest and Cassiobury Park, a historic park with a Green Flag award, the national standard for quality parks and green spaces. The Borough has excellent transport links with direct mainline rail connections to London, Gatwick Airport, the Midlands and the North, Underground and Overground connections to London, its north-west suburbs and the rural Chilterns, community rail connections to St Albans, national coach services to Heathrow, Luton and Stansted airports, and convenient road connections via the M1, M25 and A41. A long established urban centre, with a market charter dating to the 12th century, Watford expanded rapidly from its linear layout along the historic High Street during the nineteenth century with the coming of the railway line. Much of the character of the area is formed by the streets of terraced Victorian housing, which were followed by an extensive variety of planned housing estates during the twentieth century. These estates, along with their associated employment areas, reflect the styles of design that predominated at the time of their construction, with the resulting diversity of urban character visible across the Borough. Watford is the centre of a sub-region serving around 500,000 people, living within a 20 minute travelling time catchment. Known for traditional industries including printing, the town has successfully diversified into an attractive and popular regional shopping and business centre and a focus for culture and recreation. As part of the London commuter belt, Watford is strongly influenced by London; and whilst this brings the benefits of a buoyant economy, it also brings significant environmental pressures such as high levels of traffic congestion, high house prices and, with limited land available for development, pressure on all land, including the green belt. Green space in Watford is also varied in type, form, pattern, character and design, and ranges from the historic parks of Cassiobury and Oxhey Park, to local recreation grounds, allotments, play areas, sports pitches and playing fields, to the significant areas of semi-natural green space along the river corridors and Whippendell Wood.

2.1.1 Demographic Background

The importance of demographic information is important as without it, it is not possible to determine whether we have enough open space or even too much and where these gaps may exist.

Watford currently has a population of 90,301. This is an increase of 13.3% compared to the figure of 79,726 from the 2001 Census, and an increase of 5% compared to the ONS mid-2010 estimate of 86,000.

Key Census Day statistics for Watford:

- Watford's population on Census Day 2011 was 90,301, of which 49.6% were male and 50.4% female;
- Watford has a high population density, which has risen to 42 persons per hectare from 37 persons per hectare in 2001, compared with an average of 7 persons per hectare in Hertfordshire and 4 persons per hectare in England overall
- The non-white British proportion of Watford's population increased from 25% in 2001 to 38% in 2011. This is significantly higher than the national level of 20% and the Eastern region level of 15% and reflects Watford's broad mix of cultures. Significantly, the Asian population in Watford has increased from 8.2% in 2001 to 17.9% in 2011.

Source: 2011 Census © Crown Copyright (KS02).

2.2 Watford Consultation

As part of the development of the Green Spaces Strategy, some early, but limited consultation was carried out and is discussed further in the following section under “Involving Communities”.

Research in recent years by a range of investigators, in particular English Heritage, GreenSpace, Natural England, the former CABE Space, and Comedia Demos (*‘Park Life’* report) has confirmed the importance of parks and open spaces as a focus for the community, or as a place for people to meet each other, both formally and informally. This may be through organised events which can increase the sense of community.

However, it is not only large and formally organised events that are important to the community. National studies have shown that about one third of people entering parks do so on their own, one third with a friend and one third with a large group. Different ethnic groups have also been identified as having different approaches to active and passive recreation.

Considering many of these issues, it is important to “involve communities” and define green space stakeholders in developing any strategic overview for the development, management and maintenance of green spaces in Watford.

2.3 Involving Communities

2.3.1 Green Spaces Stakeholders

Stakeholders are people who have an interest, so when we talk about green spaces, this potentially means everyone. They may use them passively (walking through them on their way to work, school or the shops), or actively (playing sport, visiting a facility there, or an event, or walking the dog), or live or work next to a green space. Green space touches most of us. With this in mind, we have carried out some initial consultation but recognise that ongoing work with the Green Spaces Strategy will require continuing and ongoing consultation.

Taking into account local views is fundamental to achieving a successful green space network that people are satisfied with and feel safe using.

The local community was therefore engaged through the following methods:

1. Friends Groups, Sports Clubs and Residents Associations through *Survey Monkey*;
2. Members; and
3. Citizens Panel consultation.

Table 2.3 - Summary of Consultation Issues (opposite)

Key Questions

A simple questionnaire was devised that was seeking local people's views on their local green spaces and in Watford as a whole. This included specific questions on quality, accessibility and quantity of open space. Questions were also asked in relation to the kind of activities local people engaged in green spaces.

Feedback (based on 164 responses)

- The most popular activity is walking with 92% of respondents taking part in it regularly, followed by 71% meeting friends, 37% observing wildlife, and 32% cycling.

Quality

- Within their **local areas**, 43% felt allotments were good to very good with only 12% saying they were poor or very poor; 83% said children's play areas were good to very good; 89% said that parks were good to very good and 73% said that recreation grounds were good to very good.
- 79% of respondents replied that woodlands and natural green spaces were good to very good.
- Facilities in open spaces was variable, with sports pitches (56%) good to very good but youth facilities, tennis courts and changing facilities poor to very poor.

- Within **Watford as a whole**, 49% felt allotments were good to very good, with 12% poor to very poor. 79% said children's play areas were good to very good, 94% said that parks were good to very good; 74% felt that recreations grounds were good to very good; 84% also said that woodlands and natural green spaces were good to very good. In relation to facilities, the results reflected the local areas results.

Quantity

In relation to quantity of green spaces in their local areas, most respondents felt that there were enough allotments, play areas, parks and recreation grounds, but many felt that there was not enough woodlands or natural green spaces. Youth facilities were significantly lacking in most respondents views. These responses were echoed within Watford as a whole.

Accessibility

A question was asked in relation as to how long a user would be willing to walk to certain green spaces facilities. Most allotment tenants were prepared to spend up to 10 minutes (44%) and 20 minutes (20%). Children's play areas were primarily within 10 minutes (42%), natural green spaces up to 20 minutes (49%); a local park within 10 minutes (55%); Recreation ground, between 10 and 20 minutes (70%).

Comments

Many comments were made in relation to green spaces ranging from the love of Cassiobury Park to the perceived development threats on open spaces and the high quality of children's play areas.

Key Issues

- Quality of green spaces is high especially parks and children's play areas;
- Quality of changing facilities, some sports and youth facilities is variable;
- Quantity of most green spaces is about right although youth facilities is an issue along with natural green spaces.
- Most users were prepared to walk between 10 and 20 minutes to a local green space depending on the typology.

2.3.2 Consultation with Young People

40% of Watford's population is made up of young people up to the age of 29, with just less than 20% under the age of 15. They are a difficult group to involve in decision making, design and management of the green spaces they use. There have been successes to date and developments continue in relation to involving young people. However more work is required to ensure the Council fully engages with young people. Their needs depend on age and level of parental dependency. Young children need access to safe green spaces closer to home though older children want to play alone or meet friends but still be relatively close to home. Older teenagers will travel quite independently within their own or an adjacent neighbourhood or simply "hang out" and be well away from other residents to avoid potential conflict.

Also, a previous study by the Heritage Lottery Fund (May 2003), shows that 86% of parents with children aged 11 or under, say that on a warm day their children would rather go to the park than sit watching a television program. The consultation highlighted a lack of facilities for young people in relation to teenagers.

2.3.3 Consultation with Ethnic Minority Groups

The 2011 census identifies that approximately 21% of the population in Watford comes from black and ethnic minority groups and is increasing with the remainder primarily white British. People from ethnic minority backgrounds face a variety of problems when accessing services. These may be through cultural differences, accessibility issues, as well as language barriers or fear of prejudice or harassment (real and perceived). An Action Plan will be developed that will look at how increased usage of open spaces by BME groups can be delivered with reference to the Black Environment Network Research, '*Ethnic Communities and Green Spaces - Guidance for Green Space Managers*'.

2.3.4 Improving Access for All - The Health of our Population

The NHS Health Profile 2012 for Watford, similarly to 2011, indicates that priorities include physical activity and obesity, particularly among younger people and older people's health.

The amount of physically active adults has improved again since last year (8.8% in 2010, 10% in 2011, and 10.5% in 2012) and is not far from the England average (11.2%). The amount of healthy eating adults has remained the same at 32.2%, better than the national average of 28.7%, as has the proportion of obese adults at 17.3%, below the England average of 24.2% but the percentage of obese children in Year 6 has again increased both in Watford (from 16.4% to 18%) and in England (18.7% to 19%).

In the council's original Corporate Plan 2012-16, the first objective was to 'Improve the health of the town and enhance its heritage'. Many Watford residents are already enjoying the benefits of the modernised leisure centres, Woodside and Watford Central, illustrated by Watford being ranked first in the country in 'satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities' in the Place Survey 2008-09. Ensuring that our leisure centres and our parks and open spaces are maintained to a high standard all contributes to a potentially healthier town.

However, it is recognised that we still need to increase participation in sports and leisure activities amongst our community as this has a positive impact on issues such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease. There is also a link in the council's other aims, for example, tackling problems such as alcohol and drug abuse has a positive impact on health as well as crime levels.

2.3.5 Consultation with Older People

As previously noted, nearly 17% of the population are over pension-able age. Older people are a diverse and expanding group and regular users of parks and green spaces for activities such as walking dogs, relaxing or taking grandchildren to play. They are also often the ones who are most likely to fill in a questionnaire or form a Friend's Group!

2.3.6 “Friend’s of Green Space” Groups

Watford currently has a number of Friends Groups across the town but also has a number of Residents Associations who are involved in enhancing their local communities. The Council are keen to support these groups in relation to specific open spaces and local communities. Friend’s Groups and Residents Associations are very important to parks and open spaces within the town’s communities, as they have one common goal - to improve their local community green space. They create an important focus for the community and many successful partnerships have developed in areas where the “park” is at the heart of their community.

The support from Watford Council is essential to ensure these groups are supported effectively. The work to support such groups will form part of an Action Plan of this Green Spaces Strategy.

2.3.7 Summary of Local Consultation

Any consultation exercise is always difficult to ensure as many views are taken into account as possible. The response for Watford was reasonable with over 150+ responses to the online survey. Several key issues have been highlighted as part of the consultation and were summarised above based on:-

- Local people’s perception of the quantity of open space in Watford;
- Local people’s perception of the quality of open space in Watford;
- Local people’s perception on how accessible open space is in Watford;
- Time prepared to travel to different types of open space in Watford; and
- Current usage of open space

2.4 Policy Context and Background

The gathering of data that has been carried out in the development of this Green Spaces Strategy is important in setting local standards for the type, location, quantity, quality and accessibility of green spaces, helping to identify gaps in provision and to define key priorities for investment.

At a national level the key policy and guidance documents that underpin this strategy and set out clear expectations for local authorities to take a strategic approach to green space are:

- The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP);
- The Biodiversity Strategy for England (BSE);
- The Localism Act, 2011;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Making Space for Nature (MSN);
- Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Guidance (GIG); and
- DEFRA’s Green Infrastructure Partnership (GIP).

■ *The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP)*

The NEWP (2011) states the government's view that the quality of the natural environment is in decline, highly fragmented and unable to respond to the pressures that will follow from climate change.

The NEWP is based largely on the concept of "ecosystem services" and the benefits that society gains from natural resources and functional natural systems - benefits such as food and water, fertile soils and clean air. It concludes that many ecosystems are in decline and therefore the benefits society derives from them are also in decline. As a result it argues for the creation and maintenance of a "resilient ecological network across England". It aims to halt biodiversity loss by 2020; to support networks. It also refers to urban green infrastructure as completing "the links in our national ecological network" and "one of the most effective tools available to us in managing environmental risks such as flooding and heat waves".

The White Paper introduced a number of new policy initiatives, including:

- Local Nature Partnerships, intended to work at a strategic scale for a better natural environment;
- Nature Improvement Areas intended to enhance and reconnect nature on a significant scale;
- Biodiversity offsets, designed to deliver biodiversity benefits for losses through compensatory habitat expansion or restoration elsewhere; and
- A Green Infrastructure (GI) Partnership designed to support the development of GI in England.

■ *The Biodiversity Strategy for England (BSE)*

The BSE, Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services, sets out how the Government intends to implement international and EU commitments. It aims to reduce the environmental pressures created by development by "taking a strategic approach to planning for nature" and by retaining "the protection and improvement of the natural environment as core objectives of the planning system".

■ *The Localism Act, 2011*

The Localism Act sets out an ambitious aim of "taking power away from officials and putting it into the hands of those who know most about their neighbourhood - local people themselves". It requires changes to strategic, local and neighbourhood level planning; the most significant for green space planning relate to the neighbourhood level as it empowers Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.

■ *The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

The NPPF (published March 2012) is a streamlined version of the former Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements issued by the Government over the years. It starts from the premise that the purpose of planning is to achieve sustainable growth and therefore it has an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. In particular, the planning system should seek to deliver positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment and people's quality of life. In more detail, the government's aims for the planning system are that it should help:

- ❑ Build a strong, competitive economy;
- ❑ Ensure the vitality of town centres;
- ❑ Support a prosperous rural economy;
- ❑ Promote sustainable transport;
- ❑ Support high quality communications infrastructure;
- ❑ Deliver a wide choice of high quality homes;
- ❑ Require good design;
- ❑ Promote healthy communities;
- ❑ Protect Green Belt land;
- ❑ Meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;
- ❑ Conserve and enhance the natural environment;
- ❑ Conserve and enhance the historic environment; and
- ❑ Facilitate the sustainable use of minerals.

As a result, the NPPF is structured around these thirteen objectives. Those sections which set out policies for green space and green infrastructure are Section 8, *Promoting Healthy Communities*; Section 9, *Protecting Green Belt Land*; Section 10, *Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change*; and Section 11, *Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment*.

Promoting Healthy Communities

Open space is a vitally important component of sustainable development and is covered in the NPPF objective of Promoting Health Communities. It requires planning authorities:

- ❑ To create a shared vision with communities of the residential environment and facilities they wish to see;
- ❑ To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs;
- ❑ To base their planning policies on “robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision” ; in effect, what was known until recently as a “PPG17 assessment” or “green space strategy;”
- ❑ To protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

It provides highly specific guidance:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ❑ An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- ❑ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

- ❑ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

Protecting Green Belt Land

The NPPF states unequivocally that “the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open” and requires planning authorities to:-

“... plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land”.

It also states that the construction of buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate, although it also highlights a number of exceptions to this general rule. They include the

“... provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sports, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of providing land within it”.

Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The NPPF suggests that the planning system should help conserve and enhance the natural environment by:

- ❑ Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- ❑ Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- ❑ Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- ❑ Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and
- ❑ Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

Provision Standards

The Framework entitled “Using a proportionate evidence base”, requires that planning authorities

“... set out their policy on local standards in the Local Plan ...they should assess the likely cumulative impacts on development in the area of all existing and proposed local standards, supplementary planning documents and policies that support the development plan, when added to nationally required standards.”

Implicitly, therefore, the NPPF continues the approach set out in the former PPG17 of requiring councils to adopt locally-determined standards for open space, sport and recreation provision, a key outcome of this revised Green Spaces Strategy.

■ **Making Space for Nature (MSN)**

MSN also highlights the decline in biodiversity and fragmentation of wildlife habitats, resulting in a reduction in the benefits that ecosystems deliver. It suggests that the overall aim for England's ecological networks should be to ensure that

“Compared to the situation in 2000, biodiversity is enhanced and the diversity, functioning and resilience of ecosystems re-established in a network of spaces for nature that can sustain these levels into the future, even given continuing environmental change and human pressures.”

■ **Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance (GIG)**

Natural England has been promoting the concept of green infrastructure (GI) for some years. However, its initial attempts concentrated on trying to persuade local authorities to adopt its Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) which set out an aspiration that everyone should be able to access a range of green spaces of different sizes within fixed maximum distances from their home. ANGSt had two main failings. First, it ignored the requirement in the former PPG17 that provision standards for open space should be locally determined; and second, it was simply unachievable in many areas. GI thinking has now moved on to focus more on the planned use of natural systems and processes (ecosystems) than what was ultimately an arbitrarily determined set of standards.

■ **DEFRA's Green Infrastructure Partnership (GIP)**

This is reflected in the work of the Green Infrastructure Partnership, which fulfils a commitment in the Natural Environment Green Paper, It brings together a wide range of organisations with a remit of:

- ❑ Finding ways to provide green infrastructure in towns, cities and rural areas;
- ❑ Address barriers that might prevent this progress;
- ❑ Develop and evidence base on the condition of England's green infrastructure and how it meets the needs of communities;
- ❑ Demonstrate the many benefits that green infrastructure can bring;
- ❑ Look into how communities, planners and decision-makers can best be supported in designing and developing green infrastructure; and
- ❑ Help people to quantify the costs and benefits of investing in green infrastructure and make the case for green infrastructure projects.

The Partnership defines GI as “a planned network of green spaces and other environmental features including street trees, gardens, green roofs, community forests, parks, rivers, canals and wetlands”. It has gone on to commission research on six broad topics:

- ❑ How to design and retrofit GI;
- ❑ How to plan GI for ecosystem services;
- ❑ How to work with communities;
- ❑ How to implement GI at the local level;

- ❑ How to value and make the case for GI; and
- ❑ How to ensure that people have the skills and knowledge to deliver improved GI

There are also a number of key local policy documents that are relevant to the Green Spaces Strategy. These are below:

■ **‘Watford Corporate Plan 2013-2017’**

The Corporate Plan 2013-17 presents the outcome of the corporate planning the council has undertaken over the last year and provides a clear picture for our residents, partners and staff of what we are aiming to achieve for Watford. It is our key improvement and planning document, which identifies where we are focusing our efforts and resources both over the next year and for the medium term. From the Corporate Plan the council develops its service business plans which, in turn, inform the work programme of each team within the council and the individual objectives of each member of staff, identified through our annual appraisal process.

A number of important factors underpin this Plan and are considered when we identify what specific areas of work we will focus on over the next four years (see our Corporate Medium Term Delivery Plan).

These include:

- ❑ our corporate vision and priorities, which we reviewed during 2012/13;
- ❑ our challenges and opportunities;
- ❑ our progress and achievements against our commitments in previous plans;
- ❑ our staff and financial resources, including capital investment;
- ❑ linkages to other key council strategies - such as the Local Plan Core Strategy, Economic Strategy, Cultural Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy and Housing Strategy;
- ❑ feedback from our community and local residents, which helps identify what are the most important things for us to do both in the short and longer term;
- ❑ an understanding of the local area including what the Census 2011 tells us about our residents and the borough; and
- ❑ external issues and influences (such as responding to government requirements and legislation)

All successful organisations have at their heart, a clear vision of what they want to achieve. This vision sets out the organisation’s direction, defines its priorities and guides its actions, whilst making sure that it is constantly striving to improve the services it provides in line with local priorities and financial constraints.

By their very nature, corporate visions have a long-term perspective. Therefore, we believe our vision remains relevant to the council and to the borough

“Watford’s vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit”

We have an ambitious agenda for Watford. To ensure we are best placed to deliver this agenda we have reviewed our corporate priorities. We need to ensure they clearly represent what we see as our

main areas for focus and what we aim to achieve by 2017 so that we meet the challenges of our corporate vision .

Through this review we have identified four corporate priorities that we believe reflect our aims, clearly set out what we want to achieve for Watford as well as how we will continue to improve the way we work as an organisation.

Our New Corporate Planning Framework from 2013
Our vision and priorities are the fundamental building blocks that support the delivery of our Corporate Plan, service plans and individual work programmes.

Watford’s vision is to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| CP1 Making Watford a better place to live | CP2 To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth | CP3 Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | CP4 Operating the council efficiently and effectively |
|--|--|---|--|

Listening to local people and ensuring they have the opportunities to influence decisions is essential if we are to focus on what matters most to our communities. We are committed to understanding needs and ensuring everyone has an opportunity to have a say.

Through consultations and engagement our community has told us what is important to them and the town. This has been reflected in our new corporate priorities but it also influences the work we do to deliver these priorities.

In our Community Survey 2012 we asked local people what they thought was important in making somewhere a good place to live. Below are the top five responses and how they link to our new corporate priorities.

| TOP FIVE THINGS THAT PEOPLE SAY HELP MAKE THEIR AREA A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE | % response | LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITY |
|---|------------|--|
| Level of crime / community safety | 72% | CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in |
| Quality of health services | 46% | CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in |
| Litter / dirt in the streets | 44% | CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in |
| Parks and open spaces | 39% | CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in |
| Road and pavement repairs | 38% | CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live in |

■ **‘One Watford Sustainable Community Strategy’**

One Watford is Watford’s Local Strategic Partnership. They are a group of people representing key organisations in Watford that have come together to make a greater impact on improving life in Watford.

Each organisation has its own work and own agenda in Watford, contributing to the vision for the town. However, partners recognise that by working together on important projects, they can achieve more collectively than individually.

One Watford has developed a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Watford. The SCS sets out a long-term vision for the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the local area. The SCS, therefore, is the main partnership document for Watford. It shows how One Watford partners are working together to improve Watford and contribute to the sustainable development of the borough - that means meeting today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We have a shared vision - that Watford will be **‘a town to be proud of, where people will always choose to live, work and visit’**.

A number of objectives have been highlighted and these are summarised below:-

- A well-planned town with homes to suit all needs;
- A safer town;
- **A healthy town;**
- A prosperous and educated town;
- A well-informed community where everyone can contribute; and
- **A town that protects its environment and heritage.**

■ **‘Core Strategy’**

The Core Strategy sets out the overall vision, strategy and strategic objectives for Watford to 2031, and beyond, including the broad locations in which new development will be accommodated. It also sets out the broad framework for the other documents in the Local Development Framework (LDF), and has to be consistent with other strategies including Watford’s Sustainable Community Strategy and the East of England Plan. Underpinning policies related to green spaces is the Council’s commitment to Green Infrastructure with a range of priorities identified. The council will seek a net gain in the quality and quantity of Green Infrastructure, as well as recognising the benefits of green infrastructure already present and seeking to enhance and improve it.

Any proposals should improve links between sites and not compromise the integrity of the Green Infrastructure network by causing fragmentation, damage to, or isolation of GI assets. Priorities for Green Infrastructure focus on the projects identified in the Watford Green Infrastructure Plan:

1. Cassiobury Park Enhancement;
2. Whippendell Wood Enhancement;
3. Grand Union Canal Enhancement;
4. Colne Valley Wetland Enhancement;
5. Urban Greening and Legibility for Watford; and
6. Joint working on the Green Herts interactive map

The contribution a development makes to the Green Infrastructure network will be a key consideration when determining planning permission, new development should contribute to the delivery of new Green Infrastructure and the management of a linked network of enhanced open spaces and corridors. In some instances an improvement in the overall quality of Green Infrastructure may make it acceptable for minor open space loss, this will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

The Green Spaces Strategy is relevant to a number of other key Council strategies:

It is important to determine where the Green Spaces Strategy sits within the hierarchy and what the links are. These are especially important when determining local priorities and especially when looking at allocation of available funding. The Green Spaces Strategy is central to the delivery of many of these policies objectives, including health, the economy, quality of life and economic regeneration. A structure is developed below indicating the hierarchy.

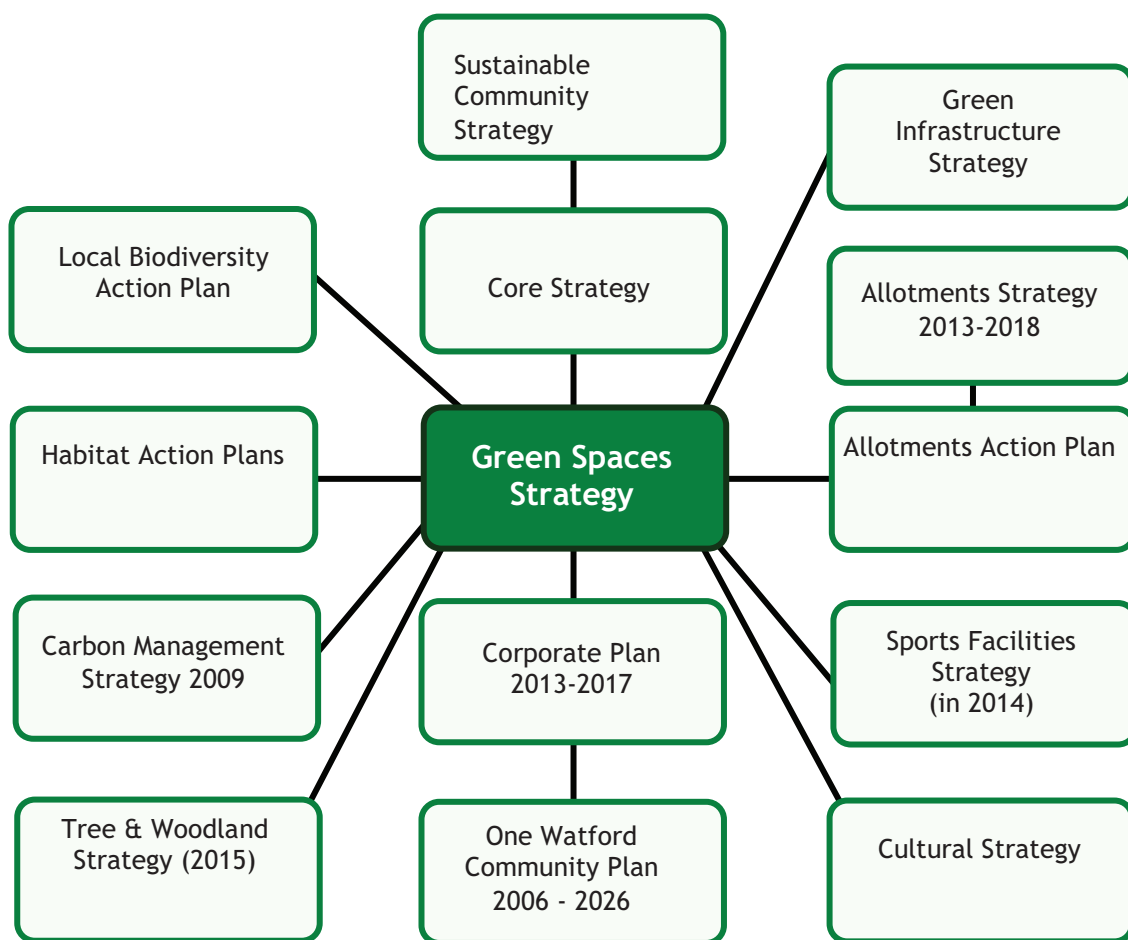


Figure 2.4 - Proposed Policy Hierarchy

Importantly however, the key messages derived from the policy review are:

- Green space has risen up the national policy priorities in recent years, with a change in emphasis from “quantity” to “quality and accessibility” and from “Sport and Open Space” to “Open Space and Physical Activity”;
- Treat green spaces as infrastructure that can deliver clear benefits for local people, wildlife and the long term sustainability of the Borough in a cost-effective manner;
- Take full account of the opportunities created by the NPPF to rationalise and improve provision, if necessary disposing of some poorly located and used spaces to fund the improvement of others;
- Set out clear requirements for developers providing on-site green spaces and how the Council will seek to use Community Infrastructure Levy to fund new or enhanced green space provision;
- Identify spaces that could be considered for designation as Local Green Spaces;
- Seek to harness and promote the use of ecosystems to make the Borough more sustainable and deliver significant benefits to the local quality of life;
- As a general principle, seek to enhance biodiversity across the Borough wherever possible;
- Green Spaces strategies should be “cross-council”;
- There are wider links to issues like sustainability;
- There is a need to raise the profile of the importance of the quality of Green Spaces in the Community Planning Process and to highlight its benefits;
- It is important that in developing an Green Spaces Strategy, that in terms of setting a wider framework for the strategy, the links to existing policies and strategies are determined, in particular the important ones highlighted in the policy hierarchy; and
- Green spaces policies need to be **realistic** and **achievable** in an environment of diminishing resources and continuing economic challenges.



Woodside Stadium

3 Our Methodology - Green Space Audits and Standards - Quality, Quantity and Accessibility

Part of the process of developing this strategy, audits of the quality and value, and the quantity and accessibility of green spaces were carried out across Watford in line with the advice in *PPG17* in 2010 (Quantity and Accessibility) and 2012 (Quality and Value). Without a comprehensive audit, we would be unable to set new standards or determine exactly what we had or how accessible it was. In doing this, we used standardised audit forms and GIS analysis to undertake these audits. This process has initiated the development of appropriate local provision standards. These audits covered many issues including:

- Maintenance and Cleanliness;
- Health and Safety;
- Biodiversity;
- Facilities and Management;
- Usage and Recreational value; and
- Negative factors impacting on the green space.

For the purpose of this revised and updated Green Spaces Strategy, the Council used primary and secondary data. In the first instance, a desk-top review of all open spaces was undertaken identifying all parcels of open land from existing sources - parks management and maintenance plans, GIS (Geographical Information Systems) and aerial photography and secondly, all open spaces were audited including those managed by organisations other than Watford Council, thus enabling a more accurate assessment of the current provision of open space within the borough.

These sites were then digitised using GIS linked to an Excel database. Having established the area of open space in the Borough, the next stage was to undertake a more detailed assessment of each open space, looking at its quality and provision for access.

The adequacy of open space provision has traditionally been assessed by comparing the area of open space to the total population within a given geographic area. A key issue is what would be an appropriate open space provision standard for an “urban” district such as Watford, given that it shares common characteristics with many London boroughs rather than other Hertfordshire Districts.

Analysis is undertaken on an individual typology basis as opposed to grouping similar types. This reflects different values placed on each typology.

To understand the adequacy of overall provision, the Council took a composite approach to setting open space provision standards. This conforms to the guidance set out in the former *PPG17* and the Companion Guide ‘Assessing Needs and Opportunities’ as well as taking into account other options including the application of national standards - for example the National Playing Fields Association guidance of 2.4 hectares (6 acres) per 1,000 population. The standard was developed to reflect the amount of land required for sports and play facilities for local communities and thus focused on green spaces that are fully accessible to the public and can be used for these purposes.

3.1 Identifying and Prioritising

There is localised recognition that there needs to be continued improvements to parks and open spaces in Watford and many have been carried out to date. However, despite the enthusiasm to do so, these continued improvements cannot all be brought about at once and action needs to be organised, prioritised, resourced and adequately funded. The quality and value audits are discussed later but it is important to acknowledge the importance of these in determining policies on green spaces. With the

help of open space audit scores and a quality/value matrix that categorises spaces and places, it will be easier to identify key priorities for action.

A comprehensive audit will therefore give:

- Clear policies for protection linked to prescribed and identified sites;
- Give specific recommendations by area where there are opportunities to improve accessibility and quality of green spaces;
- Clear understanding through custodianship of the areas to be retained and protected;
- Criteria for sites that may lead to occasional disposal; and
- Determine what additional resources are required to build on existing good practice.

3.2 Investment in Green Spaces

Watford has invested funds into many parks and open spaces to date, primarily as a result of significant Section 106 funding and capital investment brought about by the last Green Spaces Strategy, and recognises the need to continue to maintain open spaces across the town to a high standard, but this has partly been opportunity driven as and when funds have become available. There is however the perception that continued capital investment is still required across many areas of open space in the Watford, particularly in infrastructure, outdoor sports facilities, allotments, cemeteries, teenage facilities and children's play, and this is confirmed by the latest qualitative audit.

National Government continues to advise Local Government to undertake rigorous audits of parks and open spaces, and to use this as a basis for future investment. This must be linked to the Development Plan, Core Strategy and other regeneration and economic initiatives. Some funding can often be theme based within strict operational areas with little direct funding for parks or open space funding. Any investment plan must take this into account and be flexible as these are often the only sources of funding that may be available. A comprehensive audit allows priorities to be determined on the ground as the Council will have the base data detailing how well or poorly an open space is doing. It allows policies to be determined in relation to improvement, re-allocation or rationalisation. It also allows the Council to assist in allocating existing and future resources, whether through developer contributions or a funding provider.

3.3 Value for Money

One of the greatest assets from parks and open spaces is that they are freely available for everyone to use. However, development, management and maintenance costs are considerable, but in comparison to other leisure facilities, offer excellent value for money. The cost per visit per person to a public park nationally is less than 50p! Cost effective asset management is about getting the best out of available assets. Can the Council get more out of some of the town's open spaces by extending the range of facilities on offer or even consider charging for certain facilities eg car parking in parks?

The Council also needs to look at space that is under-performing, and may be surplus to requirements (low in value), or too difficult to bring up to standards. If this is the case, the Council may need to seek alternative uses. Local provision standards help to assess whether an open space is surplus to requirements and this aspect of green space provision is explored further in the section that follows.

3.4 Quality and Value Audits and Standards

Essentially a quality and value audit has three purposes:

1. To ascertain the quality and value of each site through evaluating a range of features or characteristics as objectively and consistently as possible;
2. To identify the features or characteristics which result in some sites being of low quality or value, to provide a focus for improvements or enhancements; and
3. To identify those sites that the Council should protect from development; those that would benefit from improvement and enhancement or those that may benefit from consideration for alternative green space uses.

Although driven partly by ‘PPG17’, the audit encompasses wider implications than land use planning and seeks to provide the basis for prioritising improvements in site management, long term development as well as maintenance.

For the purpose of this Strategy, green space has been classified based on the ‘PPG17’ typology. In seeking to maximise consistency, the Kit Campbell Associates Report ‘*Rethinking Open Space*’ recommends the use of standard forms, which were used in the Watford audit.

Over 184 sites were audited in Watford in Autumn 2012, to record scores for the quality and value of a variety of site characteristics.

The scores provided a basis for comparing sites and also provided an overview of the present state of open space in Watford. As such, they have provided a preliminary identification of those spaces the Council should protect through the planning system and those that are a priority for future enhancement. The matrix developed in Figure 3.4 shows how this was developed under ‘PPG17’ guidelines. Sites are ultimately classified as either high quality/value or low quality/value. The scores for each site are detailed in Section 4.1.

3.4.1 Definition of Quality and Value

It is also important to define what quality and value actually mean as part of any on site audit:-

Quality relates to the range of facilities or features on a site. The quality audit covers factors such as site accessibility, safety and security, management and maintenance and the presence of planting, trees, seats, and other facilities.

Value relates to the contribution the site makes to local amenity, recreation and well being, bio-diversity, cultural heritage, community or other strategic objectives.

Sites were audited on the following basis using the ‘PPG17’ typology:

- Allotments and Community Gardens (ACG);
- Play space for Children and Young People (CYP);
- Teenage facilities (CYP);
- Multi-functional Green Spaces - covering local amenity green spaces (AGS), parks and gardens (PGRG), churchyards and cemeteries (CC), green corridors (GC), natural and semi-natural green spaces (NGS) and Outdoor Sports Facilities (OSF);

We have combined the quality and value audits of local amenity green spaces, parks and gardens, churchyards and cemeteries, natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors and outdoor sports facilities due to the multi-functionality of those open spaces, as well as much of the quality criteria is similar across each typology.

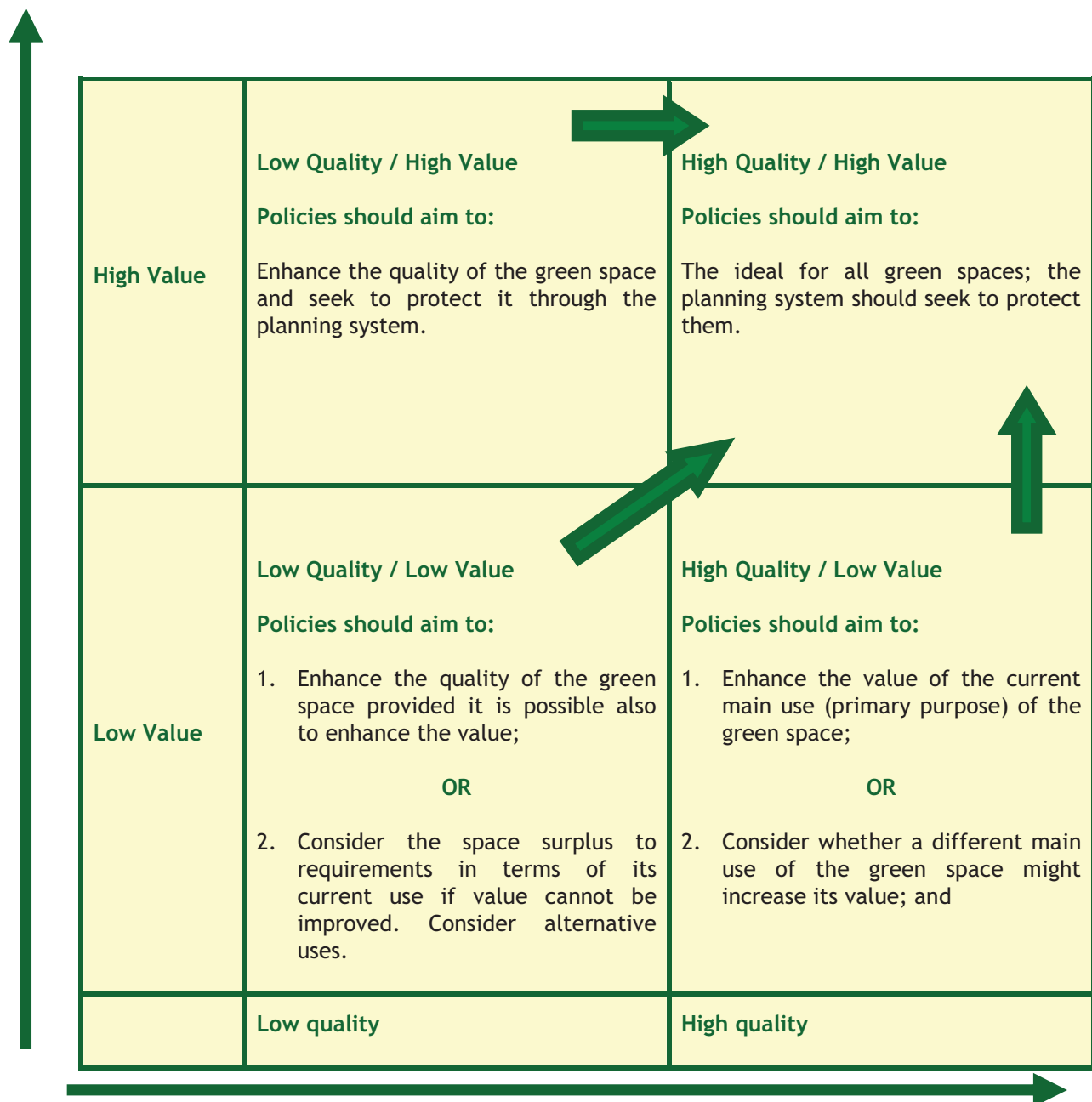


Figure 3.4 - Quality/Value Matrix, as summarised by CABE Space

The result from this work now enables Watford Borough Council:

- To rank sites across Watford in terms of value or quality either in general or in relation to specific features or characteristics;
- To identify priorities for investment and development or possible changes to management and maintenance practices;
- To identify the need for developer contributions to fund the enhancement of existing provision within the vicinity of a proposed development; and
- To enter the audit results into a GIS for mapping purposes.

4 Analysis of Findings - The Audit Results

4.1 The Audit Results

Full details of the **audit results** are too detailed to list within the scope of this strategy. However a **summary** follows in relation to the town and the overall scores are listed below in the table below.

| NAME | TYPOLGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Amenity Green Space (AGS) | AGS | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| Harebreaks Estate South | AGS | 81% | 50% | HQLV |
| Beechen Grove | AGS | 73% | 63% | HQLV |
| Church Street | AGS | 64% | 55% | LQLV |
| Watford Field Road | AGS | 62% | 71% | LQHV |
| Raphael Drive | AGS | 52% | 50% | LQLV |
| Holywell Estate | AGS | 65% | 54% | LQLV |
| Croxley View | AGS | 86% | 96% | HQHV |
| Berry Avenue | AGS | 56% | 29% | LQLV |
| Harebreaks Estate Greenspace | AGS | 75% | 48% | HQLV |
| Gisburne Way | AGS | 79% | 69% | HQHV |
| Kytes Estate | AGS | 71% | 66% | HQHV |
| Coates Dell | AGS | 77% | 77% | HQHV |
| Gaddesden Crescent | AGS | 72% | 56% | HQLV |
| Codicote Drive | AGS | 60% | 25% | LQLV |
| Kimpton Place | AGS | 68% | 53% | LQLV |
| The Gossamers | AGS | 83% | 72% | HQHV |
| Meriden | AGS | 72% | 48% | HQLV |
| The Meadows | AGS | 32% | 33% | LQLV |
| Cow Lane | AGS | 66% | 47% | LQLV |
| Russell House/Mulberry Close | AGS | 87% | 91% | HQHV |
| Rufford Close | AGS | 62% | 71% | LQHV |
| Lingfield Way | AGS | 76% | 83% | HQHV |
| Nascot Grange | AGS | 87% | 84% | HQHV |
| Grange Close | AGS | 85% | 66% | HQHV |
| Willow Grange | AGS | 74% | 71% | HQHV |
| Blackwell Drive | AGS | 45% | 63% | LQLV |
| Longcroft | AGS | 81% | 68% | HQHV |
| The Pastures | AGS | 47% | 70% | LQHV |
| Watford Heath | AGS | 79% | 75% | HQHV |
| Top of Cassio Road | AGS | 35% | 72% | LQHV |
| Cassio Common | AGS | 85% | 80% | HQHV |
| Hemming Way | AGS | 53% | 27% | LQLV |
| Crown Rise | AGS | 55% | 20% | LQLV |
| Douglas Avenue/Tudor Drive | AGS | 82% | 78% | HQHV |
| Radlett Road/Bushey Mill Lane | AGS | 75% | 69% | HQHV |
| Norbury Avenue | AGS | 99% | 60% | HQLV |
| Reeds Crescent | AGS | 93% | 92% | HQHV |
| Horseshoe Lane/Boundary Way | AGS | 75% | 76% | HQHV |
| Cobb Green | AGS | 52% | 55% | LQLV |
| Weall Green | AGS | 85% | 63% | HQLV |
| Stud/Weall Green | AGS | 54% | 40% | LQLV |
| Stud Green | AGS | 65% | 42% | LQLV |
| Alban Wood School | AGS | 67% | 42% | LQLV |
| Hope Green | AGS | 85% | 63% | HQLV |
| Albans View | AGS | 57% | 55% | LQLV |
| Valley Rise | AGS | 65% | 47% | LQLV |

| | | | | |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Ganders Ash | AGS | 69% | 31% | LQLV |
| Russell Crescent | AGS | 67% | 27% | LQLV |
| Sherwoods Estate | AGS | 79% | 50% | HQLV |

| NAME | TYOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|--|---------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Churchyards & Cemeteries (CC) | | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| St Mary's Churchyard | CC | 89% | 89% | HQHV |
| North Watford Cemetery | CC | 82% | 73% | HQHV |
| Vicarage Road Cemetery | CC | 63% | 66% | LQHV |
| All Saints Church | CC | 83% | 90% | HQHV |

| NAME | TYOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|--|---------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Green Corridors (GC) | | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| Timberlake/River Colne GC | GC | 84% | 84% | HQHV |
| Ebury Way | GC | 70% | 89% | HQHV |
| Tolpits Lane to Ascot Road Cycle Route | GC | 82% | 80% | HQHV |
| A41 Colne Way | GC | 40% | 73% | LQHV |
| Mundon Drive North | GC | 76% | 78% | HQHV |
| Hempstead Road North | GC | 43% | 46% | LQLV |
| Hempstead Road South | GC | 43% | 46% | LQLV |
| Grand Union Canal | GC | 51% | 73% | LQHV |
| Mundon Drive South | GC | 90% | 96% | HQHV |

| NAME | TYOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|--|---------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Allotment and Community Gardens (ACG) | | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| Timberlake | | 91% | 78% | HQHV |
| Holywell | | 87% | 71% | HQHV |
| Brightwell | | 85% | 67% | HQHV |
| Callowland | | 86% | 71% | HQHV |
| Cherry Tree | | 95% | 66% | HQHV |
| Wiggenhall | | 90% | 27% | HQLV |
| Oxhey Grange | | 89% | 74% | HQHV |
| Paddock Road | | 89% | 77% | HQHV |
| Briar Road | | 94% | 42% | HQLV |
| Tavistock Road | | 83% | 43% | HQLV |
| Chester Road | | 86% | 32% | HQLV |
| Farm Terrace | | 69% | 56% | LQLV |
| Garston Manor | | 90% | 80% | HQHV |



King George V Playing Fields

| NAME | TYPOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|---|----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Natural Green Space (NGS) | | 50% | 66% | HQHV |
| Milton Street Railway | NGS | 20% | 66% | LQHV |
| Stephenson Way Land Transfer Natural Area | NGS | 17% | 52% | LQLV |
| Ascot Road Semi-natural Area | NGS | 53% | 74% | HQHV |
| Tolpits Lane (former Scammell Site) | NGS | 16% | 43% | LQLV |
| Former Willow Lane Allotments | NGS | 40% | 54% | LQLV |
| Former Cardiff Road Coach park | NGS | 9% | 63% | LQLV |
| Lairage Land | NGS | 40% | 77% | LQHV |
| Adjacent to Ebury Way and Lairage land | NGS | 40% | 77% | LQHV |
| Caractacus View | NGS | 40% | 77% | LQHV |
| Brightwells Farm | NGS | 40% | 77% | LQHV |
| Tolpits Lane | NGS | 22% | 52% | LQLV |
| Harebreaks Woodland | NGS | 50% | 66% | HQHV |
| Tunnel Woods | NGS | 51% | 78% | HQHV |
| Beechfield School Woodland | NGS | 44% | 79% | LQHV |
| Sussex Road/Railway | NGS | 30% | 55% | LQLV |
| Park Terrace Wood | NGS | 50% | 76% | HQHV |
| Garston Park LNR | NGS | 50% | 78% | HQHV |
| Three Valleys Water | NGS | 35% | 39% | LQLV |
| Ravenscroft | NGS | 60% | 65% | HQLV |
| Russel Lane Wood | NGS | 23% | 69% | LQLV |
| Greenbank Wood | NGS | 23% | 69% | LQLV |
| Nascot Wood School Woodland | NGS | 53% | 84% | HQHV |
| Attenborough Fields | NGS | 100% | 98% | HQHV |
| The Grove | NGS | 75% | 70% | HQHV |
| The Spinney, Grovemill Lane | NGS | 50% | 60% | HQLV |
| Whippendell Wood | NGS | 75% | 96% | HQHV |
| Cassiobury Park LNR | NGS | 89% | 89% | HQHV |
| Ash Close | NGS | 45% | 79% | LQHV |
| Golf driving range woodland | NGS | 67% | 70% | HQHV |
| Croxley Green Junction | NGS | 37% | 55% | LQLV |
| Land off Riverside Road | NGS | 24% | 51% | LQLV |
| Alban Wood | NGS | 65% | 84% | HQHV |
| North Orbital Road adjacent to Leisure Park | NGS | 56% | 36% | HQLV |
| A405 adjacent to Leverett Close | NGS | 58% | 38% | HQLV |



Cassiobury Park LNR

| NAME | TYPOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|--|----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Parks, Gardens, Recs Grounds (PGRG) | | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| Buryfield Nature Garden | PGRG | 44% | 49% | LQLV |
| Radlett Road Playing Fields | PGRG | 44% | 48% | LQLV |
| Waterfields Recreation Ground | PGRG | 82% | 85% | HQHV |
| Watford Fields Recreation ground | PGRG | 48% | 66% | LQHV |
| Oxhey Park Sports Ground | PGRG | 46% | 66% | LQLV |
| Harwoods Recreation Ground | PGRG | 62% | 66% | LQHV |
| King George V Playing Field | PGRG | 70% | 76% | HQHV |
| Harebreaks Recreation Ground | PGRG | 61% | 63% | LQLV |
| Callowland Recreation Ground | PGRG | 68% | 69% | LQHV |
| Garston Park | PGRG | 75% | 64% | HQLV |
| Meriden Park | PGRG | 76% | 84% | HQHV |
| Lea Farm Recreation Ground | PGRG | 63% | 63% | LQLV |
| Goodwood Recreation Ground | PGRG | 75% | 69% | HQHV |
| North Watford Playing Field | PGRG | 81% | 73% | HQHV |
| Cheslyn Gardens | PGRG | 98% | 100% | HQHV |
| Riverside Road Recreation Ground | PGRG | 52% | 57% | LQLV |
| Oxhey Park | PGRG | 64% | 81% | LQHV |
| Oxhey Grange Playing Field | PGRG | 56% | 62% | LQLV |
| Oxhey Green | PGRG | 90% | 79% | HQHV |
| Glen Way Recreation Ground | PGRG | 80% | 82% | HQHV |
| Cassiobury Park | PGRG | 92% | 99% | HQHV |
| Leavesden Green | PGRG | 58% | 54% | LQLV |
| Stanborough Park | PGRG | 83% | 87% | HQHV |
| East Drive Recreation Ground | PGRG | 32% | 28% | LQLV |
| Knutsford Playing Fields | PGRG | 61% | 62% | LQLV |
| Riverside Park | PGRG | 57% | 69% | LQHV |
| Woodside Playing Fields | PGRG | 93% | 91% | HQHV |
| Hill Farm Recreation Ground | PGRG | 52% | 46% | LQLV |
| Leavesden Park | PGRG | 83% | 71% | HQHV |



Cassiobury Park Pools

| NAME | TYPOLOGY | QUALITY | VALUE | CATEGORY |
|---|----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Children Young People's facilities (CYP) | | 70% | 66% | HQHV |
| Southwold Road | CYP | 68% | 52% | LQLV |
| Waterfields Recreation Ground | CYP | 82% | 82% | HQHV |
| St John's Road | CYP | 78% | 89% | HQHV |
| Estcourt Road Pocket Park | CYP | 71% | 21% | HQLV |
| Central Primary School | CYP | 85% | 42% | HQLV |
| Watford Fields Play Area | CYP | 80% | 67% | HQHV |
| Himalayan Way | CYP | 72% | 71% | HQHV |
| Harwoods Adventure Play | CYP | 92% | 53% | HQLV |
| Harwoods Recreation Ground | CYP | 90% | 72% | LQHV |
| Stripling Way | CYP | 73% | 26% | HQLV |
| KGV Playing Fields | CYP | 74% | 80% | HQHV |
| Jellicoe Road | CYP | 66% | 72% | LQHV |
| Croxley View | CYP | 90% | 81% | HQHV |
| Chiltern Pines | CYP | 79% | 68% | HQHV |
| Courtlands Close | CYP | 86% | 68% | HQHV |
| Berry Avenue | CYP | 54% | 52% | LQLV |
| Harebreaks adventure Playground | CYP | 100% | 61% | HQLV |
| Harebreaks Recreation Ground | CYP | 49% | 87% | LQHV |
| Foxhill (East Drive) | CYP | 76% | 84% | HQHV |
| Callowland Recreation Ground | CYP | 73% | 74% | HQHV |
| Leggatts Green | CYP | 68% | 51% | LQLV |
| Garston Park | CYP | 85% | 78% | HQHV |
| Meriden Community centre | CYP | 71% | 11% | HQLV |
| Meriden Park Playground | CYP | 85% | 82% | HQHV |
| Lea Farm Recreation Ground | CYP | 83% | 72% | HQHV |
| Edward Amey Close | CYP | 53% | 57% | LQLV |
| Gadswell Close | CYP | 82% | 47% | HQLV |
| Goodwood Recreation Ground | CYP | 83% | 93% | HQHV |
| North Watford Playing Field | CYP | 84% | 86% | HQHV |
| Nascot Grange | CYP | 74% | 97% | HQHV |
| Stamford Road | CYP | 82% | 89% | HQHV |
| Riverside Recreation ground | CYP | 44% | 47% | LQLV |
| Oxhey Park | CYP | 94% | 87% | HQHV |
| Oxhey Green Play area | CYP | 88% | 81% | HQHV |
| Cassiobury park Upper | CYP | 80% | 95% | HQHV |
| Cassiobury Park Lower | CYP | 91% | 97% | HQHV |
| Leavesden Green | CYP | 67% | 75% | LQHV |
| Fern Way Recreation Ground | CYP | 54% | 82% | LQHV |
| Aspen Park Drive | CYP | 74% | 58% | HQLV |
| East Drive Recreation Ground | CYP | 47% | 59% | LQLV |
| Knutsford Playing Field | CYP | 90% | 81% | HQHV |
| Norbury Avenue | CYP | 70% | 67% | HQHV |
| Chater School Play Area | CYP | 81% | 63% | HQLV |
| Riverside Park | CYP | 56% | 61% | LQLV |
| Robin Place | CYP | 69% | 68% | LQHV |
| Throstle Place | CYP | 78% | 68% | HQLV |
| Magpie Place | CYP | 60% | 53% | LQLV |
| Woodside | CYP | 92% | 89% | HQHV |
| Hill Farm Recreation Ground | CYP | 69% | 64% | LQLV |
| Ridghurst Avenue | CYP | 79% | 74% | HQHV |
| Radlett Road teen shelter | CYP | 76% | 21% | HQHV |
| Derby Road Skatepark | CYP | 73% | 42% | HQHV |
| Harwoods Recreation Ground teen shelter | CYP | 53% | 21% | LQHV |
| Callowland Recreation Ground | CYP | 83% | 21% | HQHV |



Tai Chi In Cassiobury Park



Chilterns Cross Country League Competition in Cassiobury Park

4.1.1 West Watford (Holywell, Vicarage, Oxhey)

The overall quality of open space in **West Watford** is generally mixed across most typologies, especially parks, gardens and recreation grounds scoring low in quality but high in value. Children's play facilities score highly and reflect the recent investment across the town, as do allotments, with the exception of Farm Terrace. The quality of natural green space is also high.

As expected, the value of most green spaces to the local community is generally high, with key parks such as Oxhey Park, Riverside Rec, Harwoods Rec and King George V Playing Fields all scoring highly. Vicarage Road Cemetery however as a significant local space in a dense urban area is deemed low quality but high value, and as an important open space, the reasons why need to be analysed further.

4.1.2 Central Watford (Central, Park, Nascot, Callowland)

The overall quality of green space in **Central Watford** is very good with some high quality open spaces across the full typology range, in particular Cassiobury Park, Whippendell Wood, as well as the recently improved open spaces at Waterfield Rec, North Watford Playing Fields and Cheslyn House and Gardens. The quality of some open spaces is a concern and includes Callowlands Recreation Ground and Harebreaks Recreation Ground. Cassiobury Park provides comprehensive sports facilities as well as good play provision not just for Central Watford but for the whole town. Likewise, Whippendell Wood, as the only SSSI in Watford provides important access to natural green space for the area and town as a whole.

4.1.3 North Watford (Tudor, Leggatts, Meriden, Stanborough, Woodside)

Open spaces in **North Watford** are also vary from high in quality and value with some very good sites, in particular Woodside Playing Fields and Woodside Stadium, Stanborough Park, North Watford Cemetery to those of lower quality and value, such as Leavesden Green and Lea Farm Recreation Ground. Allotments are generally of a high quality with an excellent site at Garston Manor.

4.2 Quality Standards

The Council has an aspiration that all of the principal spaces and facilities in Watford should be of both high quality and high value. The audit scores obviously provide comparative data on each site, but as stated, it is necessary to use an essentially arbitrary "cut off" point above which sites are classed as high quality or value and below which they are classed as low quality or value. This approach provides an initial method to assess the sites in a "broad brush" manner and underpin further policy assessments, based on the matrix shown in Figure 3.4.

The quality and value audits have detailed what the present levels of standards are in Watford.

These standards have two main uses:

1. They provide benchmarks for the Council to assess and compare the quality of different facilities of the same type within its area as an aid when determining priorities for improvement or changes to management regimes. Given that it will not be always be possible to achieve all aspects of the standards in relation to existing provision (for example because of limited resources) quality standards are an **aspiration**. As such they should be **challenging**, but broadly **achievable**, and the Council will aim to achieve them wherever practical.

Any assessment of the quality of nature of existing open spaces of sport and recreation facilities needs a clear set of benchmarks, related to stated standards and, ideally some form of scoring system. It is also an important opportunity for the "**parks management and grounds maintenance system**" and the "**planning system**" to work together. The aim should be to jointly identify those open spaces or facilities which need enhancement; the form this enhancement should take; and relative priorities;

2. They set out the Councils requirements as a guide for developers on the quality of provision the Council will expect them either to provide or fund. In this context, quality standards are a

requirement, although they must obviously be applied in a way which is reasonable given the specific circumstances of a proposed development.

4.3 Investment Priorities

The quality audits carried out give a clear view of how to develop our priorities. These are further developed in Sections 5 and 6. An **investment plan** will be drawn up based on these audits with key details showing proposed timescales, targets and funding possibilities. This will be delivered through the development of a **strategic green space hierarchy** outlining the Council's **key priorities** in regenerating its green spaces as well as identifying sites that need protection and those that could be disposed of.

4.4 Quantity Audits and Standards - Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure (GI) provides recreational support for communities and provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and people. Green spaces benefit the whole community, improving health, well-being and quality of life by providing areas for exercise, recreation, play and for visual relief in an urban area. Watford has experienced considerable population growth in recent years which is set to continue over the plan period. The council wants to ensure that the borough's historic landscapes, open spaces (of both strategic and local significance) and major watercourses are protected as they are fundamental to the character and heritage of the borough and contribute to the resident's quality of life.

Green Infrastructure in Watford refers to networks of green spaces and natural features including open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats, street trees and natural heritage. It provides landscape, wildlife, recreation and cultural experiences and can play a key role in adapting to and mitigating climate change.

Guidance from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in the publication 'Future Health: sustainable places for health and well-being(xiii) (Nov 2009)' promotes the value of green infrastructure in the prevention of disease and the promotion of long-term health and mental well-being. Access to nature can reduce stress, improve mental well-being and relieve the sense of overcrowding in urban environments. Easily accessible green infrastructure allows people to make healthier choices:

- 91% of people believe public open spaces improve quality of life.
- The likelihood of residents being physically active increases 300% in residential areas with a high level of green infrastructure

Watford contains **significant amounts of green infrastructure** for an urban authority and it is important that access to these key assets is maintained and improved. Improving access into strategic sites, such as the Colne Valley and Gade Valley/Grand Union Canal, in turn links into assets outside of the borough creating a wider green infrastructure network. It is important that biodiversity habitats are protected and the green links between them enhanced and protected from development.

There are 34 wildlife sites in Watford covering 260Ha (Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre, November 2010), including Cassiobury Park, Harebreaks Wood, The Lairage Land, Albans Wood and Garston Park all managed in whole or in part for their biodiversity and existing Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Status. The Council is also responsible for managing Whippendell Wood a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the borough boundary. Other significant open spaces include the Grand Union Canal, River Gade, River Colne and the gardens of Cheslyn House.

New development will be expected to aid the delivery and management of Green Infrastructure and will result in an important net gain in the quality and quantity of green infrastructure assets - particularly in areas of identified open space deficiency, to meet the existing and future needs of a growing population.

4.4.1 Green Infrastructure Policy Objectives

The Core Strategy sets out objectives in line with this Green Spaces Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy. In light of the recent Open Space and Green Infrastructure studies these objectives have been updated. The strategic objectives for Green Infrastructure are:

- Protect against the loss of all green infrastructure and biodiversity habitats within the borough;
- Enhance the borough's green infrastructure provision, either by making provision for new facilities in identified areas of deficiency based on the council's most up-to-date Open Space Study, or by improving existing open space provision;
- Ensure that new development contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area, increasing recreational and/or biodiversity value, and where appropriate provides or contributes to the provision of accessible green space networks linking urban areas;
- Focus resources into improving access to and enhancing currently underused facilities (particularly parks and play areas) within the borough and adjoining districts to help reduce the impact on other existing resources which are threatened by high user numbers; and
- Seek to maintain and enhance the role of undesignated green infrastructure assets such as urban street trees and incidental green spaces in reducing the impacts of climate and other environmental changes.



Park Rangers

Policy GI 1 - Green Infrastructure

All green infrastructure assets identified through the Open Space audit and the Green Infrastructure Study will be protected for their recreational, environmental, visual, and wildlife value. Development which results in a net loss of provision will not normally be acceptable.

Priorities for Green Infrastructure will focus on conserving and enhancing the following key assets and the linkages between them:

- Cassiobury Park;
- Whippendell Wood (outside the borough but owned and managed by Watford Borough Council);
- Colne and Gade Valleys and Grand Union Canal;
- Chalk landscape valleys;
- The borough's sites of Special Scientific Interest; Local Nature Reserves, wildlife sites, key biodiversity areas and priority habitats and species identified by the Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

Where opportunities arise, new facilities should be provided and enhanced in line with the Green Spaces Strategy, the Green Infrastructure Plan, and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. In particular development proposals located in the town centre and close to the Colne Valley Strategic link will be expected to make provision for better access to or the enhancement of the strategic infrastructure link. Development proposals in areas which are deficient in open space will be expected to improve provision by establishing new open space where possible or improving accessibility to, and the quality of, existing open space.

Proposals for new development should contribute to the creation, extension and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure provision. Where appropriate contributions to future management and maintenance of new provision will be sought.

Proposals for new development should demonstrate that they are not compromising the integrity of the Green Infrastructure network, by causing fragmentation, damage to, or isolation of Green Infrastructure assets including natural habitats and species. Development proposals will be encouraged to enhance links for wildlife to existing GI assets. In addition to the above, where appropriate proposals which contribute to the following will be encouraged.

- Measures to relieve the impact of current high usage levels of Cassiobury Park and Whippendell Wood.
- Increased quality and numbers of urban street trees.
- Opportunities and land for residents to grow food.
- Wetland enhancement and sustainable water management in the Gade and Colne Valleys

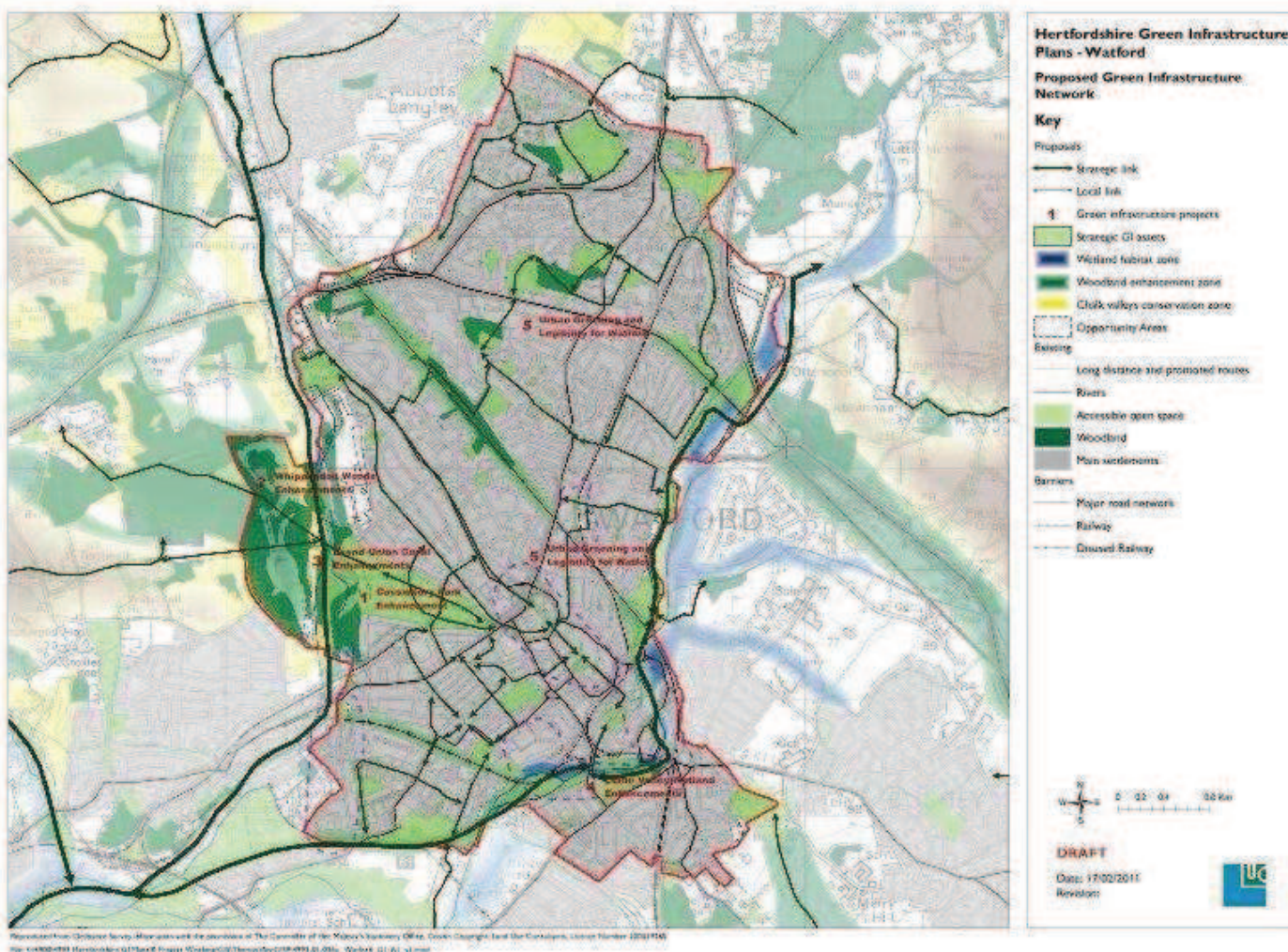
While the principle is to retain the existing **Green Belt boundary**, minor adjustments to deal with some inconsistencies will be considered in the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD and accompanying proposals map. The Green Infrastructure evidence base will inform the Site Allocations DPD and will be considered in assessing applications for new development.

The change (in hectares) of total open space managed by Watford Borough Council will be monitored, as will the amount of eligible open space managed to Green Flag Award standards.

The council will plan for Green Infrastructure in partnership with neighbouring local authorities; Three Rivers, Hertsmere and St Albans; the County Council and other Hertfordshire authorities, as well as relevant interest groups and stakeholders.

Further qualitative analysis will be carried out through updated versions of this Green Spaces Strategy by Watford Borough Council. In some instances an improvement in the quality of Green Infrastructure may make it acceptable for minor open space loss, this will be examined on a case-by-case basis.

The Green Infrastructure Plan will provide details of projects which local communities can be involved in delivering.



Green Infrastructure Plan for Watford

In general, Watford residents considered that there was generally sufficient green space within the town with the exception of natural green space as has been determined through localised consultation. Based on the typology maps resulting from the audit, all green spaces were mapped onto GIS which then allowed quantities of provision to be determined per ward and provision of open space per person for the town. The results are summarised in Table 4.4. These are important as it allows the Council to determine defined provision standards that are locally derived, based on local needs and a local assessment.

| Typology | Cal'land (M ²) | Central (M ²) | Holywell (M ²) | Legg'ts (M ²) | W'side (M ²) | Me'den (M ²) | Nascot (M ²) | Oxhey (M ²) | Park (M ²) | Stanb'g (M ²) | Tudor (M ²) | V'rage (M ²) |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Parks & Gardens & Recreation Grounds | 37,475 | 120,962 | 157,654 | 76,298 | 287,102 | 181,838 | 83,029 | 140,361 | 760,279 | 128,835 | 41,700 | 18,306 |
| Amenity Green Spaces | 7,971 | 7,672 | 53,176 | 20,219 | 40,284 | 75,274 | 23,911 | 21,673 | 11,241 | 11,666 | 20,648 | 0 |
| Green Corridors | 0 | 4,552 | 78,337 | 0 | 0 | 17,301 | 12,641 | 0 | 82,969 | 0 | 23,696 | 0 |
| Natural/Semi-Natural Green Spaces | 0 | 81,440 | 116,759 | 82,842 | 44,902 | 132,979 | 51,743 | 168,747 | 1,017,863 | 4,780 | 18,355 | 24,460 |
| Allotments & Community Gardens | 0 | 15,200 | 46,900 | 74,300 | 23,100 | 0 | 0 | 83,400 | 0 | 5,100 | 3,300 | 29,500 |
| Churchyards & Cemeteries | 0 | 4,109 | 0 | 0 | 3,925 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 126,059 | 0 | 57,889 |
| Outdoor Sports Facilities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 52,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 150,260 | 17,440 | 0 | 33,360 |
| Children and Young Peoples Facilities | 116 | 4,948 | 11,454 | 10,757 | 2,468 | 2,514 | 1,810 | 3,447 | 3,259 | 5,225 | 928 | 1,873 |
| TOTAL | 45,562 | 238,883 | 463,280 | 316,620 | 401,781 | 409,906 | 173,134 | 417,628 | 2,025,871 | 299,105 | 108627 | 165,388 |
| M² per person | 6 | 29 | 54 | 42 | 57 | 52 | 23 | 62 | 260 | 42 | 18 | 20 |
| Note - Watford has 5,065,785 m ² of open space, which equates to 56m ² per person. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 4.4 - Quantity of Public Open Space in Watford per ward.

(Note: significant outdoor sports facilities are included within Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds typology)

4.4.2 Overview of Existing Provision

Watford has a large quantity of green space but a number of clear issues stand out:

- Natural green spaces, outdoor sports facilities and in particular Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds are the largest green space land uses;
- Provision of allotments in Watford is considerable with a range of sites and geographically well distributed across the town;
- There are significant opportunities for linking green spaces and enhancing the Green Infrastructure of the town.

4.5 Accessibility Audits and Distance Thresholds

There are three key factors relating to Watford's geography which has an important bearing on the formulation of distance thresholds for the area and determining which communities have "accessibility deficiencies" to different forms of provision.

The key factors are:

1. The compact and urban nature of Watford;
2. The proximity of facilities in neighbouring boroughs and knowledge that local people are likely to use; and
3. The significant lack of opportunities for creating new and extra provision of green space within the borough.

4.5.1 The Nature of Distance Thresholds

Distance thresholds are not hard facts, but a broad and flexible guide to the distance which people in general will be willing to travel in order to use or visit a facility or space. They are affected by many issues such as human factors (age issues) and individual circumstances and variations in external circumstances, such as physical barriers (rail and road corridors).

There are two other key points:

1. The distance that people in any particular area travel to spaces or facilities is a function of the distribution of provision, coupled with the range of factors summarised above. In an area with little provision e.g. rural areas or outlying villages, empirically established distance thresholds will be much higher than in another area with a high level of well distributed provision;
2. There is a clear difference between people's need to travel and willingness to do so. Rugby players may not be willing to travel more than a mile, for instance, to their local club, but the distance they will need to travel to take part in matches depends primarily on the geographical area covered by the league in which their team plays. The higher a player's standard of skill, the wider this area will be.

4.6 Accessibility Audit Findings

Distance thresholds were mapped using GIS to determine accessibility deficiencies for:

- Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds; and
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces;

4.6.1 Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds

There are 29 sites identified as parks, gardens and recreation grounds in Watford, covering 203 hectares. This equates to 2.24ha per 1,000 population. The standards suggest applying a distance threshold of 600m around parks and gardens, equivalent to a 15 minute walk time. When this is applied, creating buffer zones on the map, clear but very small areas of deficiency of accessible parks and gardens can be identified.

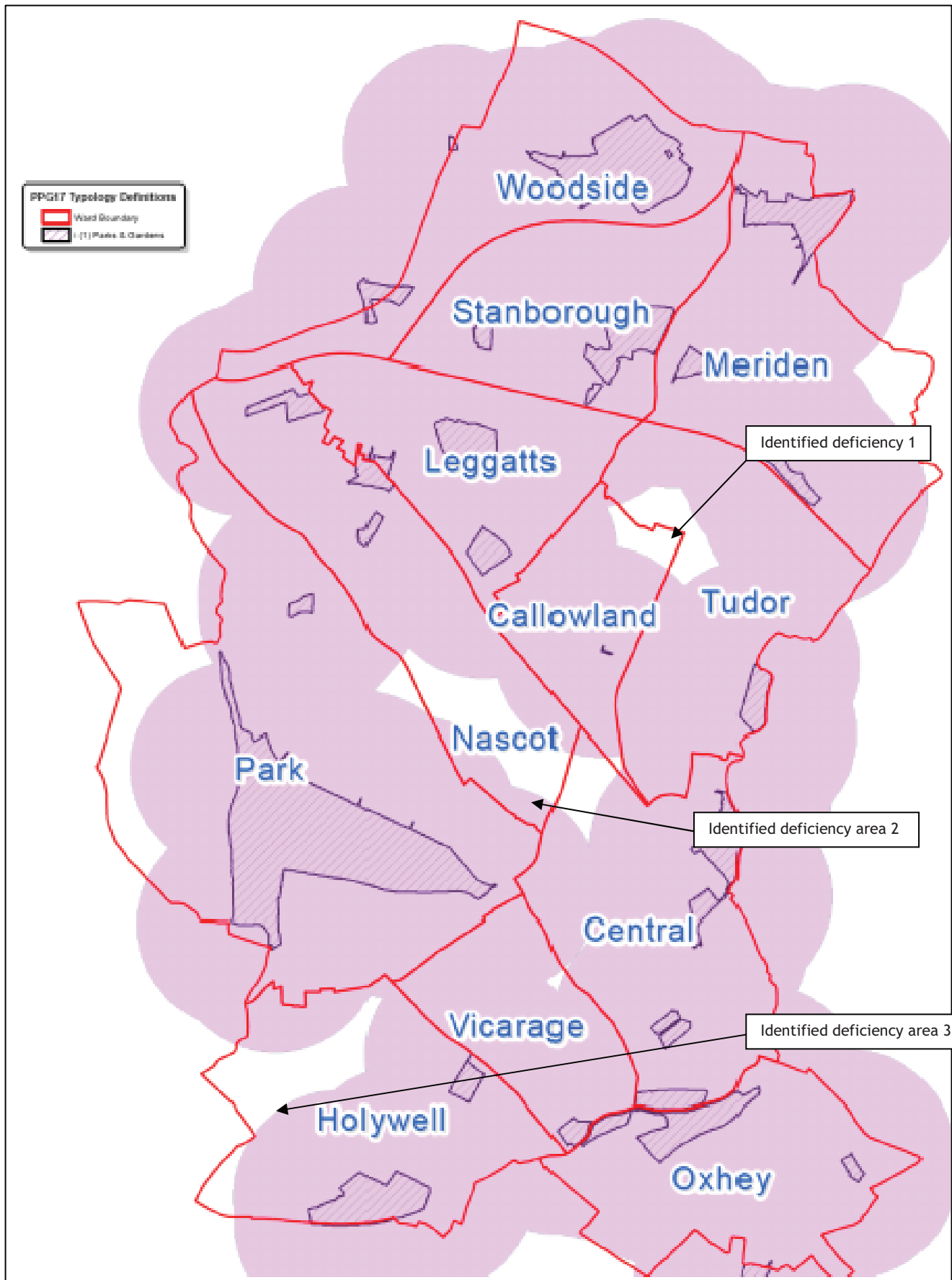
These areas are identified on the map above. Area 1 is in North Watford, around Bushey Mill Lane and the Greycain Industrial Estate. Area 2 is to the north of the Town Centre, mainly in Nascot Ward. The third area of deprivation is around the Caxton Business Park in the Holywell area.

There is less priority to provide provision in the Caxton Way and Greycain Industrial areas as these areas have a relatively low population density and are designated employment areas. However the area of deficiency identified to the north of the Town Centre (area 2) is a key priority area as the population density is relatively high in this area.

It is likely that the larger (Green Flag designated) parks of Cassiobury (75 hectares) and Woodside Playing Fields (25 hectares) serve a greater catchment area than the 15 minute walk time mapped. In reality residents will travel further to access such a facility, therefore it can be expected that residents out of the buffer zone in area two will travel to Cassiobury Park.



Cheslyn Gardens



Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds Distance thresholds

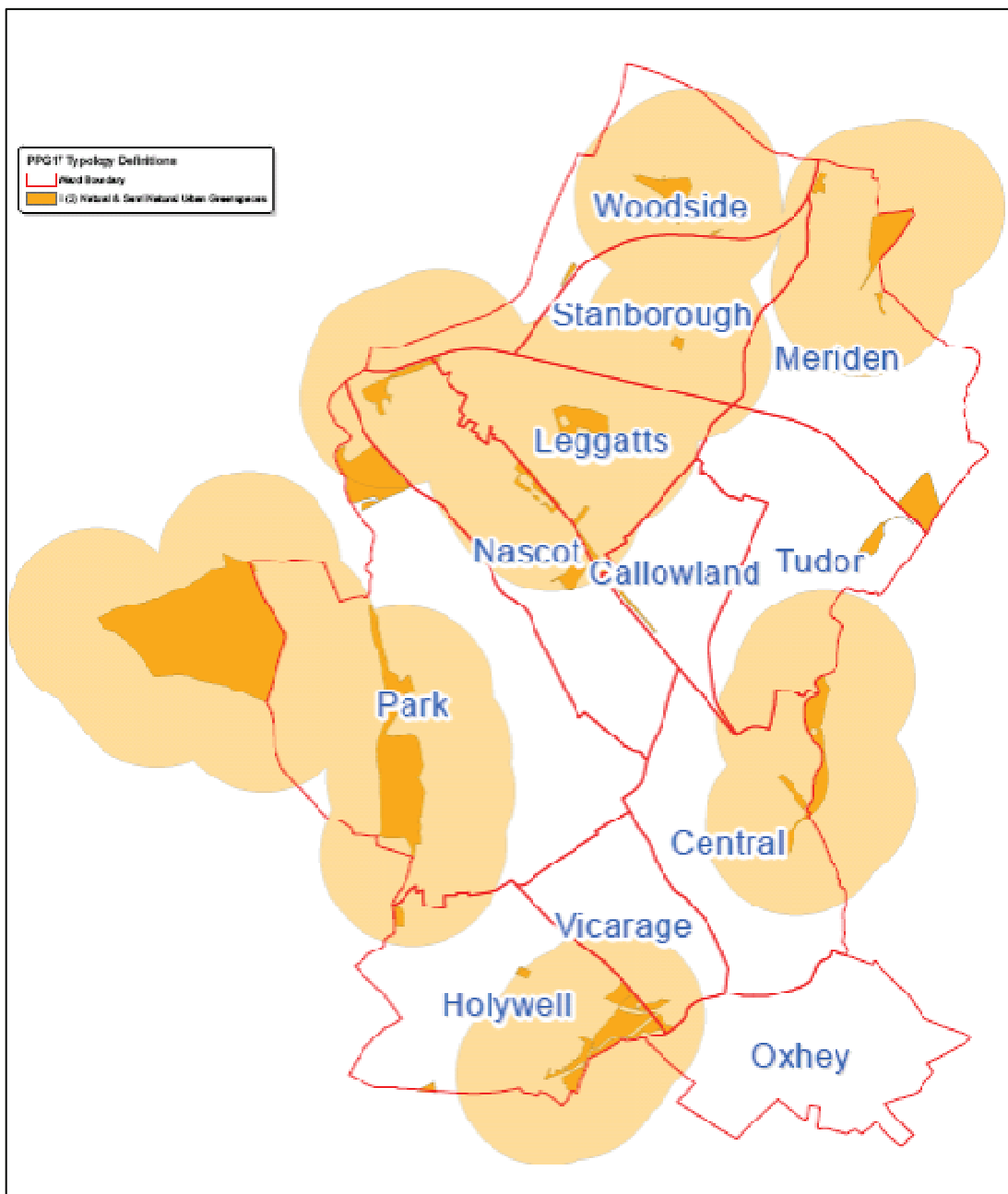
4.6.2 Natural and Semi Natural Green Spaces

The typology of natural and semi-natural green spaces, as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide includes woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. downland, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), open running water, wastelands (including disturbed ground), and bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs, quarries, pits). These provide wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

There are 34 sites classified as natural and semi-natural green spaces in Watford covering 174 hectares, this is equal to 1.92ha per 1,000 population. 5 of these sites are identified as Local Nature Reserves. Watford is an urban area so it is expected that there will be gaps in the provision of natural green spaces.

The distribution of natural and semi-natural green spaces is generally around the edge of the borough with a large area in the centre, and down towards Oxhey, out of the 600m buffer zone.

Natural and Semi Natural Green Spaces Distance Thresholds



4.6.3 Outdoor Sports Facilities

There are 57 outdoor sports facilities in Watford totalling 219.61 hectares. This equates to 2.43 hectares per 1,000 population. The provision is fairly well spread throughout the borough and it is reasonable to expect residents to travel to pitches and other specific facilities such as Woodside Playing Fields and Stadium. A detailed Sports Facilities Study was carried out in 2012 and has assessed the following:-

- Usage - present and future;
- Quality of provision;
- Quantity of provision;
- Accessibility; and
- Capacity - present and future.

A detailed and comprehensive Sports Facilities Strategy will be developed as an Action Plan to this Green Spaces Strategy, with an emphasis on creating and developing multi-activity sports activity hubs.

4.6.4 Allotments and Community Gardens

The typology of allotments, community gardens and city farms, set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide, includes sites which provide 'opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of a long term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction'.

There are 13 sites in Watford managed by the Council totalling just over 28 hectares. This is equal to 0.31ha per 1,000 people. There is good access to allotments in the north and south of the borough but little access from the central strip. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) suggests a national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households (i.e. 20 allotments per 2,000 people based on two people per house) or 1 allotment per 200 people. This equates to 0.125 hectares per 1,000 population based on an average plot size of 250m². Based on the current provision Watford is well over the NSALG standard, however, the majority of allotments are in the north and south of the borough with less provision in the central area of the town. There is an ongoing demand for allotments in Watford. Watford Community Housing Trust and Railtrack also have a small number of allotments available to residents, but these have not been included in this assessment.

4.6.5 Children's and Young People's / Teenage Facilities

There are 55 sites classified as provision for children and young people, totalling just under 5 hectares - 0.05ha per 1,000 population.

Although there are gaps within each analysis area, the focus is on improving access to the various sites as well as upgrading provision. It is considered that people will be willing to travel slightly further (especially along green corridors) to reach play areas of better quality.

To support this, a qualitative analysis on the play areas has been performed with analysis of such aspects as level and scope of play equipment, variety, signage, appropriate age segregation, proximity to dwellings, accessibility, drainage, and type of safety surfacing. The split between high quality and low quality sites was 70:30 indicating the impact of the ongoing improvements to many sites in the town, but with considerable work still required to improve remaining areas.

4.6.6 Amenity Green space

The amenity green space typology, as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide, defines sites as offering 'opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas'. These include informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, 'village greens' and other incidental space.

49 sites classified as amenity green space are identified in Watford, totalling 29 hectares - 0.32ha per 1,000 population.

There are gaps within the densely populated area to the east of the Town Centre around Queens Road, improved access to existing provision will be sought in the medium term.

4.6.7 Green Corridors

The green corridors typology, as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide includes sites that offer opportunities for 'walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure or travel purposes and opportunities for wildlife migration'. This includes river and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycle routes and pedestrian paths within towns, rights of way and permissive paths.

There are fairly extensive green corridors around the borough boundary, covering 22 hectares - 0.24ha per 1,000 population. It is not appropriate to apply accessibility standards to public rights of way and green corridors due to their linear nature and usage (often via many access points). However, the central area of the borough and down into Oxhey ward in the south-east do not have access to these green corridors.

4.6.8 Cemeteries and Churchyards

The typology of cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds, as set out in PPG17:A Companion Guide includes areas for 'quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity'.

There are four sites in Watford totalling 19.2 hectares. This equates to 0.21 hectares per 1,000 population. It must be noted that two of these sites are no longer used for burials, however they still have amenity value as places of quiet contemplation.

Two cemeteries are currently in service within the borough, both are owned and maintained by the council. Vicarage Road Cemetery is almost at capacity. North Watford Cemetery has approximately 15 years capacity remaining. New sites for cemeteries will be examined through the site allocations development plan document.

Although there is no provision in the central area across the borough, all residents live within a 30 minute drive time of provision. Therefore against a standard of 30 minute drive time, there are no gaps in provision.

4.7 Setting, Developing and Applying Local Provision Standards

Standards for the green space typologies (as classified in Section 1 of this Strategy and applied throughout the Strategy) consider surpluses and deficiencies in provision on the basis of quantitative, qualitative analysis and any consultation undertaken. National recommended guidance has been used to inform the appropriate distance thresholds, which have been applied using GIS mapping to demonstrate potential surplus/deficiencies in provision. In order to set provision by standards it is important to consider any standards previously applied by the Council and through the planning framework.

The standard for green space previously applied reflected the National Playing Fields Association standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population (The former Six Acre Standard which equates to 2.4m² per person)

The location, accessibility and quality of green space is also important in ensuring that the areas are well used and appropriate to the needs of the Watford community.

Setting distance thresholds for each type of open space for all areas is not easy to achieve, as many factors will influence travel times. The figures are based on generic average travel times. However the standards provided, provide guidance that help to identify gaps in provision and meet local needs as identified through detailed analysis and benchmarking.

In developing and applying standards of provision, it is important to be clear that:

- National standards of recommended provision have been used for comparative purposes only along with benchmarking with similar authorities;
- Existing standards of provision relate to the current level of provision of a specific typology; and
- Recommended standards of provision are based on local assessment and analysis, but may be the same as a national recommended standard if appropriate, and specifically where current levels of provision do not meet a nationally recommended standard as a minimum. Equally, the future recommended standard may be the existing provision, if it is particularly high, and to lose it would significantly change the natural character of the area as would be the case in Watford.

It is not appropriate to set local standards in the same way for each typology; this is because the majority of people access different types of provision in different ways, for example, walking to a park or children’s play area, driving to an outdoor sports facility. In addition, the way in which people choose to access different types of provision may be influenced by locational factors, for example, a high quality park may be within cycling or driving, but not walking distance. It is also important to take into consideration the extreme urban nature of Watford and its compact nature.

With this in mind, we have developed a set of standards below for each typology. For each typology, we have identified a benchmark based on authorities who have carried out similar work and studies. The Middlesbrough example is especially appropriate due to its compact and dense urban nature with lack of access to open countryside and pressures on existing spaces.



Signage Improvement Programme

4.7.1 Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None
- **Existing Provision:**
 - **Watford** 2.24ha per 1,000 population which equates to 22m² per person
- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 20m² per person

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standard. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 3.6m² per person; Mid Sussex 2.0m² per person; Middlesbrough 13m² per person)

- **Accessibility Standard**

- **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 600 m
- **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:** Not applicable

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m; Middlesbrough 600m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one park, garden, recreation ground or a sports pitch site providing opportunities for informal recreation.

Justification: All residents should have easy access to a park, garden or recreation ground. This means that accessibility is more important than quantity. Suitable designed and managed sports pitches can also fulfil some of the functions of parks and recreation grounds, but there will be a need for additional space over and above that required for the pitches and support accommodation alone. Where particular forms of green space can be multifunctional - and recreation grounds generally contain a mix of several recreation opportunities - this makes the most effective use of land. This is especially relevant within a dense urban where recreation grounds, sports fields are often multifunctional.

Deficiencies: None, apart from small areas identified in North Watford, Nascot and north of Holywell.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: The Council will seek contributions from all developments which will increase the use made of parks, such as residential and office developments as well as improving access to and quality of existing parks such as Cassiobury Park.

Opportunities: Continue to upgrade the quality parks, gardens and recreation grounds to improve qualitative deficiencies. Reduction of existing parks and gardens would significantly change the natural character of the town.

4.7.2 Amenity Green Space

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None
- **Existing Provision:**
 - **Watford** 0.32ha per 1,000 population which equates to 3.2m² per person
- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** Not Appropriate

Quantity It is not desirable for amenity green space to be a discrete category of provision. Instead, the Council and its partners will adopt a policy of supporting its integration into other forms of green space wherever possible. Where there is under provision of parks, local amenity green space could be upgraded to meet any identified deficiency. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 6.0m² per person; Horsham 4.0m² per person; Middlesbrough 6.5m² per person)

- **Accessibility Standard:**
 - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 450 m

Benchmark: (Blyth 300 m; Mid Sussex 300 m; Horsham 350 m; Middlesbrough 350m)

Accessibility: Every dwelling within all settlements should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one local amenity green space or public access pitch.

Justification: Accessibility is more important than quantity because accessible, high quality green spaces meet local needs better than larger, more distant sites. Most forms of green space are multi-functional and therefore serve a number of purposes, the most important of which is to “soften” and enhance the appearance of an area & provide an attractive setting for buildings and for pathways and other transport routes. When assessing whether there is adequate amenity space in an area, it is important to consider the whole of the green network. Therefore, distance thresholds for amenity green spaces can be applied to other forms of green space where they serve an amenity function.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: The Council will seek contributions from residential developments to the enhancement of Local Amenity green space only if there are deficiencies in parks, gardens and recreation grounds, sports pitch provision, play areas and natural/semi-natural green space and to the agreed provision standards for those typologies if deemed appropriate.

Opportunities: Upgrading of Local Amenity green space to enhanced facilities where current deficiencies are identified. There are gaps within the densely populated area to the east of the Town Centre around Queens Road, improved access to existing provision will be sought in the medium term.

4.7.3 Natural and Semi-Natural Green space

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None
- **Existing Provision:**
 - **Watford** 1.92ha per 1,000 population which equates to 1.9m² per person
- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** Not Appropriate

Quantity: It is not desirable for accessible natural green space to be a discrete category of provision. Instead, the Council and its partners will adopt a policy of supporting its integration into other forms of green space wherever possible. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 20m² pp; Horsham 20m² pp; Middlesbrough 0.5m² pp)

- **Accessibility Standard:**
 - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 600 m

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 600 m; Horsham 1000 m; Middlesbrough 950m)

Accessibility: Every dwelling should be within 600 m of at least one accessible natural green space.

Site Size and Accessibility: Many dwellings in Watford have less than average accessibility to open countryside but reasonable access to natural/semi-natural green space. Well located accessible natural green space will be given a high degree of protection by Watford Borough Council and will be protected by policies relating to nature conservation or specific nature conservation designations.

Justification: Natural green spaces offer local residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and to be close to nature. Sites such as woodlands, local nature reserves and potential wetland habitat networks should be easily accessible to all residents. When coupled with high quality, accessibility is more important than quantity because many smaller but higher quality sites should have a greater capacity to accommodate users than fewer larger and often lower quality ones. They should also provide a better experience for visitors.

Deficiencies: Across most of the central areas of the town.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: The Council will **not** ask developers to provide new on-site natural green spaces but seek contributions towards the enhancement of either existing natural green spaces and to increase the biodiversity of other existing green space typologies such as parks and gardens, sports pitches sites, education land and local amenity green space, particularly in the central area.

Opportunities: Improve access to Green Infrastructure based on Policy GI 1 - Green Infrastructure.

All green infrastructure assets identified through the Open Space audit and the Green Infrastructure Study will be protected for their recreational, environmental, visual, and wildlife value. Development which results in a net loss of provision will not normally be acceptable.

Priorities for Green Infrastructure will focus on conserving and enhancing the key assets and the linkages between them.

4.7.4 Equipped Play Areas

■ **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** Up to 8 m² per person based on the NPFA standard for **play space**

■ **Existing Provision:**

- **Watford** 0.05ha per 1,000 population which equates to 0.5m² per person

■ **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 0.6m² per person - (based on fixed equipped play areas)

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standard.

Benchmark: (Blyth 0.8m² per person; Mid Sussex 0.65m² per person; Horsham 0.5m² per person; Middlesbrough 0.5 m² per person)

■ **Accessibility Standard:**

- **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 500m

Benchmark: (Blyth 300 m; Mid Sussex 300 m; Horsham 350 m; Middlesbrough 500m)

Accessibility: All dwellings with more than one bedroom should be within the walking distance threshold of at least one fixed equipment play area.

Justification: All children should be able to use play areas. These spaces also meet a valuable social need for parents and carers. Accessibility is more important than quantity because many young children will not be able to walk far to a play area.

Deficiencies: There are no significant deficiencies across the town.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy:

In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing play areas.

Opportunities: The town is well served by a large number of play areas but there are opportunities to improve play sites in key locations, in particular in regional and community park sites where destination play facilities with youth activity areas should be developed further.

4.7.5 Youth Activity Areas

■ **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None

■ **Existing Provision:** Not Known

■ **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 0.3m² per person

Quantity: The total quantity of provision should at least match the amount of provision required by the quantity standard.

Benchmark: (Blyth 0.1m² per person; Mid Sussex 0.3m² per person; Horsham 0.2-0.4m² per person; Middlesbrough 0.3m² per person)

■ **Accessibility Standard:**

- **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 600 m
- **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:** Not applicable

Benchmark: (Blyth 600 m; Mid Sussex 600 m; Horsham 1000 m; Middlesbrough 500m)

Accessibility: All dwellings with more than one bedroom should be within walking distance of at least one neighbourhood youth area such as a MUGA or Youth Shelter.

Justification: Young people tend to be a neglected group in terms of access to community infrastructure, partly because their needs can be difficult to define. Indeed, many young people are unable to give a clear answer when asked to identify the facilities they would like in their area.

However, young people have every right to “hang about” and indulge in largely harmless but sometimes noisy activities close to home, so there is a clear need to provide for them. Given the nature of youth culture and the difficulties of territorialism, it is important that young people should have a degree of choice, through access to more than one youth area within their neighbourhood.

Deficiencies: There are considerable deficiencies across the whole town.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing youth activity areas if within the appropriate distance threshold.

Opportunities: Longer term development of youth sites and activity areas in regional and community parks.

4.7.6 Allotments and Community Gardens

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** None
- **Existing Provision:**
 - **Watford** 0.31ha per 1,000 population which equates to 3.1m² per person
- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 3m² per person

Quantity: The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) suggests a national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households (i.e. 20 allotments per 2,000 people based on two people per house) or 1 allotment per 200 people. This equates to 0.125 hectares per 1,000 population based on an average plot size of 250m².

Benchmark: (Blyth 4.4m² per person; Mid Sussex 1.75m² per person; Horsham 1.25m² per person)

- **Accessibility Standard:**
 - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 1000 m
 - **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:** 4.5 km

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m; Middlesbrough 700m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within walking distance threshold of at least one allotment site within the settlement hierarchy or within driving distance as the 2011 allotment survey highlighted that well over 50% of tenants drive to their sites. .

Justification: There is a reasonable demand for allotments in Watford where gardens linked to dwellings can often be very small, or almost non-existent.

Deficiencies: Based on the current provision Watford is well over the NSALG standard, however, the majority of allotments are in the north and south of the borough with limited provision in the middle of the town. There is a continued demand for allotments in Watford despite limited promotion.

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: In the short term, developer contributions to be utilised in improving existing allotment areas across the town.

Opportunities: Improve access to allotments to allow them to become a viable option for people living in the centre of Watford. It is accepted that residents may have to drive to allotments, particularly if they are carrying equipment.

4.7.7 Outdoor Sports Facilities

- **Existing Local Plan Quantity Standard:** NPFA six acre standard
- **Existing Provision:** (does not include School Playing Fields, as most are inaccessible)
 - **Watford** 2.43ha per 1,000 population which equates to 24m² per person
- **Proposed Quantity Standard:** 20m² per person

Quantity: The total quantity of grass and artificial pitches available to community based clubs and teams should at least match the amount of provision required by the application of the quantity standards. **Benchmark:** (Blyth 10m² per person; Mid Sussex 12.25m² per person; Horsham 14m² per person; Middlesbrough 11m² per person)

- **Accessibility Standard:**
 - **Straight Line Walking Distance Threshold:** 1000 m
 - **Straight Line Driving Distance Threshold:** Not applicable

Benchmark: (Blyth 900 m; Mid Sussex 900 m; Horsham 1000 m; Middlesbrough 850m)

Accessibility: All dwellings should be within walking distance of at least one playing pitch.

Justification: All residents should have the opportunity to take part in the pitch sport of their choice. In the first instance this requires enough pitches with accessibility being secondary as the competitive nature of sports pitches means that participants will not always use the pitch nearest to their home. In addition, roughly half of all matches are played “away”. Cricket and rugby teams tend to draw their membership from a wider area than football teams and many football pitches are also used by young people for mini-soccer or casually for “kickabouts”. There is especially a need for football pitches to be more accessible than cricket or rugby pitches.

Deficiencies: None

Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy Policy: The Council will seek contributions from all developments which will increase the use made of sports pitches, such as residential and office developments.

Opportunities: Enhancement of facilities across the town due to qualitative issues, especially in relation to changing facilities. Emphasis on strategic multi activity hubs including Woodside Playing Fields and King George V Playing Fields. Sports Facilities Strategy to be developed.

5 The Strategic & Local Green Space Network - Policies and Aspirations

The overall quality, accessibility and quantity of green space in Watford is largely very good, well maintained and valued by our local communities. However, previous consultation also raised a number of concerns and issues such as perceived deficiencies in some typologies of open space and the need for continuous improvement and longer term investment. The policies we have derived in Section 6 for the Council and our partners to aim for, leading to a more detailed action plan will assist the Council in this task. However, we need to be more specific as to what our priorities are and what specifically we need to concentrate on. With the limited and often declining resources we have, as well as externally and from developers, we need to prioritise accordingly. We have therefore proposed a “**Strategic Green Space Network**”, the sites which are most important to us, which need to be **protected** as well as continually **enhanced** through capital **investment** as well as enhanced management and maintenance where appropriate and realistic. Many of these sites are already high quality through continued high standards of maintenance, but as prescribed, many require long term management plans and long term investment to improve their long term futures and development. This will allow us and our partners to deliver our Green Space Vision and aspirations.

5.1 Our Vision

“Watford will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the town”.

5.2 Delivering Change

The Council has been managing within existing resources in many areas but has also been improving open spaces and facilities proactively as a result of Section 106 Developer contributions. However, in the current economic climate, these resources are likely to decline and available funding will need to be delivered and allocated where it is really needed most. This Green Spaces Strategy emphasises the need to continue to improve proactively. However, community involvement in developing a strategic network of green spaces and in improving sites is critical. Although involving the community can require increased resources, these efforts should result in lower maintenance costs through an increase in local pride and less vandalism/abuse through peer pressure. The Strategic Green Space Network as outlined below is the immediate priority for the Council with Developer Contributions / Community Infrastructure Levy and other funding to be targeted towards these sites. The open spaces audit has confirmed that there is generally sufficient open space provision across the town and that **the overall priority should be existing site enhancement**, based on this new strategic network.

Delivering this change will be through delivering the Councils revised Corporate Policies which are summarised below and through a number of policy development areas and ultimately through a series of Action Plans detailed in Section 8, with short, medium and long term targets, working with strategic partners, local communities and key stakeholders. Not all may be achievable, but a vision has now been created and targets and opportunities identified.

Corporate Policies

- CP1 - Making Watford a better place to live
- CP2 - To provide the strategic lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth
- CP3 - Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town
- CP4 - Operating the council efficiently and effectively

Policy Development Areas

We have therefore adopted a number of key policy development areas which embrace the above issues and are developed in detail in Section 7 - Action Plan and provide the necessary guidance in taking the strategy forward.

1. The Council recognises the importance and value of all its green spaces to Watford and it's diverse communities and will seek to protect and enhance them through the planning system;
2. The Council through partnership working with private and public organisations, as well as Friends and resident groups, will seek funding opportunities to sustainably manage and enhance publicly accessible green spaces in the interests of the whole Watford community;
3. The Council will work in conjunction with partners, users, and stakeholders and involve them in the "decision making" process relating to the use, development and management of the towns' green spaces;
4. The Council will work in partnership with local people and other agencies in order to provide cleaner, safer and greener environments. These will be publicly accessible and socially inclusive, catering for a wide range of people, ages and backgrounds for their enjoyment and safe use without the fear of crime;
5. The Council will encourage the use of Watford's green spaces as important centres of education as well as places to celebrate our cultural diversity;
6. The Council will encourage multifunctional use of green spaces to provide a balanced provision for play, sports, recreation and biodiversity, which will promote the health, enjoyment and well-being of Watford's local communities; and
7. The Council will protect and enhance Watford's biodiversity within its open spaces.

Objectives

- To provide and enhance a strategic network of accessible, high quality green space throughout Watford based on Green Infrastructure principles;
- To provide guidance for the effective planning and protection of open space, sport and recreational facilities which meet local needs by;
 - providing appropriate green space planning policies and standards which provide clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners, which will be taken forward as part of the Development Plan;
 - ensuring the continued provision of green spaces is distributed and located appropriately throughout Watford;
 - promoting good green space design and management principles in all new and existing developments.
- To strengthen local community involvement and interest in Watford's green spaces by;
 - encouraging community participation in the design, management and care of their local green spaces;
 - promoting the value of green space as a major contributor to health and social well-being, via its use for recreational, educational and sporting activities;
 - ensuring green spaces are locally valued and well used community assets.

- To improve Green Space by;
 - ensuring green spaces are locally accessible, clean, attractive, well maintained, fit for purpose and safe;
 - improving the existing green space contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of Watford;
 - providing a sustainable approach to green space management and maintenance.

5.3 The Strategic Borough-Wide Network (based on the following)

| Regional Parks | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Cassiobury Park and Whippendell Wood (and LNR/SSSI) | | Woodside Playing Fields (with Albans Wood LNR) | |
| Cheslyn House and Gardens | | St Mary's Churchyard | |
| North Watford and Vicarage Road Cemeteries | | Watford Museum Gardens | |
| Community Parks | | | |
| Callowland Rec | Oxhey Park | King George V Playing Fields | Watford Fields |
| Garston Park (and LNR) | Oxhey Green | Knutsford Playing Fields | Watford Heath |
| Goodwood Rec | Radlett Road Playing Fields | Leaveden Green Rec | North Watford Playing Fields |
| Harebreaks Rec (and LNR) | Waterfields Rec | Meriden Park | Colne River Park (with Lairage Land LNR) |
| Local Parks | | | |
| All Saints Churchyard | | Munden Woods Open Space | |
| Cassio Common | | Lingfield Way Open Space | |
| Buryfield Nature Garden | | Oxhey Grange | |
| Canterbury Road Pocket Park | | Russell Lane Wood | |
| East Drive Rec | | Riverside Rec | |
| Glen Way Open Space | | Riverside Park | |
| Harwoods Rec | | Berry Avenue Open Space | |
| Lea Farm Rec | | | |
| Strategic Sports Hubs | | | |
| King George V Playing Fields | | Fullerians / Sun Postal | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| West Herts Sports Ground | | Woodside Playing Fields | |
| Green links | | | |
| Colne River Corridor | River Gade | Grand Union Canal | Cassiobury Park |

Table 5.3 Strategic Green Space Network - List of Sites



Green Flag success in 2013/14

5.4 The Strategic Borough-Wide Network

The quality of all the strategic green space network sites should meet the quality standards requirements in all respects:

- The priorities are to enhance the quality of the regional, community and local sites in the strategic green space network;
- The priorities are to improve the accessibility of the sites in the strategic green space network;
- The priorities are to protect through the planning system all the sites in the strategic green space network;
- The priorities are to increase community and stakeholder involvement across Watford in all aspects of green space management, maintenance and development.

5.5 The Watford Provision Level

The spaces that the Council will seek to upgrade and enhance to ensure they are High Quality/High Value are included in the proposed strategic green space network in Table 5.3.

5.6 Opportunities and Sites for Review

Just over 50 sites across Watford are currently classed as low quality and of low value. The Council will review those spaces that have been classed as being genuinely low quality and low value, in the light of wider planning policies.

The policy on low quality low value sites is as follows:

- Enhance the quality of the green space provided it is possible also to enhance the value;
- Consider the space surplus to requirements in terms of its current use if value cannot be improved. Consider alternative uses.

Along with the above criteria, we will also include the following:

- Determine any other typology deficiencies in the area within distance thresholds;
- Determine how poor the quality and value is and whether enhancement is realistic;
- Determine future long term investment opportunities of each site;
- Determine local community “value” by localised consultation; and
- Opportunities for enhancement of nearby green space facilities within the green space network.

6 Key Green Space Issues - Our Vision and Strategy

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the main issues facing the Council, its partners and stakeholders if it is to achieve the proposed vision for green spaces for Watford. We also describe some of the options facing us in achieving this goal. The development of a new and “fit for purpose” Green Spaces Strategy for Watford is based around three key issues:

1. **Developing a Green Space Strategy Action Plan** - creating a draft framework for the implementation of the strategy that will guide all future green spaces and public places improvements based on a defined action plan;
2. **Improving the Green Spaces Consultative Network** - identifying a way in which we could effectively involve more local people in decisions about the management and development of our green spaces and public places;
3. **Measuring Progress** - suggesting how we can measure what has been done and how much there is still to do.

6.2 The Vision for Watford’s Green Spaces

Watford will have a network of accessible, high quality and highly valued green spaces to be proud of, promoting sustainability, supporting bio-diversity and extensively contributing to the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the town.

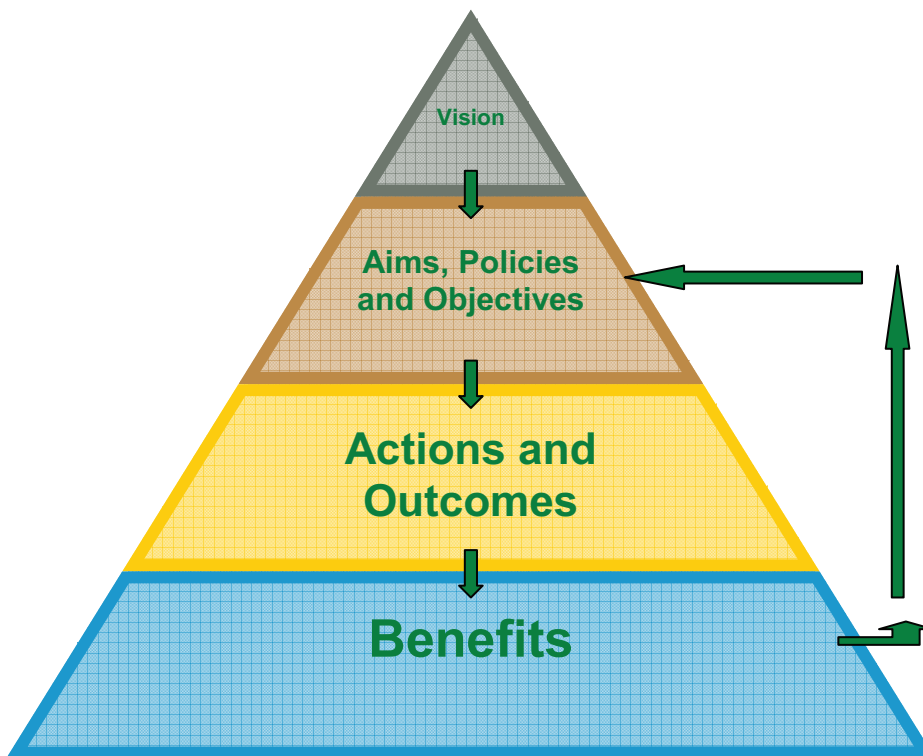


Figure 6.2 Delivering the Vision

This vision will guide and support Watford Borough Council’s actions on green spaces. This must be considered when designing and improving green spaces and management and maintenance regimes for them.

The vision has five key components:

1. A strong network and infrastructure of green spaces will be protected through the planning system, enhanced and managed to provide multi-functional benefits;
2. Green spaces will be socially inclusive, catering for a wide range of people, ages and backgrounds;
3. Green spaces will be enhanced and managed to maximise their biodiversity value;
4. Green spaces will make a substantial contribution to the visual amenity, identity, character and local distinctiveness of the town; and
5. Green spaces will be managed and maintained in a flexible, creative and sustainable manner seeking to minimise energy and chemical inputs, increasing re-cycling and through use of local materials.

Ten overarching strategy guidelines are proposed to expand the vision into real deliverable statements with a clear deliverable Action Plan.

STEWARDSHIP

1. The Council's Stewardship Role

As the representative of the residents of Watford, The Council will manage green spaces in the interests of the whole community.

The Council is the steward of many of Watford's most valuable green spaces and owns them in trust, now and for future generations.

2. Green Space History and Heritage

The Council will protect and preserve the historic and architectural heritage found within the Watford's green spaces. The Council will ensure that this heritage is protected, now and for the future.

MANAGEMENT

3. Green Spaces as Community Assets

Watford's green space is an essential and permanent community resource. The Council will work in conjunction with partners, users, and stakeholders and involve them in the "decision making" process relating to the use, development and management of the region's green spaces.

4. Investing in Community Green Spaces

The Council recognises that green spaces require investment. The Council will continue to actively seek resources for the regeneration of many green spaces, in partnership with the local community and external agencies based on a developed "strategic green space network". The Council will ensure any investment is sustainable, maintenance regimes are developed and where new developments and initiatives are introduced, maintenance issues are taken into account in the design, management and ongoing sustainability of the facility.

USE

5. Universal Access to Green Spaces

Watford's green spaces are available for use by all sections of the local community, including the business community. The Council will support and promote fully inclusive access and use of Watford's green spaces for all lawful purposes.

6. The Right to Safety

All sections of the local community have the right to use Watford's green spaces in safety and without fear of crime. The Council will work in partnership with local people and other agencies in order to provide cleaner, safer and greener environments.

7. Education for Citizenship

The Council recognises that green spaces are a rich resource for learning, not only about the living environment, but the town's history and culture. The Council will encourage the use of the town's green spaces as important centres of education as well as places to celebrate our cultural diversity.

8. Spaces for Play, Sport and Recreation

Watford's green spaces are an essential community resource in providing quality spaces for play, sport and recreation. The Council will ensure that these uses are provided for in health, enjoyment and well-being of the town's local communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

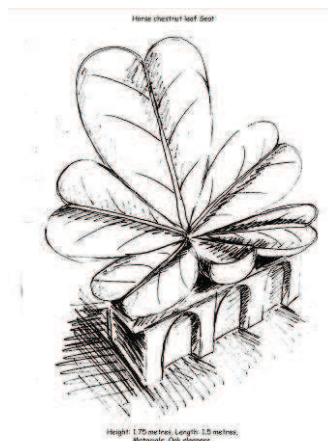
9. Community Living Spaces

The Council will continue to develop green spaces to ensure that they remain "living spaces". The Council will protect and enhance the town's biodiversity, maximise resource efficiency by increasing recycling opportunities, establish a better use of essential energy sources and minimise the use of pesticides and chemicals.

10. Aiming High and Ensuring Quality

The Council will make best use of resources available to ensure the highest quality for all the town's green spaces. The Council will continue to adopt the principles of the Green Flag standard across all green spaces.

The Council's aim is to build on its success in the annual Green Flag awards and build on the awards for Cassiobury Park, Cheslyn House and Gardens and Woodside Playing Fields.



6.3 Key Issues

The Council has identified a number of key issues for the future of green space provision in Watford

- Involving Communities;
- Parks and Gardens;
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space Areas;
- Green Infrastructure and corridors;
- Equipped Play Areas and Youth Provision;
- Sports Pitches and Multi-Courts / Artificial Turf Pitches;
- Allotments;
- Green Space Opportunities;
- Partnership Working with local stakeholders;
- Green Space Management, Maintenance and Development; and
- Staffing, Funding and Income Generation in Parks

We discuss these issues below in further detail.

6.3.1 Involving Communities

Needs

As already identified throughout the work in developing the Green Spaces Strategy, there is a need to develop better ways of involving local communities in green space management, maintenance and development. There are currently a number of groups in existence in relation to parks and open spaces in Watford and there are clear benefits to developing groups to work with green space management. These include a number of Friend's Groups and Resident's Associations. A key dimension of successful green space management is a willingness to engage local communities in the task, and to think creatively about means to make this happen. Community participation needs to happen within a framework which gives weight to different voices within the community, and that is not unduly influenced by sectional interests. Involving the voluntary sector in any green space management can tap an under-utilised resource.

There is also a need to work with other partners with an interest in the management of green space, e.g. Groundwork Trust, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Canal and River Trust, Trust for Conservation Volunteers as well as local sports clubs.

Opportunities

With the development of this Green Spaces Strategy there are clear immediate opportunities to further involve communities in green spaces in Watford. Some excellent work is already undertaken with Friends Groups such as the Friends of Cassiobury Park and Friends of Oxhey Park but there is enormous potential to involve further local communities, particularly in relation to the development of parks management plans for the community parks, improvements to play facilities as well as encouraging the number of Friends Groups.

The high quality but low value of some of the town's green spaces however means that the involvement of local communities is essential in delivering a better quality green space network in

relation to management, and in particular, development and assisting in attracting funding to allow much of this to happen.



Cassiobury Park in the autumn

6.3.2 Parks and Gardens

Needs

The overall quality of parks, gardens and recreation grounds in Watford is excellent and they score highly due to the quality of maintenance. Also in many cases they are highly valued by local communities. The strategy has identified that parks and gardens should be a strategic priority and should continue to be maintained to a high standard to ensure all are high quality and high value. The successful management of Watford's green spaces depends upon a correct understanding of the nature and needs of different types of green spaces. Locally derived green space typologies are valuable to differentiate between green space types and their appropriate aspirations and management regimes.

A clear distinction between ownership and management responsibilities for green space can help to establish a unified and integrated management regime.

Opportunities

A parks hierarchy was adopted in 2010 in relation to standards of maintenance based on regional, community and local parks and this seems a sensible approach to adopt as well as adapt. Despite the fact that Watford is a small but compact town, it has a wide range of parks and gardens, so a three-tier hierarchy has been developed:

Regional parks and gardens: the major parks and gardens with a good range of high quality facilities, intended to serve the whole town and a district-wide catchment. The Council will therefore seek to make these parks different and complementary. All existing Green Flag parks are included in this level of the hierarchy.

Community parks and gardens: parks and gardens within walking distance of each of the main neighbourhoods in the town, with a lesser range of facilities, but designed to complement the regional parks and gardens, with an emphasis on providing local play opportunities as well as formal / informal

sports facilities. The Council will actively seek to maximise pedestrian and cycling access to these spaces and ensure they are invested in and maintained to a high standard.

Local parks and gardens: parks and gardens within walking distance of all neighbourhoods but with an emphasis on informal play and sports activity and may have fewer if any facilities.

6.3.3 Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space

Needs

There is a considerable amount of natural and semi-natural green space within Watford despite its compact and urban nature and with some significant and strategic sites within the town such as Whippendell Wood and the river corridors of the River Colne and River Gade. These are all important in relation to green infrastructure, local biodiversity as well as accessibility. However, a number of areas are deficient, and accessibility is an issue.

Opportunities

Natural green spaces offer local residents and visitors the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and to be close to nature. Such sites should be easily accessible to all residents and visitors but managed in a balanced way to ensure local biodiversity is not compromised. Significant opportunities also exist through the newly established Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) whose purpose is to ensure the natural environment is fully valued in local decision making and delivers benefits for wildlife, people, landscapes and the local economy.

6.3.4 Green Infrastructure and corridors

Needs

Green infrastructure (GI) is an important part of the green spaces network providing visual, wildlife and sustainable transport links between the many urban green spaces and the outer countryside and green belt. In the face of competition for resources and environmental change, now more than ever we must look to our landscape and to sites to perform the widest range of functions for people, communities and quality of life, wildlife and ecosystems. In some cases, existing GI assets are delivering the necessary functionality, in others not. This pattern of demand and supply forms the basis for the analyses undertaken and proposals made in this plan. For example, issues relate to access and links, and the variable ability to reach assets as part of a green travel network. The Green Infrastructure Plan seeks to address links and connections, alternative green space provision and low cost, maximum benefit interventions such as improved landscape management to deliver a wider array of functions. It also looks at ways to influence sustainable living modes and transport choices through non spatial and educational projects to support spatial proposals.

Opportunities

The Council has identified with key professionals and community stakeholders, a series of potential projects to take forward the GI network and to deliver the functions identified in the GI Plan. The GI projects are as follows:

- Cassiobury Park Enhancement;
- Whippendell Woods Enhancement;
- Grand Union Canal Enhancement;
- Colne River Park Enhancement;
- Colne Valley Wetland Enhancement; and
- Urban Greening and Legibility for Watford.

An essential part of effective GI delivery is a strategic, co-ordinated approach, to ensure that projects are resourced appropriately in terms of capital works and ongoing revenue activity. The Green Infrastructure Plan now forms part of the evidence base for Development Plan Documents (DPDs) in the Local Development Framework and green infrastructure issues are now included and addressed in the Development Plan Documents.

6.3.5 Equipped Play Areas and Youth Provision

Needs

As a result of the lack of youth provision, teenagers can tend to colonise play facilities intended for younger children and their quality suffers as a result.

At the same time, there are still issues in relation to the quality and play value of play facilities in some areas of the town that have yet to receive investment. There are many play areas across the town which are generally maintained to a high standard and therefore are classed as high quality but play value is very poor.

Opportunities

As part of the continued initiative to improve green space quality across the town, opportunities exist to continue to improve the quality and play value of play areas and increase the number of youth facilities across the whole town. The development of youth and play facilities is an excellent way in which to empower a local community to get involved whether through development of Multi Use Games Areas, shelters or provision of wheeled sports such as BMX or skateboarding.

6.3.6 Sports Pitches, Multi-Courts and Artificial Turf Pitches

Needs

The spread of outdoor sports pitches across Watford is very good. There are issues related to the quality of provision of changing facilities and some facilities such as football, tennis and lack of all-weather facilities, including 3G artificial turf pitches.

Opportunities

Currently, there is no Sports Facilities / Playing Pitch Strategy for Watford. However, the Council commissioned a detailed audit of sports facilities across the town in 2012, in particular relating to provision of rugby, football, cricket, tennis and hockey. A *'Sports Facilities Strategy'* would identify the need for improved changing and toilet facilities to serve the existing pitches and would provide an approach which would prioritise this work in areas where maximum benefit can be gained by giving higher priority to those sites with most pitches, which could then be served by one building - the creation of multi-functional sports activity hubs.

The need for improvements to pitch quality at certain strategic sites would also be identified within the *'Sports Facilities Strategy'*.

6.3.7 Allotments

Needs

The overall provision of allotments across Watford is well provided for, with demand steady but with waiting lists on some sites .

Opportunities

A new strategy has been developed after localised community consultation and local needs assessments. The "Watford Allotments Strategy 2013 - 2018" is the overarching strategy for the provision of allotments in the Borough and includes all the background information, national, regional and local policies which are relevant to allotments as well as details of the consultation carried out.

Significant investment is required on most of our sites and the need for more focussed promotion and availability of allotments is central to the delivery of the Action Plan contained within the Allotments Strategy. Funding is often difficult to obtain for allotment developments and improvements but allotments nevertheless are an important leisure facility, especially for younger generations who are now taking up allotment gardening alongside more established users.

6.3.8 Green Space Opportunities

Needs

Watford overall has sufficient quantity of green spaces but there is a conflict between the strongly expressed desire for better management and maintenance and what the Council can realistically afford especially with regards to the financial restraints the Council is now facing. Despite these pressures, there is also the view that local residents wish to have improved maintenance despite many sites scoring highly in the quality audit. Local expectations are always high!

Opportunities

There may be opportunities to rationalise some provision and possibly convert some spaces to other uses or potentially dispose of some sites which currently offer little value to local communities. The audit information already identifies those spaces that are of least value to the community or wildlife.

6.3.9 Partnership Working with Local Stakeholders

Issue

The delivery of a range of Action Plans, investments and enhancements in difficult economic times is simply not achievable without partnership working, whether with a local community group, residents association or organisations such as Groundwork, The Wildlife Trust or others.

Needs

Local community groups are often active in their locality and Watford has a number who are keen to see continued improvements in their community green spaces. There have been many successes, but there may well be many who do not have the confidence, the skills or capacity to work with the Council in delivering continued improvements to their green spaces.

Opportunities

Building on the successes to date (Goodwood Rec, North Watford Playing Fields, Cassiobury Park, Oxhey Park, Woodside Playing Fields, Harebreaks Wood), further opportunities exist to develop projects within other communities, whether a community tidy up or developing a masterplan for a green space and subsequent attraction of funding to deliver.

6.3.10 Green Space Management, Maintenance and Development

Issue

Local people have indicated that they would like to see their green spaces continued to be managed and maintained to a high standard. There is also the concern that green space, whilst mainly of a high quality in relation to maintenance, as indicated by the quality audits, future long term development plans need to be considered in relation to infrastructure condition, long term use, and longer term investment plans. In 2013, the Council outsourced its Environmental Services functions to Veolia Environmental Services (VES) as part of a 7 year contract. This included the management, maintenance and development of all green spaces. They are a key partner in the delivery of this Green Spaces Strategy.

Needs

Improving management, maintenance and development is not simply a matter of doing things differently, but generally also requires additional resources.

Opportunities

Some sites such as the several of the parks would benefit from involvement by teams of volunteers or *Park Champions*. However, there are obvious limits to the extent to which volunteers can deliver long term management and maintenance. The development of long term Management Plans or Development Plans for the Regional and Community Parks, with cost implications are an opportunity which would assist the Council and VES in gaining external funding for longer term investment.

6.3.11 Staffing, Funding and Income Generation in Parks

Issues

In recent years, maintenance resources nationwide and locally have declined considerably in real terms and the Council is now faced with a significant reduction in its core funding due to the current economic climate and government austerity measures. Staffing in parks has already been reduced in 2011 and further reductions in funding are required in 2012/13. The outsourcing of the service to VES has allowed a number of efficiencies to be made and increased to opportunity for retaining and improving quality but also to increase opportunities for income generation in parks.

Seven key areas have been identified where changes could be implemented:

1. Increasing the funding/resources available through alternative sources;
2. Partnering with commercial organisations through alternative delivery mechanisms;
3. Increasing income generation opportunities in parks;
4. Developing self- management options;
5. Full cost recovery for some services provided;
6. Altering the management and maintenance regimes; and
7. Prioritising fewer sites.

Opportunities

Developer contributions from any future development proposals in the town may support further green space or facility enhancement or development but with the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), this is likely to be much more competitive and challenging with other infrastructure improvements seeking contributions. Income generation in parks and open spaces is very poor within Watford and there are considerable opportunities for franchises, improved leasing terms as well as charging for certain services.

6.4 Contributions to the Enhancement of Existing Provision

The need for the enhancement of existing provision arises when there will be a sufficient quantity of provision within the distance threshold of the development site after the development, but some elements of this provision may fail to meet the required quality standards.

The Council will seek developer contributions based on a Development Control Model using information available from the PPG17 audit, provision and quality standards for off- site contributions based on the model below.

Whilst minimum quantitative, accessibility and qualitative standards need to be met in the provision of new green spaces or enhancement of existing ones, the design **quality** of a green space can make a major difference to whether or not a green space is successful and well used.

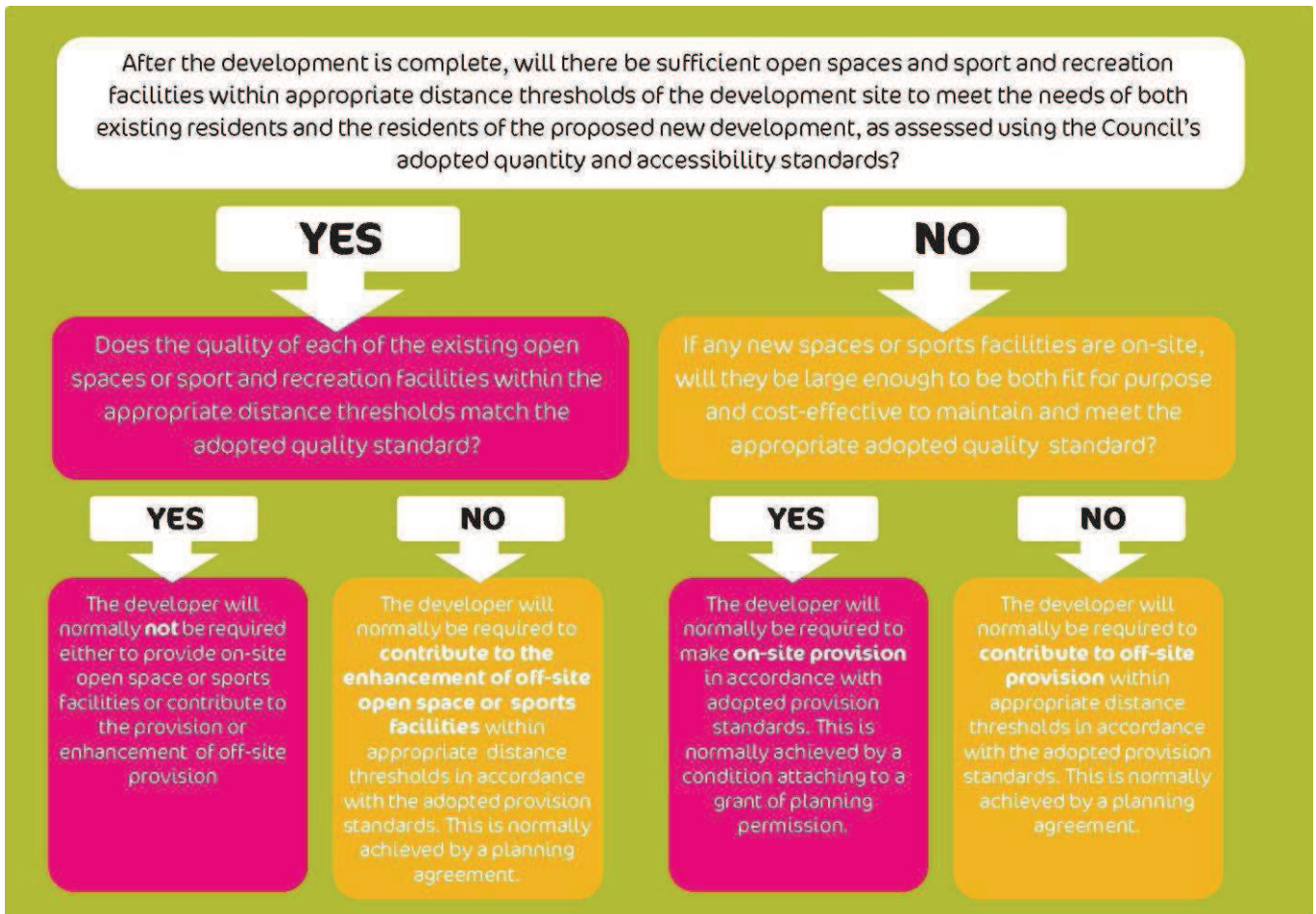


Figure 6.5 - Development Control Model

6.5 Performance Indicators - Measuring Progress

There have been a range of nationally recognised performance measurements provided by the previous Audit Commission that were applied to green spaces.

CABE Space had been advocating and promoting the outcomes and values of parks and open spaces (e.g. promoting satisfaction in place, providing a place for young people to participate in active recreations and empowering communities) rather than focusing on inputs (i.e. service delivery). However, Watford are keen to continue to use Green Flag as the key performance indicator for its parks and to build on current successes.

6.5.1 Green Flag Awards

The Green Flag Award scheme was launched in 1996. It was designed to encourage good standards in parks and green spaces, recognise the diversity and what makes those sites special and recognise the value of the green spaces to the people who use them. The award is the benchmark by which the quality of green spaces is judged. The Tidy Britain Group use a steering group of national, public and voluntary sector organisations and informed individuals, to independently run the Green Flag Scheme. Two fairly later additions were the Green Pennant for sites managed by voluntary and community groups and the Green Heritage Site Award which is for sites of heritage value.

At present, Watford has 3 Green Flag parks.

It is intended to increase the number of Green Flag Parks in Watford and these may include:-

- Oxhey Park;
- North Watford Cemetery;

- Waterfields Recreation Ground
- Callowland Recreation Ground;
- North Watford Playing Fields;
- Garston Park;
- St. Mary's Churchyard
- ... And Green Heritage for Cassiobury Park and Whippendell Wood.

6.6 Site Classification by Use - Grounds Maintenance Implications

6.6.1 Maintenance Standards

The current grounds maintenance regimes have different regimes in relation to different areas. Not all sites are treated equally e.g. Green Flag parks and gardens are generally maintained to a much higher standard in comparison to a local park. At the same time there are many similarities, for example, grass cutting has the same standard of maintenance regime in a Green Flag Park as it does in a local park. As highlighted, the standard of maintenance in Watford is generally high particularly within parks and gardens. There are however significant pressures in relation to on-going budgetary issues and acceptable levels of maintenance standards need to be further investigated.

Research on maintenance standards will be carried out as an Action Plan of this strategy looking specifically at:

- Existing standards;
- Level of specification;
- Typology of open space;
- Development of Management Plans for all Regional and Community Parks and nature conservation sites;
- Service delivery;
- Alternative methods of service delivery; and
- Volunteer labour and use of reparation “labour” initiatives

This will enable the following:

- Improved management regimes, specific to the typology of use and local expectations. Links to management plans;
- Improved maintenance regimes, specific to the typology and local expectations;
- Clarification of standards of provision, for client, contractor and customers;
- Priorities for development, based on quality audits; and
- Community needs and aspirations.

6.7 Sustainable Design and Development

In order to support Watford's vision to be a successful town in which people are proud to live, work, study and visit, it is important that the authority is able to maintain and sustain its physical infrastructure. For many years, new investments, due to a lack of consideration for its maintenance and sustainability requirements, have declined into a poor condition to be subsequently replaced again in later years. During the intervening years of decline, the image and liveability of the area becomes reduced, causing poor public perceptions of the area. The Council should move towards a "Sustain and Maintain Policy" and develop mechanisms where this is taken into account in all capital projects and planning decisions. This is a key role that should be developed by the Council whereby it will not take on any other management or maintenance "obligations" unless sustainability and maintenance have been approved and agreed.

6.8 Anti-Social Behaviour

CABE Space, November 2004, published an important Policy Note on '*Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour in Public Spaces*'. Research commissioned by CABE Space reveals that community groups estimate that 31% of parks suffer from unacceptably high levels of vandalism and behaviour related problems. Around 60% of local authorities are seen by these groups to have achieved very limited or practically no success in tackling the problem.

Solutions - CABE Space has seen two approaches emerge to the problem of anti-social behaviour in public spaces:

1. **"Target hardening"** - the redesign of facilities and equipment to make them near indestructible, and less susceptible to theft, vandalism and abuse;
2. **"Place making"** - investing in good design, attractive new facilities and good maintenance to create public spaces that the community will want to use and enjoy.

The evidence for place making - The CABE Space study showed that well designed, well maintained public spaces can contribute to reducing the incidence of vandalism and anti- social behaviour, and result in long term cost savings.

Approaches that work:

- Responding rapidly to problems such as vandalism by sending a clear message that abuse will not be tolerated;
- Supporting the Park Rangers and Environmental Crime Officers to reassure visitors while discouraging anti-social behaviour;
- Reasserting the clarity of design with open vistas and clear sight lines; and
- Fully engaging the community (including groups creating problems) in the process of reclaiming the park or open space.

So the benefits of investing in public space can be three-fold:

1. Successfully tackling problems of anti-social behaviour;
2. Achieving long term cost savings; and
3. Creating the neighbourhoods in which we want to live.

CABE Space recommended that:

- We should invest in the good design, staffing and maintenance of public spaces to tackle problems of anti- social behaviour, or to prevent the start of a downward spiral; and

- Security measures and target hardening should not be used as the only response to problems of anti-social behaviour in public space, but should be employed selectively where they will be effective, and as part of a co-ordinated approach.

The Council will develop Action Plans related to the issues of anti- social behaviour in parks and green spaces in accordance with CABI Space guidance.



Vicarage Road Cemetery

7 Action Plan

This Action Plan will enable Watford Borough Council and its partners through open space stewardship, to meet green space needs and provide a fair distribution of safe, accessible, clean, attractive green spaces, and achieve the strategic green space network. They are based on the 10 overarching policies, detailed in Section 6. Action Plans are however meant to be clear and concise and if possible, define outcomes and benefits, as well as being broadly achievable. There is an increased emphasis on partnership working. The Council is not able to deliver this without community support and stakeholder involvement. We have therefore developed an Action Plan that will need to be reviewed regularly. Watford Borough Council as the principal landowner and custodian of much of the open space will be a key player but we have identified “key partners” who will have important roles to play. This includes local communities who have already indicated support for the green space we currently have. The development of any Action Plan may also be seen as over ambitious and restrictive, when taking into account existing issues such as budget pressures, staffing, skills requirement and changing national priorities.

With this in mind, the Action Plan will need an annual review as well as being flexible and with “stretched” targets, but with organisations who could be involved as well as strong leadership from the Council. As we have already stated, this Green Spaces Strategy is a document and delivery mechanism for many current service areas within the council (planning services, environmental services, legal and property services, buildings and projects) as well as a number of key stakeholders within the town. We propose to develop more detailed Project Plans for each defined action with more details highlighting requirements, funding issues, staffing resources, and timescales.

Key to Action Plans 8.1-8.4:

*Partners, stakeholders and community representatives (Who):

| | |
|------|---|
| GT | - Groundwork Trust |
| HMWT | - Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust |
| WBC | - Watford Borough Council |
| VES | - Veolia Environmental Services |
| EH | - English Heritage |
| SE | - Sport England |
| FG | - Friends Groups and Residents Associations |
| NHS | - NHS Trust |
| SC | - Sports Clubs |
| CRT | - Canal and River Trust |
| SLM | - SLM Leisure |
| HLNP | - Herts Local Nature Partnership |
| TCV | - The Conservation Volunteers |

**Timescales:

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------|---|
| Short Term (S) | - 5 years (up to 2018) | - Medium Term (M) 5-10 years (up to 2023) |
| Long Term (L) | - 10 years onwards | |

7.1 Stewardship

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---|--|
| 7.1.1 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will continue to enhance its green spaces based on an agreed investment strategy linked to the qualitative and value assessments, taking into account accessibility and local needs and further develop the strategic and local green space network. | WBC VES GT | S, M, L | Staff costs; Grant funding; S106 / CIL; Revenue costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced quality and value; Improved access to green space; Enhancement of local open spaces. |
| 7.1.2 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will continue to enhance green spaces for the benefit of local biodiversity and enhancement of its green infrastructure and support the Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership. | WBC VES HMWT HLNP TCV | S,M,L | Staff costs; Grant funding; S106 / CIL; Revenue costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced quality and value; Improved access to green space; Enhancement of local open spaces. |
| 7.1.3 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will seek to tackle issues related to anti-social behaviour in green spaces in accordance with CABE Space guidance. | WBC VES FG | S, M, L | Staff costs; Revenue costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved safety in open spaces; Local community empowerment; Increased use of open spaces by local people. |
| 7.1.4 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will review maintenance regimes, looking at standards, levels of specification in relation to typology of space and need for development of Management Plans for Community Parks . | WBC VES | S, M | Staff costs; Revenue costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved levels of maintenance; Increased quality of most important open spaces; Increased usage of open spaces. |

7.2 Management

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|---|--|--------------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| 7.2.1 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will develop Management Plans for all existing Regional and Community parks based on a new three tier parks hierarchy and will involve local people, stakeholders as part of the process. | WBC VES GT FG | S, M | Staff costs; Grounds maintenance implications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved levels of management and maintenance; Local community empowerment; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. |
| 7.2.2 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will apply the principles of Green Flag for all Regional and Community parks and gardens/green spaces and apply for Green Flag for the spaces listed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Oxhey Park □ Garston Park □ Waterfields Rec □ Callowland Rec □ North Watford Cemetery □ North Watford Playing Fields □ St. Mary's Churchyard and Green Heritage for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Cassiobury Park □ Whippendell Wood | WBC VES FG | S, M, L | Application costs; Staff costs; Changes to grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased quality of the most important open spaces; Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. |
| 7.2.3 | Making Watford a better place to live Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council and partners will encourage more positive use and more activity in parks and gardens by encouraging local people to use them through programmes of activity, in particular in Cassiobury Park linked to the ongoing HLF restoration project. | WBC VES FG HMWT SC | S, M, L | Staff costs; Changes to grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased usage of open spaces; Local community empowerment; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|---|---|---------------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| 7.2.4 | Operating the council efficiently and effectively | Complete and update the spatial GIS mapping of parks and open spaces and highway verges across Watford, capturing all grounds maintenance activities accurately and update regularly | WBC VES | S | Staff costs; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient use of data and ability to prioritise works more effectively |
| 7.2.5 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council with partners will seek to develop and update sustainable management plans for all strategic natural and semi-natural green space sites, seeking to enhance their biodiversity value in terms of site size, links, habitats and management. | WBC VES HMWT | M,L | Staff Costs; Grant funding; Changes to grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved levels of management and maintenance; Local community empowerment; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement; Increased local biodiversity. |
| 7.2.6 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council with its partners will develop a policy and strategy for trees in parks and streets as well as woodlands, linked to programmed management and mapping of trees in the town, mapped on an approved GIS / Tree management software. | WBC VES | S,M,L | Staff Costs; Software costs and management; Survey costs; Immediate remedial works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved levels of management and maintenance; Efficient use of data and ability to prioritise works more effectively |
| 7.2.7 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and partners will support the integration of natural and semi-natural green spaces into other forms of green space wherever possible. | WBC VES GT HMWT TCV | M, L | Revenue implications on grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased biodiversity; Improved access to natural green space; Enhancement of local open spaces. |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| 7.2.8 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council and local communities will continue to manage and maintain closed churchyards and cemeteries under its ownership / management for the benefit of local people and wildlife. | WBC VES | S, M, L | Existing. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased biodiversity; Improved access to natural green space; Enhancement of local open spaces. |
| 7.2.9 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will establish an annual capital programme for improvements to its Regional, Community and local parks and gardens as well as major semi-natural green space sites, to include play facilities, reviewed on a five yearly basis, based on the new strategic network. | WBC | S,M, L | Capital costs; S106 / CIL; Grant funding; Revenue implications on grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased quality of the most important open spaces; Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. |
| 7.2.10 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council with partners, will maximise every opportunity in relation to grant funding to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heritage Lottery Fund; Landfill Tax Credit Scheme; BIG; Sport England; Arts Council; Groundwork UK; Watford Community Housing Trust | WBC VES GT HMWT | S, M, L | Staff costs; match funding required; Revenue implications on grounds maintenance; Consultants fees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased quality of the most important open spaces; Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|------|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| 7.2.11 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will seek developer contributions (S106/CIL) based on a Development Control Model based on information available from the 'PPG17' audit, provision and quality standards for off-site contributions for all types of green space. | WBC | S, M, L | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. Increased quality of the most important open spaces; |

7.3 Use

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|--|---|---------------------------------------|----------------|---|---|
| 7.3.1 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council and other green space stakeholders will develop a 'Community Involvement Action Plan' to engage and involve local communities through development of Friend's Groups in particular. | WBC VES FG GT HMWT TCV | S, M | Staff costs; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; |
| 7.3.2 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council will develop, in partnership a system to develop volunteering opportunities on council managed green space, particularly in Cassiobury Park and natural green space corridors. | WBC VES HMWT FG GT TCV | M, L | Staff costs; New staff post Consultation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Health benefits to local people and visitors; |
| 7.3.3 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed | The Council will work with health partners to investigate, assess and promote new ways of using green spaces to improve health | WBC NHS HMWT | M | Staff costs; New staff post. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|--|--|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| | town | and wellbeing, particularly Cassiobury Park. This will include investigating any possible funding opportunities. | GT TCV | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits to local people and visitors; |
| 7.3.4 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council will develop publicity material to publicise both strategic green space sites to all sectors of the community who need improved access to information on their local green spaces. | WBC VES | S | Printing and design costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Increased usage of open spaces; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; |
| 7.3.5 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council will consult and involve local communities on green space issues and developments to include the following in line with the Council's Strategy for Community Engagement and Consultation. These will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children; Older People; People with Disabilities; Carers; People with Learning Difficulties; Black and Minority Ethnic groups; and Other excluded groups. | WBC VES FG | S, M, L | Staff costs; Consultation costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Health benefits to local people and visitors; Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; |
| 7.3.6 | Promoting an active, cohesive & | The Council will make "access for all" an integral part of all policy, strategy and activity in the | WBC | S, M, L | Capital and revenue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local community empowerment; Enhancement of open spaces, with |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| | well informed town | planning development and management of Watford's green spaces in line with the ' <i>BT Countryside for All</i> ' standards and their accompanying approach as an integral part of any physical access policy. | | | implications. | <p>increased quality;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased access to natural green space. |
| 7.3.7 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council with partners will improve the network of green corridors within Watford based on Green Infrastructure principles and continue to improve the links and access to other green spaces in developing the strategic network through working in partnership. | WBC VES HMWT TCV | M | Capital and revenue implications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Increased usage of open spaces; • Increased access to natural green space. |
| 7.3.8 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will seek to ensure that all regional and community parks will have at least a destination play facility and, if appropriate, a youth facility, all retained as high quality and of high value to the local community. | WBC | M , L | Capital and revenue implications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; |
| 7.3.9 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council, with key partners will improve its network of play areas and play spaces in particular developing a more strategic overview of sites, with less emphasis on smaller equipped Local Areas of Play (LAP) and a greater focus on | WBC VES | S, M, L | Capital and revenue implications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|--------|---|--|------------|----------------|---|---|
| | | neighbourhood facilities offering greater play value. | | | | |
| 7.3.10 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will seek funding and support the long term plans for the development of sports provision and facilities throughout the town based on a new Sports Facilities Strategy to be based on recommendations from the Sports Facilities Study carried out in 2012. This will include recommendations for developing strategic multi activity sports hubs. | WBC SE | M, L | Capital and revenue implications; Grant funding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits to local people and visitors; • Local community empowerment; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Increased usage of open spaces; |
| 7.3.11 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will implement a system of sampling user numbers in key locations and times, in particular at Cassiobury Park, Woodside Playing Fields and Cheslyn House and Gardens. | WBC | M | Capital and revenue implications; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; |
| 7.3.12 | Operating the council efficiently and effectively | The Council will continue to measure and report customer satisfaction levels in parks and open spaces. | WBC VES | S,M,L | Staff costs; Consultation costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised profile locally and nationally of open space within Watford; |
| 7.3.13 | Operating the council efficiently and effectively | The Council will identify further partnerships to assist in delivery of parks management, maintenance and development including frameworks for landscape contractors, play providers and landscape / green space consultants. | WBC VES | S,M,L | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money; • Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; • Local community empowerment; |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|--------|---|---|------------|----------------|---|---|
| 7.3.14 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will work with allotment tenants in developing and improving allotment sites across the town, seeking external funding if possible and seeking to develop self management opportunities as well as to establish models of best practice used elsewhere as outlined in the Action Plans in the 2013 - 2018 Allotment Strategy. | WBC VES | S,M | Capital and revenue implications; Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits to local people; Local community empowerment; Increased participation in allotment gardening. |
| 7.3.15 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will work in partnership with allotment tenants to promote allotment gardening across Watford as outlined in the Action Plans in the 2013 - 2018 Allotment Strategy. | WBC VES | S, M, L | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits to local people; Local community empowerment; Increased participation in allotment gardening. |
| 7.3.16 | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town Making Watford a better place to live | The Council with local stakeholders, will aim to work with local schools and colleges more closely to achieve shared community goals and maximise the community use of school facilities where appropriate. | WBC | S, M, L | Staff costs; Revenue implications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits to local people and visitors; Local community empowerment; Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Increased usage of open spaces; Increased participation in local sports. |
| 7.3.17 | Making Watford a | The Council will form a project team and commission a feasibility | WBC | M | Capital and revenue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|---------------|---|--|---------------------------|----------------|---|---|
| | better place to live Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | study for the long term development of Woodside Playing Fields, including Watford Town Cricket Club and Stadium, based on the outcome of the Sports Facilities Study carried out in 2012. | SC SE SLM | | implications; Staff costs. | increased quality; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased usage of open spaces; Increased participation in local sports. |
| 7.3.18 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will deliver a Round 2 HLF Parks for People application for Cassiobury Park and on success, deliver and implement the £6.5 million restoration project. | WBC VES HMWT CRT | S,M | Capital and revenue implications; Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Increased usage of open spaces; Local community empowerment; Health benefits to local people and visitors; |
| 7.3.19 | Making Watford a better place to live Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | The Council will continue its promotion of parks and open spaces through signage improvement programme, noticeboards, leaflets, way-marked walks and interpretation boards. Update existing website for parks and open spaces. | WBC VES HMWT CRT | S,M | Capital and revenue; implications; Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased usage of open spaces; |
| 7.3.20 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council develop fitness trails and outdoor gyms at specific sites throughout Watford. | WBC | S,M,L | Capital and revenue; implications; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health benefits to local people and visitors; |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|--------|--|--|--------------------------|----------------|---|---|
| | Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town | | | | | |
| 7.3.21 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will continue to develop the Colne River Project and to extend the boundaries to the upper areas of the River Colne and seek funding to deliver further improvements | WBC VES EA HMWT | S,M,L | Capital and revenue; implications; Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Increased usage of open spaces; |
| 7.3.22 | Operating the council efficiently and effectively | The Council will develop a consistent and agreed policy on fees and charges for events and commercial ventures in parks and open spaces | WBC VES | S | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value for money |
| 7.3.23 | Operating the council efficiently and effectively | The Council will update and amend all parks and open spaces byelaws to ensure they are suitable for current and existing park usage. | WBC | M | Staff costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ??? |
| 7.3.24 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will consider and explore opportunities for extreme sports facilities in Watford, in particular introduce a BMX facility in an agreed location. | WBC | M,L | Capital and revenue; implications; Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Increased usage of open spaces; Health benefits to local people and visitors; |

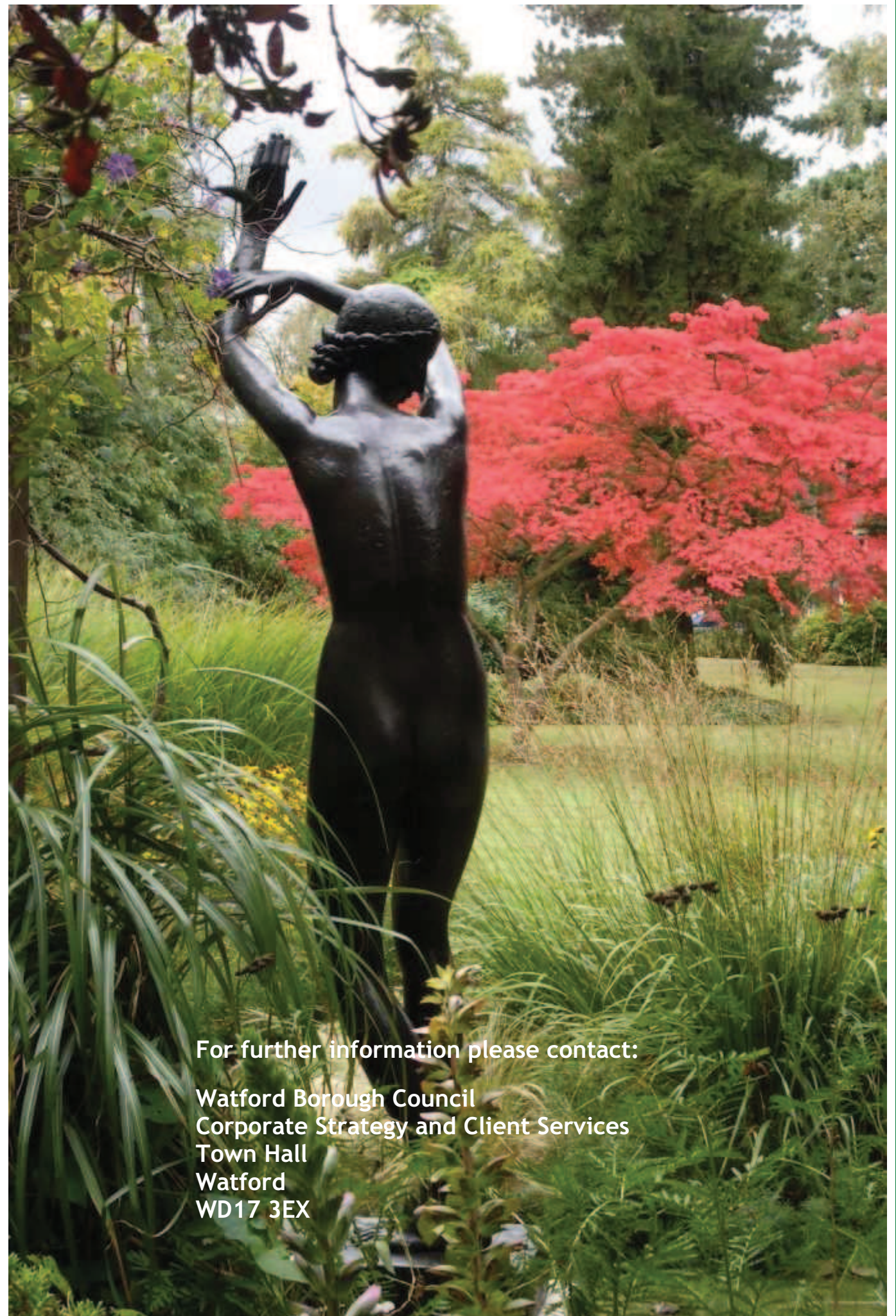
7.4 Environmental Protection

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-------|---------------------------------------|---|------------|----------------|--|---|
| 7.4.1 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will continue to seek developer contributions through Section 106 / CIL agreements to improve green spaces within Watford | WBC | S, M | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. Increased quality of the most important open spaces; |
| 7.4.2 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will continue to seek developer contributions through Section 106/CIL agreements to improve play facilities. | WBC | S, M | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of open spaces, with increased quality; Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. Increased quality of the most important open spaces; |
| 7.4.3 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will review those spaces classed as being of genuinely low quality and low value in the light of wider planning policies, but taking account of accessibility, quality and value of alternative provision in the area and the resources available to the Council. | WBC | S, M | Staff costs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher level of protection and continued enhancement. Identification of potential savings and efficiencies in relation to existing management and maintenance; Local community empowerment; |
| 8.4.4 | Making Watford a better place to live | The Council will adopt more sustainable planting and maintenance practices, to inc. minimising inputs of non-renewable resources, pesticides and herbicides and to develop a programme for controlling | WBC VES | S, M | Revenue implications on grounds maintenance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased biodiversity; Enhancement of local open spaces. |

| No. | Corporate Aim | Action | *Who | S,M,L Priority | Resource Requirements | Outcomes and Benefits |
|-----|---------------|-------------------|------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | invasive species. | | | | |

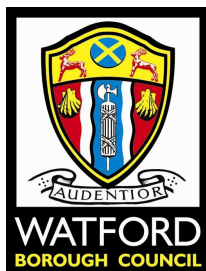






For further information please contact:

**Watford Borough Council
Corporate Strategy and Client Services
Town Hall
Watford
WD17 3EX**



Equality Impact Analysis

| | |
|---|--|
| Title of policy, function or service | Final Green Spaces Strategy 2013 – 2023 |
| Lead officer | Paul Rabbitts |
| Person completing the EIA | Paul Rabbitts / Kathryn Robson |
| Type of policy, function or service: | Existing (reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/> New/Proposed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | |

Background

This analysis considers the potential impacts, both positive and negative, of Watford Borough Council's Green Spaces Strategy 2013-23 on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010. These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership

The analysis also considers how we can achieve the positive effects and reduce or mitigate the negatives. This will be established by:

- Understanding of the role of green space to the quality of life of Watford, the current level and quality of provision and where improvements could be made
- Understanding of the wider Watford context
- Consultation results and any other resident feedback.

Green Spaces in Watford

The Green Spaces Strategy 2013-2023 covers the following types of accessible green space - see below. Much of it is owned and managed by Watford Borough Council but some areas are either privately owned or outside the control of local governments. This is based on the typology of open space in Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17).

■ **Parks, Gardens and Recreation Grounds (PGRG)**

These areas of land are normally enclosed, designed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden or recreation ground. Their primary purpose is to provide accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

■ **Amenity Green Spaces (AGS)**

These are landscaped areas that are a visual amenity and/or have separate land uses e.g. major areas of grass within housing areas and business parks that are usable for informal recreation, social activities and informal play. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for informal recreation close to home or work, or to enhance the appearance of residential and other areas.

■ **Green Corridors (GC)**

These are green routes/linkages including river and canal corridors, major road verges and hedgerows connecting different areas within urban and rural areas and joining green spaces together. Their primary purpose is for walking, cycling or horse riding routes and for wildlife migration.

■ **Natural and Semi-Natural Green Spaces (NGS)**

These are areas of undeveloped or previously undeveloped land with residual natural habitats. Their primary purpose is for wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

■ **Allotments and Community Gardens (ACG)**

Areas of land rented for growing vegetables, fruits or flowers. Their primary purpose is to provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

■ **Churchyards and Cemeteries (CC)**

This category includes municipal cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds with legitimate public access. Their primary purpose is for burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

■ **Civic Space (CS)**

Includes squares and streets, predominantly of hard landscaping that provide a focus for pedestrian activity and civic or cultural events, and can make connections for people and for wildlife.

■ **Play Space for Children and Young People (CYP)**

This includes equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and multi use games areas (MUGA) for children and young people. Where these are within larger parks and gardens or areas of amenity space they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

■ **Outdoor Sports Facilities (OSF)**

These are large and generally flat areas of grassland or specially designed surfaces used for designated sports e.g. playing fields, tennis courts and bowling greens – areas which can generally be booked and whose primary purpose is for playing of sport. Where these are within parks or large recreation grounds they will be recorded as a subtype to the predominant type.

■ **School Grounds/Playing Fields (EDUC)**

These are large areas of open space associated with primary and secondary schools and are generally flat areas of grassland with a combination of playing fields, play grounds, play facilities or other areas of sport such as tennis, cricket or football. Most are inaccessible to the public but several have

multi-use purposes and are used by the public after school hours and at weekends.

The aim and purpose of the Green Spaces Strategy 2013-23

The aims and objectives are;

- To provide and enhance a strategic network of accessible, high quality green space throughout Watford;
- To provide guidance for the effective planning and protection of open space, sport and

recreational facilities which meet local needs by;

- providing appropriate green space planning policies and standards which provide clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners, which will be taken forward as part of the Core Strategy;
- promoting good green space design and management principles in all new and existing developments.
- To strengthen local community involvement and interest in Watford's green spaces by:
 - encouraging community participation in the design, management and care of their local green spaces;
 - promoting the value of green space as a major contributor to health and social well being, via its use for recreational, educational and sporting activities;
 - ensuring green spaces are locally valued and well used community assets.
- To improve green spaces by:
 - ensuring green spaces are high quality and locally accessible, clean, attractive, well maintained, fit for purpose and safe;
 - improving the existing green spaces contribution to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural value of Watford;
 - providing a sustainable approach to green spaces management and maintenance.

The benefits of green spaces to the community

Green spaces are widely accepted as offering lasting social, economic, cultural, educational, environmental and health benefits and this was endorsed by detailed research carried out by CABE Space. This is summarised below.

1. Social Benefits and Opportunities

Perhaps the most obvious benefits and opportunities that green spaces provide for urban living are social – they create opportunities for people to do things, take part in events and activities or just to be.

- **Children's Play** – children's play is one of the main reasons for visiting open spaces. The importance of play for a child's development is supported by a wide range of research and is now increasingly accepted by professionals as well as ordinary people. Despite the importance of play for a child's development, there are some issues in the urban context that restrict the opportunities for play in the external environment for many children including parental anxiety about children's safety to poor provision of play facilities;
- **Passive Recreation** – walking the dog, watching your children play, wildlife, people, looking at views, reading or resting or just meeting people. Research has shown the importance of passive recreation is far more important to individuals lives than active recreation and most parks and open space users will use an open space for passive use rather than sport or events;
- **Active Recreation** – organised sport, children's play, music, events. Despite being the minority user of parks and open spaces, nationally it is estimated that up to 16% of park users will visit for active recreation alone and account for 7.5 million visitors each year;
- **Community Focus** – festivals, meeting people formally or informally. Research in recent years

has confirmed the importance of parks and open spaces as a focus for the community, or as places for people to meet each other, both formally and informally. This may be through organised events which may increase the sense of community. However, it is not only large and formally organised events that are important to the community. Studies have shown that about one third of people entering parks do so on their own, one third with a friend and one third with a large group;

- **Cultural Focus** – different ethnic backgrounds have different requirements from open spaces. There may be approaches related to design and management of parks and open spaces that could be investigated that would encourage wider use of these areas by these groups;
- **Open Spaces as Educational Resources** – The benefits to children have included sensory perception, children's behaviour, outdoor learning opportunities, different patterns of play.

2. Health Benefits and Opportunities

Research shows that contact with the natural world can benefit mental and physical health. Access to a quality green environment not only benefits health in preventative terms, but speeds recovery and plays a vital part in our mental well being.

Physical inactivity has been estimated to cost the NHS about 2-3% of its total budget, according to Dr. William Bird medical advisor to the British Heart Foundation.

Keeping active greatly reduces the risk of dying from coronary heart disease, and of developing diabetes, hypertension, obesity and certain cancers and helps maintain health and independence in older adults.

3. Environmental Benefits and Opportunities

Our green spaces and street trees can ameliorate urban environments, making it feel more liveable by screening eyesores, reducing noise and absorbing harmful pollutants. They support diverse wildlife habitats in our town, connecting people with nature close to home, school or work. The environmental benefits of urban open spaces and adjacent countryside are there for all regardless of social class, creed, ethnic background or gender.

4. Wildlife – Opportunities for Habitats and Human Experience

Watford is a busy and active town and as a result there are significant pressures on wildlife and therefore habitats for wildlife are much more significant. Watford has a range of habitats including two river corridors, a number of Local Nature Reserves as well as Whippendell Wood which is our only Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Within these are many habitats and designated wildlife spaces across the town that are managed by the Council and its partners, including Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT), Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and a number of Friends Groups such as the Friends of Cassiobury Park and Friends of Harebreaks Woods who continue to improve our sites for wildlife as well as accessibility, management and visitor potential.

5. Economic Value of Green Spaces

There has been significant research over recent years between the link of having high quality green spaces and benefits to economic vitality particularly by CABI Space and GreenSpace. It is recognised that a clean attractive green environment not only gives social, recreational and health benefits to our citizens but is a vital part of attracting investments.

“Environmental enhancement not only makes places more attractive and pleasant but green space initiatives can result in community strengthening and local economic stimulation as well as improvement to local environmental quality

How the 2013 – 2023 Green Spaces Strategy promotes equality

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

The 2013-2023 Green Spaces Strategy now provides an opportunity to promote equality through ensuring that everyone within the Watford community is able to access and enjoy the benefits of green spaces. The assessment of this has involved understanding the Watford context and considering this against any feedback from consultation and engagement that is available so that there is a clear alignment between the new strategy and the needs, aspirations and expectations of Watford residents.

In addition, it considers how the strategy might foster good relations within the Watford community. As a valuable community asset, green spaces play a significant role in bringing a community together and this focus is reflected within the new strategy.

Information and evidence

The Watford population

We know from the Census 2011 that:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Population | The size of Watford's population at the time of the census was 90,300 . This is around a 13% increase in population since the last census in 2001 when the population was 79,726. The current mid-year estimate (2012) puts the population at 91,732 . |
| Population density | The population density for Watford is 4,215 people per square kilometre (based on 2011 Census). This makes it the most densely populated district in England and Wales. However, in comparison with some metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, the density is relatively low. The council recognises that, as a densely populated area, open spaces are of great value to local people. |

| <p>Age bands</p> | <p>Watford continues to be a relatively young population - particularly in comparison to the rest of Hertfordshire.</p> <p>The largest populations by age band in Watford are (from the 2011 Census):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25-29 (8,000) • 30-34 (8,100) • the numbers in each successive age-band fall progressively until there are estimated to be 1,600 who are 85+. <p>The median age in Watford is 35 - no change since 2001. This is the lowest median age in Hertfordshire and is the fifth lowest median age in the Eastern region (47 local authority areas in total). The median age for the UK is 39.</p> <p>Watford has the fourth highest percentage population of 0-4 year olds in the Eastern region and the sixth highest 0-14 year olds. In comparison, Watford has the third lowest percentage population of 65+ in the region.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total population</td> <td>90,301</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-4 years old</td> <td>6,730</td> <td>7.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5-9 years old</td> <td>5,436</td> <td>6.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10-14 years old</td> <td>5,298</td> <td>5.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15-19 years old</td> <td>5,302</td> <td>5.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20-24 years old</td> <td>5,711</td> <td>6.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-29 years old</td> <td>8,053</td> <td>8.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-44 years old</td> <td>22,469</td> <td>24.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-59 years old</td> <td>16,155</td> <td>17.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-64 years old</td> <td>3,996</td> <td>4.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65-74 years old</td> <td>5,743</td> <td>6.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>75-84 years old</td> <td>3,829</td> <td>4.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>85-89 years old</td> <td>1,013</td> <td>1.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>90+ years old</td> <td>566</td> <td>0.6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Number | Percentage | Total population | 90,301 | | 0-4 years old | 6,730 | 7.5% | 5-9 years old | 5,436 | 6.0% | 10-14 years old | 5,298 | 5.9% | 15-19 years old | 5,302 | 5.9% | 20-24 years old | 5,711 | 6.3% | 25-29 years old | 8,053 | 8.9% | 30-44 years old | 22,469 | 24.9% | 45-59 years old | 16,155 | 17.9% | 60-64 years old | 3,996 | 4.4% | 65-74 years old | 5,743 | 6.4% | 75-84 years old | 3,829 | 4.2% | 85-89 years old | 1,013 | 1.1% | 90+ years old | 566 | 0.6% |
|---|--|------------|--------|------------|-------------------------|--------|--|----------------------|--------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|------|---|-------------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|------|------------------------|-------|------|------------------------|--------|-------|------------------------|--------|-------|------------------------|-------|------|------------------------|-------|------|------------------------|-------|------|------------------------|-------|------|----------------------|-----|------|
| | Number | Percentage | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total population | 90,301 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 45-59 years old | 16,155 | 17.9% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 60-64 years old | 3,996 | 4.4% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 75-84 years old | 3,829 | 4.2% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85-89 years old | 1,013 | 1.1% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 90+ years old | 566 | 0.6% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Disability</p> | <p>Watford's population enjoys better health than the Eastern Region and England overall with nearly 85% of the population stating that they have 'good health' and just under 14% recording a disability -(from the 2011 Census)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>All people</td> <td>90,301</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Good health</td> <td>76,653</td> <td>84.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fairly good/fair health</td> <td>9,911</td> <td>11.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not good/bad/very bad health</td> <td>3,737</td> <td>4.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>People with a long-term limiting illness or disability</td> <td>12,480 (not part of total)</td> <td>13.7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Number | Percentage | All people | 90,301 | | Good health | 76,653 | 84.9% | Fairly good/fair health | 9,911 | 11.0% | Not good/bad/very bad health | 3,737 | 4.1% | People with a long-term limiting illness or disability | 12,480 (not part of total) | 13.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Number | Percentage | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| People with a long-term limiting illness or disability | 12,480 (not part of total) | 13.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Race

The White British population has decreased from 2001 to 2011 and is now 62% of the Watford population (2011 Census).

All ethnic categories except for White British and White Irish have increased over the time period, with notable percentage increase in White Other, Indian, Pakistani and Black African.

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| | |
| White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | 61.9% (55,875) |
| White Irish | 2.3% (2,063) |
| White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller | 0.1% (61) |
| White: Other White | 7.7% (6,947) |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean | 1.1% (990) |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African | 0.5% (412) |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian | 1.0% (939) |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | 0.8% (763) |
| Asian/Asian British: Indian | 5.5% (4,923) |
| Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 6.7% (6,082) |
| Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi | 0.4% (362) |
| Asian/Asian British: Chinese | 0.9% (822) |
| Asian/Asian British: Other Asian | 4.4% (3,981) |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African | 3.5% (3,142) |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean | 1.7% (1,558) |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black | 0.6% (529) |
| Other ethnic group: Arab | 0.3% (294) |
| Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group | 0.6% (558) |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| Sex | (2011 Census). | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Males | 44,828 | 49.6% | |
| | Females | 45,473 | 50.4% | |
| Religion or belief | (2011 Census). | | | |
| | | Number | Percentage | |
| | Total people | 90,301 | | |
| | Christian | 48,891 | 54.1% | |
| | Buddhist | 659 | 0.7% | |
| | Hindu | 4,348 | 4.8% | |
| | Jewish | 1,023 | 1.1% | |
| | Muslim | 8,905 | 9.9% | |
| | Sikh | 566 | 0.6% | |
| | Other religion | 489 | 0.5% | |
| | No religion | 19,330 | 21.4% | |
| Religion not stated | 6,090 | 6.7% | | |
| Marriage or civil partnership | All Usual Residents Aged 16 and Over | | Count | 71693 |
| | Single (Never Married or Never Registered a Same-Sex Civil Partnership) | | Count | 26911 |
| | | | Percentage | 37.5 |
| | Married | | Count | 32982 |
| | | | Percentage | 46 |
| | In a Registered Same-Sex Civil Partnership | | Count | 128 |
| | | | Percentage | 0.2 |
| | Separated (but Still Legally Married or Still Legally in a Same-Sex Civil Partnership) | | Count | 1962 |
| | | | Percentage | 2.7 |
| | Divorced or Formerly in a Same-Sex Civil Partnership which is Now Legally Dissolved | | Count | 5680 |
| | | | Percentage | 7.9 |
| | Widowed or Surviving Partner from a Same-Sex Civil Partnership | | Count | 4030 |
| | | | Percentage | 5.6 |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <p>Households</p> | <p>The average household size in Watford is 2.4. This is average for the region.</p> <p>Number of households The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 36,681 households in Watford at the time of the Census; this does not match the figure from council tax, which was 36,916 as of March 31 2011 (and is 37,169 as of 23.07.12). This is likely to be down to empty properties which are still eligible for council tax but would not have returned a census form.</p> <p>Watford had the fourth highest percentage change in households - +14.6% - in the Eastern region from 2001 to 2011.</p> <p>Household Composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most frequent household = single people aged under pensionable age. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grown from 17.5% in 2001 to 21.1% in 2011 (overtaken married couples with children) • Lone parents - significant rise in the number and % of lone parents (from 4.9% in 2001 to 7.2% in 2011) • One person pensioner households – declined in both numbers and percentage (from 12.2% 2001 to 10.0% in 2011) <p>Household tenure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately rented housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased from 3,170 homes in 2001 to 7,371 homes in 2011, from 9.8% to 20.1% of the housing stock • Homes owned outright: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased from 26.1% to 24.4% • Homes being purchased with a mortgage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decreased from 46.1% to 37.2% • Social housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remained static as % of the total housing stock (16.3% in both 2001 and 2011) yet it has increased in number from 5,266 in 2001 to 5,987 in 2011 • Accommodation type <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of purpose built flats in Watford has increased from 6,583 in 2001 to 10,139 in 2011, a percentage increase from 19.9% to 27.0% of the total housing stock. Although there have been modest numerical increases in all types of houses (detached, semi-detached and terraced), they have fallen as a percentage of the total housing stock <p>(2011 Census).</p> |
| <p>Projections</p> | <p>The ONS interim 2011-based subnational population projections are an indication of the future trends in population over the next 10 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watford's population is projected to be 95,000 by 2021 • Births are projected to be double deaths each year |

Watford Green Spaces Consultation

As part of the development of this new Green Spaces Strategy, some early, but limited consultation was carried out.

The initial analysis recognised this as a weakness of the strategy at draft stage as any feedback is a significant element of understanding how the community feels about any given service area and can identify how this might link to protected characteristics. For example, we could not say with any certainty who is, or who isn't, using Watford's green spaces.

However, the draft strategy (and the associated EIA) identified the need for further consultation as work that needed to be done before it could be finally agreed and adopted. Within this, it considered the groups that might require targeted engagement – including younger people, older people, ethnic minority communities, people with disabilities – as well as consultation with the wider community. In terms of the early EIA, this approach recommended ensuring that relevant equalities questions were included within any questionnaires that were developed.

Given that there needed to be further consultation and engagement done on the draft strategy, it was recommended that the initial EIA was reviewed regularly as information was received and further consultation carried out. This is summarised below.

Findings from the consultation

The Green Spaces Strategy included questions relating to some of the protected characteristics. The responses are outlined below.

Compared to the Watford profile overall, there were some gaps in responses to the survey and these will need to be considered as part of the on going consultation programme on the strategy. The recommendation would be to do some targeted consultation / engagement with those groups not strongly represented in the feedback such as the non-White community, younger people (under 24)

Of those responding to the Green Spaces Strategy:

| Age bands | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | 153 | |
| 0-15 years old | 0 | 0% |
| 15-19 years old | 0 | 0% |
| 20-24 years old | 0 | 0% |
| 25-34 years old | 7 | 4.6% |
| 35-44 years old | 33 | 21.6% |
| 45-54 years old | 37 | 24.2% |
| 55-64 years old | 36 | 23.5% |
| 65-74 years old | 32 | 20.9% |
| 75-79 years old | 6 | 3.9% |
| 80+ years old | 2 | 1.3% |

| Disability | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | 151 | |
| Yes, limited a lot | 6 | 4.0% |
| Yes, limited a little | 8 | 11.9% |
| No | 127 | 89.1% |

| Race | <p>The White British population has decreased from 2001 to 2011 and is now 62% of the Watford population (2011 Census).</p> <p>All ethnic categories except for White British and White Irish have increased over the time period, with notable percentage increase in White Other, Indian, Pakistani and Black African.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British</td> <td>83% (122)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White: Other White</td> <td>7.5% (11)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed</td> <td>0.7% (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/Asian British: Indian</td> <td>0.7% (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/Asian British: Pakistani</td> <td>2.0% (3)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/Asian British: Chinese</td> <td>0.7% (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/Asian British: Other Asian</td> <td>1.3% (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African</td> <td>1.4% (2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean</td> <td>0.7% (1)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black</td> <td>0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group</td> <td>2.0% (3)</td> </tr> </table> | | | White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | 83% (122) | White: Other White | 7.5% (11) | Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | 0.7% (1) | Asian/Asian British: Indian | 0.7% (1) | Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 2.0% (3) | Asian/Asian British: Chinese | 0.7% (1) | Asian/Asian British: Other Asian | 1.3% (2) | Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African | 1.4% (2) | Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean | 0.7% (1) | Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black | 0% | Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group | 2.0% (3) |
|---|--|------------|--------|---|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---|-------------|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|---|---------------|---|-------------|---|-------------|---|----|---|-------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | 83% (122) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | 0.7% (1) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asian/Asian British: Indian | 0.7% (1) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | 2.0% (3) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asian/Asian British: Chinese | 0.7% (1) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Asian/Asian British: Other Asian | 1.3% (2) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean | 0.7% (1) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black | 0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group | 2.0% (3) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sex | <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Males</td> <td>75</td> <td>52%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Females</td> <td>48</td> <td>48%</td> </tr> </table> | | | | Males | 75 | 52% | Females | 48 | 48% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 75 | 52% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Females | 48 | 48% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Religion or belief | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Number</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total people</td> <td>147</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christian</td> <td>72</td> <td>49.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hindu</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>2</td> <td>1.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muslim</td> <td>4</td> <td>2.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other religion</td> <td>10</td> <td>0.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | Number | Percentage | Total people | 147 | | Christian | 72 | 49.0% | Hindu | 1 | 0.7% | Jewish | 2 | 1.4% | Muslim | 4 | 2.7% | Other religion | 10 | 0.5% | | | |
| | Number | Percentage | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total people | 147 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Christian | 72 | 49.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hindu | 1 | 0.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jewish | 2 | 1.4% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Muslim | 4 | 2.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other religion | 10 | 0.5% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Summary of Green Spaces Consultation

A questionnaire was devised that sought local people's views on their local green spaces and in Watford as a whole and was . This included specific questions on quality, accessibility and quantity of open space. Questions were also asked in relation to the kind of activities local people engaged in green spaces.

- The most popular activity is walking with 92% of respondents taking part in it regularly, followed by 71% meeting friends, 37% observing wildlife, and 32% cycling.

Quality

- Within their **local areas**, 43% felt allotments were good to very good with only 12% saying they were poor or very poor; 83% said children's play areas were good to very good; 89% said that parks were good to very good and 73% said that recreation grounds were good to very good.
- 79% of respondents replied that woodlands and natural green spaces were good to very good.
- Facilities in open spaces was variable, with sports pitches (56%) good to very good but youth facilities, tennis courts and changing facilities poor to very poor.
- Within **Watford as a whole**, 49% felt allotments were good to very good, with 12% poor to very poor. 79% said children's play areas were good to very good, 94% said that parks were good to very good; 74% felt that recreations grounds were good to very good; 84% also said that woodlands and natural green spaces were good to very good. In relation to facilities, the results reflected the local areas results.

Quantity

In relation to quantity of green spaces in their local areas, most respondents felt that there were enough allotments, play areas, parks and recreation grounds, but many felt that there was not enough woodlands or natural green spaces. Youth facilities were significantly lacking in most respondents views. These responses were echoed within Watford as a whole.

Accessibility

A question was asked in relation as to how long a user would be willing to walk to certain green spaces facilities. Most allotment tenants were prepared to spend up to 10 minutes (44%) and 20 minutes (20%). Children's play areas were primarily within 10 minutes (42%), natural green spaces up to 20 minutes (49%); a local park within 10 minutes (55%); Recreation ground, between 10 and 20 minutes (70%).

Comments

Many comments were made in relation to green spaces ranging from the love of Cassiobury Park to the perceived development threats on open spaces and the high quality of children's play areas.

Key Issues arising from the consultation

- Quality of green spaces is high especially parks and children's play areas;
- Quality of changing facilities, some sports and youth facilities is variable;
- Quantity of most green spaces is about right although youth facilities is an issue along with natural green spaces.

Most users were prepared to walk between 10 and 20 minutes to a local green space depending on the typology.

The response profile is attached as an appendix to this EIA.

Impacts of the Green Spaces Strategy

Many impacts of the Green Spaces Strategy have been outlined as above, this has been reviewed in light of the feedback received from further consultation and engagement on the previous draft strategy:

1. Negative impacts of the Strategy

Without good contextual information from the community on their views of Watford's green spaces there was the potential for the strategy to miss both issues (such as barriers to accessing open spaces and associated benefits) and opportunities to promote equality and foster good relations.

The consultation conducted during the summer 2013, has helped build better understanding of the needs and aspirations of the Watford community in terms of green spaces but it has also identified some gaps that will need to be addressed over the lifetime of the strategy.

The final strategy, therefore, acknowledges the need for ongoing consultation and the recommendation is endorsed by this updated EIA. In particular, the recommendation would be to ensure those groups under-represented in the consultation feedback are encouraged to respond either through targeted consultation or through more qualitative methods.

2. Positive impacts of the strategy

The 2013-2023 Green Spaces Strategy recognises the benefits of green spaces as outlined in this EIA. These benefits need to be accessible to the whole community. This can best be achieved through understanding the Watford context and aligning this with the resulting feedback and information received from consultation and engagement.

The final strategy has a good analysis of the Watford context and so demonstrates that its approach, final recommendations and agreed action plans have been developed to meet the needs of the borough and its aspirations and expectations in terms of the provision of green, open space. It has considered this analysis against other areas, good practice and current national frameworks.

This analysis is aligned with feedback and information received from the further consultation and engagement carried out on the draft strategy during the summer of 2013 and which ultimately fed into the final strategy. Specific issues are identified for certain groups within the community and that, overall, the potential for fostering good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not through green spaces is demonstrated.

The Green Spaces Strategy Action Plan has identified 'Use' as a significant theme. It has linked this to the delivery of Watford BC's corporate priority of:

Promoting an active, cohesive & well informed town

Actions have been identified which promote the theme of 'Use' and these consider the positive impacts the Strategy will have for the Watford and wider community.

3. Overall conclusion

The development of this EIA is timely as it supports the Green Spaces Strategy's recommendation for ongoing consultation and engagement with green spaces users throughout the lifespan of the strategy. It also acknowledges that actions have been identified within the Strategy that should have

positive impacts for the wider community but, again, these need to be tested through ongoing engagement throughout the lifespan of the strategy.

4. Recommendation

1. The main recommendation arising from this updated EIA is for on-going consultation and engagement to be conducted on the delivery of the Strategy action plans, in particular in relation to the identified groups with the Strategy.

DRAFT

The table summarises potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated:

| Negative Impact | Protected characteristics | Ways to mitigate the negative impact |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Although good general feedback has been received from the Watford community as to their needs, aspirations and expectations for green spaces in the borough and from some protected characteristicsthere needs to be further work through the lifespan of the strategy. Where there is less feedback from certain groups, this limits understanding of any issues or specific opportunities.</p> | <p>All but particularly identified are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-White population • Younger people | <p>.Programme of consultation and engagement throughout the strategy.</p> |

The table summarises potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

| Positive Impact | Protected characteristics | Ways to ensure the positive impact |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Action Plan – theme 2 ‘Use’ and associated outcomes. This should support fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don’t and improve access amongst all community groups</p> | <p>All – a number specifically mention impacts on the younger age group</p> | <p>Theme 2 ‘Use’ – key actions identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council and other green space stakeholders will develop a ‘<i>Community Involvement Action Plan</i>’ to engage and involve local communities through development of Friend’s Groups in particular. • The Council will develop, in partnership a system to develop volunteering opportunities on council managed green space, particularly in Cassiobury Park and natural green space corridors. • The Council will develop, in partnership a system to develop volunteering opportunities on council |

| Positive Impact | Protected characteristics | Ways to ensure the positive impact |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|
| | | <p>managed green space, particularly in Cassiobury Park and natural green space corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will work with health partners to investigate, assess and promote new ways of using green spaces to improve health and wellbeing, particularly Cassiobury Park. This will include investigating any possible funding opportunities. • The Council will develop publicity material to publicise both strategic green space sites to all sectors of the community who need improved access to information on their local green spaces. • The Council will consult and involve local communities on green space issues and developments to include the following in line with the Council’s Strategy for Community Engagement and Consultation. These will include : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children; ○ Older People; ○ People with Disabilities; ○ Carers; ○ People with Learning Difficulties; ○ Black and Minority Ethnic groups; and ○ Other excluded groups. • The Council will make “access for all” an integral part of all policy, strategy and activity in the |

| Positive Impact | Protected characteristics | Ways to ensure the positive impact |
|-----------------|---------------------------|---|
| | | <p>planning development and management of Watford's green spaces in line with the '<i>BT Countryside for All</i>' standards and their accompanying approach as an integral part of any physical access policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will continue its promotion of parks and open spaces through signage improvement programme, noticeboards, leaflets, way-marked walks and interpretation boards. Update existing website for parks and open spaces. • The Council develop fitness trails and outdoor gyms at specific sites throughout Watford. • The Council will consider and explore opportunities for extreme sports facilities in Watford, in particular introduce a BMX facility in an agreed location. |

Monitoring the review

This analysis will be reviewed as part of the development of the Green Spaces Strategy 2013-23.

This EIA has been approved by:

Lesley Palumbo.....,..... **Date**

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PART A

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 11th November 2013

Report of: Environmental Services Client Manager (Parks and Streets)

Title: Adoption of new Terms and Conditions for Allotment Tenants

1.0 **SUMMARY**

This report presents the revised and proposed updated FAQs for allotment tenants in Watford. For several years, along with the legal tenancy agreement signed by all allotment tenants, the FAQs have been the rules and regulations, the “do’s and don’ts” of what is allowed and not allowed when taking on an allotment in Watford.

1.2 As part of the development of the new 2013-2018 Allotments Strategy, one of the issues that arose was the dissatisfaction with the current FAQ’s which were updated regularly by the Allotments Management Team without consultation or involvement of tenants or site supervisors.

1.3 These have therefore been re-written in consultation with Site Supervisors and the Allotments Stakeholder Panel and are presented to Cabinet for approval and adoption.

1.4 As a result of updating the Terms and Conditions (T&C), it is also apparent that the existing tenancy agreement now needs updating to ensure it aligns with the revised T&Cs. This includes the need to revise the period of notice given to allotment tenants in relation to increasing levels of rent annually, currently restricted by having to give the ‘tenant 6 month’s notice to expire on the thirty first day of March in any year’

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to:

2.1 Approve the adoption of the final and revised FAQs now to be known as Terms and Conditions and that future revision approvals are delegated to the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services in consultation with the Portfolioholder.

2.2 Approve the recommendation to update the existing Allotment Tenancy Agreement in line with the updated Terms and Conditions and delegate its final approval to the Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services in and

the Head of Democracy and Governance.

- 2.3 Approve the recommendation to increase allotment rents annually by the RPI (September value) and inform tenants annually based on the proposed revisions to the tenancy agreement after Cabinet approval of fees and charges each February.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Paul Rabbitts,
Environmental Services Client Manager (Parks and Streets)

Telephone extension: 8250 Email: paul.rabbitts@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Lesley Palumbo, Head of Corporate Strategy and
Client Services

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 Watford Borough Council currently provides 13 allotment sites in the Borough which continue to be popular with local residents echoing the national picture. The updated Strategy for allotments was approved in April 2013 with the aim:-

“To maintain and where appropriate, improve the quality, management and promotion of Watford Borough Council allotment sites, and to offer this unique leisure activity to all members of the Watford community”.

A detailed Action Plan was approved as part of this process and included an action to update the FAQ's as required.

The FAQ's have been the rules and regulations of allotments for several years and have covered everything from size of plots, rent increases, bonfires, structures on plots, tenant responsibilities to advice on paying bills. They were updated regularly as issues arose from tenants and site supervisors but generally without consultation.

An allotment stakeholder panel was set up in September 2012 with one of the Terms of Reference to “support the development and implementation of the Allotments Strategy”.

One of the key issues raised were that the FAQ's were deemed very rigid, inflexible and tenants had no say over how these were shaped, adapted, approved and enforced, often creating ill feeling among tenants on most sites.

3.2 **Consultation**

- 3.2.1 Consultation with the Allotments Stakeholder Panel revealed the need to update and refresh these and an early meeting was held with them to start the process of rewriting these. The panel worked through the many issues with officers and a first draft was produced in February 2013. Some FAQ's were deemed quite contentious and included

size of structures permitted on plots, permission to have bonfires on sites, 2nd plots and non-cultivation. It was agreed that officers would look at best practice elsewhere and bench mark against other authorities through the London Parks and Gardens Benchmarking Forum and assess what was appropriate for Watford. The allotments management team, since transferred to Veolia, were also consulted in relation to the revised FAQ's.

- 3.2.2 The feedback was generally very good and a further meeting was held in September 2013 with the Allotments Stakeholder Panel and a lengthy session was very productive which resulted in the renaming of the FAQ's into Allotment Terms and Conditions and a final agreed set including a number of compromises on some of the more difficult issues such as bonfires on allotment sites. The issue of bonfires and incinerators continues to divide opinion and it is proposed that the proposed use of incinerators is allowed on a trial basis for 12 months and will be re-assessed if there have been significant complaints.

One key issue that arose was that the current tenancy agreement is also out-dated and needs to be fully aligned with these new terms and conditions, including specifically conditions relating to bonfires, rental increase notifications, livestock and residency. This will now be updated accordingly to ensure it aligns with these terms and conditions as well as current allotment legislation and Council policy.

After allotment rents were substantially increased in 2011 by up to 100% to bring in line with average costs nationally, feedback was received from tenants that the sharp increase could have been avoided if rents had been raised annually over previous years. Therefore, specifically, in relation to future allotment rental increases, it is the intention to revise the notice required to be given to tenants in the new tenancy agreement. The Council therefore proposes to increase allotment rents annually by the RPI current in September each year and this will be reflected in the new tenancy agreement.

3.3 **Conclusions**

- 3.3.1 The aims of the new Terms and Conditions are to allow greater flexibility within the management of allotments, for officers to make reasoned decisions and to encourage better relations with tenants who may well be keen to broaden their scope in allotment gardening. The Terms and Conditions are however sufficient enough to ensure that tenants know what is expected of them. As a consequence it is also required to update the Allotments Tenancy agreement as a separate body of work as soon as possible.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

- 4.1.2 The Director of Finance comments there are no specific financial implications.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the Council is entitled by virtue of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 to make such rules as appear to

be necessary or proper for regulating the letting of an allotment.

4.3 Equalities

4.3.1 Not applicable

4.4 Risk

4.4.1 Not applicable

4.5 Staffing

4.5.1 Management and enforcement of the new Terms and Conditions will be carried out by the Council's Environmental Services Partner, Veolia Environmental Services who have been consulted on these revisions.

4.6 Accommodation

4.6.1 Not applicable

4.7 Community Safety

4.7.1 Not applicable

4.8 Sustainability

4.8.1 Not applicable

Background Papers:

None

File Reference: None

Appendix

WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL ALLOTMENT TENANTS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In July 2013, the Council outsourced its Parks and Open Spaces Service to Veolia Environmental Services as part of a 7 year Environmental Services Contract. As part of this process, this included the management, maintenance and administration of allotments in Watford. The former FAQ's have been updated to reflect these changes and are now Terms and Conditions for all allotment tenants.

1. Renting a plot

It costs £4.40 per 25 square metres (approximately equal to 1 'pole') per year from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014, and an inflationary increase (based on the RPI each September) will be applied annually thereafter. Invoices will be issued by the Council's Partner, Veolia Environmental Services and made payable to them.

2. Paying for your plot

Invoices are sent out once a year in October. Payment is for 6 months in advance and 6 months in arrears; from 1 April to 31 March. Failure to pay promptly (Veolia payment terms are within 30 days) will result in the termination of your tenancy agreement. Allotments let within the year will be charged at the full annual rate.

3. Allotment concessions

50% discount is available to plot holders on the following means tested benefits **only**:

- Housing Benefit, in the form of Rent Allowance or Local Housing Allowance for people living in rented accommodation
- Council Tax Benefit
- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (income based)
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Guaranteed Pension Credit (not 'Savings Pension Credit')
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income based)

The list of means tested benefits will be updated annually to reflect changes in welfare reform regulations

4. Plot cultivation

"Under cultivation" means at least 75% of your plot is cultivated or managed appropriately.

- Plots covered in short or long grass or weeds, or covered by other material for more than 6 months are classed as not cultivated.
- New tenants must start cultivating within 2 months of taking on a plot.
- If you do not cultivate your plot according to these rules, your tenancy will be ended unless you can satisfy the Council that your personal circumstances (see examples in 5 below) are such that you had good reason why you could not cultivate your plot.
- Tenants who receive 2 consecutive annual non-cultivation letters (valid from January 1st 2014) will have their tenancies terminated regardless of the reason..

(Please note - You must inform your site supervisor immediately if you are having difficulties or the Veolia Environmental Services Service Support Team on 0203 567 6900).

5. Adverse weather conditions and plot cultivation

As above, 75% of your plot must be cultivated or managed appropriately. However, the Council or its Partner will assess individual circumstances in relation to weather and “personal circumstances” such as ill health, bereavement. The Council’s or Veolia’s decision shall however be final.

6. Covering plots

As long as you maintain the cultivation levels as shown in point 4, you can cover unused areas of your plot with suitable weed suppressant material. Carpet **must not** be used as residues in carpets are harmful to soils when they break down.

7. Numbers on allotment plots

You should have a clear sign at the front of your plot. It is one of the rules on your tenancy agreement. These have been provided by the Council and must be on display at all times.

8. Rubbish on plots

In most cases, you take the plot “as seen” when you choose it. However, if you find any potential hazardous waste, please contact your site supervisor and Veolia and they will assess accordingly. In some cases, if the plot is in very poor condition, they will remove and clear the plot for you. However, in general, any rubbish you find, you will need to take to a refuse site. Please also see T&C 15.

9. Structures on allotments (sheds / greenhouses / polytunnels)

You must write to Veolia for permission to put up **any** structure on your plot, and it cannot be any larger than 2.5m long x 2.0m wide x 2m high for a shed or greenhouse. If you wish to erect a polytunnel, the maximum size is 5m long x 3m wide x 2m high. You must not use concrete, corrugated metal, bricks or asbestos. No more than **15%** of the plot is to be taken up by structures. If this is exceeded, your tenancy will be terminated. If you vacate your plot or have your tenancy terminated, you will be expected to remove any structures you have erected. If not Veolia will remove and recharge you for the costs of doing so. This T&C is valid from January 1st 2014.

Please note: Watford Borough Council and Veolia can take no responsibility for your shed / greenhouse or any personal belongings left on your plot / in your shed / greenhouse. We advise you to look at the possibility of insuring any such items against theft / damage.

10. Fences and gates on plots

All allotment plots should have a pleasant, open aspect and be divided by a path of a width between 45cm to 60cm (18” to 24”), which is for the use of you and your neighbour. Do not cultivate or obstruct the path, and do not put up a fence. There are some exceptions to this condition at Paddock Road allotments due to its open nature.

11. Maintenance of paths between plots

You and your neighbour are responsible for the maintenance of paths between plots. This is a rule of your tenancy agreement. Usually, you are responsible for the path on

your *left*, (facing your plot from an access road). Paths must be kept clear at all times with no rubbish dumped on them. If you are not sure which path you are responsible for, please contact Veolia direct.

12. Bonfires and Incinerator bins on allotments

Bonfires are **not** allowed at any time on any site. However the use of incinerator bins is permitted on all sites but only during the following period:-

- 1st September to 31st March on any Tuesday after 12 noon or the first weekend of the month after 12 noon. Incinerators must not be started before 12 noon and must be extinguished by dusk.

If you have an incinerator bin please ensure that you only use it with the lid on. Keep the incinerator bin as far away from residential properties as you can to minimise any nuisance that the smoke may cause. The following conditions also apply:-

- No material other than that produced on your plot is to be burnt in the incinerator bin.
- Only burn when suitable weather conditions permit to avoid causing a nuisance to local residents (wind drift etc.)
- Only organic matter such as wood, prunings and dry vegetable matter to be burnt.
- Do not set fire to massive piles of material, it is better to start your incinerator with a small amount and then add more material when it is very hot.
- Non-vegetable matter such as plastic, rubber, roofing felt or bitumen, carpet, etc. shall not be burnt. Flammable liquids such as old sump oil shall not be burnt or used to light incinerators.
- Extinguish the incinerator before leaving the site - do not let it smoulder after you have gone.
- Only burn on your own plot, do not light fires for others.
- In the event of a complaint to the plothead from another tenant, or a member of the public, with regard to a nuisance being caused the incinerator must be extinguished immediately.

Any violation of times or conditions will lead to automatic termination of tenancy. Veolia also provides green waste bins to all Watford households, and unwanted green waste not being composted on your plot, including diseased plants, can also be put in this bin.

NOTE: This is for a trial period for 12 months only dating from January 1st 2014 to December 31st 2014 after which this will be reviewed.

13. Trees on plots

You may be allowed to plant fruit trees on your plot, but please contact Veolia first. You do not need permission for fruit canes e.g. blackcurrants. You need permission to cut or remove trees, including hedges, from an allotment.

14. Fixtures and Fittings on plots

You must not make any changes to any permanent fixtures, such as fences or water tanks.

15. Storage of household items on plots

Only garden tools may be kept on an allotment plot. You may not bring any rubbish onto the allotments. If you do, your tenancy agreement will be terminated, and you may

be taken to court for fly tipping.

16. Green waste on plots

You should try to compost all your green waste on your own plot and not others. If you dump any green waste on another plot, whether cultivated or not, your tenancy agreement will be ended, and you may be taken to court for fly tipping.

17. Grass cutting on allotment plots

You must keep your own plot cultivated and keep the left-hand path between your plot and your neighbour's neat and tidy. Vacant plots are cut if the Council or Veolia decide it is needed.

18. Livestock on plots

You may be able to keep chickens or bees on your plot, but you need to check with Veolia first. There are strict guidelines on looking after livestock on allotments and you must comply with the RSPCA guidance that will be issued with every request to keep livestock. Failure to comply with this guidance **will result in termination** of your tenancy agreement. Structures for livestock must not cover more than 15% of your plot – see No. 9.

19. Car parking on allotment plots

You can only park your car in the car parks or on spaces set aside for car parking. You can park your car on the allotment roadway to load or unload it, but please be ready to move your car at any time.

20. Additional plot requests

You may have a second plot, but not on sites where there is currently a waiting list. You will need to complete an allotment application form for a second plot. The site supervisor will also check your current plot to make sure it is in good condition before the Council and Veolia let you have a second plot and we would only allow a further plot if you have been cultivating your existing plot satisfactorily for 12 months.

21. Extra / replacement keys

The Council will soon (early 2014) be upgrading all the locks at all sites with more substantial and secure locks. **A £15 deposit will be required from you for the new key and will be returned when your the tenancy finishes and the key is returned.** In relation to replacement keys you can only have a new key if the old one is worn or lost. If lost, your deposit will be lost and a further £15 deposit required. Please call the Support team on 0203 567 6900 as you will need to fill out a form.

22. Dogs on allotments

Only guide or assistance dogs are allowed on allotment sites.

23. Transfer of plots to the next of kin when a tenant passes away

Upon the death of the tenant, if it can be shown that the plot was cultivated by any member of the tenant's immediate family (spouse, partner or child), then subject to the Council's or Partner's discretion and agreement, the plot can be transferred to the immediate family member who must apply to take over the tenancy in their own right.

24. Allotment plots for residents living outside Watford

You have to pay your Council Tax to Watford Borough Council to have one of our plots. This rule has been in place since 1 December 2010. If you live outside of Watford and had your plot before this date you may keep it. You must notify Veolia in writing within

28 days if you move and provide your new address. If you have moved out of Watford, you will be given 12 months notice to terminate your tenancy..

25. Previous terminations of tenancies

You have to wait three years from the date your previous tenancy was ended before you can re-apply to go on the allotments waiting list or be given another plot.

26. Cultivation of allotments for commercial purposes

The allotment is to be used wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, flowers and crops for consumption by the tenant or tenant's family. It is not to be used for any commercial use or operation.

27. Disputes with a fellow allotment tenants

Any cases of dispute between tenants and others shall be dealt with by the site supervisor initially. If this cannot be resolved, this should be referred to Veolia who will discuss with the Council who will make a final decision.

Further Notes

Bonfires

It is always preferable to compost as much allotment waste as possible; it is better for the environment and will provide you with free compost for your allotment. We appreciate that you may have allotment waste which is non-compostable but we ask that you remove this from site or burn in an incinerator bin as per these Terms and Conditions. Bonfires are not permitted as a smoky bonfire will cause a nuisance to local residents and may be in contravention of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This act prohibits a statutory nuisance being caused by smoke, fumes, gases or odour. To be a nuisance the smoke must either be a cause of material harm or must substantially interfere with the enjoyment of land.

Size of plots

The average size of a plot is 125 square metres (5 poles). There are also smaller and larger plots on most sites.

Problems on site

The volunteer site supervisor is there to help you with any questions, or phone the Veolia Environmental Services Service Support Team on 0203 567 6900 or email Enquiries.watford@veolia.co.uk

Supply of manure

The Council and Veolia do not provide manure. However, speak to your site supervisor, as they may have a contact.

Revisions

These Terms and Conditions can be updated at any time by Watford Borough Council.

Updated 11th November 2013

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Agenda Item 7

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 11th November 2013
Report of: Property Development Project Manager
Title: New Watford Market Update

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the progress of the delivery of the new Watford market and its future operation.
- 1.2 The design entails a new, vibrant WBC led covered market located in the current car park at the side of the TJ Hughes building (23-33 The Parade) and also includes expansion into the Parade with some temporary stalls. It is designed to be complementary to the smaller market that Intu is proposing to build as part of the Charter Place redevelopment.
- 1.3 The estimated cost for the project is £2.65m which reflects substantial design changes including full roof coverage throughout the market and a first floor storey to accommodate more units.
- 1.4 A planning application for the new market has been submitted and a decision is expected before Christmas 2013. The scheme includes 45 units.
- 1.5 Following an open tender exercise, Town & Country Markets were selected to provide advice prior to opening of the market in relation to design, business support and operational matters. They have also been selected to operate the new Watford Market once completed and are expected to enter into a lease and a management agreement.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet

- 2.1 Notes that the Watford Health Campus Partnership LLP has been instructed to design the new Watford Market and to prepare Employer's requirements for the building contract
- 2.2 Notes that a planning application has been submitted.
- 2.3 Notes that Town & Country Markets have been appointed as the operator to manage the new Watford Market following completion and also been appointed to provide design advice, business support, secure pre-lets and develop appropriate management policies.

- 2.4 Notes the Terms and Conditions for traders in the new Watford Market
- 2.7 Approves a revised capital budget estimate of £2.65m and recommends the change to the Capital Programme to Council.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact:

Hannah Heinemann

telephone extension: -8212

email: hannah.heinemann@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Manny Lewis, Managing Director

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 **Design**

Under powers delegated by Cabinet on 8th July 2013, the Managing Director instructed the Watford Health Campus Partnership LLP to design and deliver the New Watford Market Project. In consultation with market traders and councillors the design has been developed up to planning application stage. A planning application was submitted on 8th October 2013.

The design consists of modular units under a canopy roof, which provides shelter from wind and weather. A total of 45 modular units will be provided. Compared to initial designs the scheme now includes maximum roof coverage and a second storey, both elements emerged from consultation with traders and councillors. The modular units will also be insulated to protect from temperatures and prevent condensation. The full application is available to view online (13/01067/FUL). Copies of the summary document submitted for Planning will be available at the meeting.

3.2 **Market Management Company**

Town & Country Markets (TCM) have been appointed to advise the Council prior to completion of the new market and to operate the market following completion of construction works. They have a strong track record in retail operations, managing indoor and outdoor markets and redevelopment of markets.

TCM's input to date has been to advise on operational matters of the market and how the design can accommodate these issues as well as meeting with traders in the existing market to understand their trades, requirements and needs. In the following weeks they will hold one to one meetings with traders who wish to come into the market to secure pre-lets. TCM will speak with both existing and potential new traders to the town.

TCM will enter into a Lease and Management Agreement with the Council which will govern the operation of the market. The Heads of Terms have been agreed and

signed. It is anticipated that the final legal documentation will be completed by the end of 2013. The Heads of Terms secure the Council a minimum of £70,000 annual income. This amount covers its rental obligation to BMW Trust who own the freehold of part of the site, service charge obligations and other ancillary costs.

As part of the MMC's business support to the traders they will advise on managing trading in the new modular units. This will be particularly important to deal with storage and supplies. A car parking facility for the traders is being discussed with Intu using one of the satellite car parks.

3.3 Terms & Conditions for the new market

TCM have developed the Terms & Conditions which apply to traders that enter into a lease for a unit in the new market. The market will be trading 6 days a week. This is to ensure a vibrant town centre and TCM are confident that there is enough interest from traders to support a 6 day trading week.

TCM will agree a trader mix strategy with WBC. It will be up to TCM to attract and decide on the best traders for the new market to ensure its long term viability. If it is in the interest of the market there can therefore be more than one trader selling the same product. An application process will be applied to determine the traders transferring to the new market.

The traders will be expected to enter into a lease outside the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954. The term of a leases will be either 1 or 3 years. If a 3 year lease is entered a rolling break clause on 6 months notice following the initial 12 months will be incorporated. Day trader units will be operated under a casual day licences. Where a day trader commits to regularly attending the market on the same day(s) each week, a standard registered trader form will be completed. This commits the trader to a notice of two weeks should they wish to cease trading within the market at any time.

The traders will have to pay rent and service charge as well as other outgoings such as utilities bills and rates. The level of rent and service charge payment proposed are less psft pa than the traders currently pay but they will be up-rated annually by RPI. However, their frontage will also be reduced compared to their existing frontage and this has been reflected in the rental levels. TCM has also proposed a 50% reduction in rent for the first year, January to March 2015 to help traders establish themselves at the new location over the winter period. This is a positive and responsive approach.

Relocation costs and compensation for individual trader where due will be determined in discussion with Intu and consultation with traders to discuss the details has been planned for the end of October.

A drop in day to brief all traders took place on 29 October 2013.

3.5 Capital costs

Initial cost estimates for the project were £1.5m. the budget has been revised to £2.65m. The increase in cost is due to a combination of factors:

- the final design now incorporates a second storey, public lift and maximum roof

- coverage, which was not taken into account initially;
- a banner design has been included to the side of the structure to provide additional shelter from wind and weather;
- reprovided utilities as the existing substation cannot cater for the former TJ Hughes building (23-33 The Parade) and the market. An additional substation needs to be built to meet the electricity demand.
- full resurfacing and decking now to be included in the specification
- all modular units will now also be provided with a basic specification, which allows for appropriate insulation of the modular units. Further value-engineering will be carried out to ensure value for money. This includes the investigation of other modular unit options.

Going forward, the Council will secure the procurement of a principal contractor and a separate contractor for the supply of modular units.

3.6 Revenue implications

The Heads of Terms with TCM ensure that the Council will recover its costs in terms of rent, service charge and internal management fees. Further profit share arrangements will be in place should the net income exceed a specified threshold. The combination of the MMC's income projections and the savings that the Council is also making in transferring the current market operations to Intu – as reported in the MTFs – means that the capital cost of the scheme can be recovered within 10 years.

Town & Country Markets will also make a one off capital contribution to the new development.

All operational cost will fall to TCM and incentives will be agreed to minimise the operational costs to maximise profits whilst maintaining a vibrant market.

The Council will be responsible for structural maintenance and it is recommended that a fund for structural maintenance is established from the rental receipts to cover any potential costs.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 The Director of Finance comments that the proposal surrounding the New Market is likely to produce revenue savings for the Council, however, the full impact of this is not known at this stage. There are a number of costs and savings included in the proposal and these will need to be firmed up as the project progresses, and then monitored to ensure that they are achieved.

The estimated capital expenditure now required to complete the project is above that included in the current approved budget, the additional expenditure and associated funding will therefore need to be approved by Full Council.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal implications are dealt with in the body of the report. The Council will be entering a management agreement as well as a lease due to part of the market falling within the Parade area.

4.3 **Equalities**

The new market will comply with the provisions of the Equality Act to cater for people with disabilities and the tenant mix will ensure that the offer will cater for all age groups. The market will cater for existing as well as new traders. The selection of traders will be undertaken on a fair and competitive basis.

4.4 **Potential Risks**

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall score |
|--|------------|--------|---------------|
| <i>Delay of construction due to Utilities companies</i> | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| <i>Overrun on project costs</i> | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| <i>Not being able to agree Legal documentation with TCM</i> | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| <i>Lack of demand from potential traders</i> | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| <i>Slippage of timescales</i> | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| <i>Building has to be shut for 18 months.</i> | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| <i>Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register.</i> | | | |

4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 One post of the market manager is considered to be affected by TUPE.

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 N/A

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 The new market will be fully securable and the entrances covered by CCTV.

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 Sustainable building methods will be encouraged as part of the commissioning of the building contract. Additionally, TCM will be under obligations to minimise waste, reduce energy and apply sustainability measures where appropriate.

Appendix – circulated separately

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Agenda Item 8

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 11th Nov 2013
Report of: Programme Manager Regeneration Projects
Title: Watford Business Park

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Watford Business Park (WPB) is a large industrial estate located in the Holywell ward. The freehold is owned by the council who have granted long leases to various parties. Much of the estate was constructed in 1960 and whilst some areas have been modernised there remain significant areas that are in need of investment and updating.
- 1.2 Historic attempts by Watford Borough Council (WBC) to obtain Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) funding to develop a strategy and to provide funding to initiate early phases of work to WBP had proved unsuccessful. WBC recently approached the LEP again jointly with Greenhill Asset Management (GAM) who manage the adjacent Croxley Business Park, as there are a number of potential synergies for both parties in improving each other's assets as well as the area. This application was successful and the LEP agreed to provide £1.5m of loan funding for the project.
- 1.3 The LEP funding consists of £300k to develop a regeneration strategy by March 2014 and a further £1.2m contribution for the implementation of identified projects from that strategy. Completion of the strategy does not commit WBC to draw down further funds or commit to projects. A further report will be brought to cabinet for consideration when the strategy is completed so next steps can be discussed.
- 1.4 It has been provisionally agreed that £150k of the strategy development costs will be a fee for GAM and their sub consultants. The fee will be paid against agreed milestones whilst the remaining £150k is anticipated to be incurred on general due diligence work and technical studies
- 1.5 LEP funding conditions require the funds drawn to be paid back by 2019 with interest. The property department have identified a number of existing opportunities on the estate that could generate revenue and repay the £300k strategy work in that timescale in the event of no additional projects being identified. It is thought greater returns could be generated in the context of an overall strategy and consequently these short term opportunities will not be pursued individually at this stage until the strategy review is complete.
- 1.6 An exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules can apply in exceptional circumstances or where prior approval for that exemption has been granted at a Cabinet meeting. An exemption is proposed in this case to allow a single tender action with GAM for them to lead on the strategic review. This is based on the synergies and potential opportunities that could be realised from their association

with the adjacent estate and on the success of the joint approach with them to the LEP.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree the appointment of Greenhill Asset Management to undertake a review of the Watford Business Park as described against agreed milestones without going through a formal competitive procurement.
- 2.2 To agree to enter an agreement with the LEP to draw down up to £300,000 of funding to develop a strategy for Watford Business Park. This draw down amount is within the currently agreed £10 million borrowing limit.
- 2.3 To note a further report will be submitted to Cabinet regarding any further drawdown of funds for project implementation on completion of the strategy

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Martin Jones Programme Manager- Regeneration Projects x 8408 or Andrew Gibson Economic Development Manager
email: martin.jones@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Jane Custance, Head of Regeneration and Development

3.0 DETAILED PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Watford Business Park is a large industrial estate of 67 acres the freehold of which is owned by the Council. The estate was built in the 1960s and whilst a proportion has been rebuilt or refurbished many older buildings remain. Much of the estate is inefficient from a land use perspective and presents opportunities to enhance both value and the socio economic benefits, as they are not realising their full potential.

The Council granted 55 long ground leases of terms of between 99 and 125 years on most of the units in the 1960s. Many of the long leases are now at a length which discourages further investment by the long leaseholders. It is intended that as part of this process we enter dialogue with these parties with the aim of renegotiating and regearing the leases or possibly relocating uses.

The tighter access to funding over the last number of years has also exasperated the issue of lack of investment.

- 3.2 Watford Business Park is seen as an underperforming estate both in terms of employment opportunities and financial returns and the purpose of this report is to encourage further investment as well as identifying individual projects to act as a

catalyst for regeneration purposes. The estate generates an income of [£600,000pa] from the ground leases which is a significant portion of the Council's income from investment property and this project's aim would be to increase long term revenue and capital gain and reverse the erosion of income that has occurred over recent years.

- 3.3 The Business Park is in a key regeneration area close to the newly open Morrison Supermarket at Ascot Road and with Croxley Rail Link and a new station opening close by in 2017 it is an opportune time to review the Business Park and investigate what opportunities present themselves.
- 3.4 A strategy needs to be put in place to deliver and take forward the Business Park for the next 20 years. This may include infrastructure improvements, a decant strategy within the estate and improved public realm, which could free up other development opportunities and add value to the Council's assets.
- 3.5 The successful application for LEP funding with GAM now enables a strategy to be developed and due diligence work to commence.

The due diligence work includes:-

- Full review of freehold title
- Full review of head leases
- Full review of Occupational leases
- Land use survey and mapping
- End user research
- Planning
- Estate zones and land use block plans
- IT Infrastructure
- Building design concepts
- Transport Infrastructure
- Public realm
- Valuation appraisals

- 3.6 GAM's element of the work is proposed to be:

- leading the steering group
- leading the operational work groups
- co-ordinating the delivery of the due diligence work
- preparing a draft report for consideration by Dec 2013
- preparing final report by March 2014

- 3.7 The Council are also implementing parking enforcement on the estate from Christmas 2013 and this is likely to generate issues that will need to be addressed in the report.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

- 4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the LEP funding is a loan and subject

to interest payments. The loan will be financed via re-gearing and obtaining premiums from existing leases on the business park and will therefore not impact on the revenue budget. The expenditure will be treated as capital, which will be funded from the revenue savings released from the re-gearing and renegotiations of the existing leases.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the LEP funding is a loan and is also subject to interest payments. The Council will also require GAM to sign a confidentiality and competition warranty agreement, to protect the Council's interests, in view of GAM's interest in the adjoining business park.

4.3 **Equalities**

Regeneration of the Business Park is an opportunity that is identified in the adopted Local Plan – Core Strategy. The Local Plan was subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment. Any strategy arising from the work commissioned with GAM would be subject to a further EqIA.

4.4 **Potential Risks**

Please identify potential risks using the graph below. An example is given to demonstrate how the graph should be used. The score is reached by multiplying the likelihood by the impact.

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall score |
|---|------------|--------|---------------|
| No projects identified to generate sufficient revenue to pay back funds to LEP in timescale. | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Communication around implementation plans and possible relocating businesses badly received | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Controlled Parking zone enforcement in December resulting in complaints linking this approved work stream with the strategy review. | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register. | | | |

4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 It is proposed that a steering group be set up with officers from WBC, LEP and senior representation from GAM. All of which have been identified

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 GAM will make their offices at Croxley Business Park available as a base for the various consultants we appoint and for regular meetings.

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 As part of the review security, lighting and road safety issues will be addressed.

4.8 Sustainability

4.8.1 Many buildings in WBP date back to the 60s and are inefficient both in terms of configuration and do not meet basic energy standards. This report will assist in addressing how to improve issues.

One of GAM's core skills is addressing sustainability issues as is demonstrated by their management of Croyley Business Park.

4.8.2 With the delivery of Croyley Rail Link in 2017 transport issues will be reviewed and if any Green Travel Plan initiatives can be made to work in this area.

Appendices

Appendix 1.....Plan of Estate
Appendix 2.....Aerial Photo

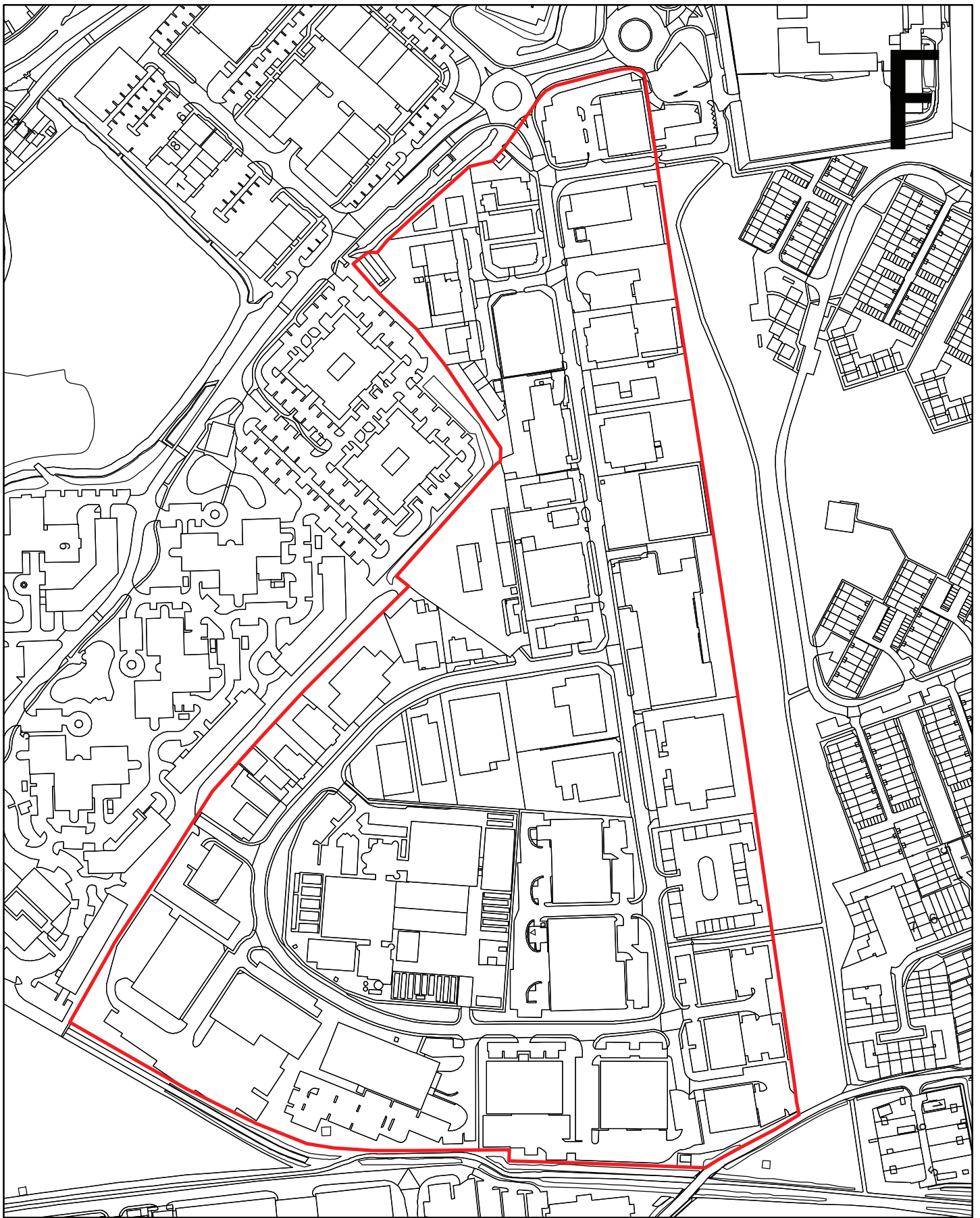
Background Papers

None

File Reference

- None.

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MAP LEGEND

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Watford Business Park

SCALE 1:3,700 @ A4

MAP REFERENCE: 00/00/2007 || XXXX

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Agenda Item 9

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 11th Nov 2013
Report of: Andrew Gibson – Economic Development Manager
Title: Future Town Centre Management and Business Advice Arrangements

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Over the past months consideration has been given to the best way of managing the Town Centre and how best to evolve business advice services. This has resulted in two projects which are outlined below.
- 1.2 A new Town Centre Partnership has been formed comprising a wide range of stakeholders, including local business leaders and the Mayor and Managing Director.
- 1.3 At its inaugural meeting on the 3rd September, the Shadow Partnership Board discussed the need for a dedicated post to support the partnership's activities and the proposed use of the £100k allocated by government to WBC through the High Street Innovation Fund.
- 1.4 It was agreed that a town of Watford's size and ambition should have a dedicated Town Centre Manager with an associated budget to implement and deliver the priorities of the Town Centre Partnership. It was agreed that WBC would employ the Town Centre Manager by reallocating budget from an existing vacant post (originally the Town Centre Programme Manager) and that the £100k High Street Innovation Fund would be allocated to the partnership over 2 years.
- 1.5 The economic downturn and resulting cuts have had a significant impact on the public sector landscape of business support. With the demise of Regional Development Agencies and major cuts to national programmes such as Business Link (which has moved entirely to an online resource), businesses are finding it difficult to navigate or find suitable sources of support, financial or otherwise, which would help them sustain or indeed grow their business.
- 1.6 Watford is in a somewhat unique position in that we have a range of local stakeholders each with a role to play in helping to create, support and ultimately grow local businesses. While existing initiatives are proving successful, there is a growing understanding that even greater impact could be achieved by adopting a truly multi-disciplinary approach to business support by creating a single point of contact/signposting facility to help direct the business to the most applicable source of advice or information.
- 1.7 An opportunity has arisen for the co-location of a number of these key stakeholders

with the Watford & West Herts Chamber of Commerce in one building in a central accessible location. This presents the best opportunity, to date, to create a single point of contact for advice and signposting to the range of business support still available. Advantages of a multi-disciplinary approach include: creating a focal point for business issues, reducing duplication and providing an all round better service for business – ensuring that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

- 1.8 Premises have been identified in Clarendon Road which could accommodate the proposed Business Advice Service, a new permanent location for the Chamber and its staff and the Town Centre Manager. This would create flexible space from which to operate the proposed Town Centre Management office and a business advice and signposting facility.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To agree the appointment of a Town Centre Manager responsible for implementing the priorities of the Town Centre Partnership.
- 2.2 To agree the allocation of £100k High Street Innovation Fund to the Town Centre Partnership over two years.
- 2.3 To agree the establishment of the One Stop Business Advice centre, co-located within Watford & West Herts Chamber of Commerce on Clarendon Road, and the subsequent capital and rental contributions.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Andrew Gibson Economic Development Manager Ex:8286
email: andrew.gibson@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by:

Jane Custance, Head of Planning and Regeneration

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

Town Centre Partnership and the appointment of a Town centre Manager

- 3.1 The creation of a Town or City Centre Partnership (TCP) is recognised best practice in many localities across the UK and is subject to significant commentary around the future of town centres in recent studies such as the Mary Portas Review and the Grimsey Review.

Partnerships are often created as a response to complex and multifaceted problems that cannot be tackled effectively by an individual or single organisation. They therefore have the potential to deliver real benefits for town centres and in most instances, deliver outputs that often exceed the sum of their parts.

- 3.2 An effective TCP can:
- ✓ Create a forum to engage local stakeholders in discussion and collaboration
 - ✓ Shape and influence organisational agendas to develop a shared strategic approach to town centre development
 - ✓ Deliver baseline services and/or provide a channel for additional services and enhanced delivery
 - ✓ Facilitate access to multiple funding and resource opportunities to enhance town centres
 - ✓ In addition, an effective TCP can provide flexibility, innovation and additional financial and human capital resources to help solve problems, all of which are powerful incentives for organisations to work together to benefit the town centre, local communities and in particular, local businesses.
- (Managing Town Centre Partnerships, CLG, 2008)
- 3.3 Local authorities and the wider public sector have much to gain from supporting business-led partnerships. Effective engagement with business can help to:
- ✓ Better understand business needs in order to support the prosperity of the town centre
 - ✓ Raise extra resource for service enhancement
 - ✓ Find delivery mechanisms which help the public sector to deliver services more efficiently and effectively and help achieve public sector targets in an era of reduced public finances; and
 - ✓ Develop new accountability mechanisms and communication tools with town centre stakeholders.
- 3.4 At the inaugural meeting of the Watford TCP on the 3rd September five key reasons were identified as to why now was the right time to create a new TCP for Watford:
- 1) There is an opportunity for the town centre to maximise the benefit from current major investments taking place: The Parade improvements, the new Watford Market, Charter Place redevelopment with Intu, the new Met Quarter restaurant area and other public realm works happening in the wider town centre
 - 2) There is an opportunity to develop a programme of events to promote the town centre and increase footfall, dwell time and visitor diversity.
 - 3) There is potential to build a more balanced town centre that includes retail, the night time economy, leisure and professional services co-existing, complementing each other in their offer to residents and visitors and ultimately increasing prosperity
 - 4) Increasing Watford's competitiveness as a retail destination – whilst the town is under pressure from other retail hubs, the Partnership can explore ways to improve marketing of the town to increase footfall and investigate ways to decrease vacancy rates taking account of the CRL extension into Lower High Street and the current capital investments.
 - 5) The opportunity to intensify marketing and promoting Watford so that the Town's regional standing continues to be enhanced building on the initial work of Watford For You and the success of Imagine Watford.

The can also consider how barriers to success can be addressed and explore how businesses could work together to overcome the challenges that the town centre faces.

3.5 It is important in any early-stage partnership that resources are available to stimulate or incentivise participation. The Council was recently awarded £100k from the High Street Innovation Fund with the aim of helping support and tackle impacts from the economic downturn. It is recommended that, in the spirit of partnership and the recommendations of both the Portas and Grimbsy reviews, this funding be allocated to partnership activity. In terms of human capital to take forward the work of the TCP and the implementation of its priorities, it is recommended that WBC support the creation of a dedicated Town centre Managers post. This post can be supported by reallocating budget from an existing vacant post (formerly the Town centre Programme Manager).

3.6 **Emerging Vision for the Town Centre Partnership**

Whilst the Council is taking a leadership, pump priming role to support this key initiative, partner funding for the TCP costs is under discussion. In addition in the long term it is possible that the TCP will form as a legal entity to stimulate a Business Improvement District which if successful, will generate additional resources for the Town Centre. Furthermore, the Watford For You website has been hosted by John Lewis and co-funded by Intu, John Lewis and the Council. The TCP would be the appropriate vehicle to lead this marketing and promotion activity in due course and also to take a key role when appropriate to commission and oversee Town centre events.

Business Advice Centre co-located with Watford & West Herts Chamber of Commerce

3.7 The economic downturn and resulting cuts have had a significant impact on the public sector landscape of business support. With the demise of Regional Development Agencies and major cuts to national programmes such as Business Link (which has moved entirely to an online resource), businesses are finding it difficult to navigate or find suitable sources of support, financial or otherwise, which would help them sustain or indeed grow their business.

WENTA and the Chamber of Commerce both currently operate from premises at Colne Way. These facilities are under pressure from the high level of business start-ups and from the Chamber's point of view are not ideal as a base for business engagement. The Chamber has been looking for a town centre location which would better suit their needs and those of their clients.

Along with Chamber Services an inward investment service is located there, which would also benefit from a higher quality and more accessible location.

Although the work of WENTA and the Chamber in terms of business start ups shouldn't be underestimated, in view of the loss of business services nationally there is an identified need for better provision.

The Chamber's decision to relocate has provided an opportunity to provide this enhanced business signposting and advice service at a joint location.

Accommodation

3.8 Premises have been identified in Clarendon Road which could accommodate the

proposed Business Advice Service, a new permanent location for the Chamber and its staff and the Town Centre Manager. This would create flexible space from which to operate the proposed Town Centre Management office and a business advice and signposting facility.

The facility would be located at Gateway House, Clarendon Road, sub-let from the Watford Community Housing Trust. The Chamber will take the sub-lease with the council making a financial revenue contribution. The cost of the Councils contribution to rental charges would be £5000 per annum for a 5 year period. It is intended to fund this from the LABGI reserve.

Branding and identity for the facility will be developed over the coming weeks, including signage facing onto Clarendon. A small set-up budget will be required to provide IT infrastructure and initial publicity material. It is anticipated that this will cost between £10k-£15k and this will be finalised through the Councils normal budget approval process.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Director of Finance comments that the Town Centre Manager post can be accommodated within existing staffing budgets. The remaining funding will come from the High Street Innovation Fund reserve (£100k) and the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive reserve (£15-20k).

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Legal and Democratic services Section Head comments that the council will need to ensure that there are appropriate agreements in place to document the funding arrangements.
(NB This will take account of Human Rights issues as appropriate.)

4.3 **Equalities**

The proposed business advice centre will be open to all sections of the community and for the benefit of all including business, social enterprises, charities as well as act as a sign-posting facility for general enquiries on starting a business.

4.4 **Potential Risks**

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall score |
|---|------------|--------|---------------|
| Financial stability of Chamber of Commerce | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| Town Centre Partnership dissolves | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| Lack of uptake from business community | 2 | 4 | 8 |
| Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register. | | | |

4.5 **Staffing**

The proposed Town Centre Manager is a dedicated post to facilitate and deliver the Town Centre Partnership's priorities.

The proposed business advice centre will be staffed on a duty-rota basis by a range of local support organisations including WBC staff (regulatory), WENTA, West Herts College, Watford & West Herts Chamber of Commerce. Co-location with the Chamber also allows for greater continuity, if for example, a member of the support team were absent through illness.

4.5.1 **Accommodation**

4.6 As discussed.

4.6.1 **Community Safety**

4.7 Na.

4.7.1 **Sustainability**

4.8 Business advice will include advice on low-carbon initiatives and funding streams eg Green Deal for Business. It is anticipated that the facility could deliver significant improvements in terms of local companies accessing existing support initiatives.

Appendix 1 – Key role of the Town Centre Manager

Appendix 2 – Initial TCP Newsletter

Background Reading:

[Managing Town Centre Partnerships, A Guide for Practitioners, CLG, 2008](#) (click to follow link)

Appendix 1

TCM Key Responsibilities

- To work with the Town Centre Partnership Board to develop a new strategy for the future of Watford Town Centre, in line with the ATCM good practice guide, working with key stakeholder groups including the Local Authority, the LSP and wider business community.
- To shape the medium to long-term future of the TCP including its corporate governance structure and how to leverage investment, secure wider ownership and build sustainability
- To act as a single point of contact for the Town Centre community, promoting strong communication and information flow and to help stimulate dialogue about town centre issues between all stakeholder groups.
- To act as an advocate/champion for Watford Town Centre Partnership and promote the principle of town centre management to retailers and other town centre interest groups and secure active commitment and support for achieving the TCPs vision and objectives.
- To work with the TCP Board to define the marketing strategy for the Town Centre and oversee the promotion of Watford in line with that strategy. Review existing marketing vehicles such as Watford For You and adapt the marketing of Watford Town Centre to better serve its needs.
- To co-ordinate the Town Centre events agenda, working with Watfords Cultural Leaders Group, the Watford Borough Council Events Officer and other partners for delivery of the events programme. It is anticipated that events will be key in increasing footfall within the Town Centre and therefore is likely to be a core component of the TCP strategy.
- To work within the One Stop Shop team located at the Chamber of Commerce to join up Town Centre planning with business initiatives.
- To explore and secure sources of funding through both private and public sector contributions to support delivery of the TCP strategy and objectives.
- To ensure that all TCP projects and services are delivered to the highest possible standards at all times.
- To act as Company Secretary for the TCP.

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Welcome to the first newsletter of the newly formed Watford Town Centre Partnership

We are a group of businesses and stakeholders from Watford town centre, and have come together in order to help determine the future of the town centre in Watford. We want to help to ensure the town centre is a vibrant and successful environment for business, residents and visitors.

We met for the first time on 3 September and want to let you know what the Partnership is all about.

Opportunity

Watford's town centre opportunity

At the meeting on the 3 September the Town Centre Partnership (TCP) discussed why this is a good time to create a partnership and the reasons behind this. Five key areas were identified:

1. There is an opportunity for the town centre to maximise the benefit from current major investments taking place: The Parade improvements; the new Watford Market; Charter Place redevelopment with Intu; the Met Quarter restaurant area; and other public realm works happening in the area.
2. There is an opportunity to develop a programme of events to promote the town centre and increase footfall, dwell time and visitor diversity.
3. There is potential to build a more balanced town centre that includes retail, the night time economy, leisure and professional services co-existing, complementing each other in their offer to resident and visitors, and ultimately thriving.
4. Increasing Watford's competitiveness as a retail destination is a key driver for the TCP. Whilst the town is under pressure from other retail hubs, the Partnership can explore ways to improve marketing of the town to increase footfall and investigate ways to decrease vacancy rates.
5. The TCP can also consider how barriers to success can be addressed, and explore how businesses could work together to overcome the challenges that we face.

Who we are?

Who we are

We are a business led group, supported by the elected Mayor, Dorothy Thorhill and Watford Borough Council. Whilst the group is currently chaired by Manny Lewis, MD of Watford Borough Council, it is anticipated that a member from the business community will step forward to Chair the TCP board.

Following a meeting with town centre businesses in June 2013, several people volunteered to join the Board. We have

called it a 'shadow' board until the TCP becomes a formal entity.

The team is made up of local business leaders from many sectors and other partners from Watford's business community who all bring valuable experience, guidance and support to the Partnership. **Any member of the town centre business community can join or become a member;** if you are interested in getting involved, please let us know.



An indicative image showing part of The Parade improvements at night.



An early image showing how the new look Watford Market may look.

What we do

What we do

One of the first tasks for the TCP is the appointment of a Town Centre Manager. This person will work with the Board to implement the TCP initiatives and drive town centre activities forward. A job description has been approved and the position will be advertised shortly.

There are other objectives that the TCP board plan to complete in the coming weeks:

- set a vision for the TCP, and define some clear objectives for what can be achieved on behalf of businesses
- define a strategy for town centre events

- explore how marketing and promotion of the town centre can be improved
- start proactive communication and feedback with town centre businesses
- consider sources of funding for the Partnership and its activities.



Getting Involved

Getting involved

This is a partnership of local businesses and stakeholders, acting as representatives for the town centre. Participation will make a huge difference to the success of the Partnership, and will ensure that decisions truly represent the views and needs of those businesses trading in the town centre today. We would encourage as many of you as possible to get involved.

You can do this by:

- joining the TCP shadow board. The Board will meet every six to eight weeks. The next meeting is **Tuesday 22 October, 1.30 to 4pm** at **The Langley**, which is at The Langley 1st & 2nd Floor Gade House, 38-42 The Parade High St, Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 1AZ. Please let us know if you are interested in coming along.
- become a member of the TCP – Simply notify us of your interest, and we will ensure you are involved in all communication and invited to provide feedback on ideas. Membership is voluntary and there is currently no associated cost .

The minutes from the meeting on 3 September are available to anyone who is interested. If you would like to get involved or have a copy of the minutes, please contact Cherie Norris at Watford Borough Council via email at: **cherie.norris@watford.gov.uk** or tel: **01923 278029**.



Who's involved?

The current shadow board members are:

Alex O'Reily, Manager

Oceana

Rajan Gudka, Manager

The Langley

Kwame Tefe, Manager

Weatherspoons

Sam Roberts, Manager

The Flower Shop

Paul Wilson, Manager

Presence

Jonathan Field, Managing Director

John Lewis

Malcolm Harrison, General Manager

Boots

Howard Oldstein, General Manager

Intu Watford

Matthew Russell, Executive Director

Watford Palace Theatre

Manny Lewis, Managing Director

Watford Borough Council

Supporting the group as co-opted shadow board members are:

Roger Gagan, Chief Executive

Watford and West Herts Chamber of Commerce

Deidre Dent, Safer Neighbourhood Team
Hertfordshire Police

Chris Pearson, Communications Director
West Herts College

Simon Arbon, Partner
Brasier Freeth

Richard Philips, Partner
Matthew Arnold Baldwin

Glyn Evans, Operations Director
Watford Football Club

Dorothy Thornhill
Elected Mayor of Watford

For more information about the Watford Town Centre Partnership, email:
Cherie: cherie.norris@watford.gov.uk or tel: **01923 278029**.

Agenda Item 10

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 11 November 2013
Report of: Senior Accountant, Finance Shared Services
Title: Finance Digest 2013/2014 – Period 6, September 2013

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report informs Cabinet of the reported budgetary variances at the end of September 2013 (period 6).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To consider the Finance Digest as at Period 6 2013/2014.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: -
Gilbert Mills, Senior Accountant, Finance Shared Services
telephone extension: 7437
email: gilbert.mills@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Alan Power, Head of Finance, Shared Services

Members are welcome to raise questions prior to any discussion at the meeting. Indeed, it would be helpful if questions could be notified in advance to ensure comprehensive responses are available at the meeting.

Queries should be addressed in the first instance to the Accountancy Practice (accountancy.practice@threerivers.gov.uk) who will ensure an answer is provided by the responsible budget holder.

3.0 REVENUE EXPENDITURE & INCOME

3.1 Income and expenditure is monitored by Heads of Service throughout the financial year with regard their areas of responsibility. When budgetary increases are identified, Heads of Service are required wherever possible to find compensating savings to offset these increases.

3.2 Changes to revenue expenditure to Period 6 are shown in the Finance Digest at Appendix 1 (section 1.2), where the original budgeted revenue expenditure of £15.021m has increased by £12k to £15.033m. This £12k has been funded via a net movement in reserves which are detailed in table 1.3 of the Digest.

3.3 Explanations for variances in the current period are shown primarily under the section headed 'Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre'. Previously reported variances would have been detailed to members within earlier digests.

4.0 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE & CAPITAL FUNDING

4.1 Changes in Capital Budgets

There have been a number of capital budget changes in the quarter and please see the Capital Programme within the Finance Digest Report for the Original and Current budgets.

5.0 Changes in Capital Funding

The Capital Section within the Finance Digest Report shows how the Capital Programme is forecasted to be financed from 2013/14 to 2017/18. A major change has been that we are planning to utilise Earmarked Reserves in order to preserve Capital Receipts and reduce the requirement to borrow in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

This funding of £7.7m is earmarked to come from the New Homes Bonus Reserve (£3m), the Capital Fund Reserve (£1.8m), the Development Sites Decontamination Reserve (£1.3m) and the Weekly Collection Support Grant Reserve (£1.6m).

5.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These have been included in the report.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None Specific.

7.0 EQUALITIES

None Specific.

8.0 **POTENTIAL RISKS**

| Potential Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Score |
|--|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| That the Council's Budget is overspent and financed from the unplanned use of reserves | 3 | 3 | 9 |

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Finance Digest, September 2013 – Period 6

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FINANCE DIGEST

Capital & Revenue Financial Monitoring at

Period 6

(September 2013)

Prepared By : Finance Shared Services

Date : 17th October 2013

Foreword

The monthly Finance Digest is a key tool for raising awareness of financial issues throughout the Council at both member and officer level.

The Finance Digest shows the key indicators that describe Watford's financial health. It provides an update on the Council's budget including effect on reserve balances as well as performance within a discrete number of service areas. Variances to budgets are reflected in the forecast outturn for 2013/14 which are loaded on to the Council's financial management system that continue to be monitored throughout the financial year.

Part 1 - Budget Monitoring

The digest reflects the Council's latest forecast of its financial position for the year, assessing expected spend against the agreed budget and split into service area. It also includes information on key risks and volatile budgets (I.E. income streams subject to economic conditions) including any action taken to mitigate their impact. Revenue spend is forecast monthly whereas capital updates are provided on a quarterly basis.

Part 2 - Performance Indicators

This section provides up to date performance data regarding various service areas of the Council including both front line services and support services.

If you have any comments, please contact the following Finance staff for assistance :-

Nigel Pollard (Finance Manager) @ nigel.pollard@threerivers.gov.uk or ☎ Ext 7198

Gilbert Mills (Senior Accountant) @ gilbert.mills@watford.gov.uk or ☎ Ext 7437

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Part 1 - Budget Monitoring

1 - General Fund Revenue

- 1.1 This report which reflects the new structure that was implemented on 1st July provides an update, in summary form, of the latest position of the Council's revenue budget as at 30th September 2013 (period 6).
- 1.2 The 2013/14 original net general fund budget requirement was £15,021k prior to movements in reserves (the current budget which includes approved virements is £15,311k). However, the forecast outturn for net expenditure at the end of period 6 is predicted to be £15,033k (see page 5).

A reconciliation between all these balances can be detailed as follows :-

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 2013/14 Original Budget requirement prior to movements in reserve | <u>Total</u> £15,021k |
| Add | |
| Approved virements from usable reserves (see table below) :- | |
| Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Reserve | £20k |
| Housing & Planning Delivery Grant Reserve | £35k |
| Budget Carry Forward Reserve | £235k |
| 2013/14 Current Budget requirement including approved virements | <u>£15,311k</u> |
| Add | |
| Anticipated usable movements from reserve (see below table) :- | |
| Invest to Save Reserve | £317k |
| Less | |
| In year forecast variances affecting Economic Impact Reserve (see table on page 4) | (£595k) |
| 2013/14 Forecast Outturn for net expenditure | <u>£15,033k</u> |

1.3 Usable Reserves

| 2013/14 Table of Reserve Movements | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Reserve | Original Budget | In year movement only | | | | Comments |
| | | Reserve Mov'ment as @ Period 4 | Period 6 movement | | Reserve Mov'ment as @ Period 6 | |
| | | | Virement | Anticipated Movement | | |
| Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) | £0k | (£20k) | £0k | £0k | (£20k) | Utilised to part fund the 'Imagine Watford' festival that took place in June 2013. |
| Housing & Planning Delivery Grant | £0k | (£35k) | £0k | £0k | (£35k) | As per Cabinet (Sept 2012), funding for investment in United Sustainable Energy Agency. |
| Budget Carry Forward | £0k | (£235k) | £0k | £0k | (£235k) | Established to carry over unused 2012/13 revenue budget required for 2013/14. |
| Sub total | £0k | (£290k) | £0k | £0k | (£290k) | |
| Invest to Save | £0k | (£317k) | £0k | £0k | (£317k) | Utilised to fund Yr 1 ICT contract costs. Savings expected in future years. |
| Vehicle Replacement | £150k | £0k | £0k | £0k | £0k | Reserve created to fund future vehicle acquisitions. |
| Economic Impact (see table below) | (£735k) | £412k | £0k | £183k | £595k | Utilised in part to fund current expenditure as well as absorb any unplanned forecast variances reported by services during the current financial year. |
| Total | (£585k) | (£195k) | £0k | £183k | (£12k) | |

Note () illustrates a decrease in reserve balances

Anticipated Net Movement on Economic Impact Reserve

The in year movement of £595k is the current unplanned forecast underspend for 2013/14 and can be summarised as follows :-

| Original Budget | In year forecast variations affecting Economic Impact Reserve | Overspend / Underspend | Page Nos | @ Period 4 £k | This Period £k | Total £k |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|----------|---------------|----------------|----------|
| (735) | As per Original Budget 2013/14 | | | | | |
| | As outlined in Period 4 Finance Digest | Underspend | N/A | 412 | 0 | 412 |
| | Corporate Strategy & Client Services | Overspend | 6 | 0 | (5) | (5) |
| | Community & Customer Services | Underspend | 7 | 0 | 23 | 23 |
| | Democracy & Governance | Underspend | 8 | 0 | 19 | 19 |
| | Regeneration & Development | Underspend | 9 | 0 | 99 | 99 |
| | Strategic Finance | Underspend | 12 | 0 | 47 | 47 |
| (735) | Total | | | 412 | 183 | 595 |

Note : the above table indicates a reduction in the balance due from the Economic Impact Reserve at year end ((£140k) as opposed to (£735k)) as a result of current underspends reported by services up to Period 6.

Reserve activity in 2013/14 has been illustrated graphically to reflect the year end carried forward balance on these reserves as at 31st March 2013 including the table of reserve movements as shown on page 3.

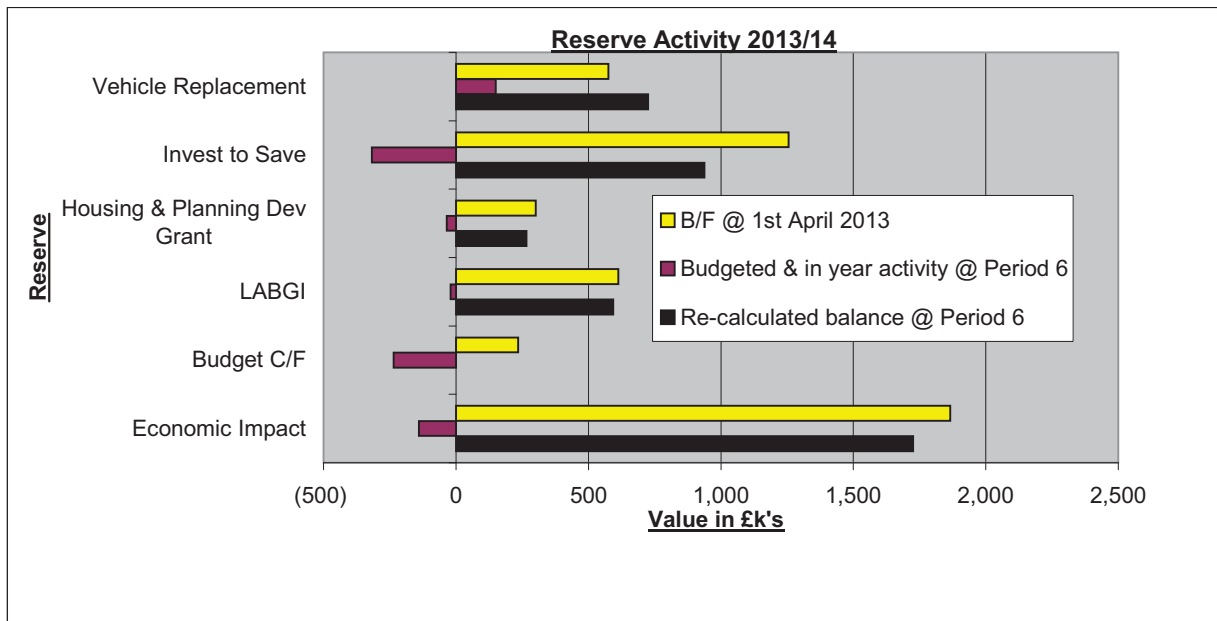


Table 1 - General Fund Summary

General Fund Variance Summary for 2013/14 as @ Period 6 (September 2013)

| Service Area | Original Budget | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Variance | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|------|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | % | Icon |
| Corporate Strategy & Client Services | 9,513 | 9,437 | 317 | 5 | 322 | 9,759 | 3.4 | ⊗ |
| Community & Customer Services | 4,861 | 5,167 | (32) | (23) | (55) | 5,112 | (1.1) | ☺ |
| Democracy & Governance | 1,762 | 1,431 | 0 | (19) | (19) | 1,412 | (1.3) | ☺ |
| Regeneration & Development | (558) | (381) | (560) | (99) | (659) | (1,040) | (173.0) | ☺ |
| Managing Director | 1,377 | 1,385 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,385 | 0.0 | ☺ |
| Human Resources | 0 | (22) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (22) | 0.0 | ☺ |
| Strategic Finance | (1,934) | (1,706) | 180 | (47) | 133 | (1,573) | 7.8 | ⊗ |
| NET GENERAL FUND | 15,021 | 15,311 | (95) | (183) | (278) | 15,033 | (1.8) | ☺ |
| Budgeted Transfer To/(From) Reserves | (585) | (585) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (585) | | |
| In Year Transfer To/(From) Reserves | 0 | (290) | 95 | 183 | 278 | (12) | | |
| NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT | 14,436 | 14,436 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14,436 | | |
| <u>Financed By :-</u> | | | | | | | | |
| Revenue Support Grant (including re-distributed NNDR) | (4,765) | (4,765) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (4,765) | | |
| Council Tax receipts | (7,350) | (7,350) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (7,350) | | |
| Other central government funding | (2,321) | (2,321) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (2,321) | | |
| TOTAL FINANCING | (14,436) | (14,436) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (14,436) | | |
| <u>General Fund Working Balance</u> | | | | | | | | |
| Opening Balance | 1,350 | 1,350 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,350 | | |
| CLOSING WORKING BALANCE | 1,350 | 1,350 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,350 | | |

Icons

Icons have been used to indicate the severity of the variation against budget.

The key is as follows:

☺ Forecast net expenditure is within budget

☹ Forecast net expenditure is as per budget

⊗ Forecast net expenditure is over budget but there is no cause for concern at this stage.

🔔 Forecast net expenditure is more than 10% and £50k over budget which is a cause for concern.

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre

| Service : Budget Owner : | Corporate Strategy & Client Services Lesley Palumbo | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| | | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| | Management Support | 0 | (158) | (158) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (158) | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Contract Monitoring | 0 | 4,428 | 4,428 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,428 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Parks and Open Spaces | 2,122 | (1,093) | 1,029 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 1,033 | Net upward revision to NNDR budgets totalling £4k. |
| | Leisure | 1,464 | (67) | 1,397 | 0 | (24) | (24) | 1,373 | Variations due to the following :- i) Management fee savings totalling (£11k) with regard WCHT and Watford YMCA. ii) Underspend on risk managed contingency budgets of (£13k). Savings proposed for 2014/15. |
| | Grants | 993 | 41 | 1,034 | 0 | (25) | (25) | 1,009 | Variations due to the following :- i) Budget underspend of (£8k) on W3RT infrastructure contract. ii) Underspend on supplies and services budgets within Grants totalling (£17k). |
| | Street Cleansing | 2,075 | (1,324) | 751 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 752 | Revision to NNDR budgets totalling £1k. |
| | Waste and Recycling | 2,629 | (1,955) | 674 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 674 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Partnerships and Performance | 229 | 61 | 290 | 0 | 50 | 50 | 340 | £50k project expenditure supporting the Watford 2031 agenda. |
| | ICT Service | 0 | (8) | (8) | 317 | 0 | 317 | 309 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | <i>Rounding Adjustment</i> | 1 | (1) | 0 | 0 | (1) | (1) | (1) | |
| | Total : Corporate Strategy & Client Services | 9,513 | (76) | 9,437 | 317 | 5 | 322 | 9,759 | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Corporate Strategy & Client Services

total as @ Period 4

Waste and Recycling

Sub Total

Pension budgets re-aligned

Corporate Strategy & Client Services

total as @ Period 6

115

(274) DCLG revenue funding moved to service accounts

(159)

83 Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

(76)

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Budget Owner : | Community & Customer Services Alan Gough | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| | | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| | Customer Services | 0 | 36 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 36 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Housing | 1,907 | 23 | 1,930 | (32) | 0 | (32) | 1,898 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Environmental Health and Licensing | 1,772 | 109 | 1,881 | 0 | (23) | (23) | 1,858 | Variations due to the following :- i) Favourable net salaries variance of (£12k) due to vacant posts. ii) Favourable income variances (in part due to successful prosecutions and partner working) totalling (£13k). iii) Other minor variations totalling £2k. |
| | Culture and Play | 1,182 | 138 | 1,320 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,320 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Total : Community & Customer Services | 4,861 | 306 | 5,167 | (32) | (23) | (55) | 5,112 | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Community & Customer Services

total as @ Period 4

191

Pension budgets re-aligned

115 Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

Community & Customer Services

total as @ Period 6

306

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Budget Owner : | Democracy & Governance Carol Chen | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| | | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| | Legal and Democratic | 1,525 | 67 | 1,592 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,592 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Buildings and Projects | 237 | (400) | (163) | 0 | (19) | (19) | (182) | Downward revision to NNDR budgets totalling |
| | Procurement | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Total : Democracy & Governance | 1,762 | (331) | 1,431 | 0 | (19) | (19) | 1,412 | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Democracy & Governance

total as @ Period 4

Buildings and Projects

Sub Total

Pension budgets re-aligned

Democracy & Governance

total as @ Period 6

(47)

(80) Two Buildings & Projects posts transferred to Regeneration & Development

(127)

(204) Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

(331)

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Regeneration & Development | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| Budget Owner : Jane Custance | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| Commercial Projects (property portfolio) | (4,943) | 34 | (4,909) | (560) | (35) | (595) | (5,504) | Variations due to the following :- i) Salaries underspend of (£7k) due to operational changes. ii) Downward revision to NNDR budgets totalling (£26k). iii) Supplies and service savings of (£2k). |
| Development Section | 1,080 | 37 | 1,117 | 0 | (52) | (52) | 1,065 | Variations due to the following :- i) Salaries underspend of (£16k) due to operational changes. ii) Upward revisions to income totalling (£34k) across all service areas. iii) Consultancy fee forecast spend reduced by (£2k). |
| Transport and Infrastructure | 2,676 | 100 | 2,776 | 0 | (11) | (11) | 2,765 | Variations due to the following :- i) Salaries underspend of (£9k) due to operational changes. ii) Downward revision to NNDR budgets totalling (£2k). |
| Policy Team | 617 | 6 | 623 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 623 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Economic Development | 12 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| <i>Rounding Adjustment</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (1) | (1) | (1) | |
| Total : Regeneration & Development | (558) | 177 | (381) | (560) | (99) | (659) | (1,040) | |

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Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Regeneration & Development

total as @ Period 4

Transport and Infrastructure

Sub Total

Pension budgets re-aligned

Regeneration & Development

total as @ Period 6

(29)

80

51

126

177

Two posts transferred to Regeneration & Development from Buildings & Projects (Democracy & Governance)

Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Managing Director | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| Budget Owner : Manny Lewis | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| Corporate Management | 1,377 | 8 | 1,385 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,385 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Total : Managing Director | 1,377 | 8 | 1,385 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,385 | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Managing Director

total as @ Period 4

0

Pension budgets re-aligned

8 Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

Managing Director

total as @ Period 6

8

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Budget Owner : | Human Resources Cathy Watson | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| | | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| | Human Resources Client | 0 | (22) | (22) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (22) | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | HR Shared Service | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| | Total : Human Resources | 0 | (22) | (22) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (22) | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

**Human Resources
total as @ Period 4**

(39)

Pension budgets re-aligned

17 Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

**Human Resources
total as @ Period 6**

(22)

Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (continued)

| Service : Strategic Finance | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---|
| Budget Owner : Jo Wagstaffe | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | |
| Finance and Resources | 202 | 3 | 205 | (20) | 0 | (20) | 185 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Finance Services Client | 123 | (3) | 120 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 123 | WBC's share of costs connected to the appointment of a new insurance broker. |
| Revenues and Benefits Client | 1,818 | 57 | 1,875 | 400 | 0 | 400 | 2,275 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Corporate Costs (including adjustments under statute) | (4,077) | 171 | (3,906) | (200) | (50) | (250) | (4,156) | Dividend of (£50k) receivable from West Herts Crematorium to constituent members. |
| Finance Shared Service | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Revs and Bens Shared Service | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Total : Strategic Finance | (1,934) | 228 | (1,706) | 180 | (47) | 133 | (1,573) | |

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Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

Reason for Agreed Budget Change

Strategic Finance

total as @ Period 4

Pension budgets re-aligned

Strategic Finance

total as @ Period 6

373

(145) Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %)

228

Table 3 - Direct Salaries Analysis

Direct Salary Costs Variance Analysis (Incl Consultancy Costs but excluding Shared Services & IAS19)

| Service Area | Previous Year Final Restated | Original Budget | Agreed Budget Change | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Variance | | Comments regarding This Month's Forecast Variances |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------|---|--|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | % | ☺ | |
| Corporate Strategy & Client Services | 5,546 | 5,578 | (3,641) | 1,937 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,937 | 0.0 | ☺ | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Community & Customer Services | 3,523 | 3,580 | (172) | 3,408 | 0 | (12) | (12) | 3,396 | (0.4) | ☺ | See Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (page 7). |
| Democracy & Governance | 1,907 | 1,840 | (254) | 1,586 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,586 | 0.0 | ☺ | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Regeneration & Development | 2,745 | 2,952 | (551) | 2,401 | 0 | (32) | (32) | 2,369 | (1.3) | ☺ | See Table 2 - Variance Analysis by Service and Cost Centre (page 9). |
| Managing Director | 369 | 240 | (19) | 221 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 221 | 0.0 | ☺ | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Human Resources | 9 | 17 | (2) | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0.0 | ☺ | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Strategic Finance | 1,089 | 169 | (7) | 162 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 162 | 0.0 | ☺ | No monthly forecast variances reported. |
| Consultancy | 225 | 134 | (13) | 121 | 0 | 32 | 32 | 153 | 26.4 | ☹ | £50k spend on Watford 2031 agenda offset in part by (£18k) of consultancy savings identified in other service budgets. |
| Total | 15,413 | 14,510 | (4,659) | 9,851 | 0 | (12) | (12) | 9,839 | (0.1) | ☺ | |

Notes to Agreed Budget Changes

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|---|
| Total as @ Period 4 | (3,411) | |
| Pension budgets re-aligned | (1,248) | Consolidation of pension implications (based on annual lump sum and contribution %) |
| Total as @ Period 6 | <u>(4,659)</u> | |

Table 4 - Key Financial Risk Areas (as at end of September 2013)

| Service Area | Original Budget | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Variance | | Comments |
|--|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------|---|---|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | % | 😊 | |
| Commercial Rental Income (incl Parks & Leisure properties and Multi Storey Car Parks) | (3,283) | (3,283) | (240) | 0 | (240) | (3,523) | (7.3) | 😊 | A detailed review of the Council's commercial property portfolio is routinely carried out by Property in consultation with Finance. |
| Housing Benefit Client :- | | | | | | | | | |
| Grant Income | (34,348) | (34,348) | 400 | (15) | 385 | (33,963) | 1.1 | 😞 | Extremely high risk area due to demands on the service including claimant volumes and central government changes to entitlements. Regular reviews are carried out within the service to ensure all claims are properly processed and validated. Variances in Period 6 relate to DWP funding concerning the removal of spare room subsidy. |
| Rent Allowance Payments | 33,884 | 33,921 | 0 | 15 | 15 | 33,936 | 0.0 | 😞 | |
| Shared Services (Operating Costs) :- | | | | | | | | | |
| Finance | 821 | 901 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 904 | 0.3 | 😞 | Reviewed and monitored by the appropriate Head of Service and agreed via the Shared Services Joint Committee. The adverse variance of £3k relates to WBC's share of costs connected to the appointment of a new insurance broker. |
| Human Resources | 506 | 506 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 506 | 0.0 | 😊 | |
| ICT | 847 | 847 | 317 | 0 | 317 | 1,164 | 37.4 | 🔔 | |
| Revenues & Benefits | 1,733 | 1,733 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,733 | 0.0 | 😊 | |
| Parks, Street & Waste Services (Net costs Re: Veolia outsourcing) | 0 | 4,275 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4,275 | 0.0 | 😊 | These services comprise one third of Council net expenditure and need to be regularly monitored. The newly appointed client team meet monthly with the appointed contractor, Veolia Environmental Services to ensure the contract specification is being met. |

Table 4 - Key Financial Risk Areas (as at end of September 2013) (continued)

| Service Area | Original Budget | Current Budget | Forecast Variance to Period 4 | Forecast Variance Period 6 | Total Forecast Variance | Forecast Outturn | Variance | | Comments |
|--|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------|---|---|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | £000's | % | ☺ | |
| Business Rates Retention | Circa 62,000 | Circa 62,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Circa 62,000 | 0.0 | ☺ | Changes introduced by central government has meant that any shortfall in collection is split 50% to government, 40% by WBC and 10% by HCC. The Council now has a financial incentive to maximise income from this source. |
| Development Control / Building Control and Land Charges Income | (554) | (554) | 0 | (34) | (34) | (588) | (6.1) | ☺ | The fragile recovery in economic conditions continue to affect these income generators which have recently been revised upwards by the Head of Service (see Page 9). Legislation has also affected the ability to charge for Land Charge services. The Council also continues to look at operational cost savings via outsourcing which can be evidenced by the ongoing review of Building Control. |
| Homelessness Spend (net) | 120 | 120 | (30) | 0 | (30) | 90 | (25.0) | ☺ | B&B costs are regularly reviewed by the Housing Section Head and reported through the Head of Service. The service is also looking to streamline the number of temporary accommodation suppliers it uses to drive down cost. |
| Investment Interest | (270) | (270) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (270) | 0.0 | ☺ | Forecast higher cash balances available for investment offset by very low rates of interest. Other investment opportunities are also being considered E.G. investing with local authorities. |
| Kerbside Recycling Income | (464) | (464) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (464) | 0.0 | ☺ | The council retains significant interest and risk in recycling income post outsourcing to Veolia. The change in service to co-mingling in Nov 2013 is also an area under review by the client team. |

Capital Programme

The position is summarised below and broken down on the following tables.

| Capital Programme Financing | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Latest Budget £ |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Expenditure | | | | | | | | | | |
| General Fund Spend | 47,783,002 | 8,329,492 | 3,702,019 | 17,804,705 | 19,040,049 | 2,046,210 | 10,173,732 | 3,556,710 | 1,501,000 | 1,480,000 |
| Section 106 Schemes | 6,518,558 | 1,151,823 | 1,252,669 | 3,781,356 | 3,781,356 | 301,575 | 332,710 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Expenditure | 54,301,560 | 9,481,315 | 4,954,688 | 21,586,061 | 22,821,405 | 2,347,785 | 10,506,442 | 3,556,710 | 1,501,000 | 1,480,000 |
| Funding | | | | | | | | | | |
| External borrowing from PWLB | 4,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 4,000,000 | 4,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grants and Contributions | 3,107,658 | 603,705 | 631,678 | 1,850,000 | 916,275 | 608,111 | 239,000 | 239,000 | 239,000 | 239,000 |
| Reserves | 7,743,977 | 49,741 | 0 | 1,500,000 | 4,277,912 | 40,169 | 1,858,324 | 1,558,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Capital Receipts | 32,924,456 | 7,797,210 | 3,156,703 | 10,011,867 | 9,631,425 | 1,397,930 | 8,076,408 | 1,759,710 | 1,262,000 | 1,241,000 |
| Section 106 Schemes | 6,525,469 | 1,030,659 | 1,166,307 | 4,224,194 | 3,995,793 | 301,575 | 332,710 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Funding | 54,301,560 | 9,481,315 | 4,954,688 | 21,586,061 | 22,821,405 | 2,347,785 | 10,506,442 | 3,556,710 | 1,501,000 | 1,480,000 |

| Available Funding - Capital Receipts | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Latest Budget £ |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Balance Bought Forward | | | | 12,616,330 | 12,616,330 | 12,616,330 | 10,264,218 |
| Used for Financing | | | | (10,011,867) | (9,631,425) | (1,397,930) | (8,076,408) |
| New Receipts | | | | 5,000,000 | 7,279,313 | 3,448,979 | 3,000,000 |
| Balance Carried Forward | | | | 7,604,463 | 10,264,218 | 14,667,379 | 5,187,810 |

| Available Funding - S106 | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Latest Budget £ |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Balance Bought Forward | | | | 4,875,415 | 4,875,415 | 4,875,415 | 1,159,622 |
| Used for Financing | | | | (4,224,194) | (3,995,793) | (301,575) | (332,710) |
| New Receipts | | | | 250,000 | 250,000 | 983,974 | 150,000 |
| Interest | | | | 37,317 | 30,000 | 17,522 | 15,000 |
| Balance Carried Forward | | | | 938,538 | 1,159,622 | 5,575,336 | 991,912 |

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Latest Budget £ |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| General Fund Schemes | | | | | | | | | | |
| Key Projects | | | | | | | | | | |
| Capitalised Salaries | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cardiff Rd Campus | 4,174,376 | 1,886,444 | 560,752 | 1,727,180 | 1,727,180 | 93,731 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cardiff Rd Health Campus - Cont to LABV | 3,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,500,000 | 1,500,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Cardiff Rd Health Campus - Loan to WHHT | 2,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Green Spaces Strategy | 917,500 | 358,367 | 339,604 | 219,529 | 219,529 | 45,381 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Colosseum Refurbishment | 2,793,728 | 2,585,794 | 207,934 | 0 | 0 | 22,662 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cultural Quarter Phase 1 | 4,693,080 | 124,620 | 357,939 | 3,515,395 | 3,431,549 | 492,936 | 689,262 | 89,710 | 0 | 0 |
| Contribution to Croyley Rail Link | 2,532,014 | 0 | 0 | 2,532,014 | 2,532,014 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| New Market | 2,600,000 | 0 | 12,580 | 1,387,420 | 2,487,420 | 40,169 | 100,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Environmental Services | | | | | | | | | | |
| Recycling Boxes | 55,080 | 0 | 15,080 | 20,000 | 20,000 | 3,060 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Trade Waste Recycling Bins | 18,118 | 1,550 | 16,568 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Additional Green Waste Bins | 47,955 | 11,955 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Kerbside Recycling Vehicles | 693,165 | 0 | 0 | 650,000 | 693,165 | 102,312 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Decent Homes Assistance | 742,205 | 166,649 | 65,556 | 200,000 | 110,000 | 34,133 | 200,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Env Services Schemes (Handyman Asst) | 53,480 | 27,628 | 10,852 | 0 | 15,000 | 14,322 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Env Services Schemes (Empty Homes Asst'ce) | 195,326 | 44,975 | 75,351 | 0 | 75,000 | 2,410 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Replacement Domestic Bins | 60,000 | 0 | 0 | 20,000 | 20,000 | 5,766 | 20,000 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Kerbsider Vehicles x 2 | 548,620 | 0 | 0 | 600,000 | 548,620 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1,300 Eurobins | 173,485 | 0 | 0 | 320,000 | 173,485 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Energy Grants (Carbon M'gmt/Clim Ch'ge) | 111,903 | 14,184 | 20,719 | 77,000 | 77,000 | 46 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| JCB Excavator | 60,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parks Equipment (6 mowers) | 148,024 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 148,024 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Johnson Sweepers (3) | 205,845 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 205,845 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cages (5) | 174,341 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 174,341 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Litter Pick Up Trucks (2) | 40,050 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40,050 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Large Van (Graffiti) | 38,737 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 38,737 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Street Furniture Van | 29,953 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29,953 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Flail & Gator (2) | 33,989 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33,989 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| POV Electric Cart (1) | 15,250 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15,250 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Capital Programme (continued)

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund Schemes | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community & Leisure Services | | | | | | | | | | |
| Allotments Upgrades | 1,410,000 | 0 | 0 | 410,000 | 1,010,000 | 17,613 | 400,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cassiobury Park HLF Project | 625,000 | 0 | 22,162 | 602,838 | 602,838 | 198,599 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Farm Terrace Allotments relocation | 750,000 | 0 | 0 | 400,000 | 400,000 | 32,858 | 350,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hurling Club relocation | 950,000 | 0 | 0 | 550,000 | 950,000 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Woodside Access Improvements Phase 1 | 232,288 | 227,121 | 5,167 | 0 | 0 | 2,727 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Waterfield Recreation Gd Car Park Imp'ts | 8,688 | 1,068 | 7,620 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| St Mary's Tombs | 100,316 | 0 | 1,024 | 99,292 | 99,292 | 29,944 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund Schemes (contd.) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Housing Services | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stand Alone Properties (Decent Standards) | 74,538 | 7,696 | 51,730 | 97,074 | 15,112 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant | 2,854,249 | 558,636 | 295,613 | 826,119 | 400,000 | 136,816 | 400,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| Affordable Housing | 189,555 | 127,868 | 58,380 | 527,995 | 3,307 | 1,448 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Private Sector Stock Condition Survey | 20,875 | 0 | 0 | 20,875 | 20,875 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parking Service | | | | | | | | | | |
| Upgrading / Resurfacing Car Parks | 241,235 | 47,860 | 7,786 | 75,589 | 75,589 | 35,674 | 35,000 | 35,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Multi Storey Car Parks Refurbishment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund Schemes (contd.) | | | | | | | | | | |
| ICT | | | | | | | | | | |
| ICT-Hardware Replacement Programme | 478,140 | 57,666 | 30,474 | 70,000 | 70,000 | 8,041 | 80,000 | 80,000 | 80,000 | 80,000 |
| ICT-Project Management Provision | 600,000 | 0 | 0 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 8,700 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 |
| ICT-Customer Relationship M'gmt System | 25,924 | 29,824 | (3,900) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ICT-eDemocracy | 16,024 | 16,024 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ICT - Document Management Processing | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ICT-Environmental Health | 221,067 | (12,939) | (3,933) | 147,939 | 147,939 | 0 | 45,000 | 45,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Asset Management System | 11,317 | 11,317 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,370 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Asset Management | | | | | | | | | | |
| Charter Place | 685,626 | 152,169 | 533,457 | 0 | 0 | (10,978) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Feasibility & Disposal Costs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 300,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Events Market | 79,607 | 79,120 | 487 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Imagine Watford Project | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Depot Refurbishment | 943,475 | 884,991 | 16,023 | 42,461 | 42,461 | 23,705 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Building Investment Programme | 2,935,243 | 333,081 | 238,193 | 743,969 | 683,969 | 149,430 | 440,000 | 440,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| Car Parks Structural Surveys | 95,000 | 0 | 0 | 70,000 | 70,000 | 5,996 | 15,000 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Guest Market (Indoor) | 1,881 | 1,881 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (1,745) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Town Centre CCTV Relocation | 466,501 | (25,001) | 6,371 | 485,131 | 485,131 | 9,530 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Property Asset Management System | 10,861 | 0 | 7,046 | 3,815 | 3,815 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Redevelopment Opportunities | 3,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Voice Automated Telephony | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,315 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ascot Road Regearing Valuation Support | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50,000 | 36,054 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Atrium Phase 5 (GIS & Cad Integration) | 34,000 | 0 | 0 | 34,000 | 34,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Veolia Capital Improvements | 300,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60,000 | 0 | 60,000 | 60,000 | 60,000 | 60,000 |
| Watford Business Park Redevelopment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Capital Programme (continued)

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| ICT - Shared Services Joint Committee | | | | | | | | | | |
| Shared Services Server Replacement | 183,636 | 88,112 | 95,524 | 0 | 0 | (2,174) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services-Capita Transition Costs | 17,977 | 7,850 | 10,127 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services ICT Development | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 270,000 | 200,000 | 382,273 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services Hardware Replace Prog | 90,918 | 24,075 | 12,843 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 0 | 18,000 | 18,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services HR CPD Module | 3,600 | 0 | 0 | 3,600 | 3,600 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services E-Academy | 117,114 | 42,694 | 74,420 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shared Services Income Management | 32,987 | 32,987 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Corp Services / Project Management | | | | | | | | | | |
| Support Services | 3,370,636 | 413,226 | 552,470 | 552,470 | 552,470 | 92,082 | 552,470 | 500,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| New Schemes Requiring Approval | | | | | | | | | | |
| Telephony-Cost of Replacement server (Macfa | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pop Up Toilets automation and refurbishment | 35,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Museum CCTV and Intruder alarm system | 45,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Town Centre CCTV Camera Replacement | 63,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21,000 | 21,000 | 21,000 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total General Fund Schemes | 47,783,002 | 8,329,492 | 3,702,019 | 17,804,705 | 19,040,049 | 2,046,210 | 10,173,732 | 3,556,710 | 1,501,000 | 1,480,000 |

| Capital Investment Programme Schemes | 2011-2017 7 Year Cost £ | 2011/12 Actual £ | 2012/13 Actual £ | 2013/14 Original Budget £ | 2013/14 Current Budget £ | 2013/14 Actual @ P6 £ | 2014/15 Latest Budget £ | 2015/16 Latest Budget £ | 2016/17 Latest Budget £ | 2017/18 Budget £ |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Section 106 Schemes | | | | | | | | | | |
| Croxley Rail Link | 593,832 | 146 | 6,056 | 587,630 | 587,630 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| East Drive Play Area | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Estcourt Road Improvements | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Stamford Road Rec Play Area | 17,000 | 16,896 | 104 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| St Johns Road Play Area | 31,000 | 25,324 | 1,540 | 4,136 | 4,136 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Stripling Road Play Area Improvements | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Courtlands Close Play Area | 40,001 | 38,993 | 1,008 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Goodwood Rec Play Area Improvements | 29,077 | 22,114 | 1,515 | 5,448 | 5,448 | 131 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Riverside Recreation Ground | 330,000 | 0 | 6,501 | 323,499 | 323,499 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Colne River Project | 992,216 | 39,819 | 247,753 | 454,644 | 454,644 | 155,267 | 250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fern Way Play Area Landscaping | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Knutsford Road | 99,994 | 979 | 49,515 | 49,500 | 49,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local Park Improvements | 250,000 | 67,073 | 58,133 | 62,294 | 62,294 | 0 | 62,500 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wiggenhall Allotments | 75,001 | 51,199 | 23,802 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local Nature Reserves | 79,920 | 21,175 | 14,445 | 24,300 | 24,300 | 0 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Watford Museum | 15,159 | 2,659 | 0 | 12,500 | 12,500 | 5,185 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Colne Valley Improvements | 67,784 | 28,930 | 30,155 | 8,699 | 8,699 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oxhey Park | 67,979 | 67,979 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cow Lane Improvements | 23,000 | 0 | 0 | 23,000 | 23,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Woodside Playing Field (Green Flag) | 43,978 | 35,639 | 8,339 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Multi Use Games At Meriden | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cassiobury Park Study Facilities | 19,112 | 18,953 | 159 | 0 | 0 | 523 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Changing Facilities Knutsford Play Fields | 412,078 | 400,272 | 11,806 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Waterfield Rec & Knutsford Play Fields | 160,039 | 6,039 | 154,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oxhey Park Bridge | 15,226 | 10,955 | 4,271 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Harwoods Rec Play Area | 144,799 | 0 | 144,799 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Central Primary School Play Area | 40,000 | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| North Watford Playing Fields Area | 111,489 | 42 | 111,447 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Himalayan Way Play Area | 100,000 | 0 | 1,058 | 98,942 | 98,942 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jellicoe Road Play Area Improvements | 11,000 | 0 | 3,262 | 7,738 | 7,738 | 845 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Watford Fields Play Area | 20,000 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Harebreaks Rec Ground Play Area | 121,000 | 0 | 0 | 121,000 | 121,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Waterfields Rec Play Area | 100,000 | 0 | 26,540 | 73,460 | 73,460 | 1,288 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Meriden Park Play Area | 250,000 | 222,000 | 0 | 28,000 | 28,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Callowland Recreation Ground | 555,000 | 12,914 | 166,082 | 376,004 | 376,004 | 8,854 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Oxhey Park | 550,000 | 21,000 | 13,522 | 515,478 | 515,478 | 105,687 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| King George V Playing Field | 350,000 | 12,723 | 38,583 | 298,694 | 298,694 | 8,795 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Radlett Road MUGA | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Leavesden Green Rec MUGA | 53,487 | 0 | 53,487 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| North Watford Cemetery | 75,000 | 4,000 | 0 | 71,000 | 71,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Vicarage Road Cemetery | 75,000 | 4,000 | 0 | 71,000 | 71,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cherry Tree Allotments | 32,929 | 0 | 20,929 | 12,000 | 12,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Farm Terrace Allotments | 3,600 | 0 | 3,600 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Skate Park Improvements | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Berry Avenue Play Area | 60,000 | 0 | 0 | 60,000 | 60,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Southwold Road Play Area | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Ridgehurst Avenue Play Area | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Garston Park | 62,000 | 0 | 0 | 62,000 | 62,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Centennial House Landscaping & Maint'ce | 858 | 0 | 258 | 390 | 390 | 0 | 210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Section 106 Schemes | 6,518,558 | 1,151,823 | 1,252,669 | 3,781,356 | 3,781,356 | 301,575 | 332,710 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Rounding Adjustments</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Capital Investment Programme | 54,301,560 | 9,481,315 | 4,954,688 | 21,586,061 | 22,821,405 | 2,347,785 | 10,506,442 | 3,556,710 | 1,501,000 | 1,480,000 |

Part 2 - Performance Indicators

2 - Performance Indicators

The following analysis identifies performance on the Councils key 'financial health' and key business indicators.

2.1 Treasury Management Performance

The performance of the council's treasury management strategy for the period ending 30th September 2013 shows an average annualised return on investments of 0.70% which is below the original estimate of 1.0%. The size of the Council's investment portfolio is larger than anticipated so budgeted interest receivable for the year therefore remains unchanged at £240k.

The current estimate of interest returns for 2013/14 is:

| | <u>2013/14</u> |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| Best case | 1.00 % |
| Central case | 0.70 % |
| Worst case | 0.50 % |

2.2 Creditor Payment Monitoring @ Period 6 (September 2013)

The Council paid 98.32% of undisputed invoices within 30 days (against an Audit Commission target of 100%). Under government legislation, invoices not paid within 30 days are subject to interest charges (excluding those invoices that are in dispute).

The number of payments made by BACS for the month was 90.34% (cumulative figure is 90.24%) against a target of 90%.

Creditor Payment Monitoring Statistics By Service Area

| Service Area | Total Undisputed Invoices | Late Payments | Payments On Time | % Payments On Time (This Month) | % Payments On Time (Yr to date) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Corporate Strategy & Client Services | 34 | 0 | 34 | 100.00 | 97.97 |
| Community & Customer Services | 112 | 0 | 112 | 100.00 | 96.89 |
| Democracy & Governance | 300 | 5 | 295 | 98.33 | 97.16 |
| Regeneration & Development | 106 | 0 | 106 | 100.00 | 98.04 |
| Managing Director | 6 | 0 | 6 | 100.00 | 94.67 |
| Shared Services | 97 | 6 | 91 | 93.81 | 92.58 |
| Total | 655 | 11 | 644 | 98.32 | 96.54 |

Cumulative Percentages of Payments Made On Time

| Month | 2012/13 Actual % | 2013/14 Actual % |
|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| April | 94.67 | 96.22 |
| May | 92.09 | 95.91 |
| June | 91.69 | 95.94 |
| July | 90.91 | 95.61 |
| August | 90.78 | 96.21 |
| September | 90.32 | 96.54 |
| October | 90.32 | |
| November | 91.18 | |
| December | 92.07 | |
| January | 92.26 | |
| February | 92.60 | |
| March | 92.93 | |

2.3 Debtors Monitoring @ Period 6 (September 2013)








Debtors monitoring statistics by service area is as follows :-







| Invoices Raised from 1st April 2013 to 30th September 2013 | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Service Area | No. Invoices | Total Raised £ | Collected £ | Outstanding | |
| | | | | £ | % |
| Corporate Strategy & Client Services | 1,396 | 991,267 | 918,918 | 72,349 | 7.30 |
| Community & Customer Services | 340 | 688,617 | 660,401 | 28,216 | 4.10 |
| Democracy & Governance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | N/A |
| Regeneration & Development | 3,033 | 9,870,913 | 9,046,442 | 824,471 | 8.35 |
| Managing Director | 12 | 6,046,701 | 6,028,761 | 17,940 | 0.30 |
| Human Resources | 2 | 783 | 498 | 285 | 36.40 |
| Strategic Finance | 430 | 683,665 | 676,671 | 6,994 | 1.02 |
| Total | 5,213 | 18,281,946 | 17,331,691 | 950,255 | 5.20 |

Of the outstanding debt of £950,255, the amount between 0 to 3 months old totals £711,741 (74.90%).

2.4

Council Tax and NNDR Collection Rates

| Reference | Description | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| RB 1 | Council Tax Collection | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator Definition | Percentage of current year council tax collected in year | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Annual | Apr | May | Jun | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | |
| Watford | Target | 96.0 | 10.8 | 19.8 | 28.6 | 37.8 | 46.7 | 55.2 | 64.3 | 73.5 | 82.4 | 90.6 | 94.0 | 96.0 | |
| | 2012/13 Actual | 95.6 | 11.1 | 19.6 | 28.1 | 36.8 | 46.0 | 54.7 | 64.0 | 72.8 | 81.7 | 90.0 | 93.4 | 95.4 | |
| | 2013/14 Actual | | 11.0 | 19.9 | 28.5 | 37.4 | 46.2 | 55.0 | | | | | | | |
| | Target Achieved? | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | | | | | |
| | Direction of Travel | | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | | | | | | |
| Comment on Performance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The average in-year collection rate for English Shire Districts in 2012/13 was 97.4%. Targets for 2013/14 have been adjusted in the light of 2012/13 recovery rates and April 2013 changes eg reductions in benefits. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Reference | Description | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
| RB 2 | NNDR Collection | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Indicator Definition | Percentage of current year national non-domestic rates collected in year | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Annual | Apr | May | Jun | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | |
| Watford | Target | 97.0 | 13.7 | 23.5 | 33.4 | 41.6 | 50.5 | 60.1 | 68.8 | 77.7 | 88.4 | 92.7 | 94.8 | 96.5 | |
| | 2012/13 Actual | 96.7 | 13.5 | 23.0 | 32.6 | 41.8 | 50.3 | 56.6 | 69.6 | 79.0 | 86.7 | 93.9 | 95.6 | 97.0 | |
| | 2013/14 Actual | | 13.3 | 23.9 | 32.4 | 42.3 | 51.4 | Not available | | | | | | | |
| | Target Achieved? | |  |  |  |  |  |  | Not available | | | | | | |
| | Direction of Travel | | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↑ | Not available | | | | | | |
| Comment on Performance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The average in-year collection rate for English Shire Districts in 2012/13 was 97.7%. Targets for 2013/14 have been adjusted in the light of 2012/13 recovery rates. The 2012/13 collection and 2013/14 collection to date takes account of rates deferral (a manual calculation is currently done for it as the system cannot yet deal with it). | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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PART A

Report to: Cabinet
Date of meeting: 11 November 2013
Report of: Director of Finance
Title: Irrecoverable Write Offs

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report proposes that debts owed to the council in respect of a Sundry Debt are written off as irrecoverable.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To approve the writing off of irrecoverable monies owed to the council in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules of the council.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Colin South ,
Recovery team leader Telephone Ext 8027

Report approved by: Joanne Wagstaffe, Director of Finance

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 The Director of Finance has the power to approve the write off of irrecoverable debts up to an approved limit. The approved limit is £3,001 for council tax, business rate and sundry debt.

3.2 Where an irrecoverable debt requiring write off is in excess of the approved limit, and the debt can still legally be recovered the approval of Cabinet is required.

3.3 Revenues and Benefits Services have a policy and procedure document for writing off debts (for all funds) as approved by Council on the 13 June 2011. All write offs are implemented in accordance with this document. Only cases where all avenues of recovery are exhausted are recommended for write off.

3.4 The writing off of irrecoverable monies owed to the Council in respect of council tax, business rates, housing benefit overpayments and sundry debtors should be done on a regular basis as cases arise. This report covers the write off of a

sundry debt and is supported by required audit trails and supporting documentation. Provision for bad debts has already been made.

3.5 Sundry Debt: £9565.00
Reason for write off, gone away, recovery exhausted, no prospect of recovery

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS.**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 Provision for bad debts has already been made in determining the authority's baseline in respect of business rate retention.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy & Governance comments that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

4.3 **Equalities**

4.3.1 None identified

4.4 **Potential Risks**

4.4.1 None identified

4.5 **Staffing**

4.5.1 None identified

4.6 **Accommodation**

4.6.1 None identified

4.7 **Community Safety**

4.7.1 None identified

4.8 **Sustainability**

4.8.1 None identified

Appendices _None

Background Papers

The information contained in the background papers is confidential in accordance with paragraph 7, Part 1, Schedule 12a, Local Government Act 1972. The names and addresses of individuals and personal information are contained in the supporting paperwork for the report.

File reference:

Head of Revenues and Benefits Services records