

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

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## Introduction

This is the executive summary for the Three Rivers open space, sport and recreation study.

## Methodology

Work was undertaken via:

- ❑ Review of existing policy and strategies.
- ❑ Parish council questionnaire.
- ❑ In-depth qualitative consultation.
- ❑ Site visits.
- ❑ A street survey, with 600 respondents in Three Rivers.
- ❑ Development of a database and extensive GIS analysis.

## Built facilities

- ❑ Just over a third (38%) of residents have visited a sports or recreation centre in the previous four weeks.
- ❑ Just under a quarter (23%) have visited a village or community hall in the previous four weeks.
- ❑ The majority of residents are unable to rate the quality of provision (mostly because of a lack of use of facilities). Those that rated provision generally consider it to be good or very good.
- ❑ Four-fifths (80%) of residents consider the provision of sports and recreation facilities to be important. This decreases to 56% for village/community halls.

## Provision

- ❑ There are five adequately sized sports halls (defined as four badminton courts or more), which are available for community use within Three Rivers. These consist of one, eight badminton court hall and four, four badminton court halls. One is provided at the major leisure centre facility and the other at school sites. There are three secondary schools with no sports hall provision.
- ❑ There are five main swimming pool facilities in Three Rivers. TRDC provides two of these; one is currently managed on its behalf by Leisure Connection.
- ❑ There is a good spread of fitness provision across the District provided by a mixture of management styles. TRDC being the largest provider at William Penn Leisure Centre and The Centre.
- ❑ There are four community centres, including YMCA Woodlands, and twelve other community hall facilities located in Three Rivers. There is a heavy concentration of community facilities in Abbots Langley through a mixture of council and parish council ownership.

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## ***Key issues***

The key issues for built facility provision in Three Rivers are:

- ❑ A shortfall of one swimming pool in the Abbots Langley area.
- ❑ The absence of learner pools in the District.
- ❑ The need to refurbish William Penn Leisure Centre.
- ❑ Increasing community use and the variety of programmes at school sites.
- ❑ Three secondary schools do not have access to a sports hall for curricular delivery.
- ❑ Clubs consider the cost of hiring facilities to be expensive.
- ❑ There is a considerable volume of gymnastics activity undertaken by young people in Three Rivers, but there is no club in the District catering for the activity.
- ❑ There is a need for further fitness provision in the Croxley Green area.
- ❑ Abbots Langley Community Centre requires refurbishment/replacement.
- ❑ The programming and marketing of village/community halls restricts usage and access for some groups.

## ***Improving provision***

- ❑ Refurbish William Penn Leisure Centre.
- ❑ Provide learner pools at William Penn Leisure Centre and Sir James Altham Centre.
- ❑ Support the development of sports hall provision at Merchant Taylor School and secure community use.
- ❑ Increase sports hall provision at Rickmansworth School and consider refurbishing the pool.
- ❑ Support the development of a pool at Watford Leisure Centre to cater for the residents of Abbots Langley.
- ❑ Increase the variety of community use programming at Clement Danes and Parmiters schools.
- ❑ Refurbish/replace Abbots Langley Community Centre.
- ❑ Develop fitness provision in the Croxley Green area.

## **Outdoor sports facilities**

### ***Provision***

- ❑ There are 39 senior, 25 junior and 24 mini football pitches in Three Rivers catering for a total of 165 teams.
- ❑ There are 22 senior and one junior cricket pitch in Three Rivers catering for 45 teams.
- ❑ There are 18 senior rugby pitches catering for just five teams in the District.
- ❑ There are five pitches and 2 ATPs catering for 12 hockey teams in Three Rivers.
- ❑ There are five bowling greens available for community use in the District.
- ❑ There are 46 tennis courts available for community use in Three Rivers, providing for 46 teams.
- ❑ Parmiters School is the only secondary school in the District, which has outdoor netball courts, which are not over-marked with tennis. It has eight courts.
- ❑ There are four 18-hole golf courses in Three Rivers and one 9-hole course.

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- ❑ Watersports activities are carried out at The Aquadrome, Rickmansworth (made up of Batchworth, Bury and Stockers lakes) and Troy Lake, West Hyde.

## Key issues

The key issues affecting outdoor sports provision in Three Rivers are:

- ❑ Accommodating teams on one 'home' site.
- ❑ The quality of sites.
- ❑ Formalising community use of schools.
- ❑ The lack of women's/girls' teams (cricket and rugby).
- ❑ Creating a local bowls forum.
- ❑ Increasing access to tennis courts.
- ❑ Upgrading Parmiters – outdoor courts; car parking.
- ❑ Implementing the management Plan at Aquadrome.
- ❑ Facilitating primary schools with access to playgrounds/outdoor pitches.

## Improving provision

- ❑ Address the following shortfalls/issues in provision:

Area	No. of inadequate facilities	Latent demand expressed	Facilities being played over capacity
Abbots Langley area	1 senior football 1 mini football	None	2 senior football 1 junior football 1 mini football
Chorleywood area	8 junior football	None	6 junior football
Croxley Green area	3 junior football	1 tennis court	3 senior football 1 junior football
Rickmansworth area	None	None	None
Sarratt area	None	None	None
Watford Rural area	1 senior football 1 mini football	None	1 junior football

- ❑ Prioritise investment in pitch quality at sites, which have been classified as poor quality.
- ❑ Redistribute play from sites, which have been identified as overplayed.
- ❑ Each site to have appropriate size and specification changing facilities, which enable access from all users groups (e.g. women/girls/disabled) and pitch capacity to be maximised.

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- ❑ At least two clubs in the District to provide and develop opportunities for girls' and women's participation.
- ❑ Support Chess Valley RFC in developing opportunities for women's and girls' participation. This may have an implication for the provision of ancillary facilities.
- ❑ ATP at St. Michael's School to provide a junior hockey development centre.
- ❑ Establish a local bowls forum in order that clubs can share information and resources for grounds maintenance. This could be done in partnership with Watford Borough Council.
- ❑ Increase public awareness of playing and coaching opportunities at clubs through increased publicity.
- ❑ Appropriate provision of ancillary facilities at all clubs to maximise accessibility and usability for recreational and competitive play.
- ❑ Protect and maintain the current level of courts, which are open for public recreational use.
- ❑ Provision of good quality outdoor courts and adequate car parking for the County development centre at Parmiter's School.
- ❑ Development/refurbishment of the Aquadrome to make it more accessible, usable and 'fit for purpose' in line with actions outlined in the 'Aquadrome Management Plan'.
- ❑ Protection and maintenance of the municipal facilities at Rickmansworth Golf Centre.

## Open spaces

- ❑ The most commonly visited open spaces in Three Rivers are parks (53%), foot/cycle paths (53%) and nature areas (43%).
- ❑ The most highly rated provision in terms of quality is nature areas (57% rating as good/very good), parks (55%) and foot/cycle paths (45%).
- ❑ Almost all survey respondents (95%) stated that open spaces are very important or quite important to them.

## Provision

- ❑ There are six sites classified as parks and gardens in Three Rivers with open access. These sites total 9.83 ha.
- ❑ There are 118 sites classified as natural and semi-natural greenspaces in Three Rivers totalling 1159.67 ha. There are a further 45 sites with closed or restricted access.
- ❑ There is a large network of green corridors with open access within each of the six analysis areas. For the purposes of analysis, these have been grouped as one site in each area, totalling 30.71 ha.
- ❑ There are 28 sites classified as amenity greenspace in Three Rivers with open access, totalling 40.78 ha.
- ❑ There are 43 sites classified as provision for children and young people in Three Rivers with open access, totalling 9.51 ha.
- ❑ There are seven sites classified as allotments, city farms or community gardens in Three Rivers with open access. There are six sites totalling 3.18 ha with restricted/closed access.

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- ❑ There are seven sites classified as cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds in Three Rivers with open access providing 11.26ha of provision.
- ❑ There is one site – St Andrew's Precinct - classified as civic spaces in Three Rivers with open access providing 1.38ha of provision.

## ***Key issues***

The key issues affecting open space provision in Three Rivers are:

- ❑ Addressing perceptions that there is a high level of anti-social behaviour/vandalism in open spaces in the District.
- ❑ Dealing with unauthorised (and illegal) motorbike use of open spaces.
- ❑ More effective use of open spaces for health benefits
- ❑ Greater use of friends of/community groups to manage sites.
- ❑ Adopting the principles of Green Flag in the operation and management of more open spaces.
- ❑ More proactive work re biodiversity.
- ❑ Meeting DDA requirements.
- ❑ Exploring management options for Whippendell Woods (owned by Watford BC, but mostly located within Three Rivers).
- ❑ Upgrading/enhancing public rights of way (with Hertfordshire County Council).
- ❑ Enhancing the security of amenity greenspace.
- ❑ Improvements to allotment provision (many of which are the responsibility of allotment associations)
- ❑ Increasing the number of civic spaces, especially in Rickmansworth.
- ❑ Increasing provision for children and young people. There is also a need to reduce the number of LAPs and improving fencing/surfaces.

## ***Improving provision***

- ❑ Catchment mapping shows that the following settlements in the District do not have access to formal open space:
  - Maple Cross
  - Rickmansworth (part of)
  - Moor Park
  - Eastbury
  - South Oxhey
  - Hunton Bridge
  - Bedmond
- ❑ No additional demand for formal open space has been identified through the consultation undertaken.
- ❑ Catchment mapping shows that there are no settlements, which do not have access to informal open space
- ❑ Consultation identified demand for the following provision:
  - Green corridor – South Oxhey.
  - Green corridor – Croxley Common Wood.

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- Green corridor – Long Valley Wood.
- Catchment mapping has highlighted the following settlements as deficient in provision for children and young people:
  - Sarratt.
  - Chorleywood.
  - Moor Park
  - Eastbury.
  - Northwood.
- Demand has been expressed for the following new provision for children and young people:
  - Pond Wood – play area required.
  - Bedmond – play area required.
  - Maple Cross, Old Uxbridge Road – skatepark and youth shelter.

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# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## SECTION ONE

### Study objectives

The specific objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of open space, as well as a review of sport and recreation facilities in Three Rivers District.

The assessment of these facilities and the subsequent strategy and action plan will allow Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) to plan the access, improvement and protection of land and facilities.

The information from this study will be used to:

- ❑ Inform the development of appropriate planning policy within the TRDC Local Development Framework.
- ❑ Prioritise investment through the development control process in terms of provision of new facilities as well as the improvement of existing facilities.
- ❑ Establish a strategy for open space, sport and recreation facilities at the local level.
- ❑ Establish a strategy for community facilities at the local level to prioritise work programmes with local groups and allocate funding.

A strategy and action plan will follow all sections of this document and provide a site-by-site list of possible future developments together with management targets to maintain and increase the quality of existing provision.

This section aims to introduce and provide an overview of the following three divisions.

- ❑ Open Space Assessment.
- ❑ Playing Pitch Assessment.
- ❑ Built Facilities Assessment.

Section One will highlight the following:

- ❑ Methodology used throughout the study.
- ❑ Local context.
- ❑ Local issues.
- ❑ Local demographics.



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## METHODOLOGY

Each of the three divisions of the project uses a different methodology to assess demand for the various typologies of provision. Outlined below are the methods used to collect the data used in each section of the report.

### ***Background information***

An extensive range of background information has been reviewed and incorporated in all documents, including the relevant strategies and action plans. Those reports that impact on this study are highlighted in the appropriate section.

### ***Parish Council Questionnaire***

A questionnaire was created by Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP). The questionnaire was posted to all Parish Councils and the data received was entered into an open spaces database. After a specific deadline KKP contacted Parish Councils that had not replied in order that a complete and therefore representative set of results was obtained.

### ***Qualitative interviews***

The core of the interviewing revolved around extensive consultation with key individuals, clubs, officers, groups and agencies working in and around Three Rivers. More specifically, youth clubs, mother and toddler groups and after school clubs were visited, whilst village hall personnel were consulted by telephone interviews. Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone.

### ***Site visits***

Site visits were conducted by KKP. Open spaces, built facilities and pitch / non-pitch sites were assessed using the appropriate criteria.

- ❑ Open spaces were evaluated through the use of an assessment proforma (examining the security, condition and value of the site) and a specific play analysis sheet, based upon NPFA guidelines.
- ❑ Outdoor sports facility sites were analysed using Sport England Electronic Tool Kit and sport specific evaluation sheets.
- ❑ Built facility condition was analysed on site and during consultation. Pre agreed questions were used.

(Please refer to Appendix two for a list of all proforma's and questionnaires that were used as part of this study).

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## **Street Survey**

A street survey was undertaken in November 2004 by mruk to identify levels of participation/attendance and key issues to be addressed. These took the form of 600 street interviews at five locations across the District to ensure a representative spread of residents. The following settlements were agreed with TRDC as survey locations:

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rickmansworth  | <input type="checkbox"/> South Oxhey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abbots Langley | <input type="checkbox"/> Chorleywood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Croxley Green  |                                      |

A quota was placed on the BME, age and gender of respondents to ensure that a representative sample of the District's population was surveyed. The BME quota set by TRDC was 4%. This quota was reached, as 6% of respondents did not classify themselves as White British.

Analysis area	No. of interviews	Analysis area	No. of interviews
<input type="checkbox"/> Rickmansworth	160	<input type="checkbox"/> South Oxhey	150
<input type="checkbox"/> Abbots Langley	125	<input type="checkbox"/> Chorleywood	65
<input type="checkbox"/> Croxley Green	100		

Quotas on location were set by TRDC and relate to the relative population living in the areas.

## **Database and GIS analysis**

An open spaces database has been created by TRDC and KKP, which comprises of sites known to TRDC and information gathered through the consultation process, as well as via the Parish Council questionnaires. Separate databases of information have been created for the pitch/non-pitch information and the built facilities assessment. The open spaces database includes data on size and typology, which has been used to map sites and their catchment areas using GIS mapping.

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## *The Creation of Analysis Areas*

The analysis areas were defined/chosen to match those used previously in other spatially based projects carried out by TRDC.

Three Rivers District contains a number of key service settlements with the role of providing a broad range of services to the settlement in question and hinterlands. The table below demonstrates the analysis areas used and the wards included within these areas.

<b><i>Watford Rural</i></b>	<b><i>Croxley Green</i></b>	<b><i>Rickmansworth</i></b>	<b><i>Chorleywood</i></b>	<b><i>Sarratt</i></b>	<b><i>Abbots Langley</i></b>
Ashridge	Croxley Green	Maple Cross & Mill End	Chorleywood East	Sarratt	Abbots Langley
Carpenders Park	Croxley Green North	Penn	Chorleywood West		Bedmond & Primrose Hill
Hayling	Croxley Green South	Rickmansworth			Langleybury
Moor Park & Eastbury		Rickmansworth West			Leavesden
Northwick					
Oxhey Hall					

Below is a table of the populations of each analysis area.

<b><i>Analysis area</i></b>	<b><i>Population.</i></b>
Watford Rural	25,696
Croxley Green	12,166
Rickmansworth	16,597
Chorleywood	9,200
Sarratt	1,889
Abbots Langley	17,266
<b>Three Rivers District</b>	<b>82,848</b>

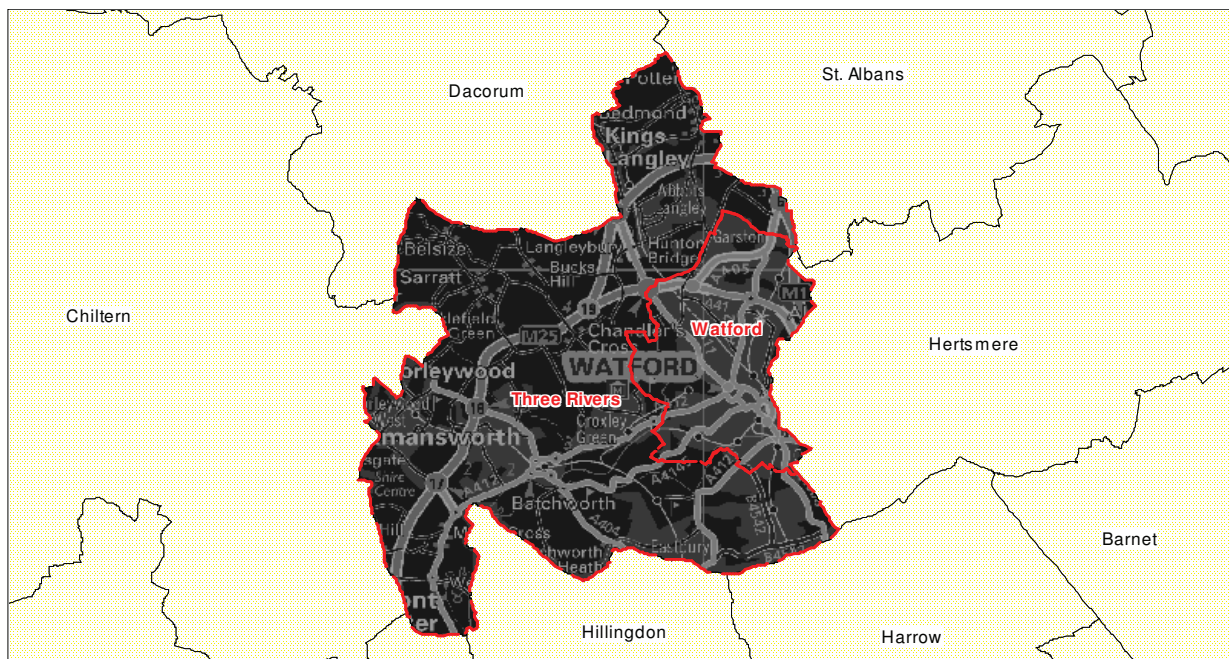
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## LOCAL CONTEXT

TRDC covers an area of 8,854 hectares with a population of 82,848 (2001 Census).

The map below shows the location of the District in relation to its neighbouring area.

*Figure 1- Map of District and surrounding area*



Three Rivers is located in South West Hertfordshire and lies to the North West of London, straddling the M25 motorway. It also acts as a gateway to the North, as the M1 lies to the East of the District. Furthermore, the West Coast Main Line runs through the District, as does the London Underground (Metropolitan Line).

Despite the excellent transport links, the District boasts large areas of attractive open countryside, much of which is designated Green Belt. The District's name derives from the rivers Chess, Gade and Colne, all of which run through the District, along with the Grand Union Canal that runs through Rickmansworth.

Rickmansworth is the main administrative centre of the District, and the largest urbanised town. The town has been well planned, with houses, flats, shops and major businesses lying alongside one another, with the Grand Union Canal and the Aerodrome within easy walking distance. It was the Grand Union Canal in the 1790s that gave the town its industrial potential, and although these industries are now relatively extinct, their legacy has meant that the town has built upon these qualities and continues to be commercially prosperous.

In 2004 Chorleywood West came out top of a survey that assessed neighbourhoods with the highest quality of life in England. The study was based on criteria including employment

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and crime rates, local facilities and depression levels. The ward is two miles north-west of Rickmansworth and lies just inside the Hertfordshire County border with Buckinghamshire. It has a 200-acre common, which includes a nine-hole golf course and riding track. Furthermore, Chorleywood House, the former home of Lady Ela Russell, a member of the Bedford family, is a popular visitor attraction. The grounds provide guided walks, as well as great views and picnic areas. There are also good quality sports facilities in the grounds, some of which are open to the public.

Other notable attractions in the area include the Leavesden Film Studios where a number of notable films are made, and a number of nature sites, including Croxley Common Moor, which is a site of Special Scientific Interest. In all, around 65% of the District is Green Belt land.

## ***Three Rivers Local Plan***

The Local Plan is the adopted framework for guiding, controlling and facilitating development within the District up to 2011. Below is a summary of the most relevant issues.

### ❑ *Sport and Leisure*

The objectives are to:

- Provide sport and leisure opportunities to meet the needs of the local community.
- Promote increased multi-purpose use of existing facilities.
- Protect environment from adverse effects of leisure activities.

### ❑ *Transport*

The objectives are to:

- Discourage the use of the private car.
- Encourage easy transfer between different modes of transport (e.g. park and ride, new bus routes, improvements to passenger information services).
- Work with local authorities and achieve the aims of the South West Hertfordshire Transportation Strategy (e.g. provision of an Amersham- Chesham rail link). The Council will not support any new road schemes, which will not solve congestion problems in the medium to long term. For example the West Watford relief road was abandoned, as it would bring increased traffic to other parts of the district.

### ❑ *Housing*

The Council recognises its responsibility to provide affordable housing, whilst concurrently protecting the environment from any adverse effects of housing development.

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## ***Community Strategy***

The Strategy concentrates itself on creating healthy, prosperous, safe and sustainable communities. A number of priorities have been identified, the most relevant of which are detailed below.

- ❑ To increase the mental and physical well being of the community through leisure services including sports, arts, play, general recreation and relaxation.
- ❑ To support the Healthy School Programme in Watford and Three Rivers.
- ❑ To increase physical activity amongst young people and establish a GP referral programme in partnership with the local NHS.
- ❑ To prevent and reduce anti-social behaviour, including noise, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and nuisance behaviour.
- ❑ To improve opportunities for cycling and walking.
- ❑ To use the planning process to improve the environment with initiatives such as tree planting, countryside management, traffic calming and other traffic initiatives.

## ***Local Biodiversity Action Plan***

The Action Plan makes reference to a number of issues, some of which are directly relevant to the study.

- ❑ A review of all Country Wildlife Sites (including SSSI's) will focus on defending and conserving the ecological quality of sites as well as extending, linking and enhancing these sites in the future.
- ❑ There is a recognised future need for new housing developments, yet pressure will be placed on the authority to avoid dividing up habitats and causing direct disturbance to wildlife.
- ❑ There is a keenness to introduce environmental volunteering as an expression of 'good citizenship' in order that people in the community appreciate or conserve the environment. This type of initiative will be extended to the schools in the District, with so-called 'countryside as classroom' opportunities being created.
- ❑ A future Green Travel Plan (GTP) aims to reduce the adverse environmental impact of traffic flow patterns in the District.
- ❑ Access improvements to cycle routes, in particular Ebury Way, are important in order that any developments fit in with the GTP. Other routes to be improved include Batchworth to the Aquadrome, Rickmansworth to West Hyde and Bedmond to Abbots Langley.
- ❑ Rights of way are to be improved in a similar way to cycle routes. They provide an alternative to motor-transport and are therefore in-keeping with the above GTP.

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## ***Community Safety Strategy***

The Community Safety Strategy was produced in April 2002 by a partnership made up of Three Rivers District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Three Rivers Council for Voluntary Services, the Watford and Three Rivers Primary Care Trust and other local groups and organisations.

The Strategy runs until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 and can be sectioned in seven priorities, which are detailed below.

- ❑ *Anti social behaviour and criminal damage*, including the reduction of public disorder incidences and the number of pupils permanently excluded from school.
- ❑ *Vehicle crime*, by seeking to reduce theft from 2% a year.
- ❑ *Road safety*, to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the road.
- ❑ *Burglary*, to reduce domestic burglary and other burglary by 22%.
- ❑ *Domestic violence*, by increasing the number of incidents reported to the police.
- ❑ *Racial harassment*, by increasing the number of offences recorded by the police.
- ❑ *Drugs and alcohol misuse*, by increasing the number of offenders dealt with for supply offences.

## ***Economic Development Strategy***

In total, around 40,000 people make up the current workforce in the District. The rate of unemployment is below the national average. To capitalise on this, the town centre has undergone substantial urban refurbishment. An Abbots Langley Village Centre enhancement scheme was stated in 1999 and government Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) grant aid has benefited South Oxhey, part of which was used to fund Community Beat Officers. Other schemes have been implemented across the District, including the upgrading of the transport interchange facility in Carpender's Park and a Chorleywood Revitalisation Scheme.

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## Sports development

TRDC sports development programme focuses on aiding in the delivery of the Councils Community Strategy objectives. It also works with the Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) on certain programmes. HSP involves all ten local authorities in Hertfordshire, the County Council, Hertfordshire University, local primary care trusts and other partners.

There are seven strands to the TRDC sports development service delivery. These are outlined below with details of current work/schemes being carried out:

Sports strand	development	Current work/schemes
Disability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) based at YMCA Woodlands in Abbots Langley – supports physical activity providers to develop and build inclusive policies and help to promote their services to the disabled community.</li> </ul>
Performance/excellence		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ TRDC supports HSP in its scheme to provide 'elite' athletes with free swimming as part of their training. All TRDC swimming pools are available for this use.</li> <li>❑ TRDC runs district cricket squads at U11, U13 and U15 age groups. This involves talent identification and coaching sessions leading to district festivals.</li> <li>❑ Hertfordshire Youth Games. The following sports are included in this County wide competition: basketball, mixed badminton, indoor athletics, mini tennis, table tennis, hockey, tag rugby, netball, football, squash, golf, kwik cricket. Although this event now has a lower priority for Three Rivers than in previous years it is still recognised as a tool to encourage club participation by young people.</li> <li>❑ HSP is running courses (coaching, coach education, umpire/referee) in Three Rivers in the following sports: hockey, girls and women's football, netball, cricket and swimming. There is the possibility of funding through HSP for athletics and badminton development officers.</li> </ul>
Social inclusion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Shade project – this project runs free sport and recreation activities for children over the age of ten during summer holidays. The core team is based at William Penn Leisure Centre for five weeks. There are also mobile units, which cover five areas including Maple Cross, YMCA Woodlands, Chorleywood, Bedmond and Baldwins Lane. Activities are based on local demand.</li> <li>❑ Active Communities – this scheme has a full time dedicated officer who has been running activities in the South Oxhey area for 11-19 year old girls. This has included dance and trampolining. The scheme is to be rolled out across the District and will include activities for boys. Originally funded by the Active Communities Development Fund, the post will be taken on by TRDC.</li> <li>❑ Mill End Youth Project – this scheme has run a series of sessions targeting 11-16 year olds based at William Penn Leisure Centre in partnership with Hertfordshire Youth Service. Activities are provided according to demand.</li> </ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Free swimming sessions are available to young people under the age of 18 through the summer holidays at TRDC pools.</li> </ul>
General community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ TRDC compiles and maintains a local directory of sports clubs and organisations.</li> <li>❑ The sports development officer facilitates a local sports clubs forum, where groups and individuals can discuss current initiatives and programmes, national governing body information, share good practise and discuss general issues.</li> </ul>
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Tri-golf development. Tri-golf is a small sided version of golf using modified equipment suitable for young children. Activities and teacher training are being develop in primary and junior schools across the District.</li> <li>❑ Primary festivals – festivals are being run in tag rugby and kwik cricket for local primary and junior schools.</li> <li>❑ School Sports Partnership – see section below on education.</li> </ul>
Women's participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ The 'Active 8' scheme is being run at William Penn Leisure Centre. This covers eight different activities over eight weeks including indoor and outdoor activities. It aims to encourage regular active recreation.</li> </ul>

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## **Education**

### *Local Education Authority (LEA)*

Education services in Three Rivers is governed by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). It has adopted seven priorities within this particular directorate:

- ❑ To raise achievement and improve assessment in the early years of education.
- ❑ To promote and strengthen strategies for improving achievement and assessment at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- ❑ To implement and promote strategies for improving achievement and assessment at Key Stage 3.
- ❑ To promote and strengthen the Hertfordshire 14-19 Strategy.
- ❑ To implement strategies for promoting creativity and improving achievement, involvement, participation and enjoyment across the curriculum.
- ❑ To develop the capability of schools to raise the achievement of every child.
- ❑ To make timely interventions in schools which may cause concern because of poor performance.

Associated actions have been devised to help achieve these priorities. In relation to sport and physical activity these are as follows:

*To develop a sports strategy which will provide support for high quality physical education and sport across Hertfordshire by the end of 2005.*

- ❑ Liaise with national and local sports bodies to ensure most effective countywide provision.
- ❑ Provide web resources and equipment to support young people's learning in physical education and sport.
- ❑ Establish a school sport network for primary schools in each local authority district.

### *School Sport Co-ordinator Programme*

Introduced in 2001, the School Sport Co-ordinator (SSCO) initiative is a joint national programme developed and implemented by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), Sport England and the Youth Sport Trust.

It aims to improve the quality and quantity of after-school sport and inter-school competition, and involves a wide range of partners, including LEAs, NGBs, local sports development officers, the British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education (BAALPE) and the Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom (PEAUK).

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

The objective of the strategy- a joint DfES/DCMS public service agreement target- is to ensure that by 2006, 75% of 15-16 year olds in England are spending a minimum of two hours each week doing high-quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum.

The SSCO programme has five key principles:

- ❑ Support for PE.
- ❑ Integrated sports development and partnership working.
- ❑ Focus on disadvantage and inclusion.
- ❑ Schools working together in families.
- ❑ A whole school approach.

The preferred model is for the programme to be managed locally by a Sports College. A typical partnership will be made up of a Partnership Development Manager (PDM), up to four School Sport Co-ordinators based in secondary schools and up to 25 Primary or Special School Link Teachers (PLTs) from the associated family of primary/special schools.

In September 2004, there were 311 school sport partnerships nationally, with 1,800 SSCOs. There is an ultimate Government target of 400 partnerships.

TRDC were originally unhappy with the partnership groups which were formed and are currently working with the Youth Sport Trust to address this. At present the outline for the partnerships is as follows:

School families						
<b>Hub secondary schools</b>	St Michaels	Rickmansworth School	St Clement Danes	Francis Combe	Parmiters	St Joan of Arc
<b>Feeder primary/junior/infant schools</b>	St Catherines	St Meryl	Christchurch	Cherry Tree	Abbots Langley	Maple Cross
	Lea Farm	Eastbury Farm	Chorleywood	Garston Infant	Bedmond	Oxhey Wood
	Coates Way	Harvey Road	Malvern Way	Kingsway Junior	Oxhey Infant	St Peters
	Holy Rood RC Infant	Woodhall	Russel	Alban Wood Junior	Greenfield	Yorke Mead
	Holy Rood RC Junior	St. Marys	St John's	Alban Wood inf/nurs	Warren Dell	Rickmansworth Park
	Divine Saviour	Little Green Road	Shepherd			St Josephs

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## *Building Schools for the Future (BSF)*

BSF is the largest single government investment in improving school buildings for over 50 years. The aim is to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England over a 10-15 year period, beginning in 2005-06.

By 2011, projects will have begun in every local authority in the country. Around 60% of all authorities will have major rebuilding projects (at least three secondary schools) underway. All the others will have resources to tackle their secondary schools in greatest need (at least one school).

According to LEA representatives, Three Rivers is unlikely to see any investment in the first phases of the scheme.

## *Extended Schools*

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is currently promoting the concept of 'extended schools'. These are schools which act as a focal point for a range of family, community services, such as childcare, health and social services, adult education and family learning, study support, ICT access, sports or arts activities. An extended school is, therefore, one that provides a range of activities and services, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.

Schools and their partners can build on existing provision and consider what additional service or activities they might offer. There is no blueprint for the types of activities that they might provide, or how they could be organised. Working with local partners, they can develop as little or as much provision as they think suitable for their own community. School facilities can have a significant impact on the provision of community facilities on both a local and borough wide basis.

There are three main models:

- ☐ Traditional community use.
- ☐ Co-location of services; e.g. health services.
- ☐ Fully integrated – full services.

Each presents both advantages and disadvantages. In general TRDC schools appear to have adopted the traditional community use model.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## *Specialist Schools*

Sports Colleges are part of the specialist schools programme run by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). In 2004 there were 291 designated Sports Colleges across the Country.

Sports Colleges play a crucial part in raising both sporting and academic standards, establishing successful partnerships between schools and the private sector and developing ways of working with the wider community.

The aim of Sports Colleges are to:

- ❑ Raise standards of achievement in PE and sport for all their students across the ability range.
- ❑ Be regional focal points for excellence in PE and community sport, extending links between families of schools, sports bodies and communities, sharing resources and developing and spreading good practice, helping to provide a structure through which young people can progress to careers in sport and PE.

Sports Colleges will increase participation in PE and sport for pre and post 16 year olds and develop the potential of talented performers.

Although a number of schools in Three Rivers have gained specialist status i.e. Rickmansworth School has Arts College Status, there are currently no sports colleges. Specialist sports colleges generally enhance authority wide support for schools and provided a model and a platform for development of the sport specialism. Rickmansworth is currently acting as the 'hub' for the SSCO programme.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## LOCAL ISSUES

### *Transport*

Three Rivers District has excellent transport links, being well served by the M25 and M1 motorways. There is good access to the London Underground into the City, with stations in Chorleywood and Rickmansworth, and this makes the District very attractive to commuters.

The District is within easy reach, via the M25, of several City airports, including Gatwick, Stansted and Heathrow.

### *Car ownership*

There is an extremely high level of car ownership in the District, with 83.8% of households owning a vehicle. Furthermore, the percentage of households owning two or more cars (44.8%) is significantly higher than the national average (29.4%). Whilst these figures do reflect the relative affluence of the area it does not mean that reliance on affordable, cheap and efficient public transport is less acute. Indeed, because of the District's proximity to London the availability of public transport such as the Underground and the motorway network is vital for a high number of the population.

### *Rail Travel*

Rail travel is very good in the District. As well as the Underground, Baker St. Station is situated just thirty minutes away, thereby providing a wide range of long distance railway links to other areas of the country. Also, the west coast main line stops at Watford junction station, thereby providing excellent links with the North West and Midlands.

Currently, there are proposals to complete the Croxley Rail link, which would re-route and extend the Metropolitan Line from Croxley Green to Watford Junction, as well as provision of an Amersham/Chesham to Watford Junction rail service.

### *Bus Services*

The above average level of household car ownership in the District, as well as the excellent rail links, would suggest that there is not a large demand for widespread, efficient public transport. However, this is unrepresentative of the actual current situation and is not in-keeping with the District Council's Local Plan that pledges to 'discourage the use of the car and to increase accessibility by alternative modes of transport.'

Two operators provide bus services, through a mixture of contract and commercial operations. Although the network of bus services covers a wide geographic area, the frequency and routes of services are limited especially during evenings and weekends. However, this is acknowledged in the Local Plan and improvements such as the introduction of new bus routes, as well as a new 'smart card' system for subsidised travel, are recent proposals.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## *District wide routes*

- Chorleywood- Rickmansworth.
- Rickmansworth- Maple Cross.
- Rickmansworth- Mill End.
- Abbots Langley- Kings Langley.

## *Cross-boundary routes*

- Rickmansworth- Watford.
- Rickmansworth- Northwood- Hillingdon.
- Rickmansworth- Amersham.
- Rickmansworth- Watford- Hemel Hempstead.
- Rickmansworth- Watford- London.
- Abbots Langley- Watford.

## ***Housing***

TRDC runs a Housing Allocation Scheme and has adopted a clearly defined policy in the prioritisation of accommodation. There are also several advice services ranging from general advice to advice on improvements and repairs, general leasing issues and supported and sheltered housing.

## ***Tourism***

Three Rivers District is well endowed with parks, moors, commons and country parks. There is a Three Rivers Museum in Rickmansworth and Moor Park Mansion, which is a Grade I listed building dating back to 1720. Both Moor Park Golf Club and TRDC make up the trustee committee.

To the West of the District is the Chiltern Hills, which provide picturesque walks. Moreover, the District is only 30 minutes from Central London and the vast array of shops situated there.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

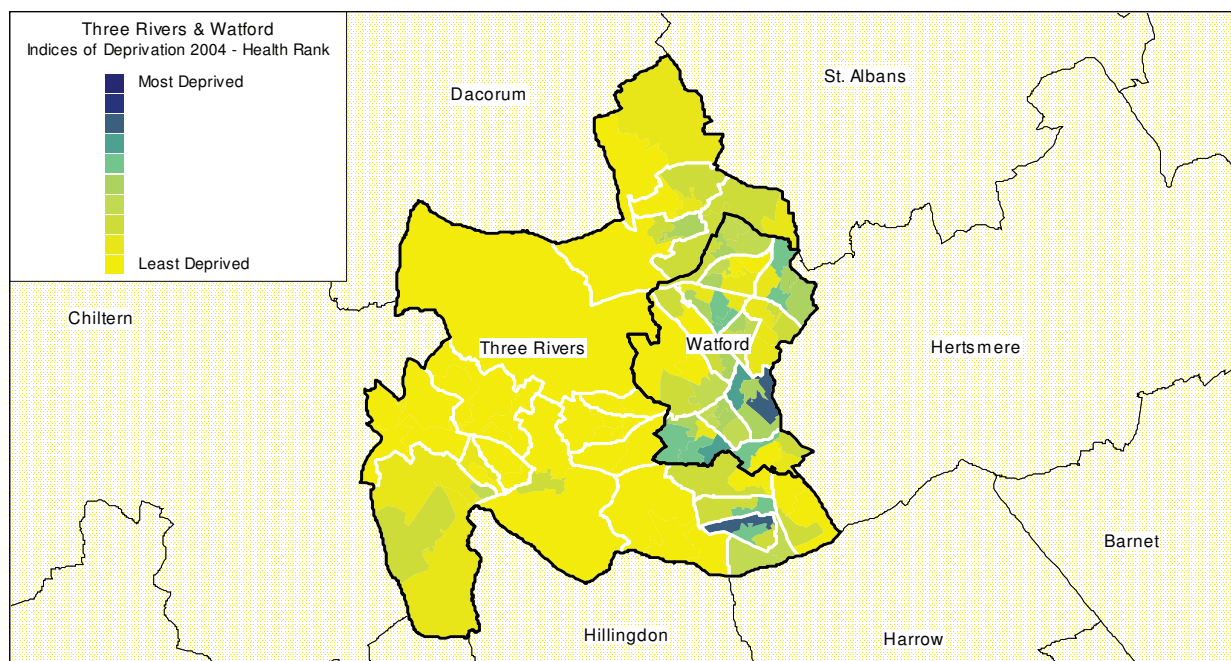
### *Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD)*

These statistics are produced by the index team at Oxford University for the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (formerly DETR). The latest set of statistics available was published in 2004.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation analyses deprivation according to key indicators:

- ☐ Income.
- ☐ Employment.
- ☐ Health Deprivation and Disability.
- ☐ Education, Skills and Training.
- ☐ Housing.
- ☐ Geographical Access to Services.

*Figure 2- IMDs of Three Rivers*



Three Rivers is a relatively affluent area, and the competitive property market reflects much of this. The most deprived area is in and around South Oxhey, in the South East of the District.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## Population demographics

Area	Total Population	% Male	% Female	% of under 16's	% of over 60's	% of Black & Minority Ethnic Groups	% of households with no vehicle
Three Rivers	82,848	48.0	52.0	20.6	22.2	7.6	16.2
England & Wales	58,789,194	48.6	51.4	20.2	20.9	9.1	26.8
<b>Watford Rural Sub Area</b>							
Ashridge	3674	48.1	51.9	24.7	17.9	6.5	26.1
Carpenders Park	4925	48.8	51.2	16.3	29.1	13.3	14.8
Hayling	3557	47.0	53.0	25.4	20.0	5.4	31.0
Moor Park & Eastbury	5459	49.1	50.9	19.8	21.5	31.7	2.7
Northwick	4739	46.1	53.9	24.7	19.0	7.0	36.3
Oxhey Hall	3342	49.3	50.7	23.5	16.3	4.6	11.3
<b>Croxley Green</b>							
Croxley Green	5325	48.6	51.4	19.4	21.6	3.8	16.9
Croxley Green North	3387	47.7	52.3	21.2	24.0	3.4	16.4
Croxley Green South	3454	49.8	50.2	20.2	17.3	6.7	11.6
<b>Rickmansworth</b>							
Maple Cross & Mill End	5385	49.4	50.6	21.4	19.1	4.2	18.8
Penn	3453	48.5	51.5	21.0	16.4	5.7	14.0
Rickmansworth	4161	45.7	54.3	16.4	24.7	7.2	19.1
Rickmansworth West	3598	48.4	51.6	19.8	24.5	5.0	10.0
<b>Sarratt</b>							
Sarratt	1889	49.6	50.4	16.3	29.4	1.3	8.6
<b>Abbots Langley</b>							
Abbots Langley	4691	47.6	52.4	19.7	23.4	4.2	18.3
Bedmond & Primrose Hill	3244	50.3	49.7	19.9	20.7	2.5	9.7
Langleybury	4855	49.0	51.0	21.5	20.1	4.5	20.6
Leavesden	4476	49.0	51.0	21.6	12.3	7.7	9.2

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

The table provides a breakdown of relevant demographics to this study.

The demographics shown can be summarised as follows:

- ❑ *Three Rivers District has a higher than average female population.* The percentage of females in the District (52.0%) is higher than the national average (51.4%). This trend is reversed in Bedmond & Primrose, where the female percentage is relative low (49.7%).
- ❑ *Three Rivers has an ageing population.* The percentage of over 60s in the District (22.2%) is higher than the national average (20.9%). The highest rates are in Carpenders Park (29.1%) and Sarratt (29.4%). However, there are areas that contradict this trend. For example, Oxhey Hall (16.3%) and Leavesden (12.3%) have a low proportion of over 60s.
- ❑ *Three Rivers has a small Black Minority Ethnic (BME) population.* The percentage of BME population in the District (7.6%) is lower than the national average (9.1%). Indeed areas such as Sarratt (1.3%) and Bedmond & Primrose (2.5%) are particularly low, whereas the percentage is particularly high in Morr Park & Eastbury (31.7%).
- ❑ *The majority of households in Three Rivers own a car.* The percentage of households without a car (16.2%) is significantly lower than the national average (26.8%). The percentage of households that own a vehicle reaches 91.4% in Sarratt compared to only 63.7% in Northwick.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## APPENDIX I- Parish Council questionnaire

Name of Parish Council.....

Name of Clerk.....

<b>Open Spaces</b>					
Please tick the appropriate box regarding ownership of open space:					
<b>Category:</b>	<b>Own</b>	<b>Lease</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>If leased: please indicate who from (e.g. District Council)</b>	<b>Access-open/ closed/ restricted by hours/ membership</b>
Parks and gardens					
Natural and semi-natural green spaces (e.g. wildlife sites, woodland)					
Green corridors (e.g. footpaths, bridle-ways, cycle-ways)					
Allotments					
Cemeteries					
Children's play areas					
Outdoor sports facilities					
Amenity greenspace (sites adding to visual aesthetics e.g. roundabouts/ grass areas)					
Civic space e.g. market square/ memorial squares					

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

Site specific information				
Site Name	Location (road name)	Size (in hectares)	Current use e.g. children's play area	Type of equipment on site e.g. benches, swings, slide etc. or number of pitches/courts e.g. 1 cricket pitch, 3 tennis courts

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## General information:

Are there any plans to develop new or existing open space (as per the nine categories)

Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes', please give details:

Are there any issues concerning open space provision e.g. re public rights of way?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes' please give details:

How far do you think people are willing to travel to use an open space facility? (Please circle)

- Park  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Amenity Greenspace  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Allotment/ Community garden  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Cemetery  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Civic space  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Small play area  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport
- Large play area with teenage facilities  
1 minute walk/ 5 minute walk/ 10 minute walk/ 15 minute walk/ 10 minutes by transport/ 30 minutes by transport

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## Indoor recreational space

Does the Parish/Town Council own any indoor space which is used for recreational activities e.g. village hall, community centres etc?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Does the Parish/Town Council lease any indoor space which is used for recreational activities e.g. village hall, community centres etc?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please complete the information below for each facility owned/leased by the Parish/Town Council:

Venue name	Address and postcode	Type of facility (village hall, community centre)	Main facilities (main hall, meeting rooms, art studio etc)	Main type of use (keep fit classes, Brownies, meetings etc.)	How would you rate the quality of the facility (poor, adequate, good)	Contact name of facility manager

Does the Parish/Town Council have any plans to increase or improve its indoor recreational provision?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give details:

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

Outdoor sports facilities				
<p>Are the outdoor sports facilities available for clubs and teams to use?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If used at present, please provide details:</p>				
Site:	Sport:	Club/team name:	When play:	Club contact:
<p>Does the Parish Council receive more requests to use the pitches/courts than it can accommodate?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please detail:</p>				
<p>Is there any unauthorised/occasional use of the pitches?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please detail:</p>				



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

Ancillary facilities:							
Are changing facilities/car parking available for teams using the pitches/courts?							
<div style="text-align: center;"> Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/> </div>							
If Yes, please detail the site and number of facilities available:							
Site:	Changing rooms	Officials room	Shower rooms	Toilets	Bar/ lounge	Team room	Parking spaces

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable			
<b>Pitches</b>	A level playing surface More than 80% grass cover Little sign of wear & tear No waterlogging Posts secure / no dangerous protrusions	Approximately 50 % grass cover Minimal wear & tear Sloping playing surface Minimal waterlogging Posts secure but in need of minor attention	Uneven playing surface Little or no grass cover Signs of excessive wear & tear Significant waterlogging Posts loose & potentially dangerous. Remedial action required Potholing & rutting			
<b>Facilities</b>	Sufficient changing accommodation for available pitches Clean & well decorated Lockable changing rooms Sufficient shower areas & toilets Little sign of vandalism Separate changing facilities/showers for male and female Separate changing facilities/showers for adults and children Changing accommodation and toilets/showers for disabled groups	Reasonable changing accommodation for available pitches Clean but in need of redecoration Some segregated shower areas Some segregated, lockable changing areas	Insufficient changing accommodation Dirty (mud, litter, graffiti) Communal shower area(s) Standing water & overpowering odour Limited lockable changing areas Un-repaired vandalism			
Please tick the appropriate box to indicate the quality of the playing field(s) and changing facilities (using the table above)						
Site Name	Good		Acceptable		Unacceptable	
	Pitch	Facilities	Pitch	Facilities	Pitch	Facilities
<p>Does the Parish/Town Council have any plans to increase or improve its outdoor sports provision?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>      No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>						

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## APPENDIX 2- BUILT FACILITIES PROFORMA

### Facilities

- ☐ Who owns and maintains the facilities?
- ☐ Which indoor facilities does the centre/hall cater for?

Main Hall - dimensions in meters, maximum capacity, is it accessible (yes, no, partial).

2<sup>nd</sup> room - dimensions in meters, maximum capacity, is it accessible (yes, no, partial).

Any other additional meeting rooms? If so dimensions etc

Toilets - number of female & male toilets number fully accessible/ambient accessible.

Kitchen - present/absent? Does it comply with health and safety regulations? Is it accessible? (yes, no, partial).

Parking - is any parking available ? how many spaces?

Induction Loop – is it fitted in any of the building? If so which rooms.

Additional Facilities Please list e.g. stage, changing rooms, showers, post office, doctors surgery etc.

Additional Equipment which can be borrowed or hired please list e.g. lighting and sound equipment, portable stage, display boards, projectors, screens etc.

### Condition

- ☐ Condition of facilities grade from very poor, below standard, average, good, excellent (please note if any of the following are particular areas for concern heating age/efficiency, interior decoration, windows, roof, floor surface).
- ☐ Is there any need for refurbishment/replacement?
- ☐ Does the building conform to DDA requirements?
- ☐ Is there any maintenance work or development planned for the future? If so where is the funding coming from? Has it already been allocated?

### Usage

- ☐ How many groups regularly use the building e.g. coffee mornings, playgroup, WI, evening classes, lunch clubs (please list) how many hours per month does each group use the building, how many people are in each group (e.g. playgroup 2 hours per week 20 members).
- ☐ Are there any plans to increase/decrease the numbers of people using the building? (E.g. setting up youth club/moving after school club to another venue).
- ☐ Are any activities not allowed? (E.g. ball games, youth groups, consumption of alcohol).
- ☐ Are any activities not able to be carried out due to the state of the building? (E.g. too cold for older people, dangerous areas for toddlers).
- ☐ Does the building have an entertainments licence?
- ☐ What time does the facility operate? Peak times?
- ☐ What is the booking policy?
- ☐ Is there clear access to the facility?

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

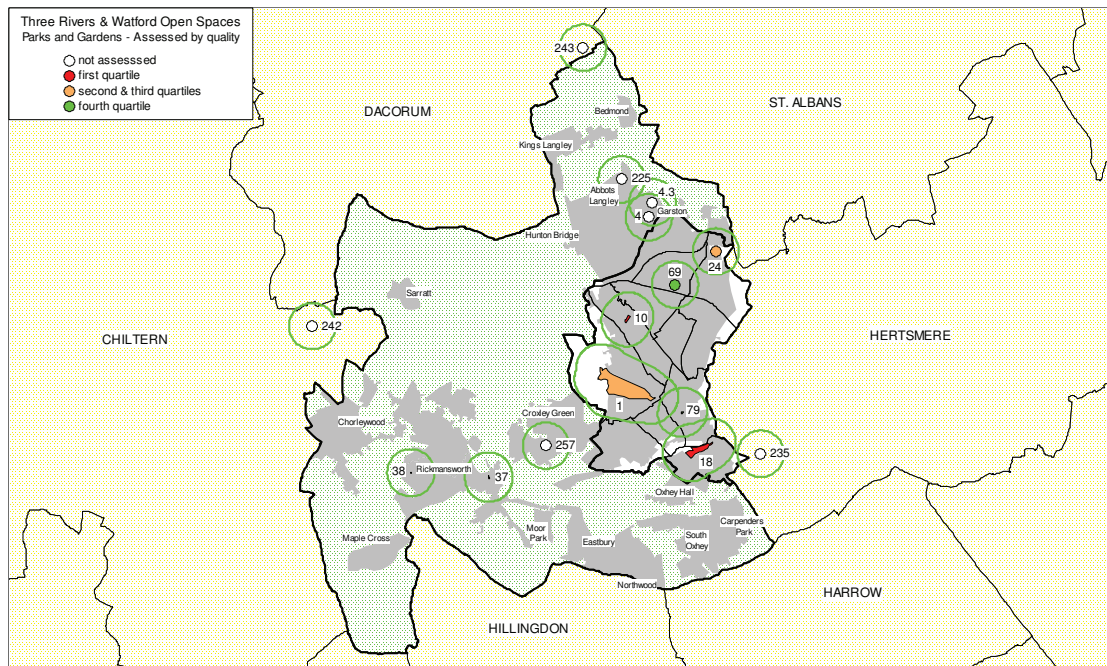
- ❑ Users – where the catchment covers for regular users; proportion of users from target areas/group (e.g. male/female; junior/adult); potential to improve reach to target areas/groups.
- ❑ What is the pricing policy/structure? Is it cheaper to hire for people who live in the town/village?
- ❑ Does the village hall generate any income? Do they operate as a charity or a trust?

### *Links*

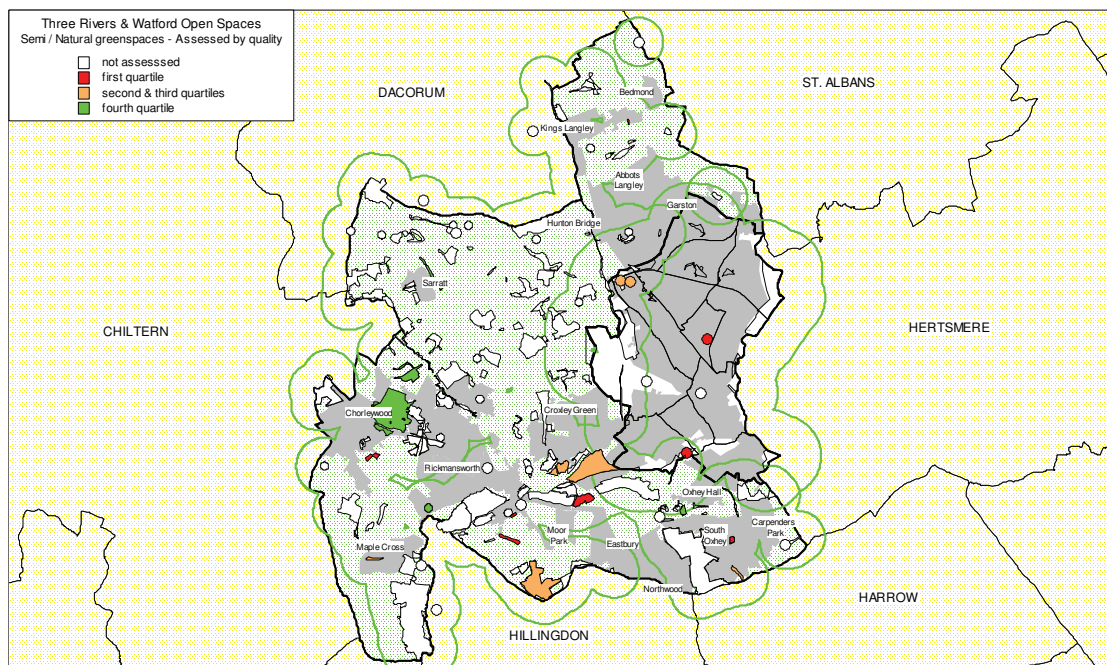
- ❑ What are the links to public transport?
- ❑ Are there any links with local schools in terms of schools using the facility for after school clubs or during school hours?
- ❑ Are there any links with local clubs?
- ❑ Are there any links with other village halls/centres?
- ❑ Are there any links with sports development?

## APPENDIX I – CATCHMENT MAPPING BY TYPOLOGY

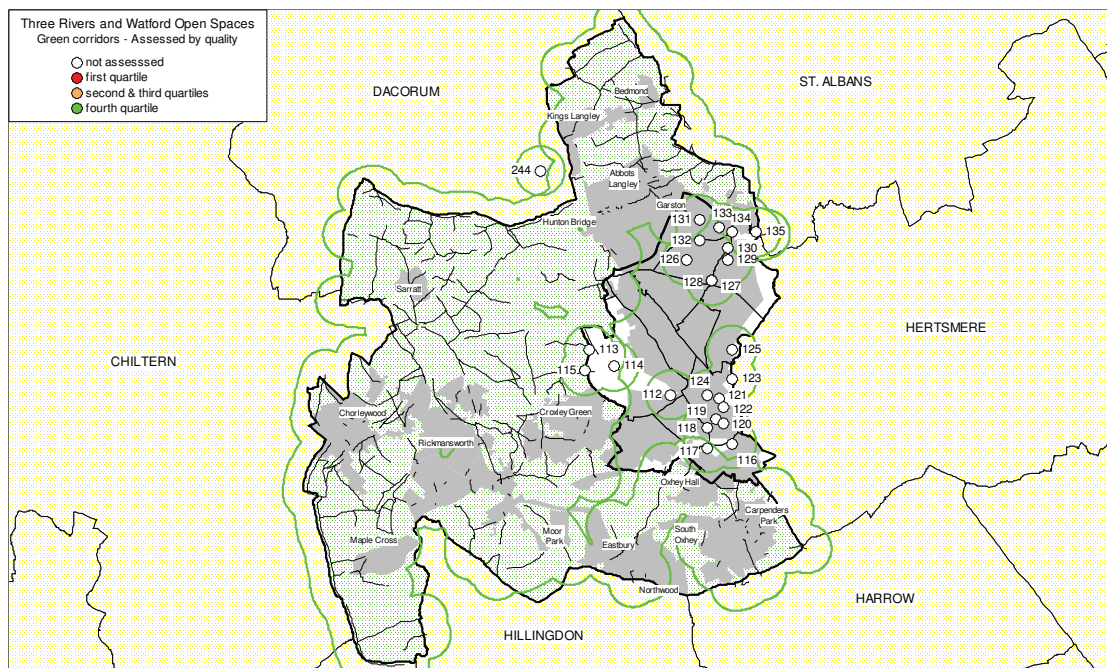
## Three Rivers and Watford – Parks and Gardens



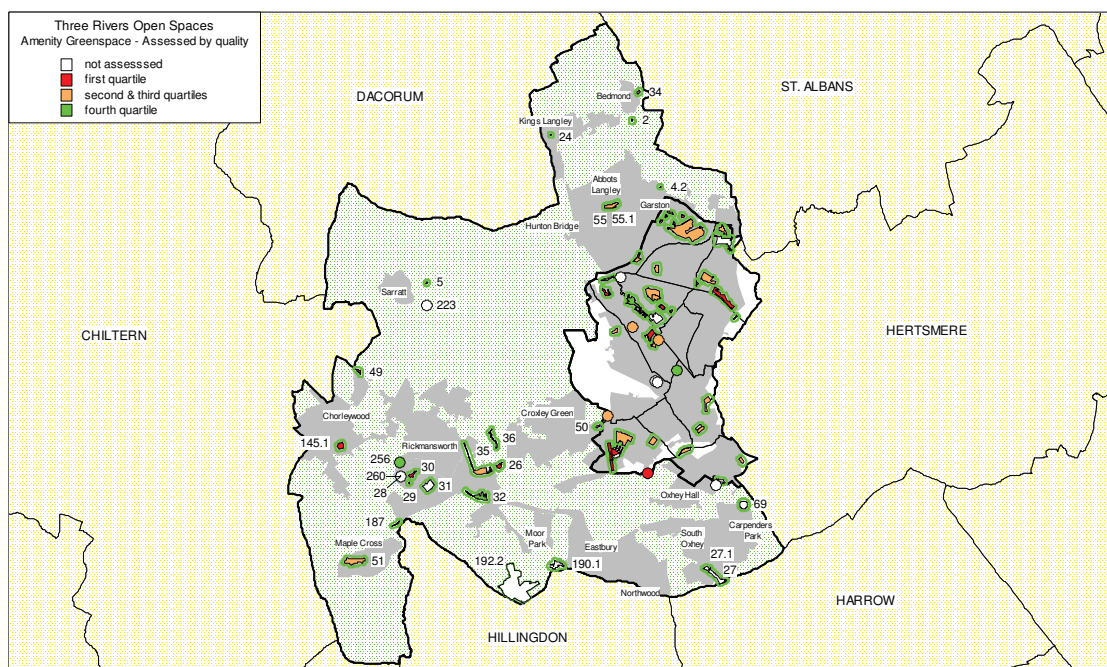
## Three Rivers and Watford – Natural and semi-natural greenspaces



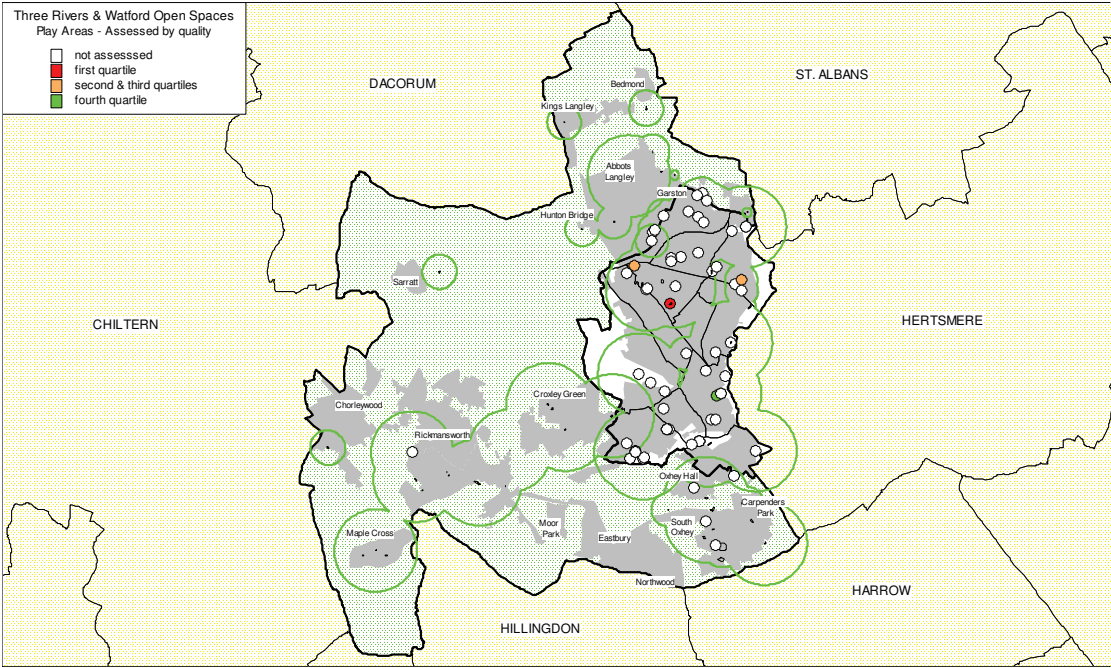
## Three Rivers and Watford – Green corridors



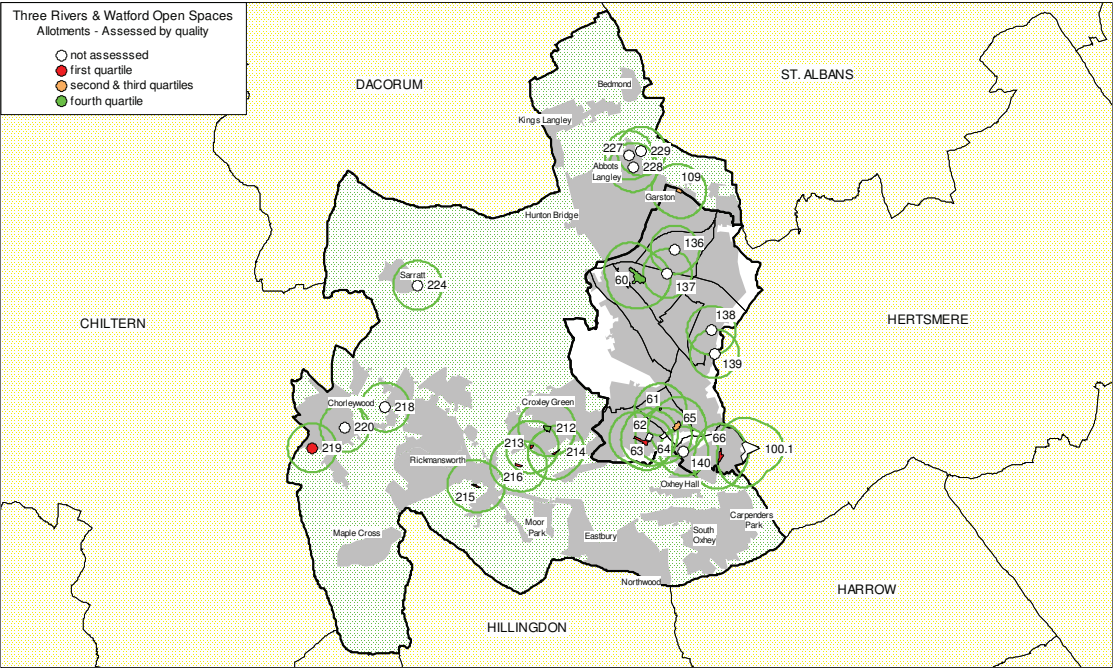
## Three Rivers and Watford – Amenity Greenspace



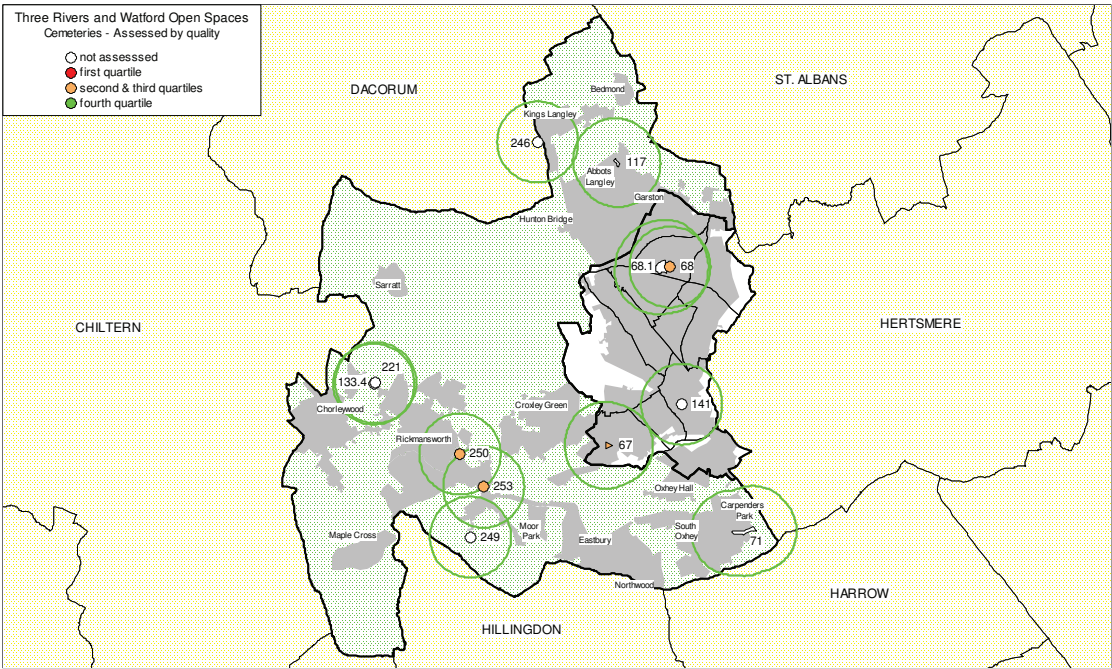
Three Rivers and Watford – Children’s play areas



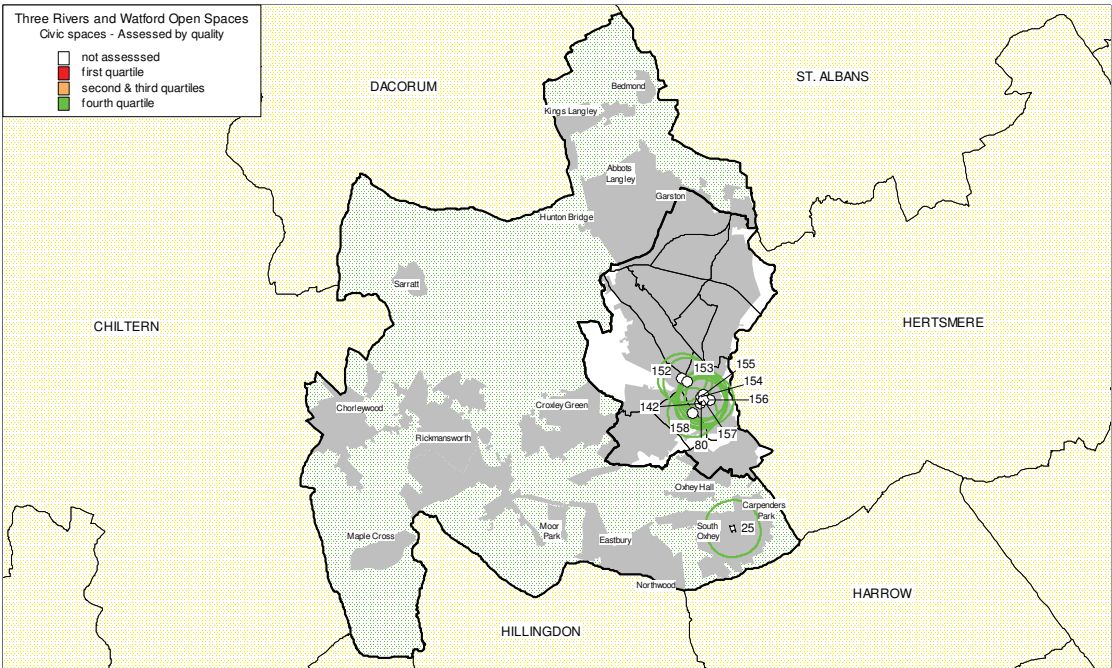
Three Rivers and Watford – Allotments



### Three Rivers and Watford – Cemeteries

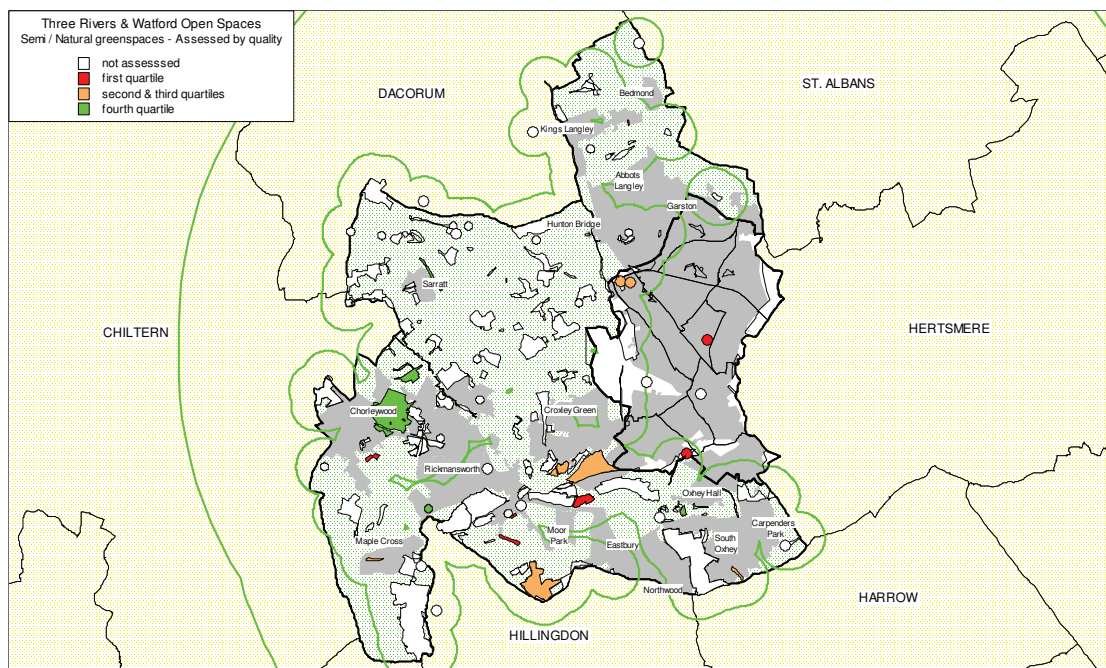


### Three Rivers and Watford – Civic spaces





## Demonstration of mapping using a 10km catchment



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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## PART I. INTRODUCTION

This is the Assessment Report considering supply and demand issues for outdoor sports facilities, their ancillary facilities and recreational parks sport provision in Three Rivers, Hertfordshire. It covers the predominant issues for sports pitch provision that services football, rugby, cricket and hockey. It also considers outdoor facilities for tennis, netball, bowls, golf and watersports and an analysis of the provision of multi-use games areas, which are used for formal sports delivery.

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) Planning Department commissioned the study in September 2004. The principal research was carried out between October 2004 to February 2005. This report sits alongside assessment reports, which cover open spaces and indoor sport and recreation facilities. Collectively the reports make up the District Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

**This report does not include strategic recommendations and policy objectives. This is included within the Strategy document.**

### 1.1 National context

#### *Towards a Level Playing Field*

The aims and requirements outlined in PPG 17 and the companion guide are reiterated in the Sport England playing pitch strategy methodology, 'Towards a Level Playing Field' (February 2003). It is this methodology (and that of its predecessor), which has been implemented in the production of this assessment. (See Part 2 for research methodology.)

### 1.2 Local context

#### ***Planned developments in sports facilities locally***

##### *Durrants School Playing Field*

The former Durrants School playing fields on Lincoln Drive in Croxley Green are to be developed for housing. Part of the playing fields will be retained and the following provision made:

- ☐ Two junior football pitches.
- ☐ Three tennis courts and pavilion.

##### *Durrants Sports Club*

Durrants Sports Club is located on Lincoln Way in Croxley Green. It is the headquarters of the Old Merchant Taylors Society and as such has been used as their sports ground for over 60 years. The site has rugby cricket and football pitches. The



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grounds are to be sold for housing and the pitches replaced on the playing fields at Merchant Taylor School. (Further detail in Part 3 of this report.)

### *St Michael's Catholic High School*

St. Michael's School is currently leading a New Opportunities Fund project to install a sand based artificial turf pitch on its playing fields. The project is being carried out in partnership with other local schools including:

- ❑ Francis Combe School.
- ❑ Garston Manor Special School.
- ❑ St Catherine of Sienna Primary School.

All of the partner schools will use the pitch during the school day.

### *YMCA Woodlands*

The YMCA has recently submitted a bid to the Football Foundation to increase the number of pitches and provide changing facilities at the Woodlands site it leases from Three Rivers District Council in Abbots Langley. A bid was previously submitted and was unsuccessful. Although the bid has been amended, there is no partner club directly involved in the scheme.



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## PART 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

This report uses established, recognised quantitative and qualitative methodologies, in keeping with the recommendations of PPG17, for assessing the supply of, and demand for outdoor sports facilities.

*Playing pitch strategy methodology.*

The site visits, consultation and analysis outlined in this report are based on Sport England's (SE) playing pitch strategy methodology, 'Towards A Level Playing Field' (2003). This document outlines specific criteria for assessing the quantity, quality, capacity and accessibility of playing pitches and ancillary facilities. These criteria and the principles of the assessment have also been applied to outdoor sports facilities other than pitches.

*Site visits*

The scoring criteria for pitches and ancillary facilities provided in the Electronic Toolkit, which accompanies 'Towards A Level Playing Field' has been used in this study. This was implemented by carrying out site visits to all local authority playing fields, parks and recreation grounds, all secondary schools and a large number of private and voluntary sector sports clubs. The visits involve carrying out a 'non-technical visual quality assessment' to collect site, individual pitch and changing accommodation information. This information is then scored and converted into a qualitative rating. The qualitative ratings are listed as:

- ☐ Good.
- ☐ Adequate.
- ☐ Poor.

This is explained in further detail in Part 4 of this report. Copies of the site, pitch and changing accommodation assessment sheets can be found in Appendix I of this document.

It should be noted that although various aspects of pitch quality are assessed by the scoring criteria, there is no question relating to waterlogging on pitches. Waterlogging has been highlighted by grounds maintenance staff and club representatives as a problem on some sites. This has been drawn out in the site assessments in Part 4 of this report.

In addition, it should also be noted that using the Sport England scoring criteria, sites which have no changing facilities are automatically rated as poor quality regardless of the quality of the pitches. Again this has been pointed out on the relevant sites in Part 4.

*Consultation*



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A variety of consultation methods have been used to collate information about leagues, clubs, County Associations and National/Regional Governing Bodies. They are generally as follows:

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Method of consultation</b>
Local authority officers	Face to face interview
League/County association representatives	Telephone interview
Football clubs	Face to face, postal questionnaire, telephone interview
Cricket/rugby/hockey/tennis/netball clubs	Face to face, telephone interview
Bowls clubs	Postal questionnaire, telephone interview
Golf clubs	Face to face, telephone interview
Secondary schools	Face to face interview
Primary and junior schools	Email questionnaire
County Associations	Face to face interview
Regional Governing Body officers	Face to face, telephone interview

Local sports development officers, County Associations and Regional Governing Body officers advised which of the clubs should be included in the face to face consultation. Issues identified by football clubs returning questionnaires were also followed up by telephone or face to face interviews.

It should be noted that the initial response to the postal questionnaires to football clubs was poor (around 10%). These questionnaires were followed up with telephone interviews until responses were obtained from a selection users of all sites across the District.



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### *Analysis*

SE specifies the need to develop a temporal supply and demand analysis (i.e. at peak usage times, how many teams want to play and how many pitches are available) and team generation rates (i.e. the number of teams being generated by the current population). In addition, a qualitative local standard for provision of outdoor sports facilities has been produced. This is represented by a figure of hectares per 1,000 population. These terms are explained fully and the analysis presented in Part 6 of this report along with a summary of key issues on a sport by sport basis.



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## **PART 3: SPORT SPECIFIC SUMMARY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following sections summarise the local administration of the main outdoor sports within Three Rivers.

It provides a quantitative summary of provision and a map showing the distribution of facilities. It also provides information about the governing body of each sport and regional strategic plans (where they exist). Details of local leagues are provided in order to outline the competitive structure for each sport. The findings of club consultation and key issues for each sport are summarised.

The sports covered are as follows:

- 3.2 Football.
- 3.3 Cricket.
- 3.4 Rugby union.
- 3.5 Hockey.
- 3.6 Bowls.
- 3.7 Tennis.
- 3.8 Netball.
- 3.9 Golf.
- 3.10 Watersports.

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### 3.2 FOOTBALL

Table 1: Summary of football pitches and teams by analysis area

Analysis Area	No. of available pitches			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini	Senior mens	Senior womens	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini-soccer
Watford Rural Area	9	4	11	17	1	8	4	4
Croxley Green Area	5	4	2	17	-	8	-	3
Rickmansworth Area	4	2	-	16	-	2	-	-
Chorleywood Area	3	8	-	4	-	8	-	7
Sarratt Area	1	-	2	3	-	1	-	3
Abbots Langley Area	17	7	9	9	-	33	-	17
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>34</b>

#### 3.2.1 Hertfordshire FA

Football in Three Rivers is administered by Hertfordshire FA. A small number of clubs are also affiliated to Middlesex FA.

Hertfordshire FA has set up a Local Football Partnership (LFP) for the County. The LFP is responsible for interpreting and implementing the FA's national strategy into local priorities supported by both the FA and the Football Foundation.

The LFP has a network of sub-groups, which have been set up in order to ensure the following:

- ❑ Engage more people in the LFP process from all areas of the football community, ensuring the LFP is as representative of the football community in the County as possible.
- ❑ Improve communication and information amongst these groups.
- ❑ Provide more in depth consideration of key issues.
- ❑ Ensure that decisions are made based on accurate information and appropriate local knowledge.

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In addition to these sub-groups, local groups have been set up on a geographical basis:

- ❑ North (North Herts, Stevenage).
- ❑ East (East Herts, Welwyn Hatfield and Broxbourne).
- ❑ South (Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere).
- ❑ West (St. Albans and Dacorum).

These groups bring together clubs, leagues, schools and other relevant organisations and individuals locally in order to assess the needs of various groups involved and to identify action to be taken.



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The Hertfordshire LFP Facility Strategy outlines the priority projects for the County for 2003-06. In July 2003, detailed consultation was undertaken with local authorities to ascertain current facility provision and the priorities for development over the next few years.

From this consultation, gaps in provision were identified and a number of strategic headlines were developed which any successful facility project must address moving forward:

- ☐ Improving the facilities available in adult league football.
- ☐ Promoting the female game.
- ☐ Improving the current provision of mini-soccer pitches.
- ☐ Promoting the community use of school facilities.
- ☐ Addressing the local needs of quality full size grass football pitches.
- ☐ Ensuring that all facilities are accessible for people with disabilities.
- ☐ Supporting the growth of small sided football.
- ☐ Supporting the development of FA Community Clubs.
- ☐ Using football as a tool to promote social inclusion.

### 3.2.2 FA Charter Standard

The FA promotes its Charter Standard scheme as a 'best practice guide that sets standards of coaching, administration and child protection for clubs working with young people. As a benchmark for quality, it will improve the playing experience for all.'

The aim is that all junior/youth age group clubs will eventually have the basic Charter Standard. The FA, in conjunction with various bodies, has drawn up the following set of criteria for clubs wishing to reach Charter Standard:

- ☐ A written constitution.
- ☐ Self-certified screening of managers, coaches and officials.
- ☐ All managers to have minimum of FA Junior Team Managers Award.
- ☐ Commitment to attend in-service training.
- ☐ Acceptance and promotion of codes of conduct.
- ☐ Commitment to provide mini-soccer opportunities for under 10's.
- ☐ Commitment to promote schools liaison and equal opportunities for all.



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Clubs can progress to:

- ❑ Charter Standard Development Club and;
- ❑ Charter Standard Community Club.

The following clubs in Three Rivers have achieved Charter Standard:

- ❑ Cassiobury Rangers
- ❑ Evergreen Youth FC
- ❑ Abbots Youth FC

The Charter Standard is also targeted at schools. Parmiters School is a Charter Standard School.

### 3.2.3 Watford FC- Community and Sports Education Trust

The Trust is a registered charity and aims to promote community participation in healthy recreation by providing facilities for playing football and other sports. It also aims to advance the education of children and young people. It works with schools to achieve this aim and encourages them to pursue Charter Standard status. This development represents part of their core development policy and involves after school training, promoting healthy living and promoting curriculum coaching. Other areas of 'core development' are outlined below:

- ❑ Pay and play.
- ❑ 'Soccer at Six' (This is a scheme that takes coaching into socially deprived areas identified in liaison with the relevant local authority).
- ❑ Holiday training courses.
- ❑ Girls/women's centre of excellence.
- ❑ Coach education.
- ❑ Match day coaching package.

There are a number of factors affecting how the Trust chooses facilities, including the cost, locality or catchment of the area and the quality of the facility. One such facility used is Parmiters School, but this is considered to be a commercial facility and regarded as quite expensive. Trust representatives find that there is a lack of quality, indoor facilities in the area that facilitate the 'pay and play' scheme. This is mainly due to the size of facilities.

The Soccer at Six scheme has been run at King George V, Mill End and Oxhey Playing Fields, with the facilities being provided free of charge by TRDC.

The Trust aspires to create a central venue base, which would incorporate training pitches and an education centre. It pointed to the facility owned by West Ham United as a 'best practice' example. This is an educational facility catering for school children



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aged 7-17 years and can also be hired out by local businesses. It runs 'playing for success' sessions every day of the week after school and is also used by the West Ham Youth Academy. A number of local sports development officers have been joint funded in other areas in conjunction with local authorities tied to these facilities.

However, the Trust feels that, in the past its relationship with TRDC has been virtually non-existent and that more could be achieved through closer co-operation. This is starting to happen as the Trust have consulted TRDC on areas for programme delivery and there is potential to deliver taster sessions in schools to create a local girls team.



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### 3.2.4 League consultation

Table 2: Summary of football league consultation

League	No. of teams from Three Rivers	Comments
<b>Olympian Sunday League (OSL)</b> Senior men's football	13	League representatives recognise the improvements to changing facilities that TRDC has made but state that this needs to be matched by improvements to pitch quality. Overall the quality of facilities is considered to be discouraging participation – this is reflected across Hertfordshire.
<b>Watford Observer Sunday League (WOSL)</b> Senior men's football	15	Although this league uses the same sites as the OSL, it considers that the pitches and changing facilities are of a 'reasonable' standard. The main issue is with changing facilities not providing enough showers for the number of players and insufficient hot water.
<b>Watford Friendly League</b> U8, U9 and U10 mini football U11, U12, U13 U14, U15 and U17 junior football	15 mini 50 junior	<p>The largest junior league in the County has increased in size over the last three years. This is attributed to a number of teams transferring from the West Herts Youth League.</p> <p>The majority of teams, both junior and mini, play on local authority or parish council owned sites, while a smaller number use pitches at local primary schools. The majority of pitches used by teams within the League are considered to be of generally good/adequate condition. Many junior and mini soccer teams come changed and, therefore, have no wish to use changing facilities.</p>
<b>West Herts Youth League:</b> U9 and U10 mini football U11, U12 and U14 junior football	16 mini	<p>The number of teams playing mini football has increased whilst the number of junior teams has decreased over the last three years. This decrease is attributed to teams moving to the Watford Friendly League, which is considered to be a better standard. Over the next few seasons the number of junior teams should build back up again as mini teams move through.</p> <p>Most of the mini football teams use primary and junior school pitches. These are considered to be adequate facilities by the League. Most of the pitches are good but there is rarely provision of ancillary facilities. League representatives accept that most young children do not want changing rooms but</p>



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		access to toilets and water should be provided.
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### 3.2.5 Club consultation

The following development/facility issues, were identified during consultation:

#### *Oxhey United FC*

The Club has four mini football teams, which use two mini pitches at Oxhey Playing Fields. It considers one of these pitches is unplayable most of the time Whilst it can 'just about manage' to play all the fixtures on one pitch, the Club also has a large number of children who play friendlies for which the second pitch is required. However, KKP's site visit identifies the pitches as 'good' quality based on the Sport England non-technical pitch appraisal. There may be issues relating to the scheduling of matches which effect pitch quality.

It currently has junior teams at U11, U12 and U13 age groups, which play at Romilly Drive Playing Fields. This site has one junior football pitch. The intention is that the Club will continue to grow as teams progress through the age groups. In September 2005 the current U10 team will move up to U11 (and, therefore, 11 a side football), the pitch at Romilly Drive will not be able to accommodate them. Ideally, the Club would like all its teams to play at the same venue – Oxhey Playing Fields. It recognises that this site is not being played to capacity at all times.

#### *Oxhey Jets FC*

Oxhey Jets FC is based at the Sir James Altham Outdoor Site in South Oxhey. There are two pitches, which are owned by TRDC. The site has one senior pitch which is enclosed and floodlit and is leased to Oxhey Jets FC. The second pitch is available for booking by members of the public and Oxhey Jets currently use it for junior football matches.

The enclosed pitch had (at the time of consultation) not been used for two months due to severe waterlogging. The Club attributes this to the pitch drainage being installed inappropriately in 2001. The lack of use of this pitch is having a financial impact on the Club as it consequently has no income from the social facilities due to match cancellations. Representatives consider it to be threatening the existence of the Club. The senior teams will be expelled from their leagues is they cannot complete their fixtures.

The third and fourth senior teams and all the junior teams play at Oxhey Playing Fields. The seniors are unable to use the second pitch at the Sir James Altham Pool outdoor site as it does not meet the quality requirements of the League. Club representatives would like all the teams to play on the same site.

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### *Evergreen FC*

Evergreen FC plays at South Way Playing Fields in Abbots Langley. The pitches are owned and maintained by Abbots Langley Parish Council. The site has two senior, one junior and one mini pitch, servicing four senior and 20 junior teams.

The playing fields are on an old land-fill site and the Club rates the quality of the pitches as poor and inadequate to meet its needs. Stones and concrete are visible on the surface of the pitches. It also suffers from high levels of unofficial use, although Evergreen is the only club which officially uses the site. Grounds maintenance is considered by club representatives to be inadequate. The parish council is currently considering the refurbishment of the pitches over a rolling programme covering the next few years.

Evergreen FC has its own clubhouse on the playing fields, which is used after matches for refreshments, club meetings and presentation evenings. It has recently been given planning permission for an extension to the building in order to accommodate its growing needs. Finances are, however, restricting the extension plans being carried out.

Ideally, the Club would like to manage the site itself in order to develop the quantity and quality of facilities to better meet its needs.

### **3.2.6 Girls' and women's football**

Hertfordshire has a Women's and Girls' Football Development Officer, a post which is jointly funded by the FA, Hertfordshire Sports Partnership and the Football Foundation. This officer is responsible for the delivery of the Hertfordshire Girls' Football Plan, which has been drawn up by the partners involved in the LFP. The aim of this plan is:

'to enthuse, retain and develop young players, no matter where they come from and regardless of their ability.'

The main delivery tool of the plan is the FA's '3 Lions FC Club Links' programme. This involves a series of coaching sessions and festivals in each local authority area which aiming to provide regular playing opportunities leading to football clubs and coaching centres.

During the 2003/2004 season, the programme was rolled out with Northwood Ladies, creating an U11 girls team. This season the Club feels it is not ready for another team. A number of other clubs in the District have been approached to carry out the programme. Interest was shown by Oxhey United FC but it was concluded that as a club, it is not ready just yet to be involved due to commitments with existing teams.

### *Northwood Ladies Football Club*



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The Club has four junior teams and a ladies team, all playing at Merchant Taylor School. Between them they use one mini, one junior and one senior pitch. These pitches are used for training and matches. The ATP is also used for training sessions. Club representatives consider this to be heavy use of the pitches and state that this is only possible due to them being such good quality.

Club representatives anticipate that, in the next two to three years, there will be a team at every age group from U10 to seniors if the recent trend is followed. With this in mind, the Club would like to have its own home ground and anticipates it will need the use of two mini, two junior and two senior pitches. This level of pitch use at Merchant Taylor School is not expected to be possible due to heavy curricular use. It recognises that current levels of use are due to the goodwill of the School and has concerns that this relationship does not provide long term stability.

TRDC sports development staff have put Northwood Ladies in touch with Bushey Cricket Club as there is potential for additional pitches to be instated at this site. It is unlikely, however, to be able to accommodate all the needs of the Club.

### *Cassiobury Rangers/Parmiters School*

Coaching sessions and girls football courses are also run at Parmiters School through Cassiobury Rangers FC.



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### 3.2.7 Summary of football in Three Rivers

- ❑ There are opportunities to work with local junior clubs to better accommodate teams all on one 'home' site.
- ❑ The quality of the ancillary facilities at Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club is inhibiting use of the pitches.
- ❑ The waterlogging problems at Sir James Altham Pool outdoor site (fenced first team pitch) are jeopardising the existence of the Oxhey Jets FC.
- ❑ The completion of installation and usage of junior pitches would increase capacity at other sites in South Oxhey.



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### 3.3 CRICKET

Table 3: Summary of cricket pitches and teams by analysis area:

Analysis Area	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams			
	Senior	Junior	Mini	Senior mens	Senior womens	Junior boys	Junior girls
Watford Rural Area	10	-	-	3	-	2	-
Croxley Green Area	3	-	-	6	-	-	-
Rickmansworth Area	4	-	-	3	-	-	-
Chorleywood Area	1	-	-	5	-	7	-
Sarratt Area	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abbots Langley Area	3	1	-	7	-	12	-
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>-</b>

Although no junior girls teams are playing formally, girls are participating in small number at club coaching sessions.

#### 3.3.1 Hertfordshire Cricket Board

Cricket in Three Rivers is organised and administered through Hertfordshire Cricket Board (HCB). Following the publication of the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) whole sport plan for cricket, HCB is compiling a county development plan. This includes an identification process for funding priorities.

This identification process is through district development groups in each local authority area. Clubs were initially invited to attend these groups if they were interested in developing/expanding their activities or had facility development aspirations. These then became the 'focus clubs' for each local authority area. In Three Rivers these are:

- ❑ Abbots Langley CC.
- ❑ Chorleywood CC.
- ❑ Langleybury CC.

Each of these is required to have a development plan in order to be a focus club.

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### *Community club clusters*

The main thrust of the ECB whole sports plan is 'community development'. This is centred around the development of 'community club clusters'. These involve a partnership between:

- ❑ One club.
- ❑ One secondary school.
- ❑ Four primary schools.

A key performance indicator for HCB is to have 10-15 community club clusters established by May 2006 (from a total of 35 focus clubs across the County).

### *Pitch Advisory Scheme*

This initiative has been developed by the England Cricket Board (ECB) through the Facilities Executive. The scheme is funded by the ECB in partnership with Sport England. It aims to appoint pitch advisors across England and Wales who possess the Institute of Groundsmanship Level 2 certificate and/or at least ten years' practical experience.

Assessments are undertaken at the request of a club. The role of the pitch advisor is to make prioritised, detailed assessments of pitches (clubs), producing a report with recommendations and making follow-up visits to the ground. The scheme also offers assessments to schools.

The ECB has recommended that, alongside a pitch advisor, assistants are appointed who, along with representatives of the County Board and development officers, form a Pitch Advisory Assessment Steering Group. In addition to the formation of the Steering Group the ECB is encouraging the establishment of groundsmanship associations. The objective of these groups is to raise the profile of groundsmanship and the raising of standards within the profession.



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### 3.3.2 League consultation

A number of leagues service the clubs/teams playing competitive cricket in Three Rivers, as demonstrated in the table below. This section contains a summary of these leagues.

*Table 4: Summary of cricket league consultation*

League	Match day	Comments
Saracens Hertfordshire Cricket League	Saturday	Feeds into the Home Counties Premier League. Fourteen divisions including a development division for younger players. The League has a pitch-marking scheme. Clubs cannot be promoted to certain divisions if the facilities are not of a certain grade. Clubs are reported to struggle to maintain the quality standards as this really implies that a full time groundsman is required. Only teams in divisions 10-13 are permitted to play on artificial turf wickets.
Chess Valley Cricket League	Sunday	Chess Valley is the biggest Sunday cricket league in the south of England. It has been running since 1995 and has approximately 50 member clubs. League representatives state that the quality of pitches is generally good although changing facilities, particularly at clubs where they are shared with football/rugby can be cramped and poorer quality.

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### 3.3.3 Club consultation

Table 5: Cricket club summary

Club	League	Site	Teams
Chorleywood CC	Saracens Herts	Chorleywood Common	5 senior, 7 junior
Rickmansworth CC	Saracens Herts	Rickmansworth Sports Club	3 senior junior training
Abbots Langley CC	Saracens Herts	Manor House Ground, Abbots Langley	4 senior, 5 junior
Langleybury CC	Saracens Herts	Langleybury CC, Hunton Bridge	4 senior, 7 junior
Old Merchant Taylor CC	Thames Valley	Durrant's Sports Ground, Croxley Green	6 senior teams
Bushey CC	Saracens Herts	Bushey CC, Eastbury Road	3 senior, 2 junior

#### *Chorleywood Cricket Club*

Chorleywood Cricket Club is located next to the A404, which runs alongside Chorleywood Common. This road has become increasingly busy over the years and is a major feeder for the M25. As such, it presents various health and safety issues. Junior coaching sessions, which take place after school and in the early evening, often coincide with the traffic rush hour. There is no physical barrier between the edge of the pitch and the main road. The boundary of the pitch is only a few metres from the roadside. If players hit a ball to the boundary, they risk danger to drivers by possibly hitting cars and to players having to retrieve the ball.

The Club would like to move the pitch back, away from the road, but is restricted by a large tree which is on the far side of the pitch. Use of land on the other side of the pitch (away from the road) is also restricted due to it being part of the common.

It is also aware that in terms of provision of ancillary facilities the Club is barely meeting the League requirements. However, the restrictions of building on common land mean that it is not in a position to significantly improve the facilities. The existing clubhouse was originally a temporary building in the 1960s.



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Due to the open nature of the site the pitch suffers from relatively high levels of vandalism.

Club representatives point out that a lot of its junior players come from fee paying schools where they play a lot of cricket anyway. The Club would like to forge better links with state schools.

#### *Rickmansworth Cricket Club*

Rickmansworth Cricket Club is located at Rickmansworth Sports Club on Park Road in Rickmansworth. The site has two cricket pitches. The main pitch is considered to be good quality. The second pitch is an artificial turf wicket in between two rugby pitches and is considered to be of adequate quality.

The site has a large pavilion, part of this has been leased out to a private company for use as a fitness centre. This is essential income to keep the Club going. It has, however, compromised the changing and catering facilities, which are rated as 'acceptable'. The Club recognises that the pavilion and changing rooms do not meet DDA standards due to the age of the facility.

In the last couple of years, the Club has re-started junior coaching sessions, for which there appears to be considerable demand. Club representatives state that, if this demand continues to increase, it would be interested in managing and maintaining the cricket pitch on the adjacent Scotsbridge playing fields.

#### *Langleybury CC*

Langleybury CC is located at Hunton Bridge in Abbots Langley. The site has two cricket pitches, one of which is a junior pitch with only an artificial turf wicket. It is currently undergoing improvements to outdoor net facilities, prior to the start of the 2005 season. At the end of the season work will start on a major refurbishment of the clubhouse. This will include improvements to changing and catering facilities and will make the clubhouse accessible for people with disabilities.



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### *Old Merchant Taylor CC*

Old Merchant Taylors CC uses the three pitches at Old Merchant Taylor Sports Ground in Croxley Green. The Club has grown over the last five years and currently has six senior teams as well as providing junior coaching.

The Club is due to move to Merchant Taylor School as part of the plans for the Durrant's Sports Ground to be sold for development. The School has agreed to provide two pitches for the exclusive use of the Club as well as access to some of its pitches as and when required. The Club has highlighted the need for pitches at the School to be of at least equal quality to the ones it currently uses.

### *Bushey CC*

Bushey CC is situated on Eastbury Road, close to the Watford boundary. The site is leased to the Club by Three Valleys Water. The site has one pitch, clubhouse and practise nets. Recent inspection of the pitch by the ECB's national pitch advisor resulted in the following observations:

- ❑ Additional remedial work is needed on the square at the end of the season to improve the quality of the surface.
- ❑ The undulations on the square mean that the playing surface is not consistent and in some ways dangerous. This is not acceptable for the standard of play of the Club and in particular junior development.
- ❑ In the medium/long term, re-grading of the entire pitch (square and outfield) is needed and the installation of a 'ring drain' around the square which would protect the quality of the playing surface.

The Club is keen to develop its junior section further and the first two improvements are considered vital in the short term to assist with this.

There are also unused tennis courts and bowling green on the Club's site, although these are not included in its lease. In addition, there is a section of playing field on the edge of the cricket pitch, which is currently fallow. The Club is keen to investigate how these areas may be brought back into use for the local community or to service local clubs.

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### 3.3.4 Three Rivers District Council cricket pitches

TRDC provides cricket pitches at the following venues:

- ❑ Scotsbridge Playing Fields
- ❑ Maple Cross Playing Fields

Both of these pitches are rated as adequate quality using the Sport England non-technical site assessment sheets.

The use of these pitches is minimal. Occasionally they will be used for 'social' or friendly games. The pitch at Scotsbridge is occasionally used by Rickmansworth CC.

### Summary of cricket in Three Rivers

- ❑ There is a reasonable distribution of clubs around the District providing opportunities to play in most areas.
- ❑ Clubs are active in junior development, both coaching and competitive play.
- ❑ The development of Chorleywood CC is likely to be inhibited by the proximity of the boundary to the main road.
- ❑ There are currently no womens or girls' teams in the District although some players from the District represent the County. In the past girls cricket sessions have been organised but with very poor response.



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## 3.4 RUGBY UNION

Table 6: Summary of rugby pitches and teams by analysis area

Analysis Area	No. of available pitches			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini	Senior mens	Senior womens	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini rugby
Watford Rural Area	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Croxley Green Area	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Rickmansworth Area	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	1
Chorleywood Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sarratt Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abbots Langley Area	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>

### 3.4.1 Hertfordshire Rugby Football Union (Hertfordshire RFU)

Rugby in Three Rivers District is administered by Hertfordshire RFU. It is responsible for club development and the local delivery of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) development programmes, a large part of which is the development of 'Community Rugby'.

#### *Community Rugby*

Community Rugby was initiated to cater for the needs of the clubs from the totally recreational up to the sometimes professional in the second division. Community Rugby 'requirements' are defined by the RFU as:

- ❑ Competitive activity through leagues, merit tables and cup competitions as well as 'friendly' rugby.
- ❑ Investment in facilities to meet expectations in a changing leisure market.
- ❑ Investment in people who support and manage their game. Valuing, supporting and rewarding the volunteer contribution to rugby needed to be addressed and there had to be more sympathy for volunteer administrators in the way the game was regulated.

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The key issues which Community Rugby initially sought to address were the number of players dropping out of the game and a decreasing number of players coming into the game with the identification of different problems in attracting youngsters at different age groups

Investment in facilities is also a major part of Community Rugby. It identified that the game demanded:

- ❑ Better playing surfaces.
- ❑ Lighting for quality training/coaching and matches at times other than Saturday or Sunday.
- ❑ Changing and social facilities to suit the modern participant, especially as there is also a growing number of female and disabled participants.

### *A Youth Section Club Development Programme – the RFU Seal of Approval*

The Rugby Football Union has introduced the Seal of Approval as a method of examining, maintaining and improving the provision of rugby in the youth section of a rugby club. It aims to recognise the effort and achievement of those clubs that reach and maintain the required standard to meet the various levels of the Seal of Approval.

The Seal of Approval is used to satisfy the Active Sports Club registration criteria for those clubs involved in delivery of the Active Sports Rugby Union Programme. The criteria for the Sport England 'Safe, Effective & Child Friendly Club' mark is integrated within the Seal of Approval. A successful application for the RFU Seal of Approval will achieve the Sport England 'Safe, Effective & Child Friendly Club'.

The Programme is based upon a three year Level I, Level II and Level III Award system in which a club will be assessed on its ability to provide a safe, effective and child friendly club environment.

Having completed the Seal of Approval Audit and Evidence File, a club will identify activities or areas that require development over the next 12 months. The club will then produce a realistic development plan based upon these needs, whereupon successful accreditation will have been achieved.

By implementing the first year development plan and having the second year plan approved, a club will qualify for Level II status. The same process in year three will lead to Level III status.

The Award will be an indication of the quality of provision a club offers, and its commitment to the continued development of young rugby players. A club will receive certification to confirm accreditation, both from the Rugby Football Union and Sport England.



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As an aspirational standard Herts RFU would like all clubs to have the Seal of Approval and to be able to accommodate juniors

### *Herts RFU issues*

Herts RFU development officers raised the following issues:

- ❑ In general changing facilities are of poor quality and inadequate particularly for women and girls.
- ❑ Very few clubs have training facilities on site. Most which do, have poor quality pitch areas with little or no floodlighting.
- ❑ However the poor accessibility and cost of off site pitches (usually artificial turf) for training is inhibitive.
- ❑ Many clubs are 'over-run' on a Sunday when junior and mini rugby takes place with inadequate space for parking and changing. In most cases this is a club organisation issue.
- ❑ Compared with other areas of Hertfordshire, clubs in the western part of the County have poorer quality pitches and facilities.

### *Rugby development through Active Sport*

A part time rugby development officer, with a specific remit to co-ordinate the development of girls' rugby was appointed in 2004 by the Hertfordshire Sports Partnership (HSP).

Activities for girls' rugby and mixed tag rugby have been taking place at clubs across the County with courses culminating in a mini summer league. Active Sport rugby has also involved more women gaining coaching qualifications at mini-midi level.

There are no clubs in Three Rivers, which have women's and girls' sections.



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### 3.4.2 Club consultation

#### *Chess Valley RFC (Rickmansworth)*

Chess Valley RFC is based at Rickmansworth Sports Ground. It has two senior teams which play in the Herts/Middlesex League I and the Herts Merit Table. It also has a mini section for seven to thirteen year olds which train on a Sunday morning.

The site has two rugby pitches, one of which is slightly smaller than a full size pitch. Representatives state that this actually suits the club in better accommodating its second team and older players.

The Club considers it has one of the most attractive clubhouses in the area. This is only compromised by the size of the changing rooms. These were originally built to accommodate cricket and hockey (eleven-a-side sports) and are slightly cramped for rugby teams.

It has aspirations to develop a third senior team and to see the development of the mini section through to a competitive colts side. The Club considers that this is a matter of time and effort on its behalf and that the facilities will be able to accommodate this development.

#### *Old Merchant Taylors RFC*

Club representatives unavailable for consultation.

The Club plays at Merchant Taylor Sports Ground in Croxley Green. It is included in the plans to move the sports facilities to Merchant Taylor School.

### 3.4.3 Summary of rugby in Three Rivers

- ☐ There are currently few opportunities for young people to play rugby in the district.
- ☐ Neither of the clubs have women's or girls sections.
- ☐ It should be considered that the District is serviced to a certain extent by clubs in Watford e.g. Fullarians and clubs in Hemel Hempstead.
- ☐ TRDC does not provide rugby pitches.



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## 3.5 HOCKEY

Table 7: Summary of hockey pitches and teams by analysis area

Analysis Area	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams			
	Senior	Junior	ATP	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls
Watford Rural Area	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Croxley Green Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rickmansworth Area	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
Chorleywood Area	1	-	1	5	3	2	1
Sarratt Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abbots Langley Area	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

### 3.5.1 England Hockey - East Region

The regional governing body for hockey in Hertfordshire is England Hockey East Region. The Regional Development Officer (RDO) oversees the implementation of England Hockey's national plan at a regional and County level. A major part of this is the club accreditation scheme.

#### *Clubs 1<sup>st</sup> – England Hockey club accreditation scheme*

All clubs are encouraged to register and work towards gaining Clubs 1st, England Hockey's club accreditation scheme. Clubs 1st is part of the Sport England Clubmark programme and is nationally recognised as a standard mark for clubs.

Clubs achieving the Clubs 1st award are recognised as working towards providing a safe, effective and child friendly hockey environment. They also receive the Clubmark award. County Sports Partnerships and Funding agencies are increasingly recognising these clubs and choosing to work with them as a priority.





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### 3.5.2 Hertfordshire Hockey Association (HHA)

Hertfordshire hockey men's and women's associations amalgamated around three years ago to form Hertfordshire Hockey Association.

Association representatives stress the huge change, which hockey clubs have undergone since the development of artificial turf pitches and the switch of competitive play to this surface. This has meant that now a majority of clubs play at school or leisure centre sites rather than multi-sport, voluntary sector sports grounds. Not only has this had an impact on the revenue for the sports clubs, it has changed the operational structure and social activities of the hockey clubs. This is certainly the case in Three Rivers. Rather than teams all playing at the same time on a Saturday afternoon and having refreshments together in an on site club house, they play matches between 10am and 6pm and may or may not convene after the game for refreshments.

On the whole HHA states that, at schools, the quality of pitches is generally good, the quality of floodlights is adequate and the quality of changing facilities are poor. It supports the view expressed by clubs that artificial turf pitches are expensive to hire and this can be inhibitive to clubs running training sessions.



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### 3.5.3 Club consultation

#### *Rickmansworth Ladies Hockey Club*

Rickmansworth Ladies HC plays on a grass pitch at Scotsbridge Playing Fields. It has one team which plays friendly matches on a Saturday afternoon. Ideally the Club would like to play on an artificial turf pitch but finds that getting a slot on a Saturday on local pitches is very difficult. The cost of hiring artificial turf pitches is also considered to be an inhibiting factor.

The grass pitch at Scotsbridge Playing Fields is considered by the Club to be of poor quality as it suffers from severe waterlogging. So far this season (2004-2005), the Club has only played six matches. However, this low level of use and the quality of the pitch has been reflected in a reduction in facility hire costs from TRDC.

The Club has no plans to expand the number of teams it runs at present. This is something it could not consider without access to better facilities.

#### *Rickmansworth and Chess Valley Hockey Club*

The Club is linked to Rickmansworth Sports Club where it previously played its matches. Due to the need to use artificial turf, the Club now uses the ATP at Clement Danes School in Chorleywood for all its training sessions and matches.

The Club runs men's, women's and junior sections. It currently fields four men's and three ladies teams as well as colts' teams at U18 and U12 age groups. Junior coaching sessions for younger children also take place on a Sunday morning.

### 3.5.4 Summary of hockey in Three Rivers

- ❑ The development of an ATP at St. Michaels School in the north of the District will provide another opportunity for hockey participation.
- ❑ The only opportunity for juniors at present is through Rickmansworth and Chess Valley HC although this club has a 'comprehensive' junior section.
- ❑ The quality of the grass pitch at Scotsbridge Playing Field is inhibiting participation.
- ❑ The cost of hiring artificial turf pitches is prohibitive to club use.

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### 3.6 BOWLS

Bowls in Hertfordshire is played on flat greens.

*Table 8: Summary of bowling greens by analysis area*

Analysis Area	No. of greens available for community use
Watford Rural Area	1
Croxley Green Area	1
Rickmansworth Area	2
Chorleywood Area	-
Sarratt Area	-
Abbots Langley Area	1
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY</b>	<b>4</b>

#### 3.6.1 Hertfordshire Bowls Association (HBA)

Hertfordshire Bowls Association is responsible for the administration of the outdoor men's game in Three Rivers. It has acknowledged that there has been a decline in participation in recent years and is running a campaign over the next few years to try and address this. The campaign has a fund of £60,000 through which clubs can tap into to get promotional material and run activities. This will be concentrated around a designated recruitment week in June 2005.

HBA representatives raised the following issues in consultation, which are relevant for Three Rivers as well as the County in general:

- ❑ The Association recognises the role it has to play in increasing active recreation and social interaction particularly for older people. It would like to work more closely with local authorities regarding this.
- ❑ HBA considers that local authorities suffer from lack of funding for grounds maintenance and, as a consequence, provide unsatisfactory maintenance.
- ❑ Bowls governing bodies run grounds maintenance courses for clubs. However, 'voluntary' maintenance is not enough. In the opinion of HBA, the greens really need a proper groundsman.
- ❑ Most clubs have adequate but basic facilities. Vandalism is reported to be a big problem for buildings/pavilions, damage to cars in car parks and damage to the greens, which, as with other fine turf sports, can result in a green being unusable for long periods of time.
- ❑ Disabled access is an issue which many clubs now have to deal with. The County Association fears that some clubs may close as they cannot meet the expense posed by meeting DDA regulations.

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- ❑ There is perceived to be some resistance from clubs towards junior participation. HBA has a bowls coaching association and aspires for every club to have a qualified coach and child protection officer.
- ❑ Representatives feel that better partnerships with local authorities are needed. The creation of 'bowls forums' in local authority areas would provide a useful interface for clubs, HBA, local authorities and other partners e.g. PCT, community safety partnerships etc. (although this is not a priority for TRDC).

### 3.6.2 Club consultation

*Table 9: Summary of bowling club consultation*

Club	Home ground	No. of greens	Comments
Abbots Langley BC	Langley Road, Abbots Langley	1	The quality of the green has increased since last season due to a new green keeper. The Club still has plans to improve the facilities. These are currently being stalled by lack of funding.
Croxley Guild BC	Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club	1	The green is maintained by the Sports & Social Club as well as bowls club members.
Mill End BC	KGV Playing Field, Mill End	1	The green is leased to the Club from TRDC. It shares a pavilion with other sports users of the site and thus has access to toilets and changing rooms. It also has its own private room within the facility. Club representatives were unavailable to comment.

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Pavilion BC	Oxhey Playing Fields, South Oxhey	I	Club representatives stated that it was not happy with the quality of the green last season but are hopeful that this has been addressed through increased closed season maintenance. It would also like to have better lighting from the car park to the club house. Lack of lighting is considered to deter players at certain times of year. The Club has a new pavilion (provided by TRDC)
Rickmansworth BC  Royal British Legion Bowls Club	Basing Gardens, Rickmansworth	I	Collectively the clubs make up the Basing Gardens Bowls Group, which has regular liaison with TRDC.  It is very pleased with the significant improvements, which have been made by TRDC to the green, gutters and general surrounds. This has increased the quality and capacity of the facilities.

### 3.6.3 Summary of bowls in Three Rivers

- ❑ There is a good distribution of bowling greens around the District.
- ❑ The creation of a local bowls forum may assist in the sharing of equipment and expertise to maintain greens.

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### 3.7 TENNIS

Table 10: Summary of tennis courts and teams by analysis area

Analysis Area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of teams
Watford Rural Area	8	5
Croxley Green Area	7	8
Rickmansworth Area	16	24
Chorleywood Area	3	9
Sarratt Area	2	-
Abbots Langley Area	10	-
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>

The number of courts listed above include, courts provided by TRDC, clubs, schools and parish councils.

#### 3.7.1 Hertfordshire Lawn Tennis Association (HLTA)

Tennis in Three Rivers is administered by Hertfordshire LTA. This body is responsible for the delivery of the LTA's national plan at a local level, the main body of this being the Club Vision Programme

##### *Club Vision*

Club Vision is the LTA's strategy to provide progressive clubs with greater support and resources at both national and county level to help clubs fully play their part in helping to 'make Britain a great tennis nation'. It is an investment programme that supports not just tennis clubs but also public 'pay and play' indoor tennis centres (ITI centres), schools and local authority venues.

It is implemented by clubs in each area completing a questionnaire about membership, facilities and activities. The outcome of the questionnaire helps the club and county tennis development officer identify areas or projects for the club to work on and where funding or other resources may be required.

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### *Junior development/mini tennis*

One of the areas in which many clubs are developing is junior or mini tennis. The LTA's Mini Tennis programme is targeted at four-ten year olds and features red, orange and green stages of progression, which are focussed on ability rather than age. The activities use modified equipment for young children and is played either on dedicated mini tennis courts (smaller than an ordinary court) or on a small area of a standard court.

The programme aims to provide quality-assured opportunities in the local community that feature:

- ☐ Activities headed by an LTA Licensed Coach.
- ☐ Coaching sessions in red, orange and green stages.
- ☐ The Mini Tennis Awards.
- ☐ Holiday activities.
- ☐ Regular and varied fun competitions.
- ☐ Additional opportunities for the more talented players.
- ☐ Off court activities, special events and social activities.

### *Club capacity*

LTA guidelines indicate that facilities should be able to accommodate 40 members per court and 60 members per floodlit court. This has been taken into consideration alongside the club consultation and facilities are rated as one of the following:

- ☐ Having spare capacity.
- ☐ Being at capacity.
- ☐ Being over capacity.

### **3.7.2 League consultation**

#### *Watford and District Tennis League*

The Watford & District Tennis League covers the west Hertfordshire area including Three Rivers. The number of clubs and teams participating has been growing steadily over the last five years and currently stands at 27 clubs fielding 130 teams. There are men's ladies and mixed competitions.



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The basic requirements for participating in the League are that a club should have three courts and have facilities to provide refreshments. Generally the venues are either private clubs or local recreation grounds. Some clubs use local school courts for matches occasionally in order to retain some capacity at the club for members use.

### 3.7.3 Club consultation

#### *Croxley Green Tennis Club*

Croxley Tennis Club is located at Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club. The club site is sub-let from the Guild. The lease is due to expire in 2013.

The Club currently operates from a portacabin after the previous clubhouse was burned down. There are no toilets, changing rooms or showers. Toilet facilities are available in the Social Club. However, this is not a suitable arrangement or particularly accessible for young children.

The Club has five macadam courts, three of which are floodlit. The floodlit courts were re-surfaced six years ago, but are now of poor quality with a very slippery surface and are considered to need re-surfacing. The other two courts have not been re-surfaced for over 10 years. An LTA report completed three years ago stated that they had 18 months of use left. The surface of these courts is now starting to break up and some subsidence is visible.

There are currently 220 members. This would indicate, based on the LTA capacity guidelines, that there is some spare capacity. Club representatives, however, state that, at peak times, more courts are needed. Largely attributed to the junior development, which has taken place, the Club feels that it needs a sixth court.

In 2003 when membership stood at 270, a court booking/allocation timetable was implemented in order to give all sections/members access to court time. In 2004 there was a drop in membership and the timetable scheme was not implemented.

The Club committee is concerned that membership will continue to decline if the quality of the courts is not improved. The Herts LTA Development Officer considers that the Club's programme of activities is being restricted by the current provision of facilities.



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### *Rickmansworth Tennis Club*

Rickmansworth Tennis Club is situated on Meadow Way in Rickmansworth. Its provision of ten courts is broken down as follows:

- ❑ 3 artificial turf.
- ❑ 3 acrylic.
- ❑ 4 macadam.

Five of the courts are floodlit. The Club has a pavilion with bar, social area, kitchen and committee room. It has male and female changing rooms with showers and toilets. There is full disabled access to the pavilion and courts.

The Club membership currently stands at 450 members, 120 of which are juniors. Based on the LTA court capacity ratings this would indicate that the Club has capacity for additional members. This is a view shared by Club representatives who would like to work with TRDC to promote tennis activities.

However, the existing car park is only just big enough to accommodate the current membership. The expansion of this is an aspiration of the Club as is the provision of a practice wall.

The Club states that 'external' recognition and accreditation is a priority. It is currently working toward LTA Mini Tennis Centre Accreditation and has aspirations to become a performance centre.

It currently runs ten men's, ten ladies and four mixed teams in the Hertfordshire Tennis League and Watford Friendly League.

### *Oxhey Hall Tennis Club*

Oxhey Hall Tennis Club is located at Oxhey Hall Community Centre. It has three macadam courts, which are considered by the Club to be good quality. The community centre located there provides basic changing rooms and catering facilities, which are considered to be 'adequate' quality. Access to these facilities when there are other functions or groups using the community centre is not always possible.

The Club currently has around 70 members. Based on LTA capacity guidelines, it would appear that the Club has significant spare capacity.

### *Sarratt Tennis Club*

Sarratt Tennis Club is based at King George V Playing Fields in Sarratt. It has two macadam courts, which club representatives consider to be good quality. Although there is a pavilion on site, which is accessible on club nights and for organised events, it is not accessible for club members if they turn up for casual play. The Club has around



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100 members. Based on LTA capacity guidelines this would indicate that the facilities are being played over capacity.

The Club has developed a thriving junior section over the last few years. A club coach runs senior and junior coaching sessions as well as several of the senior club members being qualified tennis assistants and helping out with junior sessions.

The courts suffer from a small amount of vandalism. This is, however, a larger problem with the pavilion.

### *Chorleywood Tennis Club*

Chorleywood Tennis Club is located on the Chorleywood House Estate. The courts and clubhouse are leased from TRDC. The existing lease is due to expire in 2006. There are six courts, all macadam surface with floodlights. Although not described by the Club as inadequate quality, it is acknowledged that the courts will need resurfacing in the next three to four years. The Club has aspirations to resurface at least three of the courts with a porous acrylic surface.

The Club is waiting for a new lease to be granted in order that development planning for the courts can be started. It currently has around 350 members, approximately 100 of which are juniors. The Club does not operate a waiting list. Based on the LTA capacity guidelines it would appear that the Club's membership is close to capacity. This is reflected in Club comments stating that during the league season (May – July) there are often times when not enough court space is available to accommodate members although it does have an agreement with TRDC to use local public courts for junior training and match play.



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### 3.7.4 School tennis courts

Table 11: School tennis courts

School	No. of courts	Available for community use
St Michaels Catholic High School	6	No
Merchant Taylor	6	No
Royal Masonic	12	No
Rickmansworth School	4	No
St Joan of Arc	3	No
York House Preparatory School	3	No
St. Clement Danes School	3	No

### 3.7.5 Publicly accessible tennis courts

Courts, which are open for generally community use, are located at the following venues across the district:

Table 12: Publicly accessible tennis courts

Venue	No. of courts	KKP site visit comments
Scotsbridge Playing Field	6	Good quality courts. No evidence of vandalism.
Chorleywood House Estate	3	Good quality courts. Close to the entrance and easily accessible.
Baldwins Lane Playing Field	2	Surface of courts is quite worn. Limited lifespan remaining.
Maple Cross Playing Fields	2	Appear to be new courts. Good condition.
Leavesden Country Park	3	Only two of the courts had nets. Acceptable quality surface.
Oxhey Playing Fields	3	One court has recently been resurfaced and is good quality but the other two are in poor condition.

TRDC also leases three courts to Eastbury Residents Association. These are not for general public use.

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### 3.7.6 Summary of tennis in Three Rivers

- ❑ The number of courts and level of ancillary provision at Croxley Tennis Club is restricting participation.
- ❑ Access to the courts being developed at the former Durrants School site would solve part of this problem.
- ❑ Good or acceptable quality courts are available across the District for general community use at no charge.
- ❑ The three larger clubs in the District (Rickmansworth and Croxley Green and Chorleywood) are providing opportunities for junior participation and development.



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### 3.8 NETBALL

This section outlines the provision of facilities and deals with the issues for outdoor netball courts. Indoor courts are dealt with in the Indoor Sport & Recreation Facilities Assessment Report.

Parmiters School is the only secondary school in the District, which has outdoor netball courts, which are not over-marked with tennis. It has eight courts, which are discussed in detail below.

#### 3.8.1 Hertfordshire Netball Association (HNA)

Netball in Three Rivers is administered by HNA. All leagues and clubs are affiliated to this body. In addition All England Netball Association employs a regional development officer who has responsibility for the 'east area' of England.

There are two main focus areas for netball development in Hertfordshire:

- ❑ 11-16 age group development
- ❑ Grass roots to talented performer development.

A number of events take place in order to target the above focus areas, in particular skill award days (see below).

##### *Skill Award Days*

Held during the school holidays, the Award Days are in their fifth year. This programme has concentrated in the last couple of years on more talented players with a view to progressing them to play in a club.

##### *Club provision*

The Regional Development Officer reports that there are 18 clubs in Watford and 15 in Dacorum, most of whom either play in the Hemel Hempstead League or the Watford League. No clubs are considered to be from Three Rivers. However, this is probably because all the teams from Three Rivers area play in the Watford League and are, therefore, considered to be 'Watford' teams.



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However, due to the nature of local netball provision it is difficult to pinpoint where clubs and teams are from. Local leagues are run at central venues and members of teams and clubs may come from a wide and varied catchment area to play for a particular team.

### *County development centre*

HNA has identified Parmiters School as the County Development Centre for netball. This means that all county squad training sessions and county matches take place at the School. This involves the use of both indoor and outdoor courts.

The School would like HNA to contribute in some way to the refurbishment of the outdoor courts (see below).

In addition, TRDC has set up a local coaching centre at St. Clement Danes School targeted at 11-14 year old girls. This centre has been set up to feed into the Centre at Parmiters and also to balance out provision across the District.

### **3.8.2 Leagues**

Parmiters School is the central venue for the Watford League and the South West Herts League. These play on alternate Sundays on the outdoor courts. The South West Herts League has 16 teams in two divisions. The Watford League has 24 teams in three divisions. Most clubs play in both leagues in order that they have a match every week. Summer leagues are also run at Parmiters from May through to July.

Although the leagues are recruiting new teams however, the number participating has stayed about the same over the last few years in the winter leagues and has declined in the summer league.



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### 3.8.3 Watford Premier Netball Club

Watford Premier Netball Club is the biggest club locally and the only one to provide junior netball.

The Club runs coaching sessions for Year 4 through to adults, and competitive opportunities for Year 10 age group and upwards. Club training all takes place at Parmiters School as follows:

Monday	6-7pm	Yrs 4,5,6	Indoors/outdoors
Monday	7-8pm	Yrs 7,8,9,10	Indoors/outdoors
Thursday	7-8pm	Senior club training	Indoors
Thursday	8-9.30pm	Senior club training	Outdoors

As demonstrated above, the senior club training session takes place on a Thursday night. The Club is only able to book one hour in the sports hall due to demand from other activities (predominantly football). This training session accommodates nine senior teams, usually an attendance of around 60 players.

In some ways, given the numbers of players involved, it is better for the Club to have to go outside as there is more room. However, club representatives state that given the poor quality of the outside courts, the situation is not ideal.

The outdoor courts are ten years old and considered to be in need of resurfacing. The Club is happy that the School has done everything it can to try and maintain the courts e.g. regular jet washing, they are now getting to a state beyond repair. The courts are very slippery and considered by the Club and local leagues to be dangerous. There is also a lack of car parking at the site.

### 3.8.4 Summary of netball in Three Rivers

- Whilst netball does not suffer from a deficiency in the quantity of outdoor courts, there is a significant deficiency in the quality.
- As a County Development Centre for netball, Parmiters School has inadequate quality outdoor facilities and car parking.



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### 3.9 GOLF

Three Rivers has the following golf facilities:

Map 8: Golf facilities in Three Rivers

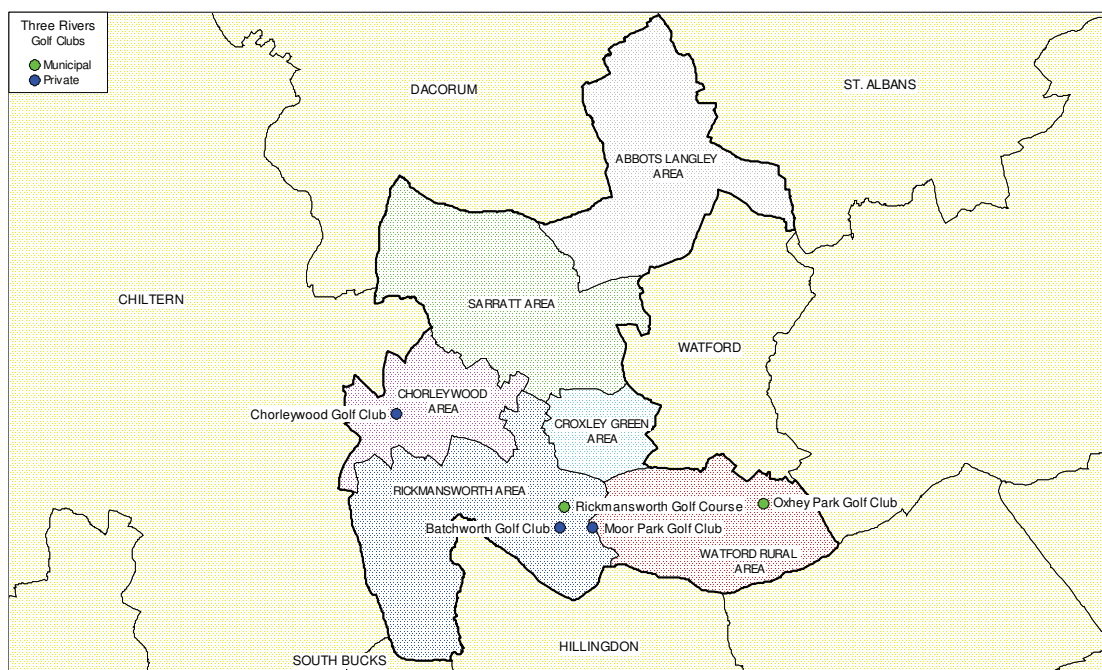


Table 13: Summary of golf facilities in Three Rivers

Venue	Ownership/management	18 hole course	9 hole course	Driving range/area	Practice areas		
					Bunker	Putt.	Net
Batchworth Park Golf Course	Private	✓		✓		✓	
Chorleywood Golf Course	Private		✓				
Moor Park Golf Course	Private	✓ (2)			✓	✓	✓
The Grove	Private	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Rickmansworth Public Golf Course	TRDC	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Oxhey Park Golf Course	TRDC – leased to private operator		✓	✓			



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### 3.9.1 Context

Many young people (often influenced by their parents' perceptions) may never consider taking up golf due to the general views of the sport being expensive to participate in (club membership and equipment) and having to be nominated/sponsored by an existing member(s) in order to join a club.

Over the last 10 years however, the nature of golf facilities has changed significantly. New commercially run centres have sprung up which offer 'pay and play' facilities as well as club membership. Individuals can pay a green fee for the day or even just pay for a round of golf, allowing access to the facilities in the same way as those at municipal golf courses but with the quality and range of facilities one would expect to find at a private club.

Due to the arrival and development of these 'commercial' facilities, golf is now more accessible than ever to a wider spectrum of the population. In many cases it is not cost but accessibility to these facilities, which is an inhibiting factor.

### 3.9.2 Club consultation

Due to the private and self-supporting nature of the golf clubs in the District, many were unwilling to provide detailed information about facilities (particularly development of facilities) and membership.

#### *Batchworth Park Golf Course*

Batchworth Golf Club is a private club located on the south side of Rickmansworth. It has approximately 700 members at present but also has a waiting list. There are very few junior members. It does not have a pay and play facility – access is strictly for members only. The Club has no plans to extend the facilities in the foreseeable future.



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### *Chorleywood Golf Course*

Chorleywood Golf Club is located on Chorleywood Common. It has a 9-hole course. The Club manager states that this limits the demand for membership and the Club currently has spare capacity with 280 members. The course cannot be extended due to by-laws on the common.

The facilities are available for non-members who can pay a daily green fee. Due to the open nature of the site, the greens do suffer from vandalism.

### *Moor Park Golf Course*

Moor Park Golf Club has around 1,500 members. Although visitors can pay a green fee, none of the facilities are open for 'pay and play'. The Club has an ongoing programme of improvements for the courses, practise facilities and social facilities although has no plans for extension, redevelopment etc.

### *Rickmansworth Public Golf Course*

Rickmansworth Public Golf Course is located on Moor Lane adjoining Moor Park Golf Course. It is the only municipal golf facility in the District and is owned by TRDC.

Rickmansworth Public Golf Course is a very popular local facility for people who are starting to play golf or only play occasionally. It sees itself as a feeder facility to the private courses and clubs in the area, which require players to have a handicap before they can join.

It is also considered by members and the management to be a more accessible facility for young people and those who cannot afford to join the bigger, private clubs.

At most times a teeing off time must be booked in order to avoid congestion. At peak times this must be done in groups (rather than individuals) in order to increase the number of people able to play. However, the management is sensitive to the balance of quality playing time and maximising participation/throughput. Peak times of usage are Saturday between 6.30am and 2pm.

Around 100 young people per week take part in coaching sessions run at the Course. Coaches and club professionals do outreach work with local schools with Tri-Golf activities. This is an introductory game using smaller equipment and larger and softer balls for young children.

There is also a members club attached to the Course, which currently has around 100 members. These make up about 2% of the usage of the facility. The membership has around a three to four year turnover as people join, get a handicap and move on to one of the other local clubs.



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Over the last few years the clubhouse and ancillary facilities at the Course have been completely refurbished. There is a publicly accessible bar and restaurant as well as changing rooms, toilets etc. for users of the golf facilities.

The aims of the management of Rickmansworth Public Golf Course over the next three to five years are to continue to raise standards and uphold the traditions of the game, whilst ensuring the facilities are available to all, including disabled users. From April 2005 the golf facilities at Rickmansworth can be booked on-line.

### *The Grove*

The Grove has a range of high quality golf facilities, which are open to members and non-members on an equal basis. The venue is to host the World Golf Championships in 2006.

### *Oxhey Park Golf Course*

Oxhey Park Golf Course is leased from TRDC to a private operator. It is a municipal facility with no 'membership' as such, although season ticket holders (currently standing at around 100) do organise activities and competitions. The nine-hole course and clubhouse are considered by the lease holder to be in need of general renovation.

The site is reported to suffer from high levels of vandalism. This includes damage to the greens, the clubhouse, shrubbery and trees. This damage is considered to have put off users.

The facility is considered to have a catchment area of two or three miles.

### **3.9.3 Summary of golf in Three Rivers**

- ❑ Rickmansworth Public Golf Course and Oxhey Park Golf Course are providing good introductory and development opportunities for people in the area wanting to play golf and are accessible to all in the community.
- ❑ Most of the provision in the District is concentrated in the south. The north is serviced to an extent by West Herts Golf Club (in Watford Borough).

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### 3.10 WATERSPORTS

Watersports activities are carried out at the following venues in Three Rivers:

- ❑ The Aquadrome, Rickmansworth (made up of Batchworth, Bury and Stockers lakes).
- ❑ Troy Lake, West Hyde.

*Map 9: Watersports venues in Three Rivers*

#### 3.10.1 Club consultation

*Bury Lake Young Mariners (BLYM)*

Bury Lake Young Mariners is a charity which was originally set up to provide sailing opportunities for young people. This has now extended to other groups including families and older people. BLYM has two types of membership:

- ❑ Groups – schools, youth groups, youth service, Colne Valley Special Sailors.
- ❑ Families – currently around 140 memberships.

The organisation has grown considerably over the last ten years and it has tried to maintain a modern fleet of boats and other equipment in order to keep pace with this. A Lottery grant was awarded in 2000, which enabled the purchase of new boats. This now means that whole groups can be accommodated on the water at any one time rather than having to rotate participation.

Between three and four thousand sessions are run each year. The average group size for these sessions is 25 participants.

BLYM lease the club house and surrounding land which provides storage and dinghy park from TRDC. It considers that the club house has come to the end of its useful life and that continuation and further development of activities are being restricted. Due to the growth in activity levels in recent years, these facilities are totally inadequate.

The charity reports that there is not enough space for changing rooms and lockers which presents child protection issues. Disabled provision for changing and general access to the club house exists but is inadequate. There are not any 'quiet spaces' or classroom facilities in the club house which are important in facilitating BLYM's role as a Royal Yachting Association (RYA) registered training centre

As with other users of the Aquadrome, BLYM has raised concerns about the level of vandalism and juvenile nuisance on the site, although due to its location it suffers less than other groups.

*Rickmansworth Waterski Club*



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Rickmansworth Waterski Club operates from Batchworth Lake at the Aquadrome. It leases its clubhouse from TRDC and is responsible for all internal maintenance. The Club has around 70 members who ski three days a week through the winter and every day through the summer. Only one person is able to ski at a time for safety reasons and size restrictions. The Club has two powerboats which are housed in a floating boathouse on the lake.

The Club runs a series of open days in the spring and summer to promote waterskiing to the local community and wider. It has plenty of equipment (skis, wetsuits, buoyancy aides etc), which is available for new members or those coming to try the activity to use.

Work is currently underway with TRDC to fence off the front of the clubhouse from the entrance to the Aquadrome where people come in to walk dogs to try and reduce the amount of dog excrement around the clubhouse.

The Club is concerned, and has had discussions with TRDC about the amount of vandalism which the site suffers. The clubhouse suffers large amounts of graffiti. In the past when the Club has installed external lighting it is ripped down within days. The boathouse is a constant target for vandals. Club representatives consider that the Aquadrome is not a safe place to be in the evenings and that this deters participation not just in waterskiing but in many other activities which could thrive at the site.

### *Colne Valley Special Sailors (CVSS)*

Colne Valley Special Sailors has been running for four years. It is affiliated to Bury Lake Young Mariners and meets twice a week from May through to September. The Wednesday meeting is largely attended by schools and groups and the Saturday session by individuals. CVSS is rapidly expanding and this season a third session may be needed. There are currently 172 disabled sailors and 44 volunteers.

CVSS regards vandalism in the Aquadrome as a problem, it feels that it has adequate ways of dealing with it in terms of the security of its boats and equipment. Representatives expressed concerns that although planning permission has been granted for improvements to the car park (grant aided by TRDC) which would assist disabled users in accessing the facilities, the improvements have yet to be carried out.

### *Out of Town Action Sports Ltd (OTAS)*

Out of Town Action Sports has a base at the Aquadrome in Rickmansworth. It runs water-based activities such as canoeing, kayaking and windsurfing. During the week its clients are mainly school groups. At the weekends clients are youth and community groups or individuals. The main months of operation are between May and September.

The Company leases a building from TRDC from which it runs its operations. This lease is due to expire in about three years. It considers that the size and specification of the



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building is restricting its operations. There is currently room for only about 50 people at any one time. Storage room is also restricted. Large groups of 100-200 people regularly have to be turned away or accommodated at the Company's land based centre in Kings Langley. This fact alone is making the site unprofitable for Out of Town Action Sports. If a solution is not found, the Company considers that it may not want to re-new the lease.

Many of the groups, which use the facilities, are not from the Three Rivers or even Watford areas. They tend to be from areas of London where these type of facilities are not available. Out of Town Action Sports would like to work more closely with TRDC to promote the facilities and activities locally.

### *Rickmansworth Sailing Club*

Rickmansworth Sailing Club is located at Troy Lake in West Hyde. The lake covers 45 acres of water which is owned by the Club and its members. The Club will be 75 years old in July 2005. Membership has grown steadily over the last 10 years.

The lake suffers from pond weed in the summer and the Club was given a grant of £5,000 from TRDC to purchase a weed cutter in order that sailing could continue. This necessity diverted funds, which were also required for the refurbishment of an outdoor toilet block for men, ladies and disabled users. This is now a priority for the Club, which is hoping that additional grants may be available from TRDC in the coming seasons.

Rickmansworth Sailing Club is very family orientated and organises specific family activities and events. It also has an extensive handicap race programme which runs all year round. Club race training sessions are held throughout the year with Club members who are qualified RYA instructors.

The Club also lets the facilities out for use by Batchworth and Amersham Sea Scouts and Batchworth Dragon Boat Club.

### 3.11.3 Rickmansworth Aquadrome Management Plan 2005-2010

TRDC has recently produced a management plan for the Aquadrome which pulls together many of the issues raised above as well as issues relating to conservation, biodiversity and woodland management.

The management plan outlines the following objectives:

- ❑ To maintain and improve existing habitats, including improved biodiversity and woodland management.
- ❑ To maintain and encourage free, safe access to the public, including people with a disability.



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- ❑ To encourage use by educational groups and improve the educational potential of the site, including information and interpretation.
- ❑ To encourage recreational activities by groups and individuals.
- ❑ To improve the quality of the public buildings and the established users buildings in partnership with those users.
- ❑ Partners be sought to improve and develop facilities for the improvement of services in the Aquadrome and to provide an income stream.

The Aquadrome Management Plan also outlines an action plan for each of the objectives including the following:

- ❑ Consideration of extending/replacing BLYM buildings
- ❑ Consideration of replacing OTAS building and café.
- ❑ Maintain waterski building.
- ❑ Palasade fencing around sides and rear of waterski building.
- ❑ Review jetty/slipway provision to establish what repairs/replacement may be necessary.
- ❑ Continue to encourage and liaise with user groups via the Aquadrome Licencees meeting.
- ❑ Waterski club to investigate possible extensions to Batchworth Lake.

### 3.11.3 Summary of watersports in Three Rivers

- ❑ Three Rivers has a strong contingent of watersports clubs and groups based around the Aquadrome in Rickmansworth.
- ❑ The operations of these groups are somewhat compromised by the quality of ancillary facilities which are available and vandalism and security issues (or perceptions of these) which are associated with the site.
- ❑ These issues are/will be addressed by the Aquadrome Management Plan and its implementation.



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### PART 4: EDUCATION PROVISION – AREA-BY-AREA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

As stated earlier in this document, legislation within the Schools Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 was introduced by the Government requiring all state schools to seek approval from the Secretary of State for Education and Employment (Education and Skills since July 2001) for the sale of their playing fields. Section 77 of the SSFA seeks to protect school playing fields against disposal or change of use by requiring the prior consent of the Secretary of State before disposal or change of use may take place. The Department for Education and Employment produced guidance on section 77 of the SSFA within Circular 3/99 'The Protection of School Playing Fields' in June 1999.

Circular 3/99 has recently been replaced by guidance from the Department for Education and Skills entitled 'The Protection of School Playing Fields and Land for City Academies'. The guidance aims to strengthen the existing measures for protecting school playing fields. In particular, the guidance intends to support the development and improvement of sporting and play provision for the benefit of schools and their local communities, and to provide wider access to these facilities. Applications for disposal or change of use of playing fields will not only have to take account of existing community use but the potential use of the facilities for the local community.

The provision of pitches at schools and colleges can make an important contribution to the overall stock of playing pitches within a particular catchment area. It is therefore important to have accurate information about the number, type, quality and availability of pitches within the education sector in Three Rivers.

The following section details playing pitch and associated facility provision on school sites. The structure is as follows:

- Details of the provision and quality of pitches and facilities at high schools and primary schools that allow community use. This section also details those clubs that either use, or have shown an interest in using, these pitches. Information regarding number and type of pitches and non-pitches is shown in Part four.



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- Details of the provision and quality of pitches and facilities at high schools, primary schools and colleges that do not allow community use. Information regarding number and type of pitches and non-pitches is contained within the text.

### 4.2 Secondary School summary

#### *St Michaels Catholic High School (1008 pupils including 6<sup>th</sup> Form)*

Located in Three Rivers, but close to the Watford Borough boundary, the School's catchment area covers both Three Rivers and Watford areas.

The School grounds will be developed with an ATP as part of the 4-way NOF bid (the partners are listed below). There will be no net loss of playing pitches. St Michaels is leading the process on behalf of the four schools involved. Allocation of funding was successful and building was due to start February 2005. Community use of the facility is to be managed by Parmiters School Consortium for an agreed management fee. The four schools involved will have priority use from 9.00am until 6.00pm as follows:

- Francis Combe (Watford) – 40%.
- St Michaels School – 40%.
- Garston Manor Special School – 10%.
- St Catherine of Sienna Catholic Primary School – 10%.

#### *Merchant Taylor Boys School*

This independent school has a total of 250 acres including farmland and lakes. The land is owned by trust and has been available for community use for the past 20 years acting as both an income stream and to develop a relationship with the local community. There are 80 acres of playing field.

There is heavy use of the ATP by the community. It is booked to capacity at peak times.



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The main inhibitor for further community use of the grass pitches is lack of community changing accommodation. In particular there is a lack of women's facilities because this is a boys' school. There is also demand to increase the floodlighting on the ATP to 9.30pm for hockey training to allow for travel across London. However, the current planning permission does not allow this.

The School has recently submitted a planning application for a £6m sports facility development in partnership with Old Merchant Taylor Sports Club in Croxley Green. Old Merchant Taylor Sports Club is looking to relocate to the school site with funds from sale of the land benefiting the project. New facilities planned include:

- ❑ ATP – waterbased and floodlit until 9.30pm.
- ❑ 2 senior rugby pitches re-laid.
- ❑ 2 cricket pitches re-laid, one to premier league standard.
- ❑ Cricket pavilion.
- ❑ Clubhouse including changing accommodation for ATP and sports hall.
- ❑ New access road.

The planning application is still being considered by TRDC.

### *St Clement Danes*

The School is perceived to be 'well off' locally in terms of sports provision with good quality outdoor facilities, including a floodlit ATP and two main indoor areas.

Provision needs to be made for the replacement of the ATP carpet, which is eight years old and although currently in good condition its life span is not expected to reach much past the next five years.



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### *St Joan of Arc (1200 pupils including 6<sup>th</sup> form)*

Located close to the centre of Rickmansworth, this large school has poor quality sports facilities both indoors and outdoors. The School struggles to accommodate a full sports programme and find many pupils miss out on sports during the winter months due to lack of indoor space and poor quality playing fields.

Playing fields are split over two sites, with one over five minutes walk away. Although this site is ideal for community use there is no access to changing accommodation to make it viable to let out.

### *Parmiters School (1220 pupils including 6<sup>th</sup> form)*

This large school is well known in the area for provision of good quality sports facilities. It is a key provider of outdoor facilities in Three Rivers and north Watford.

Its extensive playing field provision provides a home to many local football clubs. All pitches are of a high standard, some to county league standard. They are regularly maintained by the School's groundsman in partnership with the clubs. The recently opened third generation turf pitch, funded by the Football Foundation, (the only one in the area), is booked to capacity throughout the week. The site meets FA requirements and reflects the aim of achieving 'cradle to grave' football provision on one site.

The site is also the County netball centre, catering for county squad training and matches as well as a number of leagues during the winter and summer.

### *Royal Masonic Girls School*

Although the School has outdoor facilities including 14 tennis courts and grass hockey pitches, these are not available for community use. There is potential to accommodate community use of the tennis courts if demand were expressed,. The School is interested in looking at the potential to partner an ATP. Car parking for the whole site would need to be increased to adequately accommodate community use.



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### *Rickmansworth School*

Rickmansworth School, situated Park Road, Rickmansworth, has 1,500 pupils. The school has vastly expanded over recent years and currently struggles to facilitate all the sporting needs, both curricular and extra curricular, of the current student population.

Currently the School has two senior football pitches, two senior rugby pitches and a grass hockey pitch, all described as being in adequate condition. Further to the grass pitch facilities, it has four tennis courts, two of which have been recently resurfaced and floodlit and four netball courts.

### 4.3 Primary school summary by analysis area

All primary and junior schools in the District were questionnaired regarding their provision of outdoor sports facilities. The following responses were received:

School	Analysis area	Community use	Football pitches		
			Senior	Junior	mini
Divine Saviour RC Primary	Abbots Langley	No	-	2	-
St. Paul's C of E	Abbots Langley	Yes	-	-	-
St Catherine of Siena RC J M I	Abbots Langley	Yes	1	-	-
Tannerswood School	Abbots Langley	No	-	-	-
Chorleywood Primary	Chorleywood	Yes	-	2	-
Christ Church Church of England	Chorleywood	No	-	-	-
Russell(The)	Chorleywood	Yes	-	-	-
Harvey Road Primary	Croxley Green	Yes	-	1	-
Little Green Jnr School	Croxley Green	Yes	-	-	2
Yorke Mead School	Croxley Green	Yes	-	2	-
Shepherd Primary School	Rickmansworth	No	-	1	-
Arnett Hills JMI	Rickmansworth	Yes	-	-	-
St Mary's C of E Primary	Rickmansworth	Yes	-	-	-
Sarratt Church of England	Sarratt	No	-	1	-
Eastbury Farm JMI & Nursery	Watford Rural	No	-	-	4
Oxhey Wood Primary	Watford Rural	No	-	2	-
St Meryls JMI School	Watford Rural	Yes	-	-	1
Warrendell School	Watford Rural	No	-	1	-

Schools which have no formal pitches marked out tend to have a generic grass field which is used for sports activities. This could still be a useful space for clubs and teams to access for training and/or matches if pitches can be marked out with cones.

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Around 25% of the primary and junior schools in the District did not respond to the questionnaire. These include:

- ❑ Abbots Langley Primary School
- ❑ Bedmond Village Primary School
- ❑ Greenfields Primary School
- ❑ Maple Cross JMI
- ❑ Rickmansworth Park JMI
- ❑ St. John's RC Primary.



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### PART 6: 'SHORTFALL, ADEQUACY AND REQUIREMENT '

#### 6.1 Introduction

This section carries out various analyses on the information outlined in the previous sections. The analysis follows the guidelines in Sport England's 'Towards A Level Playing Field' and includes:

- ❑ Temporal supply and demand analysis (SE Playing Pitch Model)
- ❑ Team generation rates (TGRs)
- ❑ Qualitative local standards.

#### *Temporal supply and demand analysis*

The temporal demand for games is the proportion of matches that are played each day at particular times. E.g. by looking at the temporal demand it can be identified that Sunday morning is the peak time for senior football matches in Three Rivers. The supply and demand analysis compares the demand at various peak times with the number of pitches available for use. It has only been used to analyse the issues for football in Three Rivers as the issues surrounding provision for the other sports are relatively straightforward. The Playing Pitch Model (PPM) is used for this numerical analysis. There are three ways in which the model is used:

- ❑ To reflect the existing situation, using information on existing teams and pitches.
- ❑ To test the adequacy of current provision by manipulating the variable in the model e.g. to remove all the pitches rated as 'inadequate/poor' from the supply side.
- ❑ To predict future requirements for pitches, by incorporating planned pitches and projected changes in population and participation.

#### *Team generation rates (TGRs)*

TGRs indicate how many people in a specified age group are currently required to generate one team. They are derived by dividing the appropriate population age band in a given area by the number of teams in that area in that age band. The TGR for each sport and age group has been calculated and used in modelling current adequacy and future demand. TGRs have been calculated for each analysis area in Three Rivers

The TGRs for Three Rivers show relatively good levels of participation amongst men and junior age group boys. However, TGRs are not calculated for women and girls for some sports as there are no teams from the District. Whilst it may be conceded that females from Three Rivers travel out of the District (perhaps into Watford) to participate in pitch sports, at a junior level this is less likely and consideration needs



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to be given to the stimulation of demand and continued development of opportunities to participate for activities such as girls football, cricket and rugby.

Although TGRs are not calculated for the non-pitch sports, consultation shows high levels of participation by women in activities such as netball.

### *Qualitative local standard*

Within local plans/unitary development plans, many local authorities use the NPFA guidelines in setting local standards for outdoor sports provision. This is usually based on a number of hectares per 1,000 population which should be protected and maintained as formal outdoor sports provision and designated as such in the local plan/UDP. The NPFA outline 1.21 hectares of formal outdoor sports pitches as an aspiration for provision. Local authorities can then use this figure as a benchmark. E.g. in the Watford Rural area there is currently over two hectares of playing pitch provision per 1,000 population. Compared to the NPFA standard this shows a good level of provision.

However, taking this analysis a step further to identify within the pitch stock, adequate and inadequate provision and levels of latent demand in the area, makes the standard significantly more representative of the local situation. By factoring in this information a 'qualitative local standard' can be derived. That is to say a local standard, which takes into account local qualitative information.

The qualitative local standard is calculated by adding the hectarage of pitch stock available for community use to the identified shortfall of pitches (latent demand). It is also useful to identify the amount of inadequate pitches within the existing stock.

It is advised that the qualitative local standards are adopted as part of the UDP and used as supplementary planning guidance in the context of planning applications such as the following:

- ❑ Where applicants propose the removal/relocation of playing pitches, which will effect the amount of provision in a given area.
- ❑ Where developer contributions can be gained to improve the quality of existing facilities.

### *Summary*

It is important that all three levels of analysis are kept up to date. In line with recommendations in PPG 17: Planning for Open Space Sport & Recreation, it is important that TRDC has a current audit and assessment of provision in order to respond appropriately to the needs of the local community.



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### 6.2 Identified adequacy and latent demand

Through face-to-face and questionnaire consultation with clubs, in addition to consultation with sports development officers and governing body representatives, very little expression of latent (unmet demand) has been identified. Issues raised are largely to do with the quality and accessibility of facilities rather than the need for more. As highlighted in Section 5, a number of sites have been identified as over-played.

A formula for the provision of enhancements to existing facilities should assist TRDC in reducing the number of inadequate pitches identified in this study. This could be done by either providing investment in existing facilities or providing new facilities of the appropriate standard. In the longer term, the improvements to facility provision should increase use and demand for pitch provision within the District. TRDC should review the adequacy of provision as part of a rolling programme every three to five years to identify inadequacies in provision and revise priorities as applicable.





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### 6.3 Analysis summary: Abbots Langley Area

Table 37: Abbots Langley area – pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	17	7	9	9	-	26	-	17
Cricket	3	1	-	7	-	12	-	-
Hockey	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rugby Union	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 38: Abbots Langley area – current demand

Sport	Site	Pitches being overplayed
Football	Southway Playing Fields	2 senior 1 junior 1 mini
<b>Total</b>		<b>2 senior</b> <b>1 junior</b> <b>1 mini</b>

No latent demand has been expressed in the Abbots Langley area.

### Temporal supply and demand analysis

Table 39: Abbots Langley area – temporal supply and demand summary

	Total pitches available for community use	Pitches required to meet demand at peak time	Shortfall of pitches
Senior	17	3	+14
Junior	7	13	-6
Mini	9	9	0

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Can demand be catered for?

Table 40: Abbots Langley area - impact of overplay & latent demand

	Shortfall of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	+14	2	Although it would appear that there is significant spare capacity in the senior pitch stock, these pitches are probably being used by junior/youth teams to a certain extent.
Junior	-6	1	Although it would appear there is a shortfall of pitches to accommodate junior football at peak times, teams are probably playing on senior size pitches at U13 age groups upwards.
Mini	0	1	The quality of existing pitches needs to be improved in order to accommodate the current level of play.

### TGRs

The following TGRs have been calculated for the Abbots Langley area. Where no TGR is shown this indicates that no teams operate at that age group, for that sport, in that area.

Table 41: Abbots Langley area football TGRs

	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>FOOTBALL TEAMS</b>	9	0	26	0	17
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
	3,591	3,640	766	644	879
<b>TGRs</b>	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
	<b>1:399</b>		<b>1:29</b>		<b>1:52</b>
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:254</b>	<b>1:16,585</b>	<b>1:72</b>	<b>1:816</b>	<b>1:137</b>

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 42: Abbots Langley area cricket TGRs

Abbots Langley Area				
CRICKET TEAMS	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
	7	0	12	0
POPULATION 2001 Census	18-55 Men	18-55 Women	11-17 Boys	11-17 Girls
	4,607	4,662	748	717
TGRs	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
	1:658		1:62	
THREE RIVERS	1:1,000		1:191	

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Abbots Langley area.

Table 43: Abbots Langley area pitch provision summary

Population (2001 Census) 17,266	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	17	17	16	1	0
Junior football	9	7	7	0	0
Mini football	9	9	8	1	0
Senior rugby union	1	1	1	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Gaelic football	0	0	0	0	0
Australian football	0	0	0	0	0
US football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	3	3	3	0	0
Junior cricket	2	1	1	0	0
Senior grass hockey	3	3	3	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Non-pitch outdoor sports facilities</b>	<b>Total number of facilities</b>	<b>No. of facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of adequate facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of inadequate facilities for community use</b>	<b>No. of facilities required to meet latent demand</b>
Tennis	10	10	10	0	
Netball	8	8	0	8	
Athletics track	0	0	0	0	
Lawn bowling green	1	1	1	0	

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*Table 44: Abbots Langley area - local standard calculation*

Existing facility stock	Adequate pitches available for community use (ha per 1,000)	2.28
	Adequate non-pitch facilities for community use (ha per 1,000)	0.05
	Required improvements to existing playing pitch space (ha per 1,000)	0.10
Additional pitches required to meet latent demand	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and non-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>2.46</b>

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 6.4 Analysis summary: Chorleywood area

Table 45: Chorleywood area – pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	3	8	3	4	-	8	-	7
Cricket	-	-	-	5	-	7	-	-
Hockey	1	-	1	5	3	2	1	-
Rugby Union	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 46: Chorleywood area – current demand

Sport	Site	Pitches being overplayed
Football	Chorleywood House Estate	6 junior pitches
<b>Total</b>		<b>6 junior pitches</b>

No latent demand has been identified in the Chorleywood area.

Temporal supply and demand analysis for football

Table 47: Chorleywood area – temporal supply and demand

	Total pitches	Pitches required to meet demand on peak days	Shortfall of pitches
Senior	3	2	+1
Junior	8	4	+4
Mini	3	4	-1

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Can demand be catered for?

Table 48: Chorleywood sub area – impact of overplay and latent demand

	Shortfall of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	+1	None	There would appear to be a small surplus of pitches in relation to local demand.
Junior	+4	6	Although there are more pitches available at peak times than there is demand for, some pitches are being overplayed indicating a need for redistribution of teams.
Mini	-1	None	In practical terms, given the relatively small amount of wear and tear that a mini football game generates it can be assumed that demand is generally being catered for.

### TGRs

Table 49: Chorleywood area football TGRs

Chorleywood Area					
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>FOOTBALL TEAMS</b>	4	0	8	0	7
<b>POPULATION 2001</b>	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
<b>Census</b>	1,460	1,542	419	396	469
<b>TGRs</b>	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
	1:365		1:52		1:67
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	1:254	1:16,585	1:72	1:816	1:137

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Table 50: Chorleywood area cricket TGRs

Chorleywood Area				
CRICKET TEAMS	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
	5	0	7	0
POPULATION 2001 Census	18-55 Men	18-55 Women	11-17 Boys	11-17 Girls
	2,126	2,232	401	433
TGRs	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
	1:425		1:57	
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:1,000</b>		<b>1:191</b>	

Table 51: Chorleywood area hockey TGRs

Chorleywood Area				
HOCKEY TEAMS	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
	5	3	2	1
POPULATION 2001 Census	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	11-15 Boys	11-15 Girls
	1,460	1,907	303	327
TGRs	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
	1:292	1:636	1:151	1:327
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:3,198</b>	<b>1:3,751</b>	<b>1:1,358</b>	<b>1:2,705</b>



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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Chorleywood sub area.

*Table 52: Chorleywood area –provision summary*

Population (2001 Census) 9,200	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	3	3	3	0	0
Junior football	8	8	6	2	0
Mini football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	1	1	1	0	0
Junior cricket	0	0	0	0	0
Senior grass hockey	1	1	1	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	1	1	1	0	0
Non-pitch outdoor sports facilities	Total number of facilities	No. of facilities available for community use	No. of adequate facilities available for community use	No. of inadequate facilities for community use	No. of facilities required to meet latent demand
Tennis	12	6	6	0	0
Netball	0	0	0	0	0
Athletics track	0	0	0	0	0
Lawn bowling green	0	0	0	0	0

*Table 53: Chorleywood area - local standard calculation*

Existing pitch stock	Adequate pitches available for community use (ha per 1,000)	1.39
	Adequate non-pitch facilities available for community use (ha, per 1,000)	0.04
	Required improvements to existing playing pitch space (ha per 1,000)	0.18
Additional pitches required to meet	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0

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latent demand		
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and non-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>1.61</b>

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### 6.5 Analysis summary: Croxley Green Area

Table 54: Croxley Green area pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	5	4	2	17	-	7	-	3
Cricket	3	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
Hockey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rugby Union	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-

Table 55: Croxley Green area – current demand

Sport	Site	Pitches being overplayed
Football	Barton Way Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club	3 senior 1 junior
<b>Total</b>		<b>3 senior football</b> <b>1 junior football</b>

Table 56: Croxley Green area - summary of latent/future demand

Club	Site	Level of latent demand	Requirement
Croxley Green TC	Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club	1 tennis court	1 tennis court
<b>Total</b>			<b>1 tennis court</b>

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### Temporal supply and demand analysis

Table 57: Croxley Green area – temporal supply and demand

	Total pitches available for community use	Pitches required to meet demand on peak days	Shortfall of pitches
Senior	5	7	-2
Junior	4	3	-1
Mini	2	2	0

### Can demand be catered for?

Table 58: Croxley Green area – impact of overplay and latent demand

	Shortfall of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	-2	4	It should be recognised that the overplay identified is marginal. Teams using the sites rate the quality of the pitches as good.
Junior	-1	4	It should be recognised that the overplay identified is marginal. Teams using the sites rate the quality of the pitches as good.
Mini	0	0	It would appear that at present demand is being met by the existing pitch stock.

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### TGRs

Table 59: Croxley Green area football TGRs

Croxley Green Area					
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>FOOTBALL TEAMS</b>	17	0	7	0	3
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
	2,448	2,458	570	476	584
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:144</b>		<b>1:81</b>		<b>1:195</b>
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:254</b>	<b>1:16,585</b>	<b>1:72</b>	<b>1:816</b>	<b>1:137</b>

Table 60: Croxley Green area cricket TGRs

Croxley Green Area				
	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
<b>CRICKET TEAMS</b>	6	0	0	0
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	18-55 Men	18-55 Women	11-17 Boys	11-17 Girls
	3,189	3,192	562	541
	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:532</b>			
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:1,000</b>		<b>1:191</b>	

Table 61: Croxley Green area rugby TGRs

Croxley Green Area					
	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
<b>RUGBY UNION TEAMS</b>	2	0	0	0	0
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	18-45 Men	18-45 Women	13-17 Boys	16-17 Girls	8-12 Mixed
	2,299	2,313	393	146	788
	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:1,149</b>				
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:3,768</b>				<b>1:5,491</b>

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Croxley Green sub area

Table 62: Croxley Green area – pitch provision summary

Population (2001 Census) 12,166	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	5	5	5	0	0
Junior football	4	4	1	3	0
Mini football	2	2	2	0	0
Senior rugby union	1	1	1	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Gaelic football	0	0	0	0	0
Australian football	0	0	0	0	0
US football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	3	3	3	0	0
Junior cricket	0	0	0	0	0
Senior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Non-pitch outdoor sports facilities</b>	<b>Total number of facilities</b>	<b>No. of facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of adequate facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of inadequate facilities for community use</b>	<b>No. of facilities required to meet latent demand</b>
Tennis	7	7	7	0	1
Netball	0	0	0	0	0
Athletics track	0	0	0	0	0
Crown bowling green	0	0	0	0	0
Lawn bowling green	1	1	1	0	0

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*Table 63: Croxley Green area local standard calculation*

Existing pitch stock	Adequate pitches available for community use (ha per 1,000)	1.19
	Adequate non-pitch outdoor sports facilities available for community use	0.06
	Required improvements to existing playing pitch space (ha per 1,000)	0.20
Additional pitches required to meet latent demand	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0.01
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and non-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>1.46</b>

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## 6.6 Analysis summary: Rickmansworth Area

Table 64: Rickmansworth area – pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of pitches available for community use			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	4	1	-	16	-	3	-	-
Cricket	4	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Hockey	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Rugby Union	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	1

There are no sites being overplayed and no identified latent demand in the Rickmansworth area.

## Temporal supply and demand analysis

Table 65: Rickmansworth area – temporal supply and demand

	Total pitches available for community use	Pitches required to meet demand on peak days	Shortfall of pitches
Senior	4	7	-3
Junior	1	1	0
Mini	0	0	0

## Can demand be catered for?

Table 66: Rickmansworth area – impact of overplay and latent demand

	Shortfall of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	-3	None	
Junior	0	None	Current demand is being met by the existing pitch stock.
Mini	0	None	Current demand is being met by the existing pitch stock.



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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### TGRs

Table 67: Rickmansworth area football TGRs

FOOTBALL TEAMS  POPULATION 2001 Census  TGRs	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
	16	0	3	0	0
	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
	3,364	3,535	714	643	769
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:210</b>		<b>1:238</b>		
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:254</b>	<b>1:16,585</b>	<b>1:72</b>	<b>1:816</b>	<b>1:137</b>

Table 68: Rickmansworth area cricket TGRs

CRICKET TEAMS  POPULATION 2001 Census  TGRs	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
	3	0	0	0
	18-55 Men	18-55 Women	11-17 Boys	11-17 Girls
	4,321	4,422	680	736
	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:1,440</b>			
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:1,000</b>		<b>1:191</b>	

Table 69: Rickmansworth area rugby TGRs

RUGBY UNION TEAMS  POPULATION 2001 Census  TGRs	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
	2	0	0	0	1
	18-45 Men	18-45 Women	13-17 Boys	16-17 Girls	8-12 Mixed
	3,192	3,333	469	202	1,026
	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:1,596</b>				<b>1:1,026</b>
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:3,768</b>				<b>1:5,491</b>

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 70: Rickmsworth area hockey TGRs

Rickmansworth Area				
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
<b>HOCKEY TEAMS</b>	0	1	0	0
	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	11-15 Boys	11-15 Girls
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	3,364	2,859	508	534
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
<b>TGRs</b>		<b>1:2,859</b>		
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:3,198</b>	<b>1:3,751</b>	<b>1:1,358</b>	<b>1:2,705</b>

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Rickmansworth area

*Table 71: Rickmansworth area pitch provision summary*

Population (2001 Census) 16,597	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	6	4	4	0	0
Junior football	3	1	1	0	0
Mini football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby union	2	2	2	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Gaelic football	0	0	0	0	0
Australian football	0	0	0	0	0
US football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	5	4	4	0	0
Junior cricket	0	0	0	0	0
Senior grass hockey	5	1	1	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Non-pitch outdoor sports facilities</b>	<b>Total number of facilities</b>	<b>No. of facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of adequate facilities available for community use</b>	<b>No. of inadequate facilities for community use</b>	<b>No. of facilities required to meet latent demand</b>
Tennis	31	16	16	0	0
Netball	0	0	0	0	0
Athletics track	0	0	0	0	0
Crown bowling green	0	0	0	0	0
Lawn bowling green	2	2	2	0	0

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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*Table 72: Rickmansworth area local standard calculation*

Existing pitch stock	Adequate pitches available for community use (ha per 1,000)	0.95
	Adequate non-pitch facilities available for community use (ha per 1,000)	0.10
	Required improvements to existing playing pitch space (ha per 1,000)	0
Additional pitches required to meet latent demand	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and on-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>1.05</b>

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 6.7 Analysis summary: Sarratt area

Table 73: Sarratt area – pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of available pitches			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior mens	Senior womens	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	1	-	2	3	-	1	-	3
Cricket	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hockey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rugby Union	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Sport	Site	Pitches being overplayed
Football	King George V Playing Field Sarratt	1 senior football
<b>Total</b>		<b>1 senior football</b>

No latent demand has been identified in the Sarratt area

## Temporal supply and demand analysis

Table 74: Sarratt area – temporal supply and demand

	Total pitches	Pitches required to meet demand on peak days	Shortfall/surplus of pitches
Senior	1	2	-1
Junior	-	-	-
Mini	2	2	-

## Can demand be catered for?

Table 75: Sarratt area – impact of overplay and latent demand

	Shortfall of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	1 senior football	1 senior football	The senior pitch is currently overplayed. See also comment below re. mini football.
Junior	-	-	-
Mini	None	None	Although demand can be met at present and the local club has not identified any latent demand, as mini teams progress through to

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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			junior '11 a side' football additional junior or senior pitches may be required.
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# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### TGRs

Table 77: Sarratt area football TGRs

	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>FOOTBALL TEAMS</b>	3	0	1	0	3
<b>POPULATION 2001 Census</b>	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
	288	283	71	62	79
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>TGRs</b>	<b>1:96</b>		<b>1:71</b>		<b>1:26</b>
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	<b>1:242</b>	<b>1:16,585</b>	<b>1:63</b>	<b>1:816</b>	<b>1:125</b>

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Sarratt area

Table 81: Sarratt area pitch provision summary

Population (2001 Census) 1,889	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	2	0	0	0	0
Junior football	1	0	0	0	0
Mini football	2	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	2	0	0	0	0
Junior cricket	0	0	0	0	0
Senior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	0	0	0	0	0

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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*Table 82: Sarratt area local standard calculation*

Existing pitch stock	Adequate facilities available for community use (ha per 1,000)	1.91
	Required improvements to existing facilities (ha per 1,000)	0.07
Additional pitches required to meet latent demand	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and non-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>1.98</b>



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 6.8 Analysis summary: Watford Rural area

Table 83: Watford Rural area – pitch and team summary

Sport	No. of available pitches			No. of teams				
	Senior	Junior	Mini / ATP	Senior mens	Senior womens	Junior boys	Junior girls	Mini
Football	9	4	11	17	1	8	4	4
Cricket	10	-	-	3	-	2	-	-
Hockey	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Rugby Union	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 84: Watford Rural area – current demand

Sport	Site	Pitches being overplayed
Football	Romilly Drive & Oulton Way	1 junior football pitch
<b>Total</b>		<b>1 junior football pitch</b>

No latent demand has been identified for the Watford Rural area.

### Temporal supply and demand analysis

Table 85: Watford Rural area – temporal supply and demand

	Total pitches	Pitches required to meet demand on peak days	Shortfall of pitches
Senior	11	5	+6
Junior	4	6	+2
Mini	7	2	+5

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Can demand be catered for?

Table 86: Watford Rural area – impact of overplay and latent demand

	Shortfall/surplus of pitches at peak time	Overplay/latent demand for pitches	Comment
Senior	+6	None	It would appear that there is significant spare capacity in the existing pitch stock at peak times.
Junior	+2	1	The level of over play could be accommodated by re-distributing play around the existing pitch stock.
Mini	+5	None	It would appear that there is significant spare capacity in the existing pitch stock at peak times.

### TGRs

Table 87: Watford Rural area football TGRs

Watford Rural Area					
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (10-15) Boys	Junior (10-15) Girls	Mini-soccer (6-9) Mixed
<b>FOOTBALL TEAMS</b>	17	1	8	4	4
<b>POPULATION 2001</b>	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	10-15 Boys	10-15 Girls	6-9 Mixed
<b>Census</b>	4,839	5,127	1,212	1,043	1,470
<b>TGRs</b>	1:285	1:5,127	1:151	1:261	1:367
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	1:254	1:16,585	1:72	1:816	1:137

Table 88: Watford Rural area cricket TGRs

Watford Rural Area				
	Senior (18-55) Mens	Senior (18-55) Womens	Junior (11-17) Boys	Junior (11-17) Girls
<b>CRICKET TEAMS</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>POPULATION 2001</b>	18-55 Men	18-55 Women	11-17 Boys	11-17 Girls
<b>Census</b>	6,329	6,595	1,173	1,157
<b>TGRs</b>	1:1,000		1:191	
<b>THREE RIVERS</b>	1:1,000		1:191	

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 89: Watford Rural area rugby TGRs

Watford Rural Area					
RUGBY UNION TEAMS  POPULATION 2001 Census  TGRs	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
	0	0	0	0	0
	18-45 Men	18-45 Women	13-17 Boys	16-17 Girls	8-12 Mixed
	4,547	4,834	806	294	1,824
	Senior (18-45) Mens	Senior (18-45) Womens	Junior (13-17) Boys	Junior (16-17) Girls	Mini-rugby (8-12) Mixed
TGRs					
THREE RIVERS	1:3,768				1:5,491

Table 90: Watford Rural area hockey TGRs

Watford Rural Area				
HOCKEY TEAMS  POPULATION 2001 Census  TGRs	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
	0	0	0	0
	16-45 Men	16-45 Women	11-15 Boys	11-15 Girls
	4,839	4,529	881	864
	Senior (16-45) Mens	Senior (16-45) Womens	Junior (11-15) Boys	Junior (11-15) Girls
TGRs				
THREE RIVERS	1:3,198	1:3,751	1:1,358	1:2,705

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Qualitative local standard

The table below shows the breakdown of pitch provision within the Watford Rural area

*Table 91: Watford Rural area pitch provision summary*

Population (2001 Census) 25,696	Total number of pitches	Pitches available for community use	No. of adequate pitches available for community use	No. of inadequate pitches available for community use	No. of pitches required to meet latent demand
Senior football	10	9	9	0	0
Junior football	7	4	3	1	0
Mini football	11	11	6	5	0
Senior rugby union	14	14	14	0	0
Junior rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Mini rugby union	0	0	0	0	0
Senior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Junior rugby league	0	0	0	0	0
Gaelic football	0	0	0	0	0
Australian football	0	0	0	0	0
US football	0	0	0	0	0
Senior cricket	10	10	10	0	0
Junior cricket	0	0	0	0	0
Senior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
Junior grass hockey	0	0	0	0	0
ATP	1	1	1	0	0
Non-pitch outdoor sports facilities	Total number of facilities	No. of facilities available for community use	No. of adequate facilities available for community use	No. of inadequate facilities for community use	No. of facilities required to meet latent demand
Tennis	24	8	8	0	0
Netball	0	0	0	0	0
Athletics track	0	0	0	0	0
Lawn bowling green	1	1	1	0	0

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Table 92: Watford Rural area local standard calculation

Existing pitch stock	Adequate pitches available for community use (ha per 1,000)	1.99
	Adequate non-pitch outdoor sports facilities available for community use (ha per 1,000)	0.04
	Required improvements to existing playing pitch space (ha per 1,000)	0.09
Additional pitches required to meet latent demand	Required additional pitch playing space (ha per 1,000)	0
<b>Total pitches and non-pitches required</b>	<b>Pitch and non-pitch local standard (ha per 1,000)</b>	<b>2.12</b>

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

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# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Of the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 typologies, this section of the document is specifically targeted at outdoor sports facilities including all grass pitches, artificial turf pitches, tennis, netball, flat green bowls, golf and water sports facilities. The Strategy has been developed from research and analysis of outdoor sports facility provision and use within Three Rivers. It follows an Assessment Report, which details provision, quality and usage levels.

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) commissioned the study in September 2004. The principal research was carried out between October 2004 and March 2005.

The Strategy sets out a vision for the next ten years in relation to the provision and improvement of outdoor sports facility sites and associated facilities. The Action Plan recommends a number of high priority projects for the District, which should be implemented over the next five years (2005-2010). It should be recognised that the strategy and action plan is outlined to provide a framework for improvement of facilities. Resources may not currently be in place to implement it, and therefore partnerships and possible sources of external funding have been identified.



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 2.1 General

Across the District, outdoor sports facilities are provided on around 50 sites. These include TRDC parks and recreation grounds, schools private and voluntary sports clubs and parish council playing fields. There are 146 grass and artificial turf pitches across the District. This includes provision for football, cricket, rugby and hockey. Of these 126 are available for use by the community. The ones, which are not, are predominantly at school sites.

In addition to this there are 81 tennis courts, 8 netball courts and 5 bowling greens situated on public parks, private sports clubs and at schools. Just over half of the tennis courts are available for community use. 100% of bowling greens are available for community use. Almost all of those not available for community use are tennis and netball courts located at schools.

The pitches, courts and greens accommodate over 260 teams across the relevant sports each week.

In order to give the consultation and site findings a more local context, the District has been split into analysis areas. In each area the number and location of outdoor sports facilities considered to be inadequate in terms of quality has been identified. Further to this, the number of pitches being overplayed and additional pitches needed to meet local unmet (latent) demand has also been taken into consideration.

The amount of unmet demand varies in each area and in some cases none has been identified. Generally, the findings show that if pitch and ancillary facility provision on existing sites were all of good quality, current and latent demand would be accommodated. Future population growth may require additional pitch provision in some areas.

*Summary of inadequate pitches and latent demand across the District:*

Area	No. of inadequate facilities	Latent demand expressed	Facilities being played over capacity
Abbots Langley area	1 senior football 1 mini football	None	2 senior football 1 junior football 1 mini football
Chorleywood area	8 junior football	None	6 junior football
Croxley Green area	3 junior football	1 tennis court	3 senior football 1 junior football
Rickmansworth area	None	None	None
Sarratt area	None	None	None
Watford Rural area	1 senior football	None	1 junior football

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

	I mini football		
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## 2.2 Local standards

Within the accompanying Assessment Report, local standards (in hectares per thousand of population) for outdoor sports facility provision are calculated. This figure takes into account the fact that poor quality pitches cannot be relied upon as part of the pitch stock throughout the playing season and that additional pitches may be required in some areas to meet current demand.

### *Summary of local standards*

Area	Population	Required improvements to existing space (ha per 1,000 population)	Required additional space (ha per 1,000 population)	Outdoor sports facilities local standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Abbots Langley area	17,266	0.10	0	2.46
Chorleywood area	9,200	0.71	0	1.42
Croxley Green area	12,166	0.20	0.01	1.46
Rickmansworth area	16,597	0	0	1.05
Sarratt area	1,889	0	0	1.98
Watford rural area	25,696	0.04	0	2.12

It is recommended that TRDC updates the qualitative local standards on a regular basis to take into account improvements to existing sites, instatement of new sites and subsequent fluctuations in localised latent demand.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **3. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The following section provides a framework for Three Rivers and partners to maintain and improve the outdoor sports facilities within the District.

### **3.2 Aim**

The overall aim of the Strategy is as follows:

*'By 2015 Three Rivers will have an appropriate distribution and range of high quality outdoor sports facility sites with associated ancillary facilities, which will provide opportunities for participation from all sections of the community.'*

### **3.3 Strategic objectives**

The aim will be worked towards by the implementation of the following objectives:

1. Provide usable, accessible and sustainable pitches and ancillary facilities within the District.
2. Seek to ensure that this provision is of an appropriate distribution, quantity and quality.
3. Rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfall as outlined in the Assessment Report through improvements to the current pitch stock and ancillaries.
4. Encourage, support and develop partnerships with local schools, which do not have formal community use arrangements to develop structured use of outdoor sports facilities.
5. Proactive use of planning powers to quantify and secure appropriate developer contributions for new or enhanced facilities.
6. Work in tandem with the parish councils and voluntary sector organisations/clubs, with regards to securing and developing pitch and other outdoor sports provision for the use of sport and recreation.
7. Ensure that existing and future provision complies with DDA legislation and is fully accessible for all residents (including juniors and girls/women).

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## 4. TARGETS

### 4.1 Introduction

A number of targets have been developed (highlighted in green boxes) and should be implemented to enable the policy objectives to be delivered. It is recommended that TRDC adopts these to enable it to achieve the Strategy's aims and objectives.

### 4.2 Development route of pitch provision

With particular reference to the provision of football pitches, TRDC should produce a development route pitch provision model that can be applied to all types of sites in the District. This approach should facilitate the delivery of appropriately specified pitches, servicing all levels of demand. It must recognise demand and supply issues within specific catchment areas.

#### 1. Development route of pitch provision

Outline a development route of provision, which enables resources to be targeted at sites of strategic importance on a local and district-wide level.

A number of characteristics for both development routes are identified. These apply either to site elements that are already in place or, in some instances, are not in place but have the potential to be developed:

Development route 1	Development route 2
Strategically placed in the <b>local analysis area</b> context.  Accessible for residents within local analysis/settlement area e.g. Oxhey Playing Fields	Strategically placed in the <b>local village</b> context  Accessible for residents in the immediate locality e.g. KGV Sarratt.
10 minute drive-time.	5 minutes or under drive-time
Often services two sports, e.g. football, tennis.	Often services one pitch sport and one or two clubs use as a home ground e.g. football.
Good quality ancillary facilities with changing rooms/shower (men's and women's)/toilets. Making reasonable adjustments to comply with DDA requirements.	Ideally include good quality ancillary facilities with changing rooms/showers/toilets. Making reasonable adjustments to comply with DDA requirements.
Linked to NGB facilities strategies.  Clubs have/are working towards achieving	Clubs currently working towards achieving Charter Standard or equivalent accreditation.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Charter Standard or equivalent accreditation.	
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Reference has been made to the above routes in the action plan where each site has been classified into one of the development routes.

Development Route 1 sites are the largest providers of playing pitches in the District. TRDC and its partners should secure and commit significant funding to their maintenance and, where necessary, improvement. Improvements in the quality of these pitches will relieve pressure on other sites across the District and increase capacity and the adequacy of a large proportion of the pitch stock. Consideration should be given to prioritise those sites highlighted as being played over capacity or under capacity (due to poor quality).

Development Route 2 sites are smaller than development Route 1 sites. They will predominantly be parish council/voluntary sector managed facilities.

## *Conclusion*

It should be recognised that this model is intended to be flexible to assist with funding priorities. Through investment, sites can be reclassified. It should also be noted that although Development Route 2 sites would generally be considered as local priorities in some instances they may become district-wide priorities. This is likely to be the case in areas, which have a particularly low level of provision.

## **4.3 Sport specific targets**

### **2. Football**

- ☐ Prioritise investment in pitch quality at sites, which have been classified as poor quality.
- ☐ Redistribute play from sites, which have been identified as overplayed.
- ☐ Each site to have appropriate size and specification changing facilities, which enable access from all users groups (e.g. women/girls/disabled) and pitch capacity to be maximised.

### **3. Cricket**

- ☐ At least two clubs in the District to provide and develop opportunities for girls' and women's participation.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **4. Rugby**

- ❑ Support Chess Valley RFC in developing opportunities for women's and girls' participation. This may have an implication for the provision of ancillary facilities.

## **5. Hockey**

- ❑ ATP at St. Michael's School to provide a junior hockey development centre.

## **6. Bowls**

- ❑ Establish a local bowls forum in order that clubs can share information and resources for grounds maintenance. This could be done in partnership with Watford Borough Council.

## **7. Tennis**

- ❑ Increase public awareness of playing and coaching opportunities at clubs through increased publicity.
- ❑ Appropriate provision of ancillary facilities at all clubs to maximise accessibility and usability for recreational and competitive play.
- ❑ Protect and maintain the current level of courts, which are open for public recreational use.

## **8. Netball**

- ❑ Provision of good quality outdoor courts and adequate car parking for the County development centre at Parmiter's School.

## **9. Sailing/watersports**

- ❑ Development/refurbishment of the Aquadrome to make it more accessible, usable and 'fit for purpose' in line with actions outlined in the 'Aquadrome Management Plan'.

## **10. Golf**

- ❑ Protection and maintenance of the municipal facilities at Rickmansworth Golf Centre.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **4.4 Education sites**

A number of key aims of the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme include:

- ❑ To improve the PE and School Sport Programme by establishing and developing links within and between the families of schools.
- ❑ To increase all young people's participation in community sport through creating and strengthening links with sports clubs, leisure facilities and community providers.

Improvements to existing and creation of new facilities at schools, along with increasing community/club access to school facilities will help achieve these aims.

### **4.4.1 Primary schools**

There are some primary schools in Three Rivers that currently allow community use on their pitches. This brings in extra income and increases schools roles in the local community, thus increasing relationships with local families and magnifying community ownership of the schools facilities. However where primary schools do have their own pitches it is important to take into consideration the fact that there will be curriculum use also and pitches will require some recovery time.

#### **11. Primary/junior school playgrounds**

Every primary and junior school should have an adequate quality playground surface (regardless of size) for sports activities with appropriate playground markings on the ground and on walls/fences etc to facilitate cricket and hockey as well as other sports (netball, basketball, short tennis) and general movement and ball skills.

Schemes, which, should be considered to facilitate this include:

- ❑ England Cricket Board playground markings.
- ❑ Youth Sport Trust – 'Zoneparc'.
- ❑ DfES Sporting Playgrounds.

#### **12. Primary/junior school playing fields**

- ❑ Primary and junior schools, which have existing playing fields on site or immediately adjacent should mark out a minimum of one 60m x 40m training grid, which can be used for pitch sports (e.g. mini soccer, tag rugby etc.).
- ❑ Formal arrangements to be in place for community use of school playing fields and other outdoor sports facilities where appropriate.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **4.4.2 Secondary schools**

A number of schools allow community use of their pitches, the most significant of these being Parmiters School in the North of the District. Consultation with schools, however, did highlight certain improvements that were needed to pitch and non-pitch facilities.

There is substantial potential for the development of sporting opportunities in the District, particularly when the School Sports Partnership (SSP) is in place and creating avenues for funding. It is paramount that TRDC continues to work with the SSP once it is finalised in order to fully utilise the facilities available to meet the targets in the PE and School Sport Club Links (PESSCL) strategy.

### **13. Secondary school playing fields**

- ❑ Continue the development of community use of schools pitches. Provide support, where appropriate in order for schools to achieve effective community use agreements.
- ❑ Support those schools that have existing community use and require improvements to the facilities to enable increased capacity as well improving facilities for curriculum purposes.
- ❑ Improvements to pitches and ancillary facilities to accommodate additional wear and tear, and improvements to site access, security and car parking may be required. This must include access to changing facilities, and where not possible access to toilets as a minimum.
- ❑ Work closely with the SSP, once it is fully established, to extend the range of sporting opportunities within the District for children and young people.



# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

## **5. ACTION PLAN 2005 – 2015**

### **5.1 Priorities**

Taking into account the findings of the Assessment Report, in particular the site by site section and the consultation, it is paramount that TRDC secures and improves its existing pitch stock and ancillary facilities in order that sites can be used to capacity. In addition to this, it is important that TRDC provides support and guidance to the relevant partners (i.e. parish councils, private and voluntary sports clubs) within the District to apply for funding to improve their facilities.

The following sites have been identified as having the greatest priority for attention and investment over the next five years in Three Rivers. They have been identified as such from the consultation and site visits that were undertaken as part of the accompanying Assessment Report.

The action plan has been separated into each analysis area, with the key current issues highlighted about the site, the recommended actions that should be implemented in partnership with TRDC, the relevant clubs or schools etc. Potential funding streams have also been identified to provide a steer for the partners in terms of where appropriate sources of capital or revenue funding that could be applied for. The action plan also emphasises the targets that the particular site meets from within the strategy.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## 5.2 General action plan

Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding
Incomplete information about primary/junior school provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility for community use. This results in an incomplete view of the current and future capacity of the existing pitch stock.	TRDC to work with the LEA to complete this information and keep it updated.	TRDC, Hertfordshire County Council, local primary/junior schools.	Up to date, accurate picture of outdoor sports facility provision at local schools enabling TRDC to respond appropriately to Section 106 opportunities, sports development initiatives etc.	11. Primary/junior school playgrounds, 12. Primary/junior school playing fields.	N/A
Although some schools do have community use of their playing fields, there are few formal arrangements in place. Some sites are less secure for club/community use than others	Work with secondary and primary/junior schools to formalise arrangements for community use of playing fields, tennis/netball courts.	TRDC, Hertfordshire County Council, local schools.	Security of use of school playing fields and outdoor sports facilities which enables clubs/groups to plan and develop.	12. Primary/junior school playing fields, 13. Secondary school playing fields.	N/A

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

### 5.3 Area action plans

#### *Abbots Langley area action plan*

Site	Development route	Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding
St. Michael's Catholic High School	I	Funding has been secured by the School for a full size, sand based artificial turf pitch.	TRDC to work with St. Michael's School to ensure that the facility development plan is implemented, use of the ATP by the community is maximised and hockey development is a key activity.	TRDC, St. Michael's RC School	Creation of a hockey development centre to service the north of the District.	Hockey	N/A
Parmiter's School	I	The surface of the netball courts is inadequate for the facility's role as the local league central venue and the County netball centre.  Car parking is inadequate to service the facilities.	Resurfacing of the outdoor netball courts.  Explore possibilities for extension of the car parking areas.	TRDC, Parmiters School, Watford & District Netball League, Hertfordshire Netball Association.	Provision of a good quality venue suitable to meet the needs of a county development centre.	Netball, football	Big Lottery Fund

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Site	Development route	Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding
YMCA Woodlands	2	The YMCA has recently submitted a bid to the Football Foundation outlining a scheme to increase the number of pitches and provide changing facilities on site. At present there is no partner club involved in the scheme.	Support the YMCA in pursuing funding for the site in parallel with encouraging local club involvement in the scheme, potentially Garston Boys FC	YMCA, Garston Boys FC, TRDC Football Foundation	Provision of good quality, well specified facilities providing a 'home' venue for a local club.	Development route of pitch provision, football	Football Foundation

*Chorleywood area action plan*

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Site	Development route	Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding	Time scale
Chorleywood Cricket Club	2	<p>The development of the Club is being inhibited by the proximity of the pitch to an increasingly busy main road.</p> <p>The clubhouse is inadequate in size to meet the needs of the Club.</p>	TRDC should work with the Club and Chorleywood Parish Council to explore ways in which the health and safety problems posed by the current location can be overcome.	Chorleywood CC, Chorleywood Parish Council, Hertfordshire County Cricket Board, TRDC	Provision of safe playing pitch area, which will enable the club to continue to develop participation.	Cricket	ECB	Short-medium

### Croxley Green area action plan

Site	Development route	Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding	Time scale
Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club	1	The provision of changing facilities is inadequate to meet the needs of football and tennis clubs using the site. The size, quality and accessibility of the changing rooms are all poor.	Provision of a new changing block to replace the existing provision.	Croxley Guild Sports & Social Club, Croxley Tennis Club, TRDC, Hertfordshire FA, Hertfordshire LTA.	Provision of good quality ancillary facilities, which support and sustain the development of football and tennis activities at the site.	Development route of pitch provision, football, tennis	Football Foundation, Hertfordshire LTA, Section 106	Short

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

		<p>Croxley Tennis Club has expressed demand for an additional tennis court to meet current and future needs.</p>	<p>TRDC should liaise with Croxley Tennis Club regarding the provision of additional courts on the nearby former Durrants School site.</p>					
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## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE SPORT & RECREATION STUDY OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

### *Rickmansworth area action plan*

Site	Development route	Current issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Strategy targets	Potential external funding	Time scale
The Aquadrome	1	The current clubhouse, storage and other ancillary provision around the lakes are inadequate to support the existence and development of current or future users of the facility. In many cases the scale of club development and participation is being significantly inhibited.	Creation of a site 'Master Plan' for the Aquadrome, which links into use of the site for other purposes e.g. natural and semi-natural green space, green corridors etc. This should determine the 'purpose' of the site in the context of provision of open space sport and recreation facilities in the District and address the provision of good quality clubhouse and ancillary facilities as outlined in the Aquadrome Management Plan.	Aquadrome user group and individual groups, local TRDC, schools, Hertfordshire LEA/Youth Service, Royal Yachting Association, Sport England East Region	Provision of good quality ancillary facilities to support and sustain the various existing user groups of the Aquadrome and encourage additional use.	Sailing/ watersports	RYA, Big Lottery Fund, Section 106	Short-medium

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## PART I: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Study objectives

The specific objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of open space in the Three District. The assessment of open space and the subsequent strategy and action plan will allow the Council to strategically plan the improvement, access and protection of this land.

The information from this study will be used to:

- ❑ Inform the production of the Council's Local Development Framework in terms of open space policies.
- ❑ Provide support for Local Plan policies at Public Inquiry.
- ❑ Prioritise investment (including the use of Section 106 contributions).
- ❑ Support funding applications for the improvement development of key sites mentioned within this document and the strategy and action plan.

To inform the development of play and recreation provision within the District, a strategy and action plan will follow this document and provide a site by site list of possible future developments.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 1.2 Context

Over the last few years, the Government has expressed concern over the loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities. In the drive towards an urban renaissance, the importance of green space has been highlighted as an important element in creating sustainable communities. The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce report (2002) stresses the importance of looking at open spaces in terms of accessibility, quality and quantity in undertaking any local assessments.

Other policies and strategies relating to open spaces have also been developed, covering a variety of geographic scales. These policies have been created by various government departments and external agencies, and demonstrate the breadth of issues open space development covers. The policies also provide a broad framework to influence open space initiatives. Below is a list of relevant strategies. The roles of government agencies are contained within Appendix 3.

*Table 1: Summary of relevant strategies*

Situation	Policies and Strategies
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002)</li><li>❑ DTLR: Urban Greens Spaces Taskforce, Neighbourhood Renewal</li><li>❑ DTLR: Urban Green Spaces Taskforce, Green Spaces Better Places (2001)</li><li>❑ DCMS: Local Cultural Strategies</li><li>❑ DfES: Protection of School Playing Fields, Consultation on revision of Circular No: 3/99</li><li>❑ Urban Parks Forum: Public Parks Assessment</li><li>❑ New Urban Landscape Transnational Programme</li><li>❑ Rural White Paper, Our Countryside: the Future A Fair Deal for Rural England. (2000)</li><li>❑ Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion guide to PPG17 (2002).</li><li>❑ DEFRA: Strategy for Sustainable Development</li><li>❑ CABESpace: The Value of Public Space</li></ul>
Statutory and Non – statutory plans (Section One)	Three Rivers Local Plan, Youth Survey, Residents Survey 2002, Community Strategy, Cultural Strategy and Strategic Plan (TRDC), Play Plan and Cycling Strategy

## 1.3 National policy

### ***Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation***

The revised Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17), published in 2002, advises local planning authorities to provide the strongest protection for open space, to resist development pressures that could diminish recreational provision and to adopt a strategic approach to the provision and protection of sports facilities. PPG17 identifies the requirement for all local authorities to assess the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities.

### ***Rural White Paper, Our Countryside: the Future A Fair Deal for Rural England. (2000)***

The Government's Rural White Paper is intended to be a blueprint for the rejuvenation of the countryside. Its main proposals include:

- ❑ Providing local councils with the discretion to end the 50% council tax discounts for second homes.
- ❑ Large investments into rural transport schemes with a special transport fund to support car clubs, taxi services, and community transport.
- ❑ Giving extra rate relief to farmers who diversify into new businesses.
- ❑ Strengthening the role of parish councils to give local people more say in how local services are provided.

### ***PPG13: Transport (March 1994)***

PPG 13 sets out the Government's objectives for the development of Britain's transport system. Local authorities are encouraged to produce planning policies, which will stimulate and assist people in using bicycles. Routes should be proposed in local plans where cycling can be made safer and more attractive. These routes may be combined with horse riders and pedestrians to create multi user routes, away from traffic.

### ***The Parks Assessment Report (2001)***

The Parks Assessment 2001 report, written by the Urban Parks Forum, is the first attempt at a comprehensive statistical analysis of open space issues. It demonstrates a continued decline in the quality of open spaces on a national basis: '82% of the population does not have access to good quality parks; 32% of historic urban parks are declining from fair to poor condition; provision of basic visitor facilities like toilets and shelters has declined by over 25% in the last twenty years'.

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## ***Wasted Space, CABE (2003)***

The Urban Green Spaces Task Force recommends a strategic approach to improve parks and green spaces. CABE Space was created to fill this strategic gap.

*‘CABE aims to inspire and support everyone who is working to make the most of our public spaces’.*

Urban Green Task Force research demonstrates the need for open spaces assessments of this kind and investment in public spaces.

- ❑ In 2001 it was calculated that it would cost £3.5 billion to repair and replace the features and facilities in parks that have been poorly maintained and become derelict.
- ❑ Many children’s play areas are derelict or poorly designed, leaving children to play in the street. (Britain has the worst child pedestrian fatality rate in Europe.)
- ❑ By 2001, the amount that local authorities spent each year on looking after their parks was £126 million less than in 1979 (adjusted in terms of inflation).
- ❑ Public polls conducted by MORI Social Research Institute reveal that urban green space is a popular emotive issue.

## ***Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener: A response from the Urban Parks Forum***

The report seeks to establish parks and green spaces as an integral element of public space and the built environment. The Urban Parks Forum believes that the creation of cross cutting opportunities will justify parks gaining a greater share of financial resources, allowing parks to fulfil a central role in their communities. The strategy behind the Living Places report does not include substantial new resources to support park improvements but relies upon including park schemes in other urban initiatives.

## ***The Value of Public Space, CABEspace (2004)***

The aim of the document is to *‘give the facts, to spell out the many ways in which public spaces improve and enrich our lives.’*

The document focuses on the:

- ❑ Economic value of open space.
- ❑ Effects on physical and mental health.
- ❑ Benefits for young people and children.
- ❑ Reducing crime.
- ❑ Social dimensions of open space.
- ❑ Movement between spaces.
- ❑ Biodiversity value of open space.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 1.4 Local context

### ***TRDC Strategic Plan 2005 –2008***

The Plan brings together high level, medium to long term objectives, which the Council considers as priorities for the District. These objectives support the priorities of the Three Rivers Community Plan. The Plan focuses on the areas where TRDC has a lead role. The Plan is divided into four themes safer, sustainable, prosperous and healthy. Objectives include the following:

Objective	Activities
Reducing the fear of crime and improving economic viability.	Design (increasing lighting in the urban area) Speedily clearing graffiti, mess, fly tipping and abandoned cars.
Reducing the number of violent incidents	Providing youth shelters, skateparks, leisure centres.
Conserve open space	Protect the green belt.
Equalising opportunities for access to transport across the District.	Providing walking and cycling opportunities
Improving economic viability.	Increasing DDA compliance, walking/cycling routes and access to transport in town centres.

### ***Development Plans and Transportation Section: Team Action Plan and Review 2004/5***

The Tree and Landscape section, which forms part of the Development Plans and Transportation Section, is responsible for implementing Best Value outdoor reviews and grounds maintenance. The Team Action Plan includes:

- ❑ Proposals to implement new cycle tracks. These include one from Maple Cross and Rickmansworth, which has already been constructed as far as Mill End; a new cycle route between Abbots Langley and Bedmond, which was completed at the end of May 2005 and the development of new routes from Rickmansworth to Chorleywood and Croxley Green.
- ❑ Reviewing grounds maintenance and related responsibilities.
- ❑ Implementing green space strategy.
- ❑ Dealing with Tree Preservation Orders.
- ❑ Dealing with the Hedgerow Act.
- ❑ Working towards the Tree Maintenance Audit Plan.
- ❑ Carrying out the Trees for Life and Town Trees planting schemes.
- ❑ Advising developers on landscaping schemes.
- ❑ Carrying out the Open Spaces maintenance programme.
- ❑ Providing maintenance and management at Chorleywood House Grounds, The Aquadrome, The Chapel and Cemetery and Oxhey Woods.
- ❑ Reinstating Dell Wood.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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- ❑ Securing woodland grants, where appropriate, from external sources.
- ❑ Maintaining youth shelters and mini skate parks.

## **Colne Valley Park Authority**

The Colne Valley provides the first area of countryside to the west of London. The Park covers 43 square miles of varied scenery ranging from semi-urban to unspoilt countryside. The Park was designated in the 1960's to provide local facilities for people and prevent urbanisation. The Colne Valley Regional Park is situated on London's western edge. The local authority boundaries have been reviewed several times during the Park's existence and the Park now covers parts of Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead, the London Borough of Hillingdon, Chiltern, South Bucks, Spelthorne and Three Rivers. Although local authorities established the Park, the partnership is now much broader and all of the main agencies are actively involved, as well as many local groups. The Park has four key aims, as set out in its Action Plan:

- ❑ To maintain and enhance the landscape (including settlements) and waterscape of the Park in terms of their scenic and conservation value and their overall amenity
- ❑ To resist urbanisation of the Colne Valley Park and to safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development
- ❑ To conserve the nature conservation resources of the Park through the protection and management of its diverse plant and animal species, habitats and geological features
- ❑ To provide accessible facilities and opportunities for countryside recreation which do not compromise the above

## **Departmental Service Plan: Leisure 2004/2005.**

The Service Plan meets the corporate priority to provide 'A mixture of leisure for all ages'. The action plan highlights site specific and general issues dealt with by the department. The following actions relate to open space.

- ❑ To launch the refurbished Croxley Green skate park and the Barton Way MUGA.
- ❑ To enhance the Manor House Grounds play area in partnership with Abbots Langley Parish Council by installing a skateboarding area and play equipment.
- ❑ To develop a teenage recreation area at King George V, Mill End.
- ❑ To develop informal skateboarding/youth shelter facilities District wide.
- ❑ To refurbish Ebury Play Area.
- ❑ To install teenage oriented play equipment at Bedmond.
- ❑ To refurbish Otley Mead Place North and Mead Place South play areas.
- ❑ To advise the Planning Section on the development of new children's play areas through Section 106 agreements.
- ❑ To advise the Planning team on informal sport and recreation facilities through Section 106 agreements.

The Department also supports the sustainability of various programmes related to open space, including the active retired programme, Mill End Youth Project, Learning for Leisure play schemes and Herts Youth Games.

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## ***Best Value Review, Outdoor Improvement Plan – Review of Action Plan 2003***

The Plan highlights specific actions relating to the improvement of outdoor facilities. The plan follows nineteen objectives. Most actions are site specific and these have been included under the relevant typology. General objectives are listed below:

- ❑ The implementation of a dog fouling educational campaign.
- ❑ Introducing new meadowland on agreed sites.
- ❑ Carry out regular inspections for fly tipping, vandalism and access difficulties.
- ❑ Continue to monitor reported incidents in open spaces.
- ❑ Develop new cycle routes in South Oxhey.
- ❑ Include provision in new planning agreements, Leavesden, Croxley Green and Chilwell Gardens.
- ❑ Develop and monitor baseline anti social behaviour.
- ❑ Produce electronic promotional material.
- ❑ Monitor youth shelter provision.

## ***The Biodiversity Action Plan for Three Rivers District: Preparation and Implementation of a Local Delivery Plan (2003)***

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) aims to address the issues associated with biodiversity, nature conservation and environmental conservation in the District. The BAP will constitute supplementary planning guidance relating to the Local Development Framework. Action arising from the BAP will use the existing budget for Environmental Grants and financial support geared to the Sustainable Community corporate objectives. The BAP aims to create a framework for action for use by TRDC, external partners and the community.

The table below demonstrates the actions, which are relevant to this study.

Element	Biodiversity issue/activity and TRDC pledges
Wildlife and habitats	TRDC will maintain topical and appropriate management plans for all key sites in its ownership. They are currently in place for Aquadrome, Chorleywood House Gardens and LNRs. There remain many sites to complete, including woodlands.
Waste management	TRDC will ensure that litter, fly tipping and other chemical spillages/waste related pollution do not threaten habitats and species mix.
Crime and disorder	TRDC will strive to ensure the management of open space and green space is undertaken using methods, which deter anti social behaviour and illegal activity.
Environmental education	TRDC will maintain and develop collaboration with key environmental bodies in the District aiming to raise environmental awareness.  TRDC will maintain outreach work with National Government Office and schools.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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Element	Biodiversity issue/activity and TRDC pledges
	TRDC will maximise the role of the Canal Festival and Environmental Fair.
Transport	<p>TRDC will maintain, develop and promote cycleways in the District and play a part in understanding and use of PROW.</p> <p>TRDC will ensure PROW use is not detrimental to the District's biodiversity.</p> <p>TRDC will pursue opportunities similar to 'Wider Welcome' and assess the scope for benign links between LNRs and wildlife sites by other means than a car.</p> <p>TRDC will promote the canal corridor working group and DDA in relation to open space remits.</p> <p>TRDC will consider verge management in relation to wildlife sites and the BAP.</p>
Health	TRDC will promote informal recreation areas and open space to enhance quality of life.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 2: OPEN SPACES

The assessment observes the typologies of open space as set out in the PPG17 document: Assessing Opportunities and Needs:

<b>Greenspaces</b>	Parks and gardens
	Natural and semi natural greenspaces, including urban woodland.
	Green corridors
	Outdoor sports facilities (Playing Pitch Assessment)
	Amenity greenspace
	Provision for children and young people
	Allotments, community gardens and urban farms.
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds.
<b>Civic Spaces</b>	Civic and market squares and hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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## 2.1 Methodology

A thorough description of the methodology is provided below. Consultation methods, catchment mapping and the creation of analysis areas are included in this section.

### ***Background information***

An extensive range of desk top/background information has been reviewed and incorporated in all documents, including the relevant strategy and action plans. Reports with major influence on this study are highlighted in the appropriate section.

### ***Database and GIS analysis***

An open spaces database has been created by KKP, which comprises of sites known to TRDC and sites identified by KKP during the consultation, e.g. parish council. The open spaces database includes data on size, location, ownership, access and typology, which has been used to map sites and their catchment areas using GIS mapping.

Sites for which a size could not be found were given the following approximate sizes based on KKP's open space, sport and recreation experience.

Typology	Approximate size (ha)
Parks and gardens, semi natural greenspaces, green corridors, civic spaces amenity greenspace, allotments and cemeteries	0.4

Play sites visited by KKP (41 of the total number) were provided with designations in line with NPFA standards and equipped play areas were measured as part of this assessment. Play areas not visited by KKP have been classified through consultation with TRDC officers.

### ***Qualitative interviews***

The core of the consultation work revolved around extensive consultation with key individuals, clubs, officers, groups and agencies working in and around Three Rivers. Surveys were also conducted with several parish councils, which were in a position to highlight issues faced at a local level (these being Chorleywood, Croxley Green, Watford Rural, Abbots Langley and Sarratt). Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by telephone with consultees provided by TRDC and those uncovered by KKP during consultation.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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## **Quantitative street survey**

To gauge the views of local residents on participation/usage of open space, sport and recreation facilities, their awareness of and attitudes towards provision, a street survey was conducted with 600 residents of Three Rivers. Quotas were placed on age and gender and interviews were conducted at four separate locations (at different times of the day on a range of days across three weeks) across the District to ensure that the final sample was representative of the overall population. Greater detail can be found in Section One.

## **Site visits**

Site visits were conducted by KKP. Open spaces and non-pitch sites were assessed using the appropriate criteria:

Open spaces were evaluated through the use of an assessment proforma (Appendix 3), examining the security, location, condition and proximity of the sites. The criteria are based upon Green Flag criteria and the Green Space Strategies: Cabspace document. The play areas were analysed through a specific play analysis sheet, based upon NPFA guidelines (Appendix 4).

The open space site visit information was collected in the open space database and analysed. This analysis involved collecting the scores for each criteria and accumulating them. Each criteria was split into three scores, scoring one point demonstrates poor site value or quality, scoring three points demonstrated good site value/quality. A score of two points is used for adequate provision. When the criterion was not relevant to the site two points was scored, as scoring nothing would decrease the end total inappropriately.

The sum of each site visit was scored to provide quartile ranges for each typology. The top quartile contained the best quality/most valued sites for recreation, whilst the lowest quartile contained the poorest quality and value sites. The sites in the bottom quartile have been highlighted amongst consultation findings in the strategy and action plan.

Further site information can be found on the open space and play databases.

## **Catchment areas**

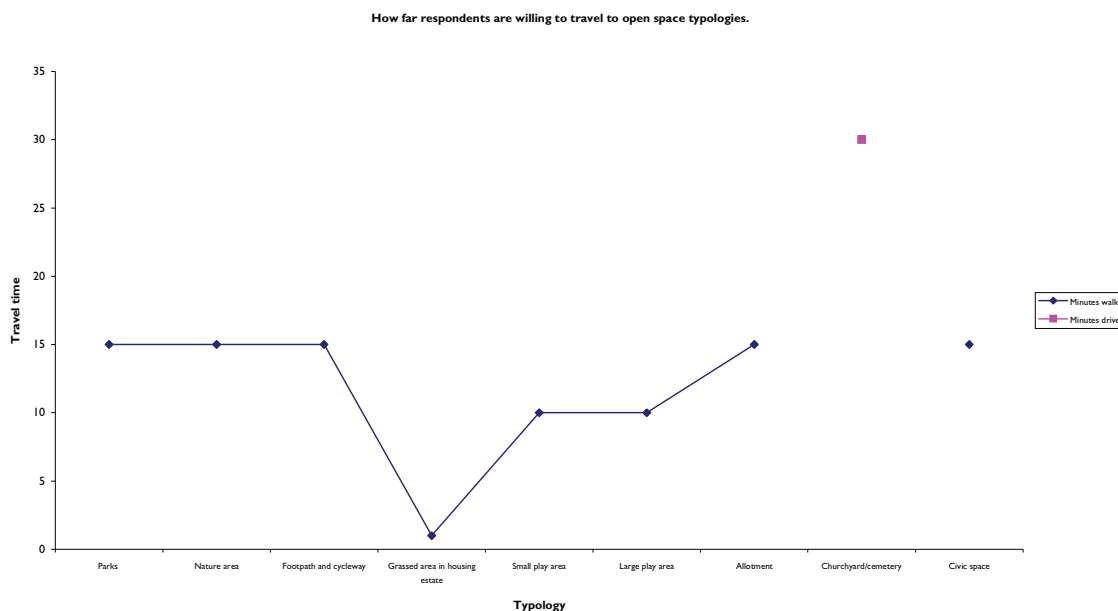
Information regarding the location of open space sites has been collected and entered into the database using two methods. The first method involves using information from the polygons supplied by TRDC. The second method of plotting the locations of open space sites involves the use of 6 figure grid references. These were used for open space sites identified by KKP. e.g. Public Rights of Way (PROW). It must be noted however that 6 figure grid references are less accurate and can be within 100m of the stated point.

The catchment areas in the table below have been created using responses from the street survey conducted by mruk (detailed in section one).

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The travel distance options were provided as the time length of a journey then they could be related to NPFA standards.

Figure 1: Distance respondents willing to travel to access open spaces



The table below equates travel time and distance.

Travelling time	Distance (straight line)
1 minute	60 metres
5 minute	240 metres
10 minute	440 metres
15 minute	600 metres
10 minute drive	4000 metres (at approx. 30mph)
30 minute drive	10000 metres (at approx. 30mph)

The catchment areas were calculated by finding the most common answers ('the mode') for relevant questions in the street survey.

The catchment areas are used to analyse open space provision in the Three Rivers District and locate deficiencies within this provision. The catchment areas of provision for children and young people are demonstrated within the relevant section.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 2: Summary of catchment areas

Open space typology	Travel time	Catchment area
Parks and gardens	15 minute walk	600m
Semi/natural greenspace	15 minute walk	600m
Green corridor	15 minute walk	600m
Amenity greenspace	1 minute walk	60m
Allotments	15 minute walk	600m
Cemetery/churchyard	30 minutes by private transport	1,000m <sup>1</sup>
Civic space	15 minute walk	600m
Small play area	10 minute walk	440m
Large play area	10 minute walk	440m

Actual walking distances have not been used as it is felt that this method is open to many variables.

The responses indicate that there is no difference between the catchment area of a large play area and a small play area. National equipped play area catchments created by the NPFA differs with this. KKP feels that the use of NPFA catchments is more realistic and uses these to analyse deficiency.

Table 3: NPFA equipped play area catchment areas:

Facility	Time	Pedestrian route	Straight line distance
Local area for play (LAP)	1 minute	100 metres	60 metres
Local equipped area for play (LEAP)	5 minutes	400 metres	240 metres
Neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP)	15 minutes	1,000 metres	600 metres.
Settlement equipped area for play (SEAP)			Over 1000 metres

The straight line distance is considered as the radial distance of each facility's catchment area. However, the pedestrian route provided by the NPFA takes into consideration barriers to access and the realistic winding nature of a route through a housing estate to a play area. The pedestrian route has therefore been used to plot the play sites' catchment areas in this study.

<sup>1</sup> A 1,000m catchment area has been used for cemetery and semi natural greenspace provision despite the results of the street survey. When a 10,000m catchment area was used the whole of the Borough was covered and a large proportion of the adjacent local authorities. It was therefore felt it would be unrealistic to use such large catchment areas.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## Geographical analysis

Detail of this process is outlined in Section One.

## 2.2 General open space issues.

### Street survey results

The street survey conducted by mruk took place in November and December 2004. Respondents were questioned in five town centres across the District:

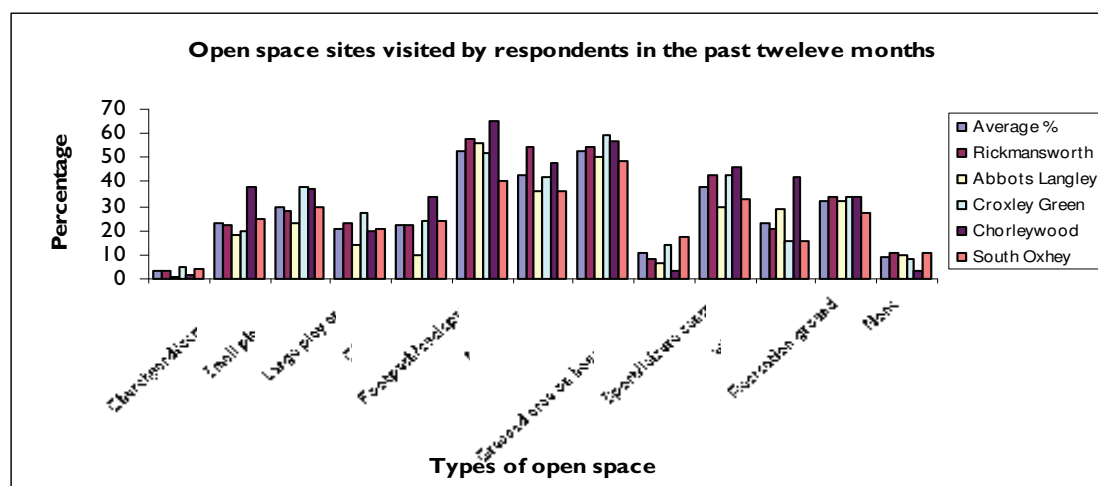
- ☐ Rickmansworth.
- ☐ Abbots Langley.
- ☐ Croxley Green.
- ☐ Chorleywood.
- ☐ South Oxhey.

Six hundred respondents were surveyed in total, of which 94% described their ethnic origin as White British. One third of respondents are in full time employment. A large majority of respondents (81%) have access to private transport. This was particularly high in Chorleywood (89%) and Abbots Langley (88%).

Over one third of respondents (39%) have children living at home, this figure was particularly high in Chorleywood (43%) and Abbots Langley (46%). Of the respondents surveyed with children most have children aged between newborn and nine years old (76% of the group). Respondents in Abbots Langley are most likely to have children aged fifteen years plus (40% of the group).

Private garden access is generally high in the Three Rivers District as 90% of respondents own a private garden. Six percent of respondents have access to a communal garden. Respondents without a garden are least common in Chorleywood (2%) and Croxley Green (6%).

Figure 2: Open space sites visited by respondents in the past twelve months



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The graph above demonstrates that respondents are most likely to have visited a green corridor, nature area or park in the past twelve months. Allotments and grassed areas within housing estates are the least popular type of provision.

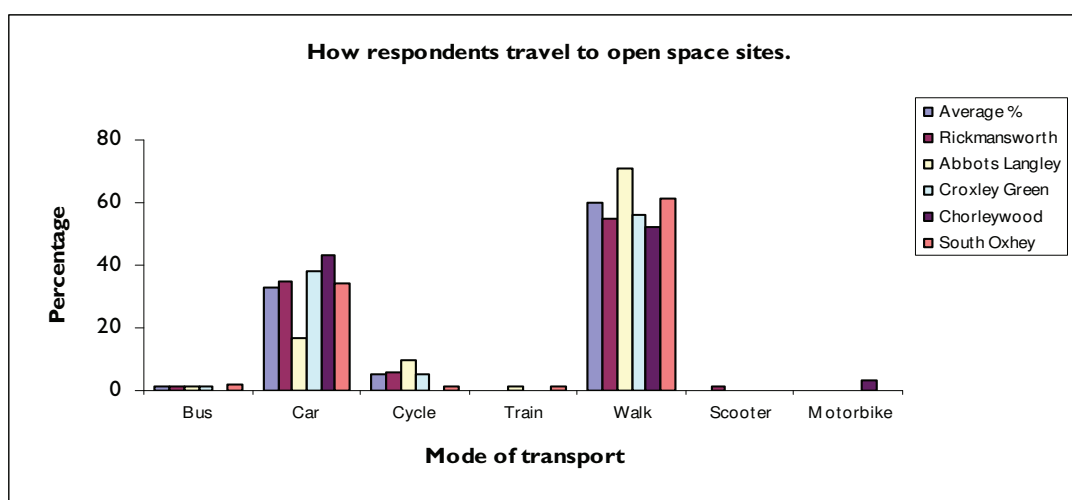
Respondents reported that the most common reasons for using open space, sport and recreation sites are:

- ☐ To exercise.
- ☐ To take children to/ use the play area.
- ☐ To take a shorter/more pleasant route.

Respondents from Three Rivers are least likely to use open space sport and recreation sites for:

- ☐ Sports in/formal.
- ☐ Walking the dog.
- ☐ Making friends
- ☐ Seeing events.
- ☐ Relaxing.
- ☐ Observing wildlife.

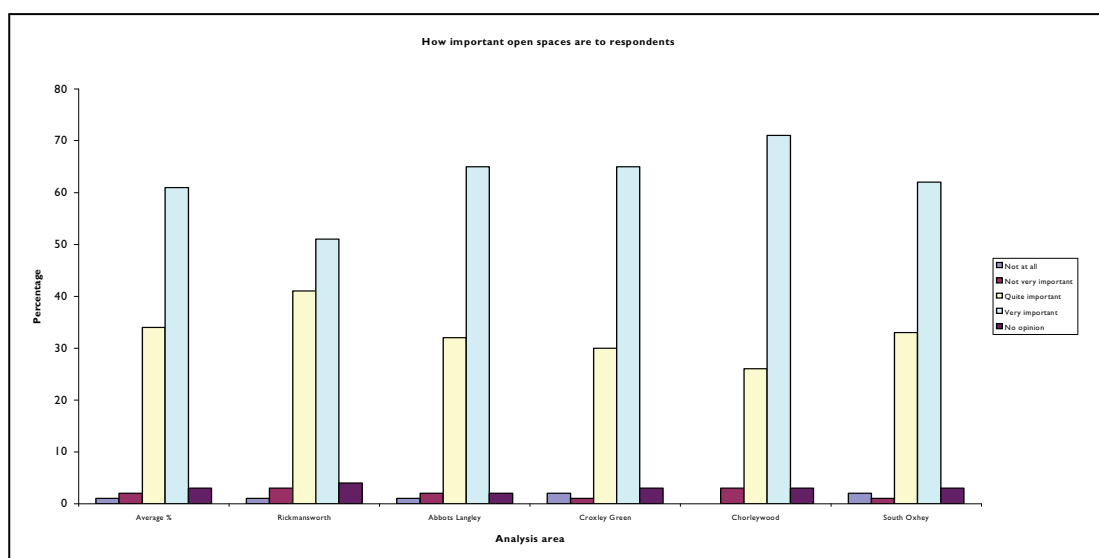
Figure 3: How respondents travel to open space sites



Respondents are most likely to walk to an open space site (60%). Travelling by car to an open space site is also popular (33%). Respondents from Abbots Langley are most likely to use 'green transport' to access open space sites.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 4: Importance of open spaces

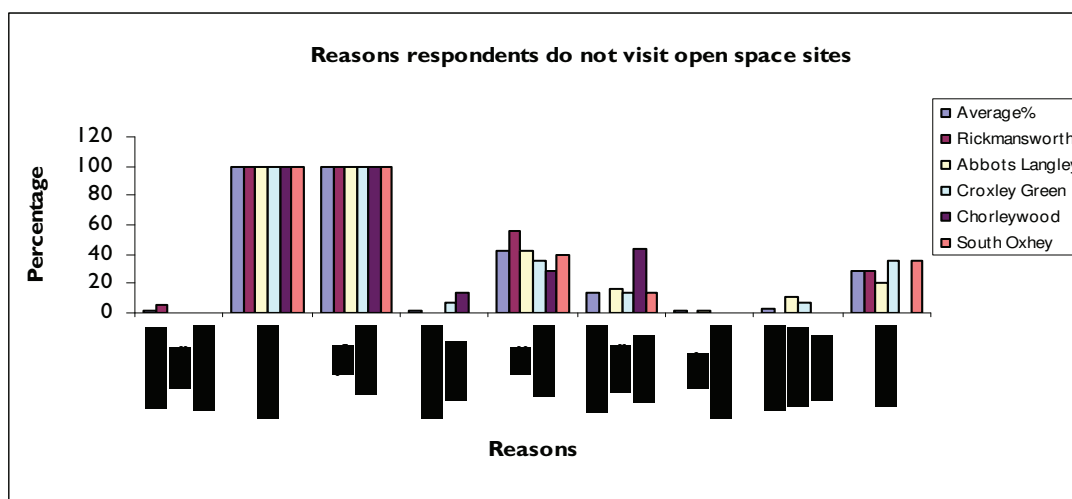


Respondents demonstrated that open spaces are important to them. Almost all respondents (95%) stated that open spaces are very important or quite important to them.

Respondents gave their opinions on the quality of open space sites by individual typology. Generally respondents felt that open spaces in the District could be improved by the following:

- ❑ Making them cleaner 18%.
- ❑ Better maintenance 16%.
- ❑ Better play areas 5%
- ❑ Increasing safety/CCTV 5%.
- ❑ Stopping dog fouling 4%.
- ❑ Getting rid of vandalism 4%.
- ❑ Footpaths need improving 4%.

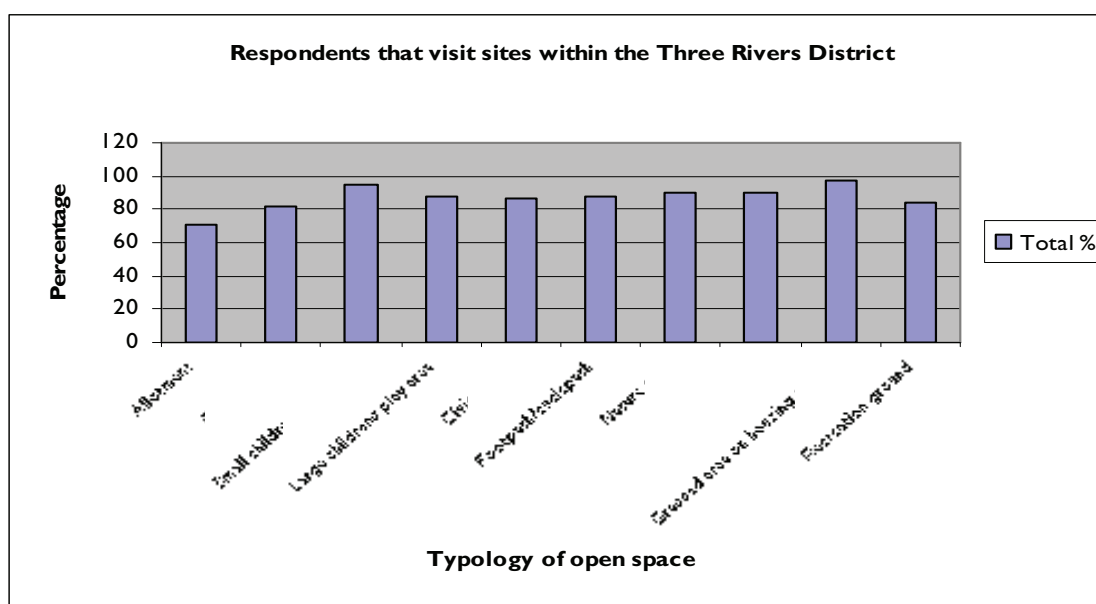
Figure 5: Reasons respondents do not visit open spaces



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Respondents do not visit open space sites for a variety of reasons. All respondents who did not visit open space sites mentioned fear of crime and that they are considered to be too expensive as limiting access. Whilst open spaces are free (i.e., there is no charge), there is obviously a perception amongst residents that they have to pay for access to certain sites. Respondents in Rickmansworth are most likely to be unsure where open space facilities are (6%) or be uninterested in visiting facilities (56%). Mobility and access problems, which limited access to open space sites is the greatest in Chorleywood (43%).

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents visiting open space sites in Three Rivers



Most respondents visit open space sites within the Three Rivers District, especially small children's play areas (95%) and grassed areas on housing estates (amenity greenspace) (97%).

## Disabled access

An access audit was completed on disability access at several key outdoor recreation venues by Hertfordshire Action Three Rivers (2001). The audit analysed indoor and outdoor provision.

It highlights the need across the District for wheelchair accessible paths, seating that can be used by the disabled and benches with wheelchair parking spaces. The need for disabled parking is also identified along with an assessment of path quality and gradient. The visually impaired and hard of hearing are also considered within the report.

It identifies the following features as good practice:

- ☐ The use of contrasting colours around parking areas, steps and bollards.
- ☐ Visual indication of hazards through signs and floor textures.
- ☐ The creation of parking spaces at outdoor recreation venues and designated disabled bays with correct spacing.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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- ❑ A path width of 1200mm minimum or 1700mm on busy paths.
- ❑ The use of a well compacted crushed rock, gravel or hogging path surface.
- ❑ The erection of handrails over footbridges and steep inclines.
- ❑ Uniform steps meeting regulations.
- ❑ Ramps provided as an alternative to steps.
- ❑ Information signs which bear in mind the needs of disabled visitors.
- ❑ Simple signage.
- ❑ The use of benches with wheelchair parking spaces.
- ❑ Adequate lighting
- ❑ Installation of induction loops where required.

Site specific findings have been included in this report and the accompanying Playing Pitch Assessment and Built Facilities Assessment.

Much of this work is already being undertaken, including better signage, improved pathway surfaces and the installation of sensory pathways. Some allotments have been made DDA compliant, e.g., a portacabin has been erected at Holywell to enable use by people with disabilities.

## ***Community safety***

Within Three Rivers the highest number of dispersal orders have been issued in South Oxhey but they have been granted in other areas including:

- ❑ Mill End.
- ❑ Abbots Langley.
- ❑ Rickmansworth.

Public transport in South Oxhey has decreased as buses have stopped running in the area in the evening as stones were being thrown at the buses as they drove through the housing estates. This has decreased access to other parts of the District and County.

TRDC officers believe motorbikes are a problem across the District and the Council receives many complaints about vandalism and threatening behaviour, which is perceived to be related to their use. A motorbike scheme, providing a site to ride and maintain motorbikes, exists in the District but it is located in an area with poor access (Tolpits Lane). The creation of a motorbike facility in other areas of the District has been blocked by local residents in the past.

TRDC officers believe the use of community beat managers and Police community support officers has been successful so far in decreasing criminal behaviour and youth nuisance in open spaces. Rickmansworth and South Oxhey are the two target areas for the District. However, perception and fear is still noted as a deterrent for using areas by local residents.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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## **Youth Service**

The Youth Service generally works with young people aged between thirteen and nineteen years of age. In Three Rivers its target area is South Oxhey. The Youth Service is moving away from a generic approach in order to develop activities with a specific theme. The Service does not wish to develop facilities such as skateparks due to the associated liability problems. However, it is considering leasing land to TRDC at the West Hyde Youth Club to install skateboarding equipment and a youth shelter.

The Service aims to subsidise activities where possible to increase their success. The Youth Service stated that football and basketball are particularly popular across the County.

## **External agencies**

### *Groundwork*

Groundwork Hertfordshire's work in the District generally focuses on South Oxhey as this area is the most deprived in the County. SRB funding in South Oxhey has, however, recently ended. Groundwork Thames Valley operates in the Colne Valley Park area.

Groundwork Hertfordshire aims to increase the number of community groups self managing sites in order that Groundwork can help them to gain funding, in particular Barclay Sitesavers grants. It aims to gain future funding and increase support from local authorities in the County.

Maintenance of Groundwork projects can be a problem. However, Groundwork Hertfordshire has tried to eliminate this problem through ensuring that funding for the site's maintenance has been found and agreed before construction/enhancement of the Site begins. Groundwork is aiming to create management plans for each of the sites it develops.

Groundwork has recently been involved with the development of a cycleway along Ebury Way.

### *Countryside Management Services (CMS)*

The objective of CMS is to work with the community to enhance the surrounding countryside and greenspace. CMS is core funded by Hertfordshire County Council and local authorities. CMS consists of area teams, which include project officers and a manager. These teams support and advise local authorities/parish councils, produce landscape plans, identify projects, develop funding bids and assist friends groups. It also works with private landowners and assists them to gain an environmental stewardship award.

CMS has been established in Three Rivers for many years and has a good working relationship with Groundwork Hertfordshire, which it believes has a different scope of work to itself. CMS has assisted TRDC through the following work:

- Commenting and responding to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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- ❑ Recruiting community liaison officers for the Wildspaces programme.
- ❑ Creating two local nature reserves.
- ❑ Developing a portfolio of the District's woodlands.
- ❑ Developing and advertising health walks.
- ❑ Creating environmental action plans for parish councils (especially Sarratt Parish Council).

CMS identifies which woodlands/nature sites should be developed through the creation of site portfolios. The sites are being improved in order to meet Green Flag criteria (relevant to semi natural greenspaces). In order to create this portfolio CMS:

- ❑ Maps the sites using aerial photography and GIS.
- ❑ Analyses access and interpretation at each Site.
- ❑ Provide a list of actions, which are related to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and local, corporate objectives.
- ❑ Identifies funding sources for the actions.
- ❑ Develops advice to support the site's ecological issues.

CMS would like to support friends groups further by:

- ❑ Developing a tools lending library for local friends groups to use.
- ❑ Providing further funding assistance.
- ❑ Developing a promotional booklet of friends groups in the District.
- ❑ Recruiting local businesses to become involved with their local community.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 3: PARKS AND GARDENS

‘Accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.’

### 3.1 Summary of provision

There are six sites classified as parks and gardens in Three Rivers with open access:

- ☐ Leavesden Country Park North.
- ☐ Leavesden Country Park South.
- ☐ Basing Gardens, Northway.
- ☐ Ornamental Gardens, Thellusson, Mill End.
- ☐ Millennium Gardens, Abbots Langley.
- ☐ Dickinson Square.

These sites total 9.83 ha, creating a current level of provision amounting to 0.12/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 4: Distribution of parks and gardens sites by geographic area

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Total area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	3	9.6	0	0	3	9.6	0.56
Chorleywood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Croxley Green	1	0.06	0	0	1	0.06	0.005
Rickmansworth	2	0.17	0	0	2	0.17	0.01
Sarratt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watford Rural	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	6	9.83	0	0	6	9.83	0.12

### 3.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

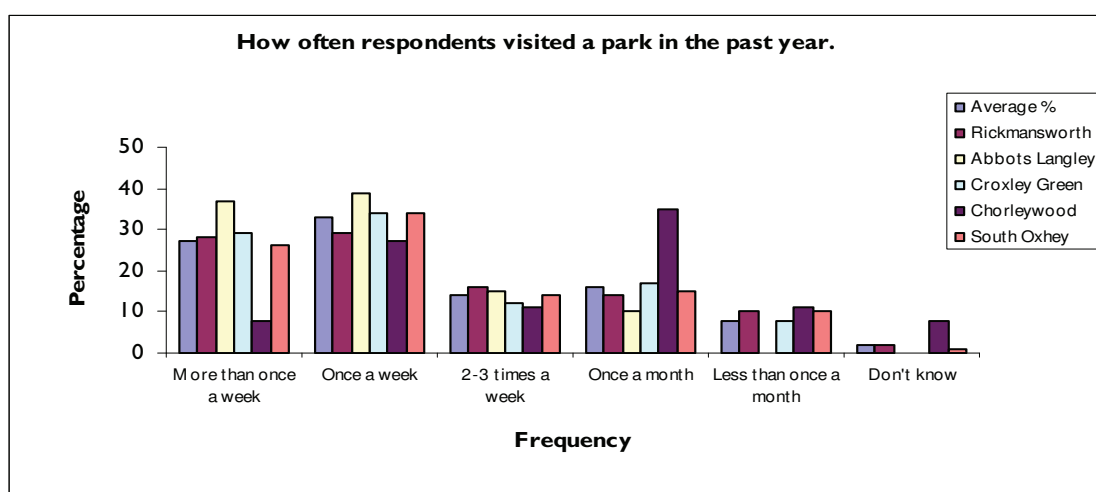
# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 5: Summary of access to provision of parks and gardens

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	√ (part of)
B	Chorleywood	
	Abbots Langley	√ (part of)
	Kings Langley (TR only)	
	Garston (TR only)	√
	Croxley Green	√ (part of)
	Oxhey Hall	
	Carpenters Park	
	South Oxhey	
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	
	Sarratt	

## 3.3 Survey results

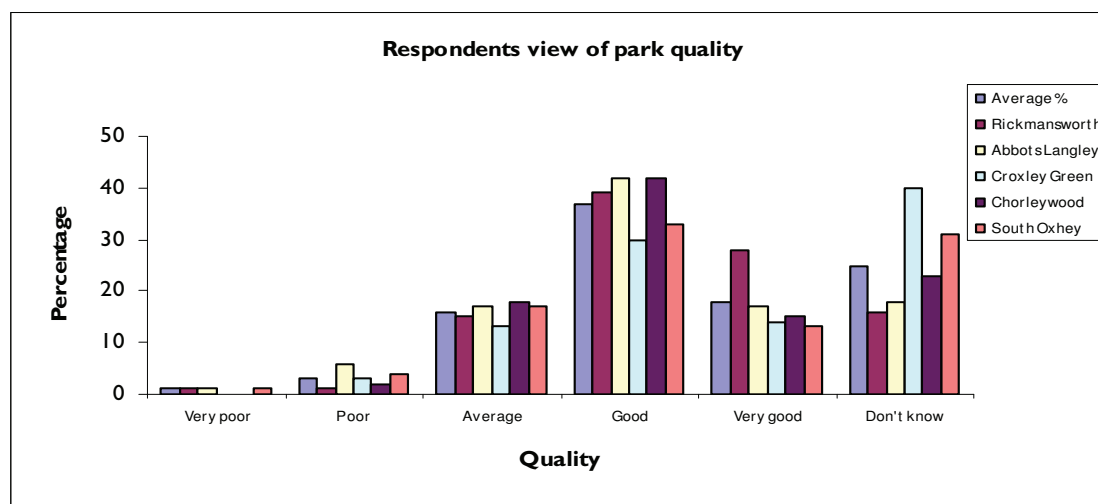
Figure 7: Frequency of visits to park in past year



Almost three quarters of respondents visit parks once a week or more (74%). Respondents from Chorleywood are the most likely to visit parks on a monthly basis (35%).

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 8: Respondents' perceptions of park quality



The quality of parks and gardens is rated as very good or good by 55% of respondents. Quality is rated lower by respondents living in Croxley Green. Residents in this area are also most likely to be unaware of the quality of provision (40%).

## 3.4 Key findings

TRDC officers believe that vandalism is the greatest problem in the District's urban parks. Parks/recreation grounds with the greatest problems include:

- ☐ Rickmansworth Aquadrome.
- ☐ King George V Playing Fields, Mill End.
- ☐ Baldwins Lane Playing Fields.

Incidences of vandalism include arson, smashing the windows of buildings on site, breaking into buildings, graffiti and damage to play areas. The groups that cause this damage tend to move around the District. TRDC officers believe that anti social behaviour orders (ASBOs) have contributed to this movement as they have deterred specific individuals from visiting certain sites. The individuals now create problems at different sites.

There are problems with abandoned cars and the use of motorbikes on certain sites across the District, including:

- ☐ South Oxhey Playing Fields.
- ☐ King George V Playing Fields, Mill End.
- ☐ Barton Way Playing Fields.

When the parks are cut the grass tends to be left on site in order to increase fertility. TRDC does not use peat on any of its sites.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## Site visit issues

KKP visited two sites, which have been designated as parks and gardens, including Leavesden Country Park and the Ornamental Garden, Mill End.

*Leavesden Country Park* is a good site with an informal nature. Road signs and entrance signs are provided. Parking is possibly required on the South side of the Park.

*The Ornamental Garden, Mill End* is of a poorer quality than the Country Park. Fencing and ownership signs are required at the Site. Some of the benches need replacing and more planting is required to enhance the Site further.

## 3.5 Development issues

Table 6: Site specific issues (parks and gardens)

Site	Analysis area	Comments
Leavesden Country Park	Abbots Langley	<p>The Access Audit 2001 reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> The Park is not clearly signed.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> No toilet facilities are available.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The tarmac paths need repairing.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The entrance off Sterling Way is too steep and the gravel is loose.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Other pathways are inaccessible by the disabled due to loose gravel, uneven surfaces, steps and concrete bollards.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Benches on the Site have no arms and no wheelchair parking spaces.</li></ul> <p>TRDC disability action plan, which covered the south side of the park, (2003) highlighted the demand for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Decorating bollards and posts in contrasting colours (now actioned).</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Redesignating two disabled parking bays adjacent to the entrance.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Providing a drop kerb from the car park.</li></ul> <p>Another DDA survey in January 2005, which included the North side, highlighted the need for disabled parking bays and dropped kerb, which will be actioned in 2005/06.</p>
Basing Gardens, Northway	Rickmansworth	<p>The Access Audit 2001 reported that the pathways at the Site are in need of repair and are too steep for use by disabled people.</p> <p>TRDC's disability action plan (2003) highlights the following actions at this site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Repairing surfaces.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pruning foliage.</li></ul>

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

		<input type="checkbox"/> Adapting the side entrance to the car park to include ramp access.
<b>3.6 Summary of shortfall</b>		
Catchment mapping suggests that there are access deficiencies in provision within the following areas:		
Sarratt	South Oxhey	
Eastbury	Huntonbridge	
Bedmond	Maple Cross	
Moorpark	Northwood	
Carpenters Park	Oxhey Hall	
Chorleywood	Kings Langley (TR only)	
Croxley Green (part of)	Abbots Langley (part of)	
Rickmansworth (part of)		
Demand is expressed for the following:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Leavesden Country Park - increased disabled access.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Basing Gardens - increased disabled access.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mill End – refurbish ornamental gardens.		

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 4: NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACES

‘Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.’

### 4.1 Summary of provision

There are 118 sites classified as natural and semi-natural greenspaces in Three Rivers totalling 1159.67 ha. There are a further 45 sites with closed or restricted access. The current level of provision therefore stands at 19.28ha/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 7: Distribution of natural and semi-natural sites by geographic area:

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Total area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	12	40.9	6	52.83	18	93.73	2.37
Chorleywood	14	228.79	8	52.95	22	281.74	24.87
Croxley Green	11	142.16	3	7.21	14	149.37	11.68
Rickmansworth	30	292.14	8	176.85	38	468.99	17.6
Sarratt	33	211.41	15	81.99	48	293.4	111.91
Watford Rural	18	244.26	5	65.54	23	309.82	9.51
TOTAL	118	1159.67	45	437.36	163	1597.04	19.28

### 4.2 Catchment mapping

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

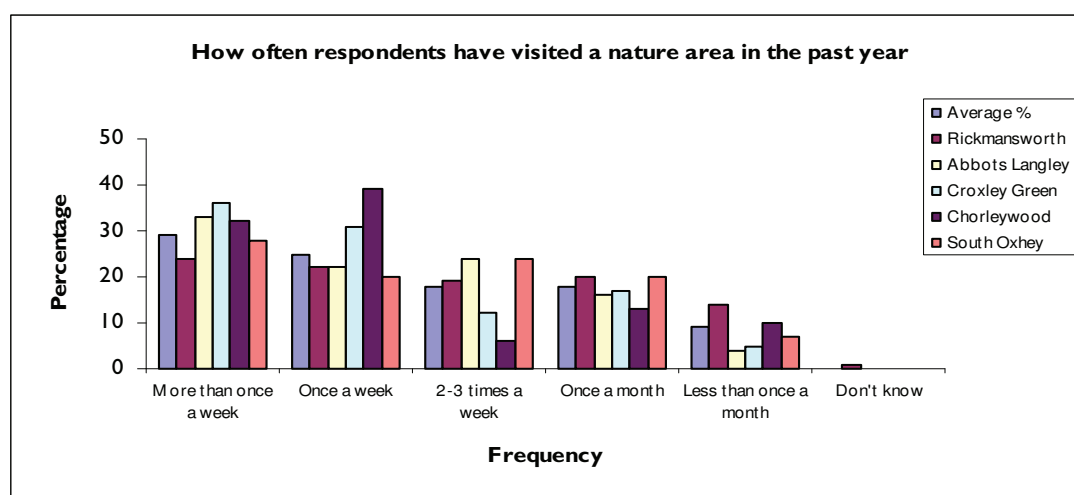
Table 8: Summary of access to provision of natural and semi-natural greenspaces

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	√
B	Chorleywood	√
	Abbots Langley	√ (part of)
	Kings Langley (TR only)	√
	Garston (TR only)	√
	Croxley Green	√
	Oxhey Hall	√
	Carpenters Park	√
	South Oxhey	√
	Eastbury	√ (part of)
	Northwood	√ (part of)
	Moorpark	√
C	Maple Cross	√
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	√
	Sarratt	√

## 4.3 Survey results

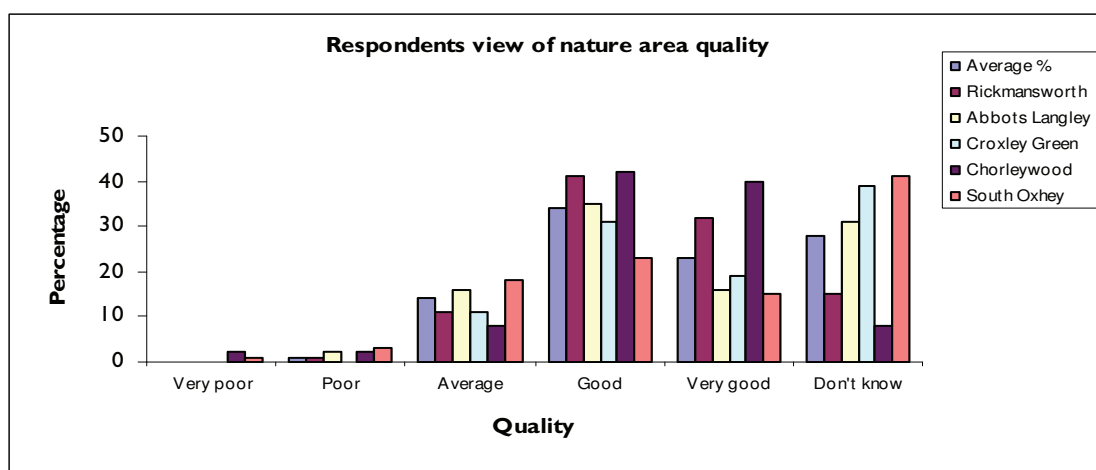
Almost three quarters of respondents (72%) to the mrak street survey visit a nature area once a week or more frequently. This percentage varies across the District with respondents from Abbots Langley (79%) and Croxley Green (79%) being most likely to visit a nature area once a week or more.

Figure 9: Frequency of visits to nature areas in past year



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 10: Respondents' perceptions of nature area quality



Over half of respondents (57%) believe nature reserve provision in the Three Rivers District is good or very good. A quarter of respondents are, however, unaware of its quality (28%).

## 4.4 Key findings

### *English Nature's ANGST model.*

English Nature has adopted the following local standards for greenspace provision through the ANGST model:

- ☐ No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace.
- ☐ Provision of at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 population.
- ☐ There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home.
- ☐ There should be one 100ha site within 5km
- ☐ There should be one 500ha site within 10km.

English Nature has justified these targets with regards to quality of life issues and recreation. This analysis has not been used in as it deemed to be unrealistic as Local Nature Reserve designation is dependent on species present at a site.



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## **Outdoor activities**

TRDC organises outdoor events including volunteer groups and children's' activities at the following sites:

- ☐ Oxhey Woods.
- ☐ Prestwick Meadows.
- ☐ Withey Beds.
- ☐ Croxley Common Moor.

The activities include site clearance and maintenance, tree planting, guided walks and children's' activities e.g. bug hunts.

## **Tree maintenance**

TRDC employs a small arborist team (arborist and assistant arborist). They undertake work to all Council owned trees, including those owned by Housing, those on all green spaces, TRDC owned car parks and other incidental areas owned by the Council and TRDC owned woodlands. Croxley Hall Woods has a management plan, which is currently being implemented. The Tree and Landscape Unit is currently working with CMS to draw up management plans for all other TRDC woodlands.

## **Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT)**

The Trust is involved with several sites across the District. The Trust is currently creating plans for all the sites it manages. Management plans have been created for the following sites:

- ☐ Springwell Reedbed.
- ☐ Hillfield Park Reservoir.
- ☐ Frogmore Meadow SSSI.

Site specific information is included within the relevant table below.

## **General issues**

### *Environmental Forum*

Three Rivers District has an environmental forum, which meets quarterly to present work in the area that has been completed and discuss new ideas.

### *Air quality*

An 'Air Quality Measurement Zone' falls within Three Rivers District. It consists of three hectares of land between the M1, M25 and A404. The removal of trees along the M25 has increased air pollution in the area and noise. Tree planting is being increased in this zone in order to decrease pollution.

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## *Fly tipping*

Fly tipping is a problem on car parks adjoining semi natural sites and around the perimeter of sites, which are adjacent to residential housing. Particular sites where this is a problem include:

- ❑ Oxhey Woods.
- ❑ Bishops Wood car park.
- ❑ Tanners Wood.

TRDC is dealing with this through the prosecution of the relevant parties and restricting access to sites where possible and at times when fly tipping is most common.

## *Tree Survey*

The Council has now purchased the CONFIRM system to proactively survey and manage all TRDC owned trees. Woodlands are to be dealt with in woodlands management plans.

## **Site visit issues**

Nineteen sites of a semi natural typology were visited by KKP. These sites are all listed below. Although many of the sites are of a good quality generally more ownership signs and litter bins are required at sites. Attention also needs to be paid to increasing disabled access.

*Prestwick Road Meadows LNR* – some evidence of litter, not disabled friendly, not signed, more furniture required (in keeping with nature of site).

*Big Wood* – good site not disabled friendly.

*Beechen Wood* - Good site not disabled friendly but meets the needs of young people and their families. The entrance is secluded. The fence at Pollands Ave entrance needs replacing. Bins are located at the entrance but litter is a problem. Therefore, more bins are required. Parking facilities at the community centre.

*Pond Wood* – The Site is a wooded area in the middle of housing. It has the potential to be enhanced with a new fence and extra maintenance. There is litter and evidence of vandalism at the Site. More bins are required.

*The Grove, Rickmansworth* – The Site caters for young people and families. New kissing gates installed yet disabled access poor. Improving this will be difficult given that the entrance is on a steep slope. The entrance to the Site is secluded. More signs are needed.

*Greenbroome Spring/Juniper Dell* – The woodland is intersected by public footpaths and is good quality. There is no clear entrance or car parking. Gates and natural pathways restrict disabled access. More signs are required.

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*Oxhey Woods LNR* - More bins are needed, as litter is an issue. On the south side of the Site there is a car park with signs. Kissing gates have been installed. More bins are required in the car park. Educational interpretation information on Site. There is evidence of vandalism, motorbike use and litter.

*Long Spring Wood* – More signs are required and there are no car parking facilities. The Site is, however, good. More furniture is required in keeping with the nature of the Site.

*Chorleywood Common* – Good site but not disabled friendly.

*Sarratt Green* – The Site has the potential to be enhanced, perhaps with planting or enhancement of the existing pond. It caters for the community and is a focal point of the village.

*Chorleywood House Estate* - Good site. The many different functions of the open space at the site enable it to meet the varying needs of the District's residents. On the day of the site visit, broken glass was observed towards the road.

*Pheasants Wood* – This is a good site with the potential to be enhanced. Meets the needs of young people and families. Litter is a problem and dog foul bins are needed. Car parking is only available in side streets. Existing fence posts present but no fence, this needs replacing, as the Site is located next to the road. More furniture is required.

*Shepherd's Lane Wood* – The Site is of a good quality. Disabled access is restricted by gates and pathways. There is no clear entrance or car-parking

*Croxley Common Moor* – The Site has the potential to be enhanced with better paths and educational boards.

*Bishops Wood woodlands* - More bins needed at the entrance of the Site as there is dog fouling and litter. The surface of the car park is very poor and has the potential to damage cars. Fly tipping is a problem. The Site also appears to be a gathering place for unwelcome social activity, which may need to involve the Police. Educational interpretation is available on Site but it is not being used due to above activity.

*Withey Beds* – More furniture and signs are required in fitting with the landscape. Good Site.

*Croxley Hall Wood* – the Site is intersected by PROW 12/11. The Site is good and has access via All Saints Lane and Harvey Road. In places the road has potholes and needs resurfacing. More signs indicating walks/name of site are required as little info. Good site.

*Riverside Drive (The Glade)* – The Site is good and backs onto the Aquadrome. Litter is, however, present and more signs are required.

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## 4.5 Development issues

Table: Site specific issues (natural and semi-natural greenspaces)

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Croxley Common Moor	Croxley Green	<p>A management plan exists for the Site which highlights: Cattle grazing, boundary maintenance, scrub management, Ragwort control, wetland management, on site events, marketing, access and amenity, education and site assessment.</p> <p>The Site is of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). CMS is involved with a restoration countryside stewardship. It aims to improve relationships between the livestock owner, which uses the Site, and gain payment from them for the use of the land.</p> <p>Although TRDC officers believe that there is demand for an indoor classroom and toilets at this site to increase environmental education activities, this is a sensitive issue, given its location within green belt.</p>
Prestwick Road Meadows LNR	Watford Rural Area	<p>CMS is currently developing the Site as a Local Nature Reserve. It includes grassland, hedges and ponds and was originally identified for housing. The Site falls within the South Oxhey SRB area.</p> <p>Revenue funding is required to maintain the Site. Interpretation boards are to be erected, which have been funded through the Wildspaces programme.</p> <p>TRDC officers report problems with fly tipping and fires.</p>
Withey Beds	Watford Rural Area	<p>TRDC would like to increase public access at the Site (Best Value Review 2003).</p> <p>CMS is currently developing a Local Nature Reserve at the Site. It is also aiming to set up a friends group and increase grazing.</p>
Whippendell Woods	WATFORD	<p>The Site is within the Three Rivers District but owned by Watford Borough Council. Approximately 82.2ha is within Three Rivers and 13.3ha in the Watford Borough Watford BC. Management arrangements should be regularly reviewed in order to take this divide into account. CMS is involved with the site's management and forestry plans.</p> <p>Groundwork is involved with access improvements at the Site including a multiuser route.</p>
Muirfield Road		<p>TRDC officers report that young people have been camping and drinking alcohol at the Site. The surrounding community has complained about this to TRDC during consultation.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Mill End Community Wildlife Area aka Springwell Allotments	Rickmansworth	<p>The Site is next to Springwell Avenue allotments and was originally a tip. A Committee was created to fight its development of the Site and it now manages the Site. CMS, Age Concern and Shell Better Britain have assisted with funding the development of the Site. Local people have contributed to funds, which have been used to purchase equipment.</p> <p>Vandalism has been a problem in the past with regards to people riding bikes over the flora and lighting fires. The Site is now gated and this activity has decreased. The Committee, which manages the Site, opens and closes the gate.</p>
Croxley Hall Wood	Croxley Green	<p>There are two countryside rangers based at this site. Parish lengthsman are employed at the Site to undertake maintenance work.</p> <p>A development plan is being created by CMS for the Site as part of a broader plan for developing woodland in the District. It includes the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improving sight lines through the Wood.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improving entrances so they are more welcoming.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the amount of guided walks.</li> </ul> <p>Requests have been received from the local community to incorporate a Buddleia walk and Long Valley Wood (both owned by London Underground) into a management plan. The Buddleia walk is subject to a village green application to HCC.</p>
Gallows Hill Lane		<p>The Site is a small woodland area currently owned by HCC. Abbots Langley Parish Council is looking to take over the management of the Site.</p>
Oxhey Woods LNR	Watford Rural Area	<p>The Site is an ancient woodland with Local Nature Reserve designation. CMS aims to set up a friends group for the Site and gain funding for coppice management and access improvements.</p> <p>TRDC officers stated that there is demand for an indoor classroom and toilets at this Site to increase environmental education activities.</p> <p>TRDC officers report problems with fly tipping and fires.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Rickmansworth Aquadrome	Rickmansworth	<p>TRDC officers reported there have been youth nuisance problems at the Site including fires and vandalism. The area Community Safety Unit fund police patrols, which has reduced this behaviour.</p> <p>The Site has a five year management plan, which was created by TRDC in 2004. It includes the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> General maintenance and tree management.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stabilisation of lake beds.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reducing the number of geese.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring encouraging/monitoring BAP species.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improving signage.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the number of benches.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing path/ drive surfacing, pedestrian safety and car parking.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repairing fences, gates, stiles etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing environmental education at the Site through nature/guided walks, creating educational packs and interpretation boards, employing a seasonal ranger and creating a classroom.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carrying out a feasibility study into a possible visitors centre.</li> </ul> <p>The Access Audit 2001 reported the following findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The hump back bridge over the Grand Union Canal is too steep for wheelchair users to use.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Information relating to pedestrian routes is inadequate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Signage is poor and boards are fixed to high for wheelchair users to read. Further tactile signs and plans should be provided.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair spaces are required at benches.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The picnic area is inaccessible to disabled people as there is no path.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> An easy access trail is located at the Site, which has been well thought out.</li> </ul> <p>TRDC's disability action plan (2003) highlights the need for the following improvements at the Site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Installing DDA compliant benches across the Site and further benches in the play area and picnic area.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Upgrading disabled toilet facilities and related signs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Providing level access to children play area.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repairing tarmac paths.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fit guardrail to small bridge next to Nomad Kayak Club.</li> </ul>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Chorleywood House Estate	Chorleywood	<p>Chorleywood House Estate Community Partnership, CMS, TRDC and Chorleywood Parish Council have created a management plan for the Site.</p> <p>The Plan is comprehensive and provides specific details of biodiversity and recreational objectives that the groups wish to achieve. These are highlighted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Regular cutting of grass and vegetation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation of CMS habitat management plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Creating open views.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Restoring pond.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing disabled access in Dell Wood and investigating the feasibility of creating further disabled friendly paths.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coppicing and the removal of dead wood.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Retention and improvement of existing hedges.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Resigning.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining current path surfaces.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Erecting dog and litter bins at the Site.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Constructing disabled parking.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing use of the compound car park by sports clubs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Building improvements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the marketing of the Site.</li> </ul> <p>The creation of two disabled parking bays has also been highlighted within TRDC's disability action plan (2003) to increase disabled access at recreational sites.</p> <p>CMS have been involved with training the friends group and providing them with an information pack.</p> <p>The Site includes Chorleywood Dell which is a nature reserve managed by the HMWT and is leased from TRDC. The Site is managed to enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>The Access Audit 2001 deemed the signage at the Site inadequate and reported a lack of car parking. This problem appears to have been rectified.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Stockers Lane LNR	Rickmansworth	<p>The Site has a strong friends group with approximately 700 members. The Site, itself, is a designated LNR and owned by Three Valleys Water Company. It is managed by Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT). They are currently negotiating new management agreements, but this is expected to cause no problems.</p> <p>There are 110 species of bird living in the lake, 60 of which are breeding. The Lake is also used for fishing by the British Airways Fishing Club.</p> <p>Work to clarify the distinction between the LNR and the adjoining sailing lake could result in restricted access to the towpath from the LNR.</p> <p>The Lake is within a valley and the Group believes that a working partnership with responsibility for the valley's protection should be created, which will involve co-operation across local authorities.</p>
Chorleywood Common	Chorleywood	<p>The Common Users group has been set up by Chorleywood Parish Council and incorporates the friends group, golf club, the cricket club, Christ Church School and church, Chorleywood Residents Association, Chenies Estate and Loudwater.</p> <p>Issues raised by the Group includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dog fouling, despite the Parish Council erecting seven dog bins around the site.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Common's application for Local Nature Reserve designation.</li> </ul> <p>The main issue on the Common is the lack of activities for children. The Parish Council planned to install a play area several years ago but the local residents objected.</p> <p>There is not enough car parking provision yet residents do not want to see any of the Common developed into a car park.</p> <p>There are benches on the Site and golf/cricket facilities.</p>
Longspring Wood	Abbots Langley	<p>The Site consists of a small wood. It is managed by HMWT. Non intervention allows the vegetation to grow naturally.</p> <p>Key species are being monitored by HMWT in order to analyse increases in the Site's biodiversity.</p>



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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Springwell Reedbed	Rickmansworth	<p>The Site is owned by Thames Valley Water and is managed by the HMWT. The management regime is designed to enhance species diversity. The Site is deemed to be a 'HMWT Nature Reserve and Site of Metropolitan Importance' by the London Borough of Hillingdon.</p> <p>Public access to the Site is confined to canal side viewing. The Trust plans to install a viewing point along the permissive path between the Reedbed and Springwell Lake. This viewing point would also include new interpretive information.</p> <p>HMWT plans to replace the information panel along the canal side margin.</p>
Chorleywood Dell (Chorleywood House Estate)	Chorleywood	<p>HMWT is monitoring the growth of several species, which it believes will indicate increases in the Site's biodiversity.</p>
Frogmore Meadow	Sarratt	<p>The Site consists of a small meadow, which is a SSSI. The Site is not well known and is managed by the HMWT. Low intensity cattle grazing takes place on the Site to increase biodiversity.</p> <p>HMT aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Replace and maintain fencing along the River Chess.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Install an interpretative panel and reserve sign.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gain land surrounding the Site in order to extend the Site.</li> </ul>

## 4.6 Summary of shortfall

Catchment mapping shows that the following areas are deficient in the access to provision of this typology:

Bedmond

Abbots Langley (part of)

Eastbury (part of)

Northwood (part of)

Demand has been expressed for the following:

- ❑ Croxley Common Moor – indoor classroom and toilets, biodiversity management (although the sensitivity of these proposals must be acknowledged).
- ❑ Withey Beds – increased public access.
- ❑ Croxley Hall Wood – improving sight lines and entrances; enhance Buddleia walk.
- ❑ Oxhey Woods – indoor classroom provision subject to planning considerations.
- ❑ Rickmansworth Aquadrome – actions outlined in management plan and in creating disabled access.
- ❑ Chorleywood House Estate – actions outlined in management plan, increased disabled access and increased biodiversity management.
- ❑ Stocker Lane LNR – restrict access to towpath and distinguish LNR from sailing club.
- ❑ Springwell Reedbed – viewing point.
- ❑ Frogmore Meadow – repair fencing, erect interpretation boards and create an extension to the Site.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 5: GREEN CORRIDORS

‘Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration.’

### 5.1 Summary of provision

There is a large network of green corridors with open access within each of the six analysis areas. For the purposes of analysis, these have been grouped as one site in each area, totalling 30.71ha. This creates a level of provision totalling 0.37ha/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

*Table 10: Distribution of green corridor sites by geographic area:*

Geographical area	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Total area		Current level
	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	1	6.57	0	0	1	6.57	0.38
Chorleywood	1	3.5	0	0	1	3.5	0.38
Croxley Green	1	1.72	0	0	1	1.72	0.14
Rickmansworth	1	7.39	0	0	1	7.39	0.45
Sarratt	1	9.3	0	0	1	9.3	4.92
Watford Rural	1	2.23	0	0	1	2.23	0.09
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30.71</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30.71</b>	<b>0.37</b>

### 5.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

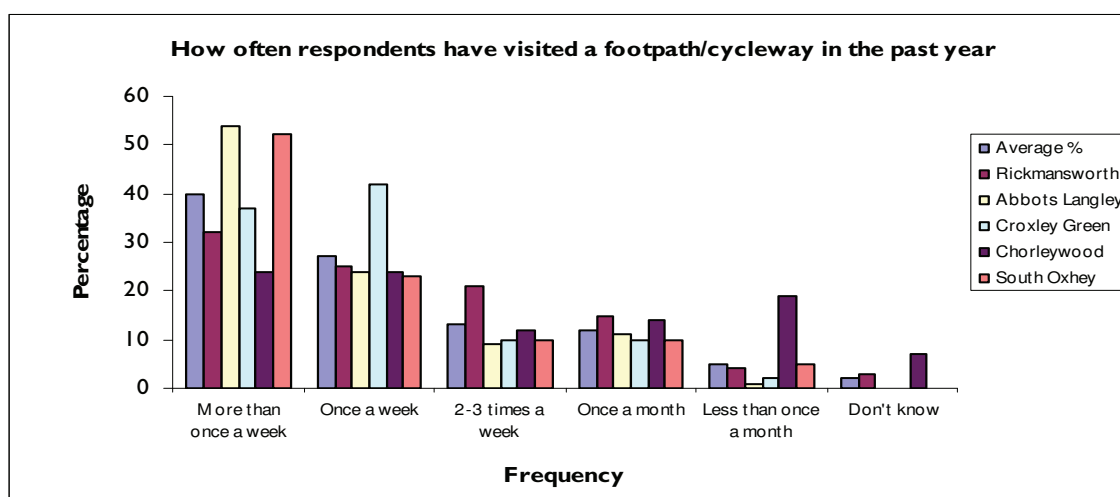
# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 11: Summary of access to provision to green corridors

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	√
B	Chorleywood	√
	Abbots Langley	√
	Kings Langley (TR only)	√
	Garston (TR only)	√
	Croxley Green	√
	Oxhey Hall	√
	Carpenters Park	√
	South Oxhey	√
	Eastbury	√
	Northwood	√ (part of)
	Moorpark	√
C	Maple Cross	√
	Bedmond	√
	Huntonbridge	√
	Sarratt	√

## 5.3 Survey results

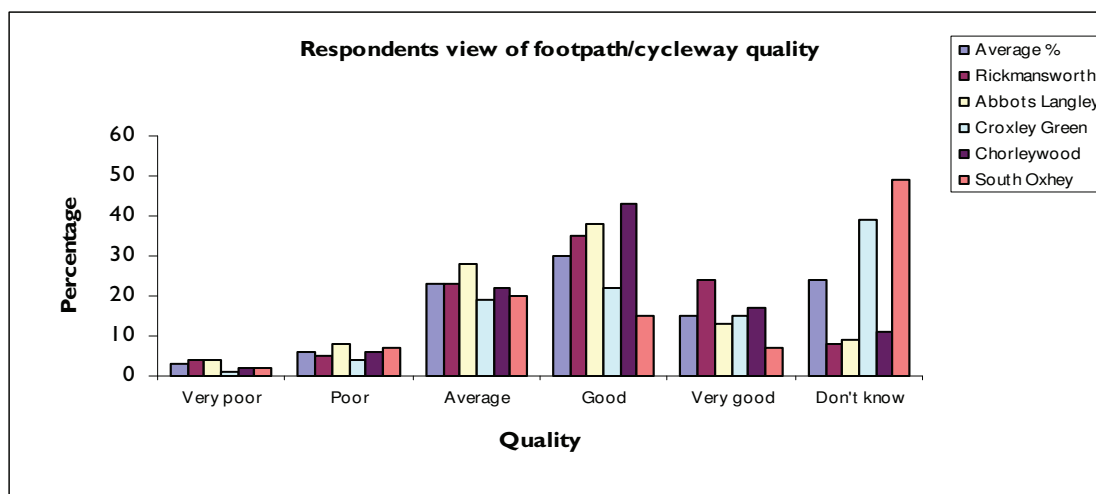
Figure 11: Frequency of visits to a footpath/cycleway in past year



Visits to green corridors in the District tend to be frequent with over three quarters of respondents (80%) visiting a footpath/cyclepath once a week or more. Respondents from Chorleywood use footpath/cycleways less frequently 19% of respondents from this area visit a green corridor less than once a month.

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Figure 12: Respondents' perception of footpath/cycleway quality



Almost half of respondents (45%) feel that footpath and cycleway provision in the District is good or very good. However, one quarter of respondents (24%) are unaware of their quality suggesting that they do not use green corridors frequently. Respondents from Chorleywood and Rickmansworth are most likely to rate provision as good or very good.

## 5.4 Key findings

### *Rights of Way Improvement Plan Draft Statement of Action 2005-02-16*

Hertfordshire has more than 3100km of public rights of way (PROW). The County Council is responsible for its maintenance. The rights of way consists of footpaths (71%), bridleways (20%), byways open to all traffic (5%) and roads used as public paths (4%). The PROWS also include:

- ☐ Cycle tracks.
- ☐ Permissive routes.
- ☐ Quiet lanes.
- ☐ Greenways.

The majority of this PROW network is found within the countryside. Only 6% of PROWs are in urban areas. The PROWs tend to be unsurfaced and are, therefore, affected by the weather.

A Statement of Action and an Action Plan has been created by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), which highlights improvements required to the PROW network. The following core actions are stated within the Report:

- ☐ Developing a range of routes for people with limited mobility and visual impairment.
- ☐ Developing a network from public transport connections.
- ☐ Reducing the number of unnecessary physical barriers.
- ☐ Promoting Hertfordshire's countryside to residents and visitors.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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- ❑ Developing appropriate, well maintained links into the countryside for use by local people.
- ❑ Creating and developing off road routes linking communities with places of work, schools and other local facilities.
- ❑ Extending the network currently available to cyclists and horse riders.
- ❑ Assisting people wishing to improve or maintain health by developing a range of circular off road routes.
- ❑ Ensuring opportunities to protect, extend and enhance the off road network are included in proposals for new developments.
- ❑ Where the off road network is affected by busy transport routes, work to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to improve safety and attractiveness for users.
- ❑ Addressing problems of fly tipping, litter and dog fouling in partnership with appropriate local and regional agencies.
- ❑ Identifying and addressing potential demand for access to the countryside amongst those who currently do not use the network.

HCC has prioritised network development with regards to public safety, the level of use and positive impacts on the Network. The document does not provide specific site by site information.

## ***Rickmansworth Canal***

An annual event (the Rickmansworth Canal and Environment Festival) is held at Batchworth Lock in Rickmansworth. Narrowboats moor in the local area providing music, exhibitions and entertainment. There are also stalls around the Site. A historic narrowboat was developed as an educational tool through an exhibition centre and is being used to train young crews. The Festival helps advertise the Site's recreational use.

## ***Footpaths***

HCC has split the PROWs that it manages into quadrants. The Three Rivers District is contained within quadrant one. PROWs that have a tarmac surface and are considered to be urban are maintained by the Highways department of HCC. Maps of the PROWs were digitised in 2000 by HCC. New paths are added to this system. HCC surveys 5% of the network bi annually for Best Value reviews.

General problems identified by HCC in this quadrant include:

- ❑ Overgrown vegetation blocking footpaths.
- ❑ Residents dumping rubbish onto the PROW from their adjacent back gardens (especially in Rickmansworth and Abbots Langley).
- ❑ Poor awareness of the PROW network, especially urban paths.
- ❑ Vandalism of kissing gates on urban to rural paths.
- ❑ Replacing stiles with kissing gates to increase disabled access has also improved access for motorbikes. Motorbikes have destroyed the path surface, especially in Jacketts Field.
- ❑ Farmers overcropping PROWs (Bedmond and North Abbots Langley).

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HCC aims to rectify these problems through contacting residents who can be deemed responsible for fly tipping and using metal kissing gates that are constructed to be beneath the ground, which cannot be sawn through. HCC has also erected signs stating no motorbikes/scooters/mopeds, which have worked in most areas as activity can then be policed. HCC has offered incentives to farmers to maintain PROWs. There are still particular problems with one farmer in Abbots Langley.

HCC is working towards a programme of resurfacing paths, improving their drainage and upgrading promoted routes. Access to open space sites has been increased through the CROW Act especially to commons and village greens.

There are rambling representatives in each area of the quadrant who organise walks. CMS is involved with the promotion of 'Walks and Move', which promotes walking, cycling and children's map reading.

Local rambling groups including the Chiltern Society, Watford/Abbots Langley/Croxley Green Rambling Association and Chorleywood/Rickmansworth Rambling Association state that the following issues are problems in the District:

- ❑ Technical obstructions.
- ❑ Overcropping.
- ❑ Motorbikes being used on footpaths.
- ❑ Signs being turned in the opposite direction.
- ❑ Stile maintenance.

Watford/Abbots Langley/Croxley Green Rambling Association Group states that it is worried about the closure of urban footpaths in the District due to new legislation, which allows the closure of paths/alleyways due to community safety concerns.

British Standards Institute guidelines highlight that:

- ❑ *There shall be no barbed wire, electric fencing capable of giving a shock, inside the structure or within 1, of the gap or structure or of the manoeuvring space.*
- ❑ *The ground within 1m of the structure and the ground through the structure shall be kept free of surface water (except immediately after rain), and provide a firm surface.*
- ❑ *When the gap or structure fails to conform to any one or more of the requirements of this standard it shall be repaired, replaced or removed.*
- ❑ *Gaps shall conform to the following requirements:*
  - *for footpaths the minimum width of gaps shall be 900mm;*
  - *for bridleways the minimum width of gaps shall be 1525mm.*

All groups stated that PROWs in other areas were poorer in quality than Three Rivers and that generally the District's problems were minimal. Groups also stated that HCC kept them well informed on the progress of any complaints they received.

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## ***Bridleways***

TRDC was presented in the past few years with the award from the British Horse Society for proactive policies on bridleways in its adopted Local Plan. Bridleway groups in the District are pleased with the level of support they receive from TRDC.

HCC officers believe that there is unmet demand in Three Rivers for more bridleways. Several bridleways have been created around Sarratt as land is rented from local farmers by groups of horse riders. These groups have then applied for bridleway designation. Fly tipping also occurs on the District's bridleways.

The Chess Valley Bridleway Action Group also stated that there was unmet demand for more bridleways in the District, which it believes are often overlooked in preference for cycling routes.

## ***Cycling***

TRDC is proactive in work to improve cycling in the District. Its proposals to implement new cycle tracks include one from Maple Cross and Rickmansworth, which has already been constructed as far as Mill End; a new cycle route between Abbots Langley and Bedmond, which was completed at the end of May 2005 and the development of a new through Rickmansworth Town Centre to Chorleywood and Croxley Green.

HCC officers stated that there is a lack of cyclepaths in Rickmansworth, especially from commuters who work in Watford and live in Rickmansworth.

Spokes (a local cycling club) believes that opportunities for cyclists should be improved and that this may be achieved by altering the designation of several footpaths to multi user routes. CTC Herts DA Cycling Club believes that there are not enough off road cycling routes in the area. The Club usually sticks to using quiet roads where they can avoid heavy traffic.

Spokes complained that poor path maintenance, especially overgrown hedges, affects cyclists despite the completion of recent improvement works. CTC Herts DA Cycling Club regards signage of cycleways in the District as generally good in Hertfordshire. Flytipping has been spotted on some of the cycle routes in the County by the Club.

A local access forum has been set up by HCC to accompany the PROW Improvement Plan. The objective of the Forum is to advise local authorities of emerging ideas and needs for improvements.

## ***Site visit issues***

Site visits were not conducted at green corridor sites as they are all owned by Hertfordshire County Council.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 5.5 Development issues

Table 12: Site specific issues (green corridors)

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Whippendell Woods	WATFORD	<p>The circular walk (section one) is surfaced and free from stiles and gates allowing easy access. There are four circular walks at the Site.</p> <p>Cyclepath provision has been increased between urban Watford and Three Rivers through the Wood.</p>
South Oxhey	Rickmansworth	<p>TRDC Best Value Review 2003 indicates that a new cycle route should be developed in the area.</p>
Grand Union Canal/River Gade	Abbots Langley	<p>There is a five year ongoing programme to implement an action plan via the Canal Users Group. This includes the upgrading of towpaths. The canal towpath is maintained by British Waterways. PROWS are signposted from this path.</p>
Ebury Way	Rickmansworth	<p>Groundwork worked in partnership with other agencies and councils to open up the point bar between the River Gade and Grand Union Canal. The point bar was originally a landfill site. It was cleared and covered with grass. A children's play area was created at the Site. It is a heritage way and a formal garden and public art is also present.</p> <p>Young people gather at the Site and a portacabin has been erected at the Site for use by youths and residents/tenants associations.</p> <p>Existing open space sites have been linked by the Ebury Way.</p> <p>CMS is marketing the Site with Groundwork.</p> <p>Ramblers groups believe sections of the canal towpath need to be upgraded by improving their surface. This will allow the Site to become DDA compliant. A section between the Ebury Way and Grand Union Canal has recently been upgraded with ramps and is promoted as a key cycle route between Watford and Rickmansworth and is part of the national cycle network. There is a leaflet and signage is regularly improved.</p>
Croxley Common Moor	Croxley Green	<p>Parish footpaths in the area are maintained by CMS and the Parish Council.</p> <p>TRDC officers state that there is demand for a bridleway route across Croxley Common Moor. The Site is strategic and would link other bridleways in the area.</p> <p>An informal bridleway is to be developed which goes through the wood. This route will provide links to other provision in the area.</p> <p>There has been horse use on the footpaths in this area due to the lack of bridleways.</p>

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Abbots Langley	Abbots Langley	A promotion booklet has been produced and guided walks take place on Thursday morning. The walks are between Abbots Langley and the Dacorum Borough.
Maple Cross/Mill End	Rickmansworth	A cyclepath has been developed between the two areas, which also links to other footpaths.
Trebor and Cadbury's		HCC, as part of its proposals to look to local businesses to improve countryside networks, highlighted that Trebor and Cadbury's would like to fund the creation of PROWs near their offices/ factories (HCC).
Bedmond	Abbots Langley	This path, through a farm is overcropped. There is a path around the perimeter of the field but this is also not maintained. Complaints have been sent to HCC (Hertfordshire and Middlesex Ramblers Association).
Bucks Hill	Sarratt	A path through a farm field is overcropped. Complaints have been sent to HCC (Hertfordshire and Middlesex Ramblers Association).
Scotsbridge Playing Field	Rickmansworth	There is a footpath, which runs through the recreation ground to the Grand Union Canal. Few people know of this paths existence due to inconsistent signposting of routes to the Chess Valley. (Chorleywood and Rickmansworth Ramblers Association)
Bridleway SA14, Coltspring	Sarratt	The Route runs along the M25. The Bridleway is not maintained adequately. It is overgrown and drainage is poor as it is at the bottom of a hill (Chess Valley Bridleway Action Group).
Bridleway Jeffreys Field SA45/57/64/69	N/A	The barriers are not high enough on the motorway bridge, which crosses the M25 to ensure rider safety. The Bridleway changes designation to a restricted byway at this point.
Buddleia Walk	N/A	The Site has been used as bridleway for many years but it is undesignated. There are proposals to link it to the management of Croxley Hall Woods, subject to the Village Green application being successful.
Lavrock and All Saints Lane (Croxley Hall Wood)	Croxley Green	The Chess Valley Bridleway Action Group would like to see this route with vehicular access designated as a bridleway.
Springwell Lake and Inns Lake	Rickmansworth	A six mile walk has been developed by Groundwork Thames Valley through several sites owned by Three Valleys Water. The route is 27ha in size.
Pynesfield Lakes, West Hyde	Rickmansworth	A public footpath is owned by Three Valleys Water, which leads to a causeway crossing nearby lakes. The causeway is 19ha.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Long Valley Wood	Croxley Green	London Underground, Metronet, SSL Ltd and BCV Ltd have put in a planning application for railway sidings to be built in Long Valley Wood on land adjacent to the Grand Union Canal. There is a permissive route in this area, which Chess Valley Bridleway Action Group would like to see designated as a bridleway.

## 5.6 Summary of shortfall

Catchment mapping shows that the following areas are deficient in the access to provision of this typology:

Northwood (part of)

Demand has been expressed for the following:

- ☐ South Oxhey – new cycle route.
- ☐ Ebury Way - -surface improvements.
- ☐ Croxley Common Moor – new bridleway.
- ☐ Trebor and Cadbury's – new PROWs.
- ☐ Bedmond – path maintenance.
- ☐ Bucks Hill – path maintenance.
- ☐ Scotsbridge Playing Fields – more signs.
- ☐ Bridleway SA14 – further maintenance of Site.
- ☐ Buddleia Walk – bridleway designation.
- ☐ Croxley Hall Wood – improving sight lines and entrances; enhance Buddleia walk.
- ☐ Lavrock and All Saints Lane - bridleway designation.
- ☐ Long Valley Wood – new bridleway.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

This is dealt with within the pitches and non pitches assessment report in Part 2.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 6: AMENITY GREENSPACE

‘Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.’

### 6.1 Summary of provision

There are 28 sites classified as amenity greenspace in Three Rivers with open access, totalling 40.78ha. This creates a current level of provision totalling 0.49ha/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 13: Distribution of amenity greenspace sites by geographic area:

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Total area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	6	5.25	0	0	6	5.25	0.3
Chorleywood	2	2.34	0	0	2	2.34	0.25
Croxley Green	1	0.47	0	0	1	0.47	0.04
Rickmansworth	14	24.83	0	0	14	24.83	1.5
Sarratt	2	0.49	0	0	2	0.49	0.26
Watford Rural	3	7.39	0	0	3	7.39	0.29
TOTAL	28	40.78	0	0	28	40.78	0.49

### 6.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

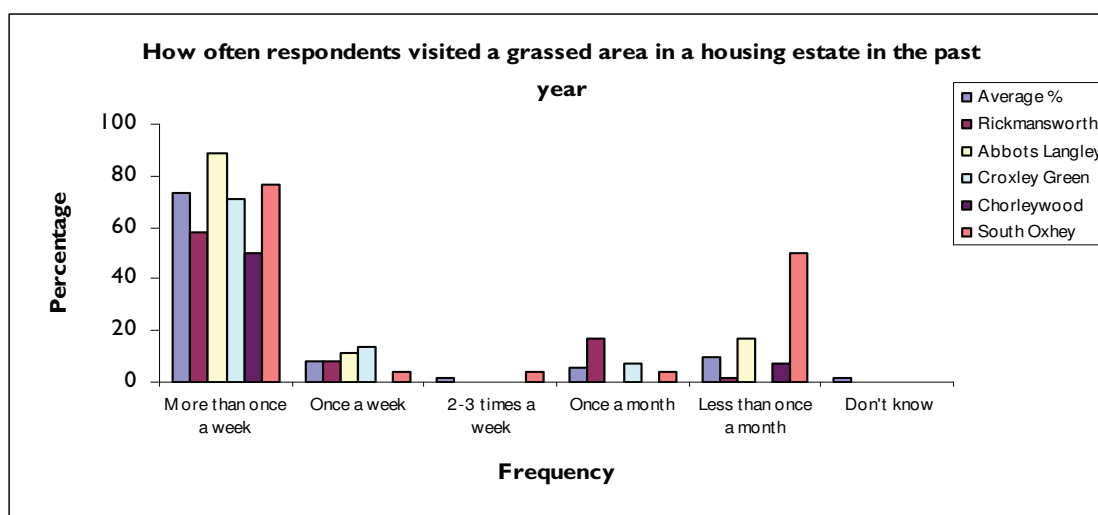
Table 14: Summary of access to provision to amenity greenspace

Zone	Settlement	Adequate provision
A	Rickmansworth	√ (part of)
B	Chorleywood	√ (part of)
	Abbots Langley	√ (part of)
	Kings Langley (TR only)	√ (part of)
	Garston (TR only)	
	Croxley Green	
	Oxhey Hall	
	Carpenters Park	√ (part of)
	South Oxhey	√ (part of)
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	√ (part of)
	Bedmond	√ (part of)
	Huntonbridge	
	Sarratt	

## 6.3 Survey results

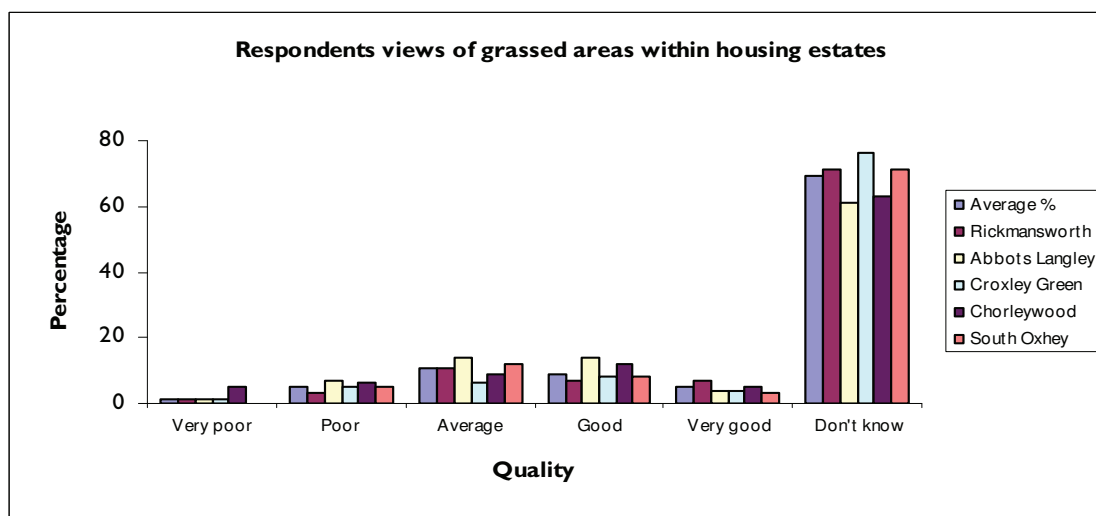
Previous studies conducted by KKP has shown that it is difficult for many residents to understand the definition of amenity greenspace. Therefore examples of this typology were provided to respondents when the survey was completed in order to comprehensively explain the classification.

Figure 13: Frequency of visits to a grassed area in a housing estate in past year



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

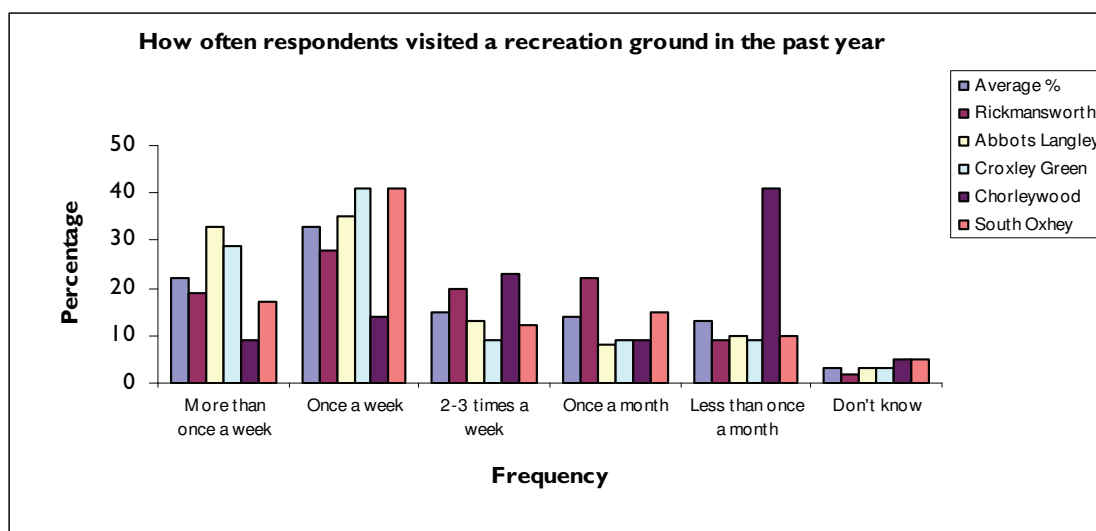
Figure 14: Respondents' perceptions of grassed in a housing estate quality



Over three quarters of respondents (80%) visit a grassed area of land within a housing estate more than once a week. This figure is greatest in Abbots Langley (89%). Respondents from South Oxhey are least likely to visit a grassed area in a housing estate frequently, fifty percent of respondents from this area visit a grassed area less than once a month. Over two thirds of respondents (69%) do not know the quality of grassed areas in housing estates despite their high frequency of visits.

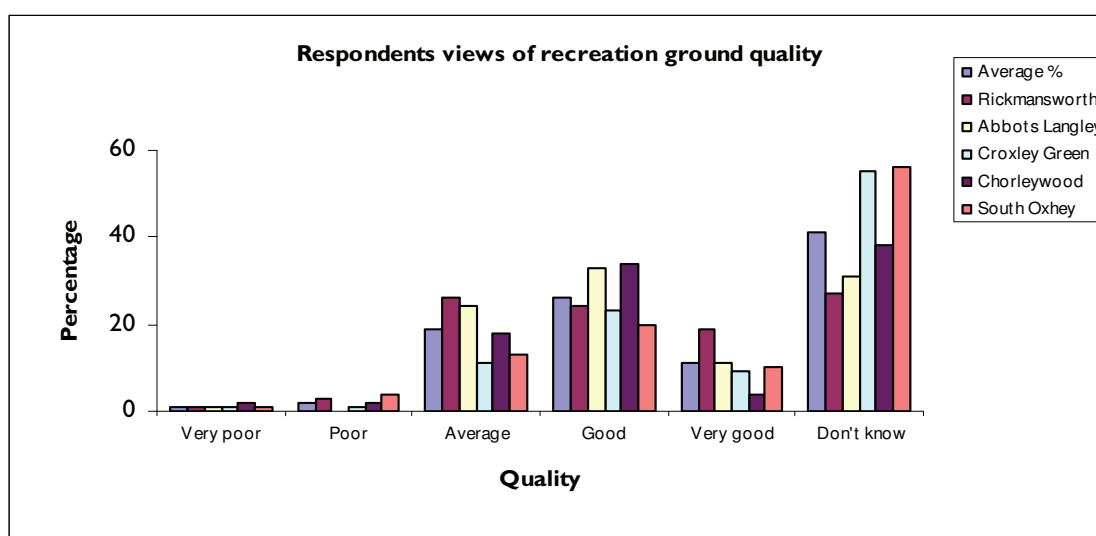
Other sites classified as amenity greenspace include recreation grounds. Almost two thirds of respondents (70%) visit these sites once a week or more. Respondents from Chorleywood are most likely to visit recreation grounds infrequently, as 41% of respondents from this area visit recreation grounds less than once a month.

Figure 15: Frequency of visits to recreation ground in past year



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 16: Respondents' perceptions of recreation ground quality



A large percentage of respondents (41%) are unaware of the quality of recreation grounds despite over half of them visiting this type of provision once a week or more. Almost one quarter of respondents (24%) feel that the quality of recreation grounds is good and a further 19% feel the quality is average.

## 6.4 Key findings

Amenity greenspace includes many of the District's recreation grounds. They are classified as amenity greenspace as they are used for informal recreation more frequently than playing pitches.

Many amenity greenspace sites suffer from the same vandalism problems as detailed in the parks section. However, problems with motorbike use, arson and joy riding tend to be more prolific on amenity greenspace sites.

Several sites are cut only twice a year to increase biodiversity at these sites. The grass is removed for composting. These sites include those with semi natural typologies also, such as:

- ☐ Rickmansworth Aquadrome.
- ☐ Croxley Common Moor.
- ☐ Batchworth Heath.
- ☐ Chenies Open Space.
- ☐ Queens Drive.
- ☐ Bury Meadows.
- ☐ River Chess Walk.
- ☐ Stones Orchard.
- ☐ Wearings Field.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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TRDC officers feel that the maintenance of amenity greenspace sites between housing could be improved. Current upkeep is restricted by time and maintenance costs.

## **Site visit issues**

KKP visited thirteen amenity greenspace sites, many of which also included play areas. General trends across these sites, which were normally of a good quality, include evidence of litter and a lack of signs and street furniture, e.g. benches.

*King George V, Sarratt* - Good site but litter appears to be a problem.

*Primrose Hill* – A good site. The recycling bins are on site too small and pile up which detracts from the appearance of the Site. Good car parking not DDA compatible. Some litter on the Site.

*Fortune Common* – Signs and more furniture is required at the Site as it is not signposted. It has the potential to be enhanced or re-evaluated as another typology.

*Jordans Road* – The Site caters for families and has potential to be enhanced with play equipment. Trees stop ball games at the moment. More signs are required.

*Coombe Hill* - Site has a floodlit corridor and meets the needs of families and youth although ball games are not permitted and more benches are required. The Site is good and has the potential to be used as allotments. Fencing is required and more signs. Litter was visible when visited.

*Bury Meadows* - Good site, which caters for all aspects of the community. However, consultation also highlights that the site is considered to be underused by some groups.

*Church Hill* - Wider entrances are required especially since it is adjacent to school, this would increase visibility lines into the Site. More seats are needed. The path around the site is closed decreasing access.

*Rickmansworth Park* - Dog fouling bins are required as fouling is evident. More furniture and signs are also needed, as the site is not signposted.

*Chenies Road* - Groundwork has been involved in the enhancement of the Site in the past. It is a meeting place for parents and pick up point for school. Litter is evident at the Site, there is poor access and more furniture is required.

*Hornhill Recreation Ground* – Good site although there is evidence of litter at the Site. There is a play area and tarmac football pitch on site.

*Tanners Hill* – The Site needs to be fenced and more signs are required. Litter was visible when visited. The swings have broken and need to be replaced or removed.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

*Warings Field, Furze View* –This is a good site with biodiversity and protected trees. A green corridor and cycle path are next to the Site. There are problems with motorbikes/quads. More furniture is required.

*Queens Drive* - Site has half-MUGA posts and grass surface, which is now worn. There is evidence of bike/quad tracks use. The Site is at the back of houses but is protected by bushes and trees. There is litter in the trees and dog foul prevalent.

## 6.5 Development issues (other sites are included in Appendix 2)

Table 15: Site specific issues (amenity greenspace)

Site	Analysis Area	Development issues
Barton Way Playing Field	Croxley Green	<p>There are complaints to the Community Safety Partnership of young people fighting, lighting fires and drinking alcohol. Drug use paraphernalia has been found in the area.</p> <p>Natural surveillance of the Site is poor due to the perimeter hedges.</p> <p>The Access Audit 2001 identifies a lack of wheelchair parking spaces on the Site and a lack of equipment for disabled children. There is also a need for car parking spaces designated for disabled persons.</p>
Baldwins Lane Playing Field	Croxley Green	<p>The Access Audit 2001 identifies the need for wheelchair parking spaces adjacent to current benches on the Site and reports that tarmac footpaths are in a poor condition.</p>
King George V Playing Fields, Mill End	Rickmansworth	<p>There is a need for disabled parking at the Site and benches with spaces for wheelchair users to park. (Access Audit 2001)</p> <p>TRDC created an action plan in 2003 to increase disabled access at recreational sites. Work at this site will include providing drop kerbs to the car park, painting bollards contrasting colours and creating disabled access to the bowling green via a level path and gate.</p>
South Oxhey Playing Fields	Watford Rural	<p>The Access Audit 2001 identified a lack of benches with parking spaces for disabled wheelchair users.</p>
Longcroft Road, Maple Cross	Rickmansworth	<p>Amenity greenspace will be created in the area through a Section 106 agreement with a current housing developer.</p>
The Green, Croxley Green	Croxley Green	<p>Croxley Green Parish Council manages the Site on behalf of TRDC.</p>

## 6.6 Summary of shortfall

Catchment mapping has highlighted the deficiencies in access to provision in the following areas:

Sarratt	Rickmansworth (part of)
Chorleywood (part of)	Abbots Langley (part of)
Kings Langley (TR only) (part of)	Garston (TR only)
Croxley Green	Oxhey Hall
Carpenders Park (part of)	South Oxhey (part of)
Eastbury	Northwood
Moorpark	Maple Cross (part of)
Bedmond (part of)	Huntonbridge

Demand has been expressed for the following:

- ❑ Barton Way Playing Fields – increase disabled access; improve natural surveillance of site
- ❑ Baldwins Lane Playing Fields - increase disabled access.
- ❑ King George V Playing Fields, Mill End - increase disabled access.
- ❑ South Oxhey Playing Fields – benches for wheelchair users.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 7: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

‘Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.’

### 7.1 Summary of provision

There are 43 sites classified as provision for children and young people in Three Rivers with open access, totalling 9.51ha. This creates a current level of provision of 0.11ha/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 16: Distribution of children and young people provision sites by geographic area

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Analysis area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	12	1.01	0	0	12	1.01	0.06
Chorleywood	1	0.15	0	0	1	0.15	0.02
Croxley Green	4	0.56	0	0	4	0.56	0.05
Rickmansworth	11	1.00	0	0	11	1.00	0.06
Sarratt	1	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	0	1	0 <sup>3</sup>	0
Watford Rural	14	7.54	0	0	14	7.54	0.29
TOTAL	43	10.25	0	0	43	10.25	0.12

### 7.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix 1). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

<sup>2</sup> No size of site provided

<sup>3</sup> No size of site provided

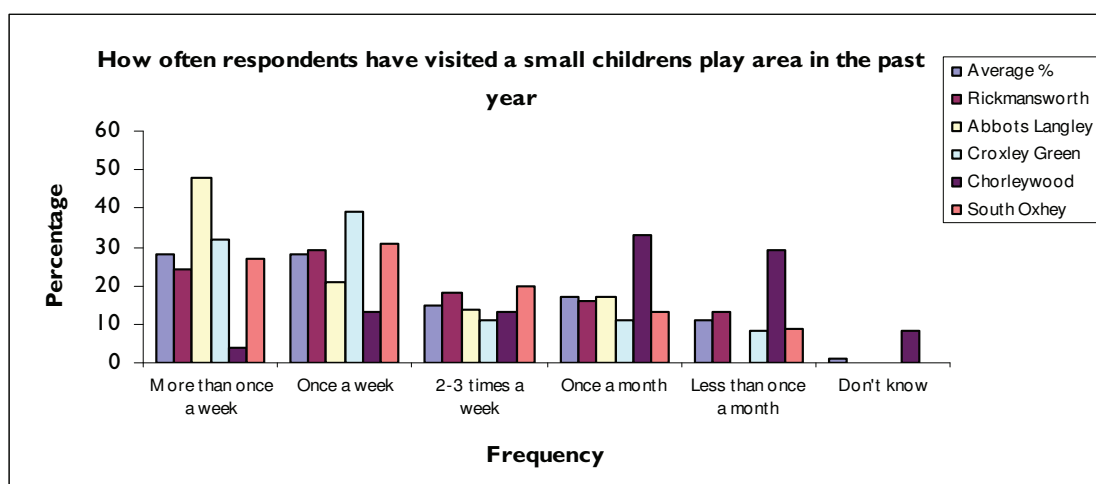
# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 17: Summary of access to provision for children and young people

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	√ (part of)
B	Chorleywood	√ (part of)
	Abbots Langley	√
	Kings Langley (TR only)	√ (part of)
	Garston (TR only)	√
	Croxley Green	√
	Oxhey Hall	√
	Carpenters Park	√
	South Oxhey	√
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	√
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	√
	Sarratt	

## 7.3 Survey results

Figure 17: Frequency of visits to a small children's play area in past year

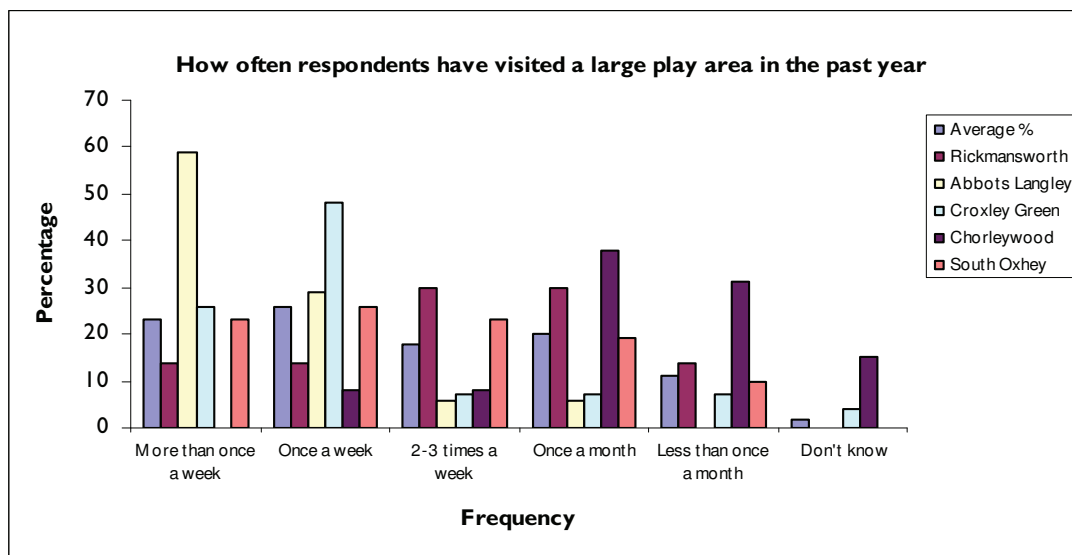


The number of regular visitors to play areas varies between analysis areas. Respondents from Abbots Langley (83%) and Croxley Green (82%) are most likely to visit a small play

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

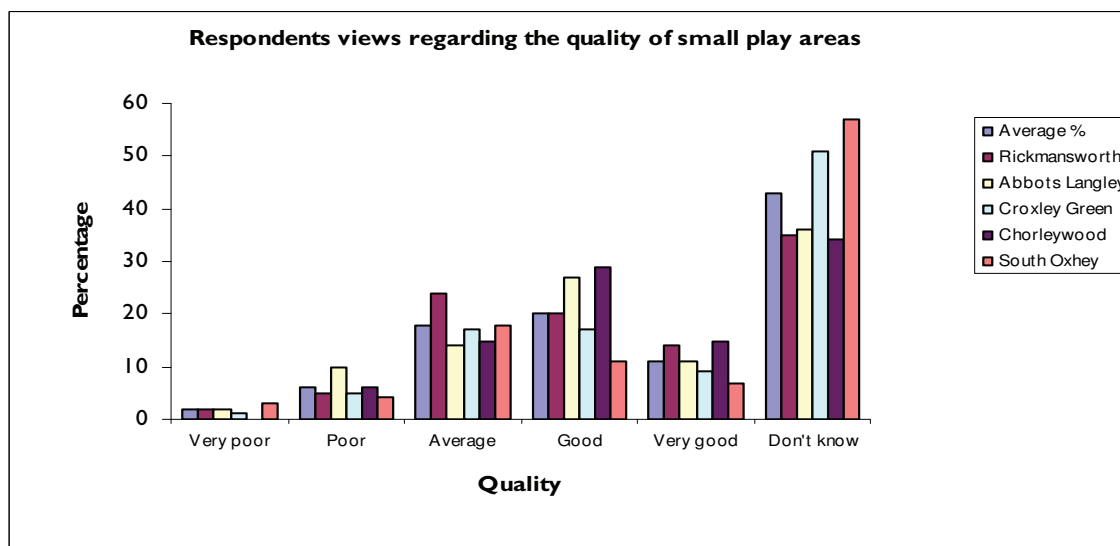
area once a week or more. Chorleywood respondents are the most likely to visit a small play area once a month or less (62%).

Figure 18: Frequency of visits to a large play area in past year



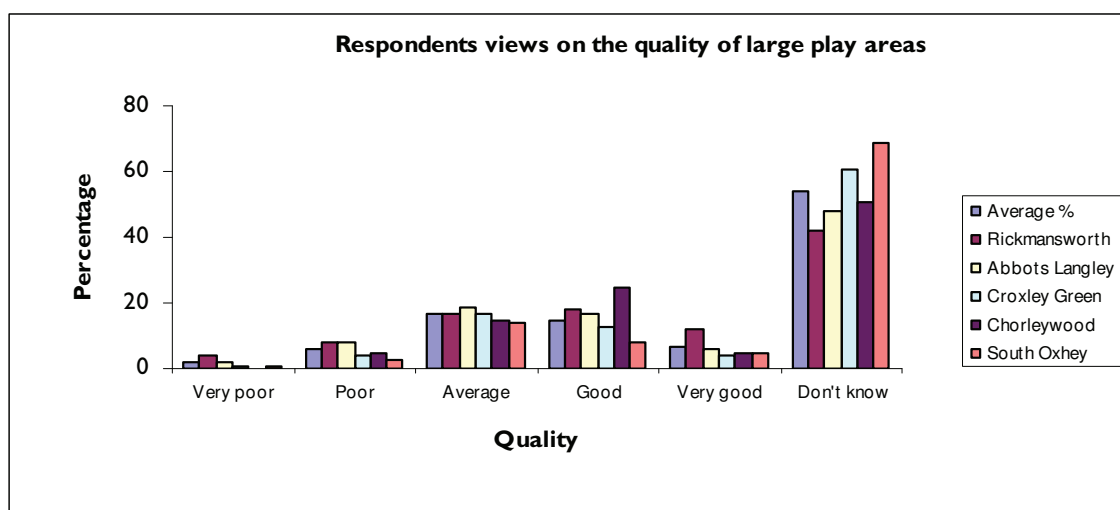
Respondents from Abbots Langley (94%) and Croxley Green (81%) are most likely to visit a large play area once a week or more. Chorleywood respondents are the most likely to visit a large play area once a month or less (69%).

Figure 19: Respondents' perceptions of small play area quality



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 20: Respondents' perceptions of large play area quality



The majority of respondents do not know the quality of play areas in the District. (54% do not know the quality of large play areas whilst 43% do not know the quality of small play areas). In general most respondents who have an opinion on the quality of play areas believe that they are of an average or good quality. South Oxhey respondents are the least likely to think that play area quality was good or very good (13% large/18% small).

## 7.4 Key findings

The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) defines playing space as 'space that is safely accessible and available to the general public, and of a suitable size and nature, for sport, active recreation or children's play. Informal areas within housing estates are also included as children's play spaces.

Play areas are separated into two areas:

- ❑ **An activity zone**, which is specifically designed for play. It may not include play equipment.
- ❑ **A buffer zone**, which is an area of land separating the activity zone from other land uses e.g. residential, playing pitch. The buffer zone may, however, contain footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths.

There are three categories for play:

- ❑ A local area for play (LAP).
- ❑ A local area equipped for play (LEAP). This area must contain five types of play equipment.
- ❑ A neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP). This area may be divided into sub sections and possibly contain play equipment catering for a variety of ages, including youth shelters and MUGAs.

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- A settlement equipped play area (SEAP) caters for all ages, includes MUGAs, skateparks, youth shelters, adventure play equipment and is often included within large parks site.

Catchment areas for these categories are assessed through the following distances and walking times, provided by the National Playing Fields Association, 2001.

*Table 18: NPFA equipped play area catchment areas*

Facility	Time	Pedestrian route	Straight line distance
Local area for play (LAP)	1 minute	100 metres	60 metres
Local equipped area for play (LEAP)	5 minutes	400 metres	240 metres
Neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP)	15 minutes	1,000 metres	600 metres.
Settlement equipped area for play (SEAP)			Over 1000 metres

The straight line distance is used as the radial distance of each facility's catchment area. This distance has been used to plot the play sites' catchment areas in this study. As pedestrian routes to play areas vary between households the straight line distance indicated by the NPFA is more defensible. The report therefore uses the straight line distances to plot catchment areas.

*Table 19: Summary of play provision by NPFA definition*

	LAPs	LEAPs	NEAPs	SEAPs	MUGA	Total
Abbots Langley	5	6	1	1	0	12
Chorleywood	0	1	0	0	0	1
Croxley Green	0	0	2	2	0	4
Rickmansworth	4	2	0	4	1	11
Sarratt	0	1	0	0	0	1
Watford Rural	4	7	2	2	1	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>43</b>

The table above demonstrates that a reasonable spread of types of provision across the District. LAPs generally provide play provision for the local area and contain equipment catering for children aged up to six years old. Decreasing the number of LAPs should be considered as these sites normally offer a poor quality play experience and cost a great deal to maintain.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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It can be seen, however, that TRDC has invested in the creation of large quality play areas, which cater for all children and teenagers. This investment should be continued in line with current documents and the demand demonstrated in this report.

Bookable MUGAs are not included in the open spaces analysis. They are addressed in the accompanying outdoor sports facilities analysis. MUGAs, included in this analysis are:

- ☐ Leavesden Country Park (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Watford Rd/ Langleybury Lane, Hunton Bridge (MUGA only).
- ☐ Manor House (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Hillcroft Crescent (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Barton Way (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ King George V, Mill End (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Hornhill Recreation Ground (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Huntonbury Dowding Way/Westland Close (linked to other play provision).
- ☐ Lincoln Drive (MUGA only).

## ***Play Plan 2002-2007***

The Play Plan aims to enable TRDC to provide and support a range of play opportunities across the District. A consultation document was created in 2002, which forms the backbone of the Plan. Council members were the main consultees.

With regards to fixed play (playgrounds) the following issues were determined by the Plan.

- ☐ Annual inspections should be carried out by TRDC additional to the inspections by Zurich Municipal carried out bi annually.
- ☐ Officers should continue to review fixed play areas and consider disability access.
- ☐ Further site specific issues are included within the site specific table below.

The Strategic Plan highlights the creation of three new low key informal skateboarding areas, two youth shelters, refurbishment of two play areas, the installation of ten new play areas through Section 106 agreements.

## ***Key issues***

Young people in the area are predominantly transported by their parents. Bus transport has ceased in the evening within South Oxhey as local youths have been throwing stones at the buses. The Police and TRDC are currently trying to rectify this problem.

TRDC officers believe that young people are gathering at the play areas and drinking in the evenings. Consultees also report these groups are responsible for digging holes in the wetpore surfacing and intimidating younger children and their parents from using the play areas for their intended purpose.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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TRDC has removed vandalised equipment and not replaced it in the past. The grounds maintenance team do not repair play areas if the leisure department aim to improve them in the short term.

TRDC officers believe that young people in Three Rivers do not make the effort to travel to facilities within walking distance from their homes.

Council officers stated that the addition of skatepark sites, MUGAs and youth shelters to certain sites has attracted more teenagers. There have been several incidences when Croxley Green Skatepark has been broken into and the huts have been damaged. TRDC officers, however, believe that there has been a reduction in the vandalism of children's play areas where teenage provision has been located nearby.

Croxley Green skatepark is open March until October in dry weather. The Site is also closed on Sundays and is only open during the week between 4pm and 7pm, Saturdays 10am - 7pm and Bank Holidays 10am – 4pm. However there is demand for facilities for teenagers to use in the evening, especially in summer and providing provision, which closes at 7pm, does not meet this demand. It must be noted, however, that opening times are based on recommendations made in the Ombudsman's report, following complaints by residents.

## **Consultation**

The following groups relating to youth provision and open spaces have been consulted:

- ❑ Parent & Toddler Group, All Saints Church, Croxley Green.
- ❑ Rainbows Toddler Group, The Centre, South Oxhey.
- ❑ Out of School Ltd, St. Mary's C of E Primary School, Rickmansworth.
- ❑ St. Acorns After School Club, St. Joseph's Church, South Oxhey.
- ❑ Bedmond Youth Club, Bedmond.
- ❑ West Hyde & Maple Cross Youth Centre.
- ❑ Abbots Langley Youth Club.

The groups were concerned with the following issues:

Vandalism is a major issue within the Authority involving play areas in particular. There is a feeling that graffiti should be allowed in some instances, but only in specified areas. Graffiti is allowed at a skateboarding site in Watford. This has contributed to creating a sense of ownership for young people, thus preventing them from graffitiing other facilities. Consultees believe this idea could be translated to sites in Three Rivers.

There is a perception that shops in the area sell alcohol to under-age teenagers. Consultees felt this was the root cause of vandalism occurring within the District's playgrounds. Consultees would like the Police to target vendors as well as confiscating alcohol from the teenagers.

The introduction of community beat officer (CBOs) in South Oxhey decreased the perception of crime in the area. Consultees felt that the loitering of groups and youngsters

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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plus the perceived, associated vandalism and graffiti decreased. The funding for these officers was discontinued. The groups consulted would like to see CBOs re-introduced, especially St. Acorns After School Club

Consultees felt that there is a distinct lack of quality open space provision within easy access to the main urban area of South Oxhey. Whilst the open space at Brookdene Park is spacious, it is also a relatively long walk and would require at least a half day visit. Rainbows Mother & Toddlers Group highlighted the need for a small, local area where they could spend a short period of time each day with friends.

Furzefield Recreation Ground, Hertsmere was identified during consultation with user groups in South Oxhey as a good example of 'best practice'. It is used in preference to anything more local. The Site has been awarded Green Flag status (since 1999) and parents at the Rainbows Toddler Group use it due to its amenities such as the café, which allows the Site to be used as a meeting place.

Lack of efficient/affordable transport to open space sites was identified as a problem during consultation. Park users find it difficult to use open spaces within Three Rivers due to the poor accessibility by public transport. It is unfeasible for many user groups to travel to sites using private transport (e.g. Rainbows Toddler Group).

Young people that hang around the Gallows Hill Lane area, especially the recreation ground car park, are being followed by police patrol cars in the evening. Young people state that they are not causing vandalism and they feel that this treatment is harassment. The local youth club is well used but has few facilities and is open twice a week. Expense deters young people from travelling into Watford to use the facilities.

## **Site visit issues**

KKP completed site visits to twenty eight of the District's play areas. As well as providing NPFA designations the site visits also outlined how the quality of play provision could be improved to meet current safety and quality standards.

Many play sites within the District are not fenced from the adjacent casual play space/amenity greenspace. This should be considered across the District and all new play areas should be fenced with two entrances/exits.

The following play areas do not have perimeter fencing:

- ☐ Skidmore Way.
- ☐ Otley Way.
- ☐ Huntonbury Dowding Way/Westland Close.
- ☐ Tanners Wood Lane.
- ☐ Ballater Close.
- ☐ Chilwell Gardens.
- ☐ Huntonbury Cheshire Way.
- ☐ Cassiobridge Rec.
- ☐ Oaklands Avenue.

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The surfaces used on equipped play sites differ through the District and many play areas have more than one type of surface. Thirteen of the play areas have wetpore surfaces, eleven have safety tiles, ten have grass and the remainder have cement, rubbercrumb, bark or Astroturf. The play areas listed below are in need of resurfacing with regards to the whole or part of the Site.

- ☐ Southway (part of).
- ☐ Skidmore Way (part of).
- ☐ Otley Way (part of).
- ☐ Mead Place South.
- ☐ Tanners Wood Lane.
- ☐ Manor House (part of).
- ☐ Love Lane (part of).
- ☐ Baldwins Lane (part of).
- ☐ The Swillett (part of).
- ☐ King George V Mill End (part of).
- ☐ Ebury Recreation Ground(part of).

## 7.5 Development issues

It must be noted that the majority of the sites listed below are also included in the amenity greenspace section. Many play areas are located on large amenity greenspace sites used as recreation grounds. The sites therefore have the same name and location.

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Table 20: Site specific issues (provision for children and young people)

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Pond Wood	Watford Rural	<p>Playgroup consultation demonstrated that local people feel this is an ideal site for enhancement. However, the Site is currently inaccessible and, due to its enclosed nature, is plagued by litter problems and fly-tipping.</p> <p>Consultation highlights demand for a new, quality facility would address the demand for a local, centralised, open space. However, it must be noted that the nature conservation character of the site limits scope for traditional play.</p>
Toms Lane, Bedmond	Abbots Langley	<p>The play area is suitable for toddler use. Equipment has been removed from the Site. The older children like to use it as a gathering area. They congregate on the equipment as the seating is broken. The grass area constantly becomes waterlogged and this prevents the children from playing sport on it.</p> <p>Consultation highlights the need for the following facilities and the Play Plan has identified plans to address them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ A BMX facility where youngsters can take their bikes safely, whilst also being challenged by the range of activity available.</li> <li>❑ A youth shelter. There is a clear demand for somewhere for youngsters to gather other than the play area on Meadow Way. This site would be ideal for a shelter and would also aim to stop vandalism of the play area.</li> </ul> <p>Young people would also like a MUGA in the area, although there is already a basketball area on site.</p>
Hayling Road, South Oxhey	Watford Rural Area	<p>St. Acorns After School Club comments about the glass and bricks that constantly litter this site. There is one bin in the park and this is often overflowing and not emptied. The Club would also like to see regular morning checks, particularly at weekends, in order to clear the Site, thereby making it safe.</p> <p>The Rainbows Toddler Group also comments that the safety surface at the playground is constantly being ripped up. This is clearly a health and safety concern for the users.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Rickmansworth Aquadrome	Rickmansworth	<p>The Aquadrome is generally viewed as a good site in the District. Indeed, one of the criticisms of the Site is that it is sometimes too busy.</p> <p>However, the out of school club comments that it takes too long to replace faulty or vandalised equipment and this spoils the enjoyment of the Site.</p> <p>Furthermore, dogs are constantly straying into the equipped play area and clear signs should be erected to warn dog owners against this behaviour. The sign should also be used to inform users of a contact number where they can report details of vandalism immediately.</p>
Scotsbridge Playing Fields	Rickmansworth	<p>The parent and toddler group considers these facilities to be poor for toddlers. They have been constructed for older teenagers (such as the mini skatepark and the youth shelter). There is a feeling that money has been used to develop facilities for older children and that young toddlers have been neglected.</p> <p>The out of school club considers glass and dog foul to be a major issue at this site.</p> <p>Older children/teenagers gather at the Site and intimidate younger children preventing them from using it. The out of school club would also like to see a more specific sports facility at the Site, such as a running track or goals for informal football practice (using the existing pitches).</p> <p>The Pavillion at Scotsbridge is to be demolished and replaced by a new building (Leisure and Community Policy Panel).</p> <p>TRDC created an action plan in 2003 to increase disabled access at recreational sites. At this Site this will involve resurfacing the car park, creating two disabled bays and providing level access from the car park to the tennis courts.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Barton Way Playing Field	Croxley Green	<p>The Parent &amp; Toddler Group perceives that gangs of youngsters are involved with anti social behaviour as they have nowhere else to go. There is a problem with glass and rubbish and equipment has been taken away and not repaired for months. The seats are broken and once again not replaced. There have also been occasions when needles have been found at the site.</p> <p>The Group would like to see the facility secured during the evening/night, more morning clean-up 'teams' and adding more lighting that would illuminate the site decreasing seclusion. The Group feels that it would be beneficial to have clearer signs at the site warning of the age limit of the facility and providing a contact number so that damage and vandalism can be reported immediately. There is also a lack of traffic signs warning motorists of the playground's locality.</p>
Croxley Green	Croxley Green	<p>The skatepark facility was deemed unusable by disabled children in Access Audit 2001.</p> <p>Youth consultation demonstrated that young people have been stopped from using the skatepark due to youth nuisance problems and linked complaints by local residents. They have therefore started to use local car parks to practice skateboarding.</p>
Ovaltine site		Installation of new toddler play area through Section 106 agreements. (TRDC Strategic Plan)
Primrose Hill, Abbots Langley	Abbots Langley	Installation of new play area for older children through Section 106 agreements. (TRDC Strategic Plan)
Watford Rd/ Langleybury Lane, Hunton Bridge	Abbots Langley	Installation of new play area through Section 106 agreements. (TRDC Strategic Plan)
Baldwins Lane Playing Fields	Croxley Green	<p>TRDC created an action plan in 2003 to increase disabled access at recreational sites. The Plan highlights the following actions at this site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The creation of two disabled parking bays.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repairing footpaths.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Creating drop kerbs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Levelling paths to tennis courts.</li> </ul> <p>The drainage of the ground is poor.</p> <p>The skatepark is locked at night time.</p> <p>Consultees believe that if young people were allowed to graffiti the skatepark this may increase their ownership of the Site. This may in turn prevent them from vandalising the surrounding play equipment.</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
King George V Playing Fields, Mill End	Rickmansworth	The play area was deemed unfit for use by disabled children in the Access Audit 2001.  TRDC aims to develop a new site for young people. (Play Plan).
South Oxhey Playing Fields	Watford Rural Area	The Access Audit 2001 identified that the play facilities are not suitable for disabled children.
Scotsbridge Playing Field	Rickmansworth	There is no access to the play area for disabled users, (Access Audit 2001).
Leavesden Aerodrome	Abbots Langley	A new play area is to be installed through Section 106 agreements. (TRDC Strategic Plan)
Manor House Grounds	Abbots Langley	The Site is to be refurbished in conjunction with Abbots Langley Parish Council. (Play Plan)  MUGA, which is fenced and floodlit.  Abbots Langley Youth Club users highlighted the need for further teenage provision in the area, which has been addressed by provision of a youth shelter and skateboarding area. They would like this to be created at the recreation ground.
Mead Place (North & South)	Rickmansworth	TRDC aims to refurbish the play area, which caters for toddlers and children (Play Plan).
Bedmond	Abbots Langley	TRDC aims to develop a new site, which caters for young people (Play Plan).
Muirfield Drive	Rickmansworth	TRDC aim to create a new site planned through Section 106 contributions.
Barton Way Playing Field	Croxley Green	TRDC created an action plan in 2003 with an aim to increase disabled access at recreational sites. The Plan highlights the following actions at this Site.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The creation of two hard areas of hardstanding and the installation of benches.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To provide a DDA compliant bench.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To resurface the car park to accommodate two disabled parking spaces.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Decorate bollards at site entrance.</li> </ul> <p>The MUGA at the Site is new, of good quality and has not been vandalised.</p>
Meadow Way	Bedmond	There is a floodlit MUGA at the Site, which is of an acceptable quality.



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Site	Analysis area	Development issues
The Queens Drive	Rickmansworth	<p>The Site is secluded and is accessed through an alleyway at the back of houses.</p> <p>The MUGA is of an unacceptable quality, especially the surface and line markings. Improvements to the Site have been highlighted in a Section 106 agreement.</p>
Leavesden MEPC site	Abbots Langley	A large play area possibly a SEAP is to be created through a Section 106 agreement with a developer working in the area. The development consists of housing and business units.
Skanska – Denham Playing Fields	Rickmansworth	The development of a LEAP is proposed due to housing development in the area.
Oaklands	Watford Rural	A play area is to be developed at the Site through Section 106 funding.
Maple Cross, Old Uxbridge Road	Rickmansworth	<p>Consultees at West Hyde &amp; Maple Cross Youth Centre believe there is a problem regarding young people 'hanging around' outside the shops at Maple Cross. The Centre could be enhanced by the addition of a skate park, which may draw youngsters away from the shop area and decrease problems for the police.</p> <p>TRDC officers state that there are plans to create a skateboarding area and shelter in the area.</p>
Durrants, Croxley Green	Croxley Green	A play area is to be developed through Section 106 funding

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 7.6 Summary of shortfall

*Catchment mapping has highlighted the following areas as deficient in provision:*

Eastbury	Northwood
Moor park	Bedmond
Sarratt	Rickmansworth (part of)
Chorleywood (part of)	Kings Langley TR only (part of)

*Demand has been expressed for the following:*

- ☐ Pond Wood – new play area.
- ☐ Toms Lane – BMX facility and youth shelter.
- ☐ Hayling Rd – increased maintenance.
- ☐ Rickmansworth Aquadrome – more detailed signs and quicker replacement of equipment.
- ☐ Scotsbridge Playing Fields – more equipment for toddlers, informal sites and increased disabled access.
- ☐ Barton Way – quicker replacement of equipment, more detailed signs, greater security and maintenance and increased disabled access.
- ☐ Ebury Recreation Ground – increased disabled access.
- ☐ Baldwins Playing Field – increased disabled access.
- ☐ King George V Playing Fields, Mill End – new play area; increased disabled access.
- ☐ South Oxhey Plying Fields – increased disabled access.
- ☐ Scotsbridge Playing Fields – increased disabled access.
- ☐ Mead Place – new play area catering for toddlers and children (as part of refurbishment work).
- ☐ Bedmond – new play area catering for young people.
- ☐ Maple Cross, Old Uxbridge Road – skatepark and youth shelter.

*Improved safety surfaces are needed at the following play areas:*

Southway (part of).	Skidmore Way (part of).
Mead Place South.	Manor House (part of).
Baldwins Lane (part of).	King George V, Mill End (part of).
Leavesden Country Park (part of).	Otley Way (part of).
Tanners Wood Lane.	Love Lane (part of).
The Swillett (part of).	Ebury Recreation Ground (part of).

*Additional fencing is needed at the following sites:*

Skidmore Way.	Otley Way.
Huntonbury Dowding Way/Westland Close	Tanners Wood Lane.
Ballater Close.	Chilwell Gardens.
Huntonbury Cheshire Way.	Cassiobridge Rec.
Oaklands Avenue.	

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## PART 8: ALLOTMENTS, COMMUNITY GARDENS AND CITY FARMS

‘Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction.’

### 8.1 Summary of provision

There are seven sites classified as allotments, city farms or community gardens in Three Rivers with open access. There are six sites totalling 3.18ha with restricted/closed access. This type of provision creates a current level of 0.14ha/ 1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

*Table 21: Summary of allotments, community gardens and city farms provision by geographic area:*

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Analysis area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	0	0	3	1.4	3	1.4	0
Chorleywood	0	0	3	1.78	3	1.78	0
Croxley Green	3	2.89	0	0	3	2.89	0.24
Rickmansworth	3	4.79	0	0	3	4.79	0.29
Sarratt	1	1.05	0	0	1	1.05	0.56
Watford Rural	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8.73</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11.91</b>	<b>0.14</b>

### 8.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

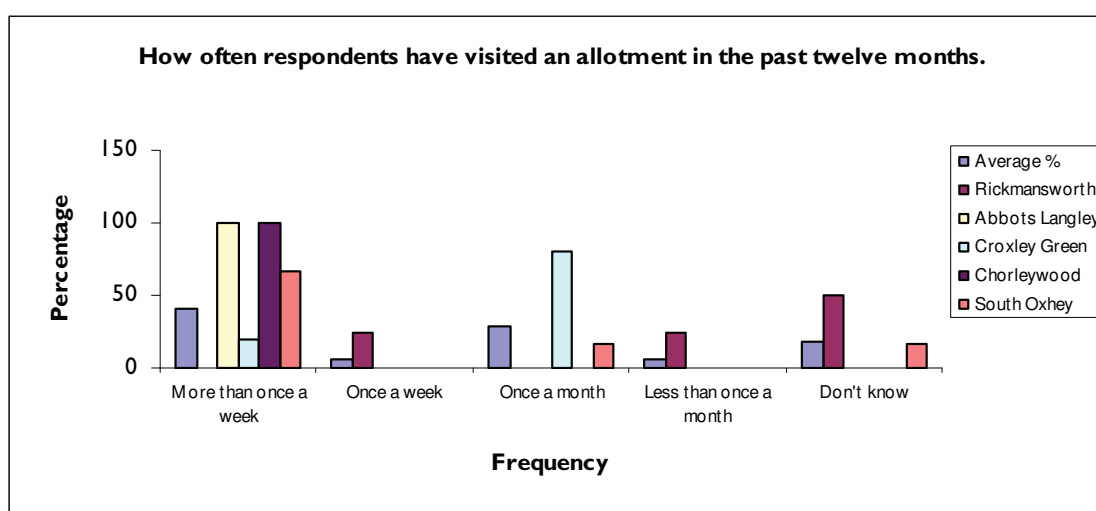
# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 22: Summary of access to provision to allotments, community gardens and city farms

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	
B	Chorleywood	√ (part of)
	Abbots Langley	√ (part of)
	Kings Langley (TR only)	
	Garston (TR only)	√
	Croxley Green	√ (part of)
	Oxhey Hall	√ (part of)
	Carpenters Park	
	South Oxhey	
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	
	Sarratt	√ (part of)

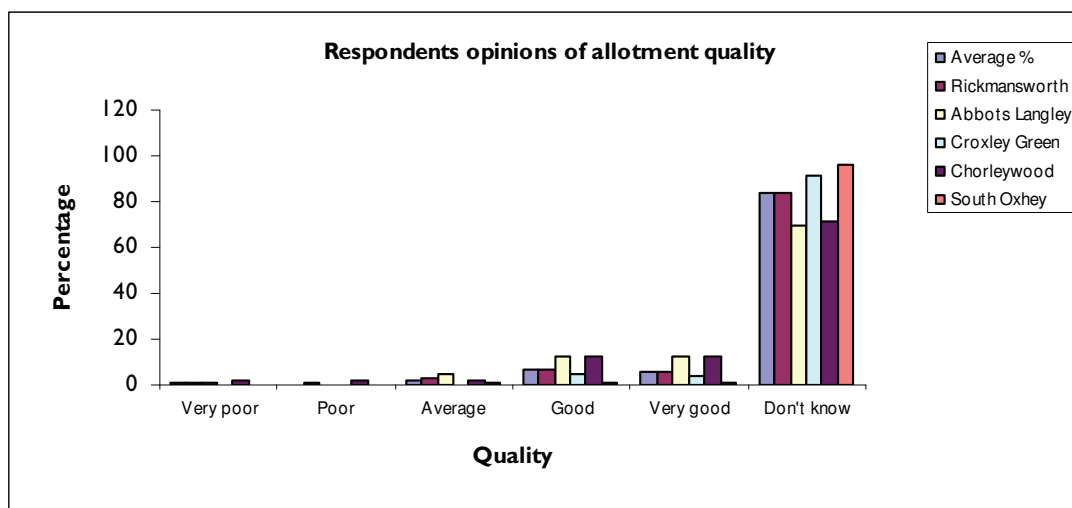
## 8.3 Survey results

Figure 21: Frequency of visits to allotment in past year



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Figure 22: Respondents' perceptions of allotment quality



The survey demonstrates that, as expected, respondents are likely to visit an allotment frequently or not at all. Forty seven percent of respondents visited allotments more than once a week. In Abbots Langley and Chorleywood all respondents who visited allotments did so more than once a week. Respondents from Croxley Green are most likely to visit allotments once a month. Many respondents did not know how often they visit an allotment, (50% Rickmansworth).

## 8.4 Key findings

The National Allotment Survey in 1996 showed average allotment provision in England to be 15 plots per 1000 people. This equals a local standard of 0.38ha/1,000.

### **Allotment questionnaires summary, 2003**

Three Rivers District Council received 33 replies from a survey of 500 allotment holders conducted in October 2003. The Survey demonstrated the following:

- ❑ 61% of respondents thought that gates and access points were in need of improvement.
- ❑ 58% of respondents felt that unoccupied plots were poorly maintained.
- ❑ 90% of holders with a water supply on site felt that the supply was well or adequately maintained.
- ❑ 10% of respondents felt that boundary fences and hedges needed improving.
- ❑ 32% of respondents felt that site pathways needed improving.
- ❑ 90% of respondents felt that parking facilities were in need of improvement or creation.
- ❑ 62% of allotment holders felt that theft and vandalism was a problem, with sheds being broken into and graffiti a concern (all respondents were from Ebury Road Allotments).

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The questionnaire also uncovered positive responses from the District's allotment holders who generally felt sites were well managed and there was a strong community spirit. A variety of wildlife is commonly seen at allotment sites across the District. Holders suggested that TRDC could do more to advertise vacant plots.

The Community and Leisure Services Committee resolved that allotments should be managed by allotment associations to save TRDC costs. All sites are currently managed by associations.

Consultation with allotment associations that manage their own sites demonstrated that they were well organised and very active. It is clear that the sites provide a clear sense of ownership to a high number of local residents and it is perceived by associations that TRDC does not publicly recognise the importance of allotments. The groups should be supported by TRDC in gaining future funding or improving the quality of their sites.

## ***Three Rivers Allotment Association***

The Association is made up of one member from each individual allotment association in Three Rivers and acts as an umbrella association to resolve issues that affect the provision of allotments in the District. Meetings are sporadic and only arranged when there is a specific issue.

The existence of such an Association is welcome and its function could be enhanced to open regular dialogue with the local authority on specific issues. Furthermore, funding should be made available to the Association on an annual basis and a subsequent allocation to individual sites can be made based on the merit of individual applications, which will be voted on by members.

## ***Site visit information***

Seven out of the thirteen allotment sites within the database were visited by KKP. The majority of the sites were identified as being of a good visual quality in comparison with other open space work KKP has completed across the country. Evident problems appear to be unique to individual sites.

*Springwell Allotments* – This is a good site, which meets the needs of the elderly and families. Equipment and shelter is located on individual plots. Evidence of litter was seen on the Site.

*Barton Way Allotments* – This is a good site, which meets the needs of the elderly, the disabled and families.

*Croxleyhall Woods Allotments* – Litter was evident at the Site.

*Frankland Road Allotments* - Good site, caters for elderly, youth and families. The vandalism of the perimeter fence is a problem and signs are required.

*Ebury Road Allotments* – The Site caters for the elderly. Access improvements are required due to the lack of car parking and the informal entrance. Vandalism was evident in the

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form of pulling up plants, damaging greenhouses and stealing tools. Flytipping is a problem and also youths congregating at the bridge, which leads to the Site. Piped water is required for the Site.

*Lavrock Lane Allotments* - Good site. The access road is bumpy with potholes. It needs resurfacing, but is not the responsibility of either TRDC or HCC. Flytipping occurs on the access road rather than at the Site itself. Car parking exists at one end of the Site. Wheelchairs could gain access to the Site if the access road was in better condition. There is an overgrown area, which has the potential to provide further plots.

*Swillet Allotments* - More seating is required at the Site. There is the potential for site expansion. A fresh water supply is required. It has good vehicular access. However, further signs are required.

## 8.5 Development issues

Table 23: Site specific issues (allotments, community gardens and city farms)

Site	Analysis area	Comments
Lavrock Lane Allotments	Rickmansworth	<p>Site consists of 49 plots, all of which are taken. There are 3 people on the waiting list.</p> <p>The main issue is the access road, which is extremely bumpy and full of potholes. Whilst disabled access to the Site itself is adequate, this access, in the view of ploholders, is hindered by the poor condition of the road. Furthermore, fly tipping is common on the road and this exacerbates the issue.</p>
Frankland Road Allotments	Croxley Green	<p>Site consists of 24 plots, some of which are sub-divided. Therefore around 30 people lease plots, paying £1.50 per plot per annum.</p> <p>The Association organises a working party to carry out general maintenance once a year, but funding is limited. In particular, the perimeter fence is old and has been vandalised and consequently requires replacing.</p> <p>The boundary fence needs replacing/repairing. Plot holders are concerned they cannot raise the appropriate funds (Allotment questionnaire response).</p>

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Site	Analysis area	Comments
Springwell Avenue Allotments, Mill End	Rickmansworth	<p>The entry road to the Site is in need of repairing and parts of the gate have been stolen and not replaced (Allotment questionnaire response).</p> <p>There are 66 plots at the Site, which are usable. All plots are in use and there is no waiting list. Users travel up to seven miles to use the allotments. The Site is next to a wildlife area.</p> <p>The Association believes that there is need for more water tanks at the Site as the water pressure is low. The paths maintained by plot holders are grass and can become slippery when wet. The Site has suffered vandalism problems in the past but after a grant for fencing and security this has decreased. The driveway is in need of hardcore to increase access.</p> <p>TRDC maintains footpaths at the Site.</p>
Croxleyhall Woods Allotments	Croxley Green	<p>The Site is managed by an association. There are 29 plots at the Site, 15 of which are vacant. The vacant sites have been covered in brambles or grassed over.</p> <p>In the past it has taken the Association five to six years to gain a new lease. They have also had to pay over £1,000 in legal costs in order to gain this lease. The Association feel that this is a large financial burden to undertake. A seven year lease has been agreed with TRDC, which the Association feels offers it little security.</p> <p>The Site does not suffer from vandalism problems and has natural surveillance. The Association believes that potential users are deterred from gaining a plot due to the initial work that would need to be carried out i.e. removing brambles. The paths at the Site are maintained by allotment holders and are grass. The paths can become slippery when wet.</p> <p>There is potential to turn the vacant allotments into a wildlife area due to the proximity of ancient woodland, if little demand for further allotments is identified.</p> <p>The gates have been vandalised and not repaired due to a lack of funds (Allotment questionnaire response).</p>
Woodhall Lane Allotments	Watford Rural	<p>Groundwork Hertfordshire has been involved with the creation of the allotment site with a local Scout group. The project is almost complete.</p>



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Site	Analysis area	Comments
Barton Way Allotments	Croxley Green	<p>There are 152 plots at the Site. There is a waiting list of five people. It takes approximately one year on the waiting list to gain a plot.</p> <p>The Association, which manages the Site, contacts plot holders whose sites are poorly maintained. The Site is in a good condition. One plot caters for the disabled and is a communal plot. Three plots have been created to increase wildlife, including beehives.</p> <p>Most plot holders live within one mile of the Site. Community events are held at the Site.</p> <p>The Association are concerned over the length of the site lease provided by TRDC. The footpaths between the plots are grass and are maintained by members. They can become slippery when wet causing problems for older site users. The Associations also feels that there are not enough water tanks at the Site to cater for all the allotments. Young people are gaining entrance to the Site and vandalising the fence by climbing onto the clothes bank adjacent to the Site.</p>
Swillet Allotments	Chorleywood	Owned by Chorleywood Parish Council. There are 24 plots.
Dog Kennel Lane Allotments	Chorleywood	Owned by Chorleywood Parish Council. There are 17 plots.
Copmans Wick Allotments	Chorleywood	Owned by Chorleywood Parish Council. There are 30 plots.
Church Lane Allotment	Sarratt	Sarratt Parish Council manages and maintains the Site. There are 42 plots and 26 users. Access is for plot holders only.
Ebury Road Allotments	Rickmansworth	<p>The Site consists of 27 plots, 26 of which are worked. The one remaining plot cannot be worked due to waterlogging. Flooding from the bordering stream can be an issue.</p> <p>There is no water supply to the Site and the members are therefore forced to collect water from the stream. This is dangerous as there is poor access.</p> <p>Access to the Site is an issue as it is via a secluded pathway. The Association believes the pathway should be opened up in order to increase the safety of those attending the Site. Moreover, fly tipping is an issue and the removal of trees would combat this issue.</p> <p>There is a problem with young people gathering on the bridge near the entrance to the Site.</p> <p>Plot holders are concerned this bridge is rotting (Allotment questionnaire response).</p>

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In considering the issues highlighted above, the context of allotment provision must be considered. The responsibility for dealing with these issues does not lie solely with TRDC. The principle of management by associations means that ploholders will often have greater opportunities to address these issues, e.g., by accessing external funding not available to TRDC.

## **8.6 Summary of shortfall**

Catchment mapping has highlighted the following area as deficient in provision:

Rickmansworth	Chorleywood (part of)
Abbots Langley (part of)	Croxley Green (part of)
Oxhey Hall (part of)	Carpenters Park
South Oxhey	Eastbury
Northwood	Moor Park
Maple Cross	Bedmond
Huntonbury	Sarratt (part of)

Demand has been expressed for the following:

- ☐ Springwell Allotments – water tank.
- ☐ Lavrock Lane – three on waiting list. Access road needs improving.
- ☐ Frankland Road – replacement of perimeter fencing.
- ☐ Croxley Hall Allotments - maintenance of vacant plots.
- ☐ Barton Way Allotments – five on waiting list, water tanks are required.
- ☐ Ebury Way – water supply and improved pathways.

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## PART 9: CEMETERIES, CHURCHYARDS AND OTHER BURIAL GROUNDS

‘Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.’

### 9.1 Summary of provision

There are seven sites classified as cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds in Three Rivers with open access providing 11.26ha of provision. This creates a current level of provision of 0.14ha/1000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 24: Distribution of cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds sites by geographic area:

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Analysis area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	1	1.14	0	0	1	1.14	0.07
Chorleywood	2	0.8	0	0	2	0.8	0.09
Croxley Green	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rickmansworth	3	4.97	0	0	3	4.97	0.3
South Oxhey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watford Rural	1	4.35	0	0	1	4.35	0.17
TOTAL	7	11.26	0	0	7	11.26	0.14

### 9.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

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Table 25: Summary of access to provision to cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	√ (part of)
B	Chorleywood	
	Abbots Langley	√ (part of)
	Kings Langley (TR only)	√ (part of)
	Garston (TR only)	√ (part of)
	Croxley Green	
	Oxhey Hall	
	Carpenters Park	√
	South Oxhey	√ (part of)
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	
	Sarratt	

## 9.3 Survey results

Figure 23: Frequency of visits to churchyard/cemetery in past year

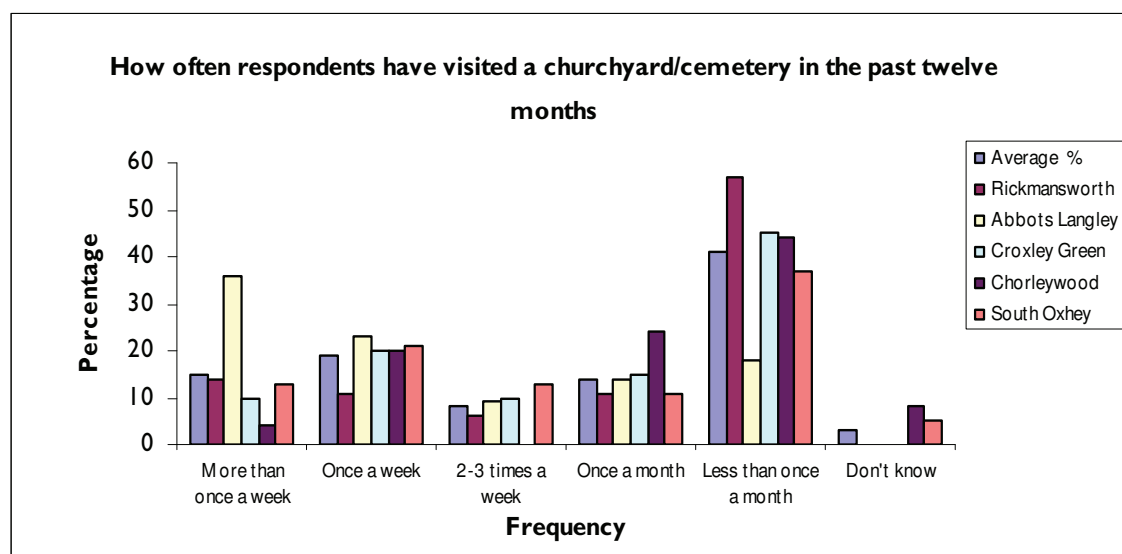
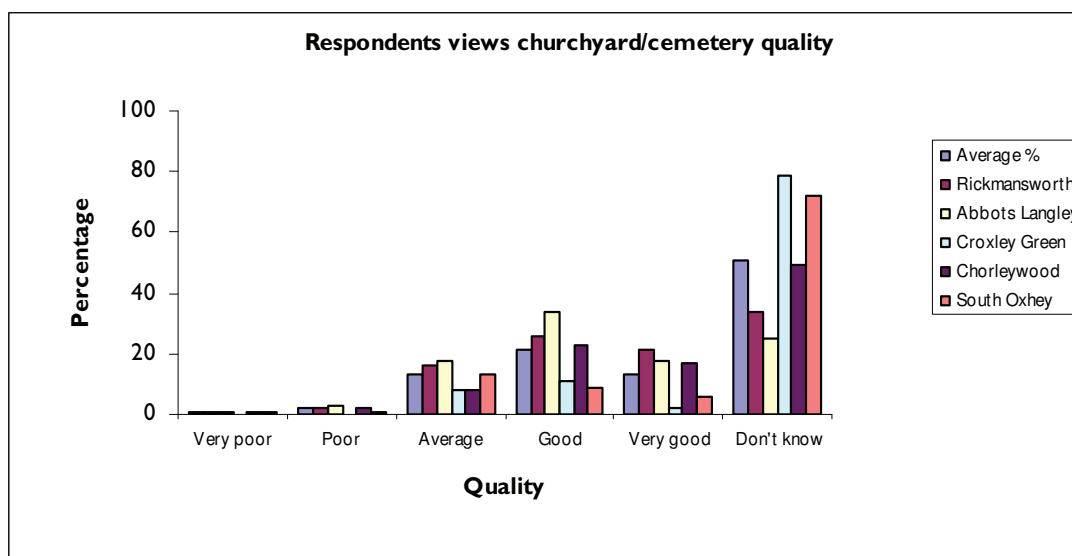


Figure 24: Respondents' perception of churchyard/cemetery quality

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT



Respondents are most likely to visit a cemetery/churchyard less than once a month (57%). Over two thirds (68%) of respondents from Abbots Langley visit cemeteries/churchyards more than once a week. Respondents from Abbots Langley are most aware of the quality of cemeteries/churchyards (25% did not know the quality of provision). However, in other areas of the District respondents are less aware of the quality of provision (Croxley Green – 79%, South Oxhey – 72%). Over one third of respondents (34%) believe that provision was of good or very good quality.

## 9.4 Key findings

There are two cemeteries in the District managed by TRDC. Only one of the sites is currently accepting burials from all persons. Parking is the main problem at the District's cemeteries. There are no reports of vandalism.

Groundwork has distributed £60,000 of Community Fund and SRB funding to churches within West Watford and South Oxhey. The objective of this funding was to regenerate the local area in a way the local community would like. The projects have improved public space by increasing its profile and providing seating. The church grounds were improved through low maintenance planting.

TRDC aims to locate sites for future use as woodland burial areas. The Local Development Framework is being reviewed for potential sites.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## Site visit issues

There are seven sites, which have been identified in the database as cemeteries, churchyards or burial grounds. KKP visited two of the main sites.

*Woodcock Hill Cemetery* – Good site. The following were seen on Site:

- ☐ There is room for expansion.
- ☐ Child burial area.
- ☐ Garden of remembrance.
- ☐ Various religions.
- ☐ Wildlife area.

*St Mary's Churchyard* - Good site. There was evidence of loose headstones.

## 9.5 Development issues

Table 26: Site specific issues (cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds)

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Public Cemetery, Chorleywood Rd	Rickmansworth	<p>TRDC officers report that the Cemetery is virtually closed and only accepts the burial of family of persons already buried in the Cemetery.</p> <p>There is a need for capital funding to increase the security of the Site.</p> <p>The Access Audit 2001 reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Signage to the Cemetery is inadequate and needs improvement.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> It is necessary for disabled people to visit the Site by car due to its steepness.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> The driveway surface is in a poor condition and loose gravel pathways do not cater for disabled users.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Disabled parking spaces should be designated, with one located next to the Chapel.</li></ul> <p>TRDC created an action plan in 2003 to increase disabled access at recreational sites. Actions highlighted for this site include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Redesignating a parking bay for disabled use.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Upgrading existing toilet facilities to ambulant disabled standard.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Providing level access surfaces to main paths in cemetery.</li></ul>
Methodist Church, Prestwick Road	South Oxhey	Groundwork has been involved with the improvement of a garden within the Church's grounds.
South Oxhey Roman Catholic	South Oxhey	Groundwork has been involved with the improvement of a garden within the Church's grounds.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site	Analysis area	Development issues
Church		
All Saints Anglican Church	South Oxhey	Work has been undertaken to improve the church and community hall. Groundwork completed landscaping work in the rest of the Church's grounds.
Woodcock Hill	Rickmansworth	<p>The Cemetery contains individual sections for children and Muslims, plus a woodland burial area due to public demand. There is an 'adopt a rose' scheme within the garden of remembrance.</p> <p>TRDC officers report that there is approximately twenty years of burial space left at the Site. There is also a possibility of extending the woodland area into the adjacent green belt.</p> <p>TRDC officers state that no vandalism has been reported at the Site. There is a demand for parking at the Site as visitors often park on the adjacent road causing traffic problems and cars to be blocked in.</p> <p>The Access Audit 2001 reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It is necessary for disabled people to visit the Site by car due to the steepness of the Site.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Signage to the Cemetery is inadequate and needs improvement.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Car parking provision is required at the Site.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gravel drives are difficult for wheelchair users to use.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Muslim section is very steep and not disabled friendly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair spaces are required next to benches.</li> </ul> <p>TRDC created an action plan in 2003 to increase disabled access at recreational sites. The Plan highlights the need to provide tarmac access drive to Muslim section for vehicular access.</p>
St Mary's churchyard	Rickmansworth	The graveyard is closed for burials but ashes are still being taken in the Garden of Remembrance.
Chorleywood Lawn Cemetery	Chorleywood	The Site is owned by Chorleywood Parish Council and is part of the Chorleywood Estate.

## 9.6 Summary of shortfall

Catchment mapping has highlighted the following areas as deficient in this typology:

Rickmansworth (part of)	Abbots Langley (part of)
Chorleywood	Garston (TR only) (part of)
Kings Langley (TR only) (part of)	Croxley Green
Oxhey Hall	South Oxhey (part of)
Eastbury	Northwood
Maple Cross	Moorpark
Bedmond	Sarratt
Huntonbridge	

Demand expressed for the following:

- ❑ Chorleywood Road – increased security and disabled access.
- ❑ Woodcock Hill - Extension of woodland into the adjacent green belt, more parking spaces, increased disabled access and vehicular access to the Muslim section.



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 10: CIVIC SPACES

‘Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians, providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.’

### 10.1 Summary of provision

There is one site – St Andrew’s Precinct - classified as civic spaces in Three Rivers with open access providing 1.38ha of provision. There are no sites with restricted/closed access. Provision therefore creates a current level of 0.02ha/1,000 population. The table below illustrates the distribution of these sites by geographic area.

Table 27: Summary of civic space provision by geographic area

	Open access		Closed/ restricted access		Analysis area		Current level
Geographical area	No.	Ha	No.	Ha	Total No.	Total Ha.	Ha/1000 people
Abbots Langley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chorleywood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Croxley Green	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rickmansworth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sarratt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Watford Rural	1	1.38	0	0	1	1.38	0.05
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>0.02</b>

### 10.2 Catchment mapping (see appendices)

The table below demonstrates which areas have adequate provision of this typology and which areas are deficient (see maps in Appendix I). Adequacy has been analysed in relation to the main settlements in each analysis area.

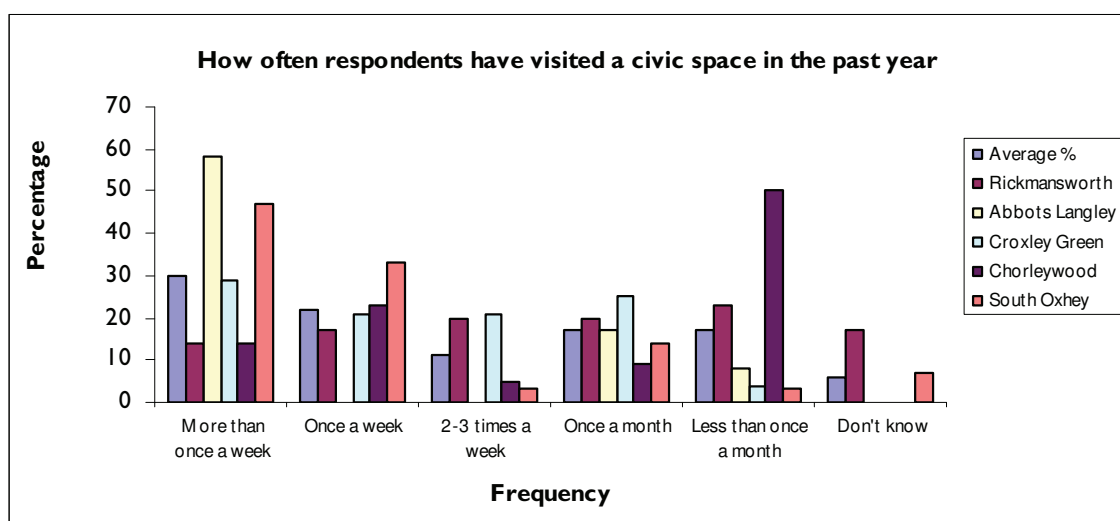
# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 28: Summary of access to provision of civic spaces

Zone	Settlement	The ward has sufficient access to provision
A	Rickmansworth	
B	Chorleywood	
	Abbots Langley	
	Kings Langley (TR only)	
	Garston (TR only)	
	Croxley Green	
	Oxhey Hall	
	Carpenters Park	√ (part of)
	South Oxhey	√ (part of)
	Eastbury	
	Northwood	
	Moorpark	
C	Maple Cross	
	Bedmond	
	Huntonbridge	
	Sarratt	

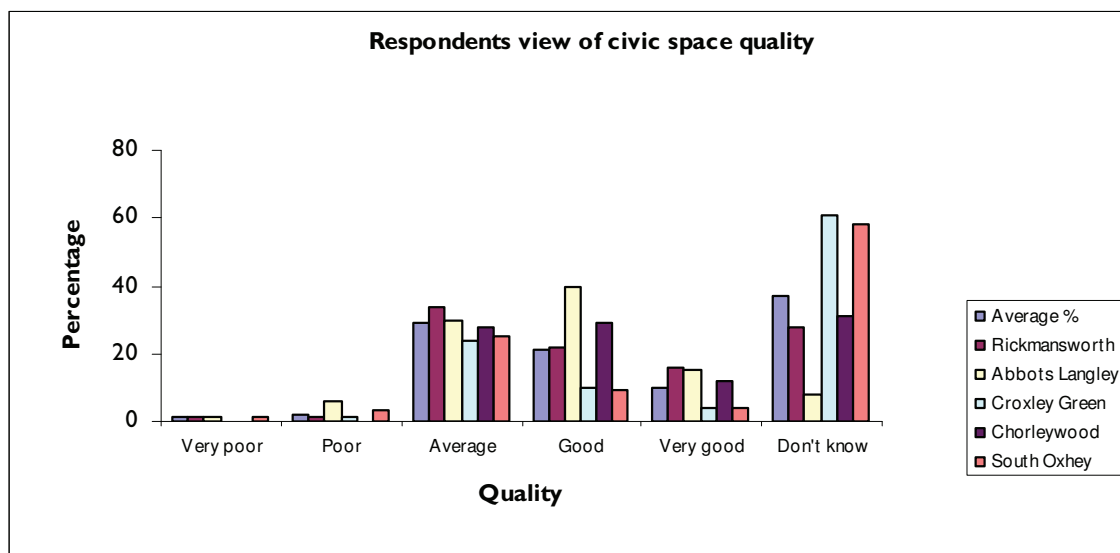
## 10.3 Survey results

Figure 25: Frequency of visits to civic space in past year



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 26: Respondents' perceptions of civic space quality



Respondents report that frequency of visits to a civic space varies greatly between analysis areas. Respondents from South Oxhey (81%) are the most likely to visit civic spaces more than once a week. Respondents from Chorleywood are most likely to visit civic spaces less than once a month (50%).

Knowledge of the quality of civic spaces is also dependent on analysis area. Sixty one percent of respondents from Croyley Green are unsure of civic space quality and over half of respondents from South Oxhey (58%). Almost one third of respondents (31%) thought that civic space provision was of a good or very good quality.

## 10.4 Key findings

There is only one civic space within Three Rivers, which is due, in part, to the linear nature of the District's settlements.

Civic spaces are needed to create a gathering point for the community and to facilitate community events. Investment in civic spaces within the District should be considered when strategic sites become available, especially within Rickmansworth.

### Site visit issues

No site visits were completed by KKP for this typology as only one site has been identified as meeting the civic space criteria.

## 10.5 Development issues

No issues were identified during consultation.

## **10.6 Summary of shortfall**

*Catchment mapping has highlighted deficiencies in provision in the following areas:*

Rickmansworth	Abbots Langley
Chorleywood	Garston (TR only)
Kings Langley (TR only)	Croxley Green
Oxhey Hall	South Oxhey (part of)
Eastbury	Northwood
Maple Cross	Moorpark
Bedmond	Sarratt
Huntonbridge	Carpenters Park (part of)

No demand has been expressed for further sites.

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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## APPENDIX ONE – CATCHMENT MAPPING

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## APPENDIX TWO – PLAY AREA DEFINITIONS

	<b>Local Area for Play</b>	<b>Locally Equipped Area for Play</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play</b>	<b>Settlement Equipped Area for Play</b>
Age group	Up to 6 years.	4-8years.	Older children.	Older children/ teenagers
Walking time from home	1 minute.	5 minutes.	10 minutes.	15-20 minutes
Location	Adjacent to a well used pathway, overlooked by houses and on a flat site that is well drained.	Adjacent to a well used pathway and on a flat site that is well drained.	Adjacent to a well used pathway and on a flat site that is well drained.	Adjacent to a well used pathway and on a flat site that is well drained.
Minimum activity zone	100m <sup>2</sup> .	400m <sup>2</sup> .	1,000m <sup>2</sup> divided into 2 parts; at least 465m <sup>2</sup> of hard surface area and equipped play space area.	Minimum 1,000m <sup>2</sup>
No. and type of play equipment	Demonstrative play features to enable children to identify space as their own domain.	At least 5 types of play equipment where at least 2 are individual items rather than part of a combination. Impact absorbing surface beneath and around play equipment.	At least 8 types of play equipment to allow developmental play amongst younger children and moderate/adventurous play for older children.	At least 10 types of play equipment and/or provision of facilities such as MUGA, skateboard park and/or youth shelter.
Buffer zone	5m depth including planting.	10m depth including planting and other physical features.	30m depth including planting and other physical features.	30m depth including planting and other physical features.
Fencing	600mm high fencing and barrier to limit speed of child entering or leaving the facility.	1m high fencing with two pedestrian gates & barriers to limit speed of child entering/leaving the facility.	1m high fencing with two pedestrian gates & barriers to limit speed of child entering/leaving the facility.	1m high fencing with two pedestrian gates & barriers to limit speed of child entering/leaving the facility.
Furniture	Seating.	Seating and a litter bin.	Seating and litter bins at each access point. Secure bicycle parking facilities.	Seating and litter bins at each access point. Secure bicycle parking facilities.
Signs and notices	Area solely used for children and	Area solely used for children and that	Area solely used for children and that	Area solely used for children and that

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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	that adults are not allowed unless accompanied by children.	adults are not allowed unless accompanied by children, and name and tel. no. of facility manager.	adults are not allowed unless accompanied by children, and name and tel. no. of facility manager.	adults are not allowed unless accompanied by children, and name and tel. no. of facility manager.
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# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## APPENDIX THREE- RELEVANT STATUTORY AGENCIES

*Summary of aims of relevant statutory agencies:*

Agency	Aims.
Countryside Commission (CC)	<p>The CC owns no land or facilities but aims to work with others to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conserve and enhance the scenic, natural, historic and cultural qualities of the whole countryside.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Secure and extend opportunities for people to enjoy and use the countryside for open air recreation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote the understanding of the countryside, its life and work, having regard for the needs of agriculture, forestry and the economic and social need of the countryside.</li> </ul>
Environment Agency (EA)	<p>The EA has statutory powers and duties including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conservation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flood defences.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Navigation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Recreation.</li> </ul> <p>The EA has a general duty to promote amenity and recreation on the land and water it owns.</p>
English Nature (EN)	<p>EN is responsible for advising central and local government on nature conservation and for monitoring, researching and promoting wildlife and natural features. It also protects Sites of Special Scientific Interests and manages National Nature Reserves.</p>
Forestry Commission (FC)	<p>The FC is divided into two sections; the Forestry Authority (FA) and the Forest Enterprise (FE). The FA is responsible for the payments of grants for approved planting and restocking schemes. The FE is responsible for the multi purpose management of the FCs woodlands and the recreation facilities within them.</p>
British Waterways (BW)	<p>BW is a publicly owned body sponsored by DETR. It is responsible for the management of 3200 kms of canals and rivers in Britain. BW is often also responsible for the towpaths adjacent to these water features.</p>



# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## APPENDIX FOUR – OPEN SPACE SITE ASSESSMENT

<b>Name of site</b>			
<b>Grid reference</b>			
<b>Road name</b>			
<b>Typology of open space (use a separate sheet for each typology)</b>		<b>Function e.g woodland/grassland</b>	
<b>Land owner</b>			

SITE INFORMATION			
<b>Surrounding area</b>	<b>Barriers to access</b>	<b>Disabled provision</b>	
residential	main roads	ramps	
agricultural	railways	gates rather than styles	
industrial	canals/river	wide entrances	
dual	secluded	even path with grip	
town centre	poor disabled provision	appropriate furniture	
		rope guide	
		steps with rail	
<b>Problems</b>			
Needles	motorbike/quad	fire damage	
vandalism	glass	litter	
dog foul	abandoned cars	horse tracks	
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>(enter number)</b>	<b>Material (see key)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Seats		_____	_____
Picnic benches		_____	_____
Tables		_____	_____
Bins		_____	_____
Dog foul bins		_____	_____
Interpretation boards		_____	_____
Signs		_____	_____
Lights		_____	_____
Artwork		_____	_____

**R rubber, W wood, M metal, P plastic**

CONCLUSIONS:	
<b>Space meets the needs of:</b>	<b>Site potential</b>
Elderly	area being developed (notes)
Young people	re – evaluate site
Disabled	good site
Various cultures	potential to be enhanced

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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Families
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# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

<b>Road</b>		<b>Overlooked</b>	
Site is right next to road without fence	1	Overlooked by housing on most sides	3
Site is next to road and fenced	2	Overlooked by housing on one side.	2
Site is located away from the road	3	Not overlooked	1
<b>Other greenspace</b>		<b>Visual condition/maintenance of the site</b>	
Next to the site	1	Good – free from graffiti, dog foul and litter.	3
Visible	2	Average – some evidence of above	2
None in sight	3	Poor – Litter, graffiti and dog fouling considered a problem	1
<b>Gradient</b>		<b>Welcoming place</b>	
Steep slope	1	Good access and disabled friendly	3
Irregular land	2	Good access not disabled friendly	2
Flat	3	Access poor or unsafe	1
<b>Signage (Note: relevance to the Site)</b>		<b>Conservation of buildings/landscape</b>	
Well signed with map of site at entrance. Ownership details provided.	3	Good condition, no graffiti or damage can be seen.	3
Ownership details provided	2	Adequate – buildings/landscape – some evidence of neglect.	2
Not signed	1	Poor- evidence of graffiti, rust, poor maintenance, lack of attention.	1
<b>Safety (Note: relevance to the Site)</b>		<b>Furniture</b>	
Equipment good quality and in working order and well maintained.	3	Furniture at the site appears to be adequate in amount and quality	3
Equipment and maintenance adequate	2	Furniture at the site is in poor quality	2
Poor maintenance and equipment needs replacing	1	More furniture is needed at the site	1

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## NON SITE VISIT INFORMATION

Community involvement  
Maintenance staff  
Management plan

Part time staff  
Community managed  
Full time staff

## INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL TYPOLOGIES

*Parks & gardens*  
Wildlife areas?

*Semi/natural greenspace*  
Environmental education facilities

Visitor facilities

*Green corridors*  
Is there sufficient disabled access?  
Is the surface of pathways even/suitable for wheelchairs?  
Types of users \_\_\_\_\_

*Amenity greenspace*  
Is there evidence of ball games being played?  
Possible to re-develop as another typology

Highway verge/roundabout  
Possible to play ball games

*Allotments*  
Is there a fresh water supply?  
Room for expansion  
Maintained by society

Toilet facilities  
Shelter

*Cemeteries*  
Is it full to capacity?  
Is there evidence of loose headstones?  
Could furniture be added to improve surroundings?  
Room for expansion  
Child burial area

Wildlife area  
Garden of remembrance  
Various religions  
Book of remembrance

*Civic spaces*  
Is there evidence that functions are held?  
Is there provision for car access to the site?  
Is the site used as a car park?

Electricity  
Heritage site  
Good quality surface

## NOTES

## DIAGRAM (if needed)

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## APPENDIX FIVE –PLAY AREA ASSESSMENT SHEET

### CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA SURVEY SHEET

#### SITE DETAILS

Site name :					Size (ha)		Casual play space
Road name, Settlement:					Total	Equipped Play space	
Postcode:							
Security (tick)		Site Location (tick)			Zoning (please tick accordingly)		
Fencing	Padlocks	Stand-alone	Park	Rec. Ground	Youth	Child	Toddler
Owned by:	Local Authority (tick)		Parish (specify)				
Comments (conditions / features):							

#### EQUIPPED PLAY AREA DETAILS

Complete details for each UNIT of equipment			
Equipment type	Number	Surface type	Barriers / Constraints comments
<b>Equipment type list</b>	<b>Surface type list</b>		
toddler swings, junior swings, slides, multiplay, roundabout, see saw, climbing frame, adventure equipment, spring animals, other please state		Bark, Grass, Safety Tiles, Sand, Tarmac, Tiles, Wetpore,	
		Other (specify)	

#### CASUAL PLAY AREA DETAILS

Play Area type	Surface type	Barriers/ Constr'ts	Comments

# THREE RIVERS DC: OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

<b>Play Area type list</b>	<b>Surface type list</b>		
Basketball, Five-a-side area, Football area,	As above		
Other (specify)			

## FURNITURE DETAILS

Furniture type	Number	Comments
Seats		
Tables		
Litter bins		
Signs		
Picnic tables		
Shelter		
Other (specify)		

# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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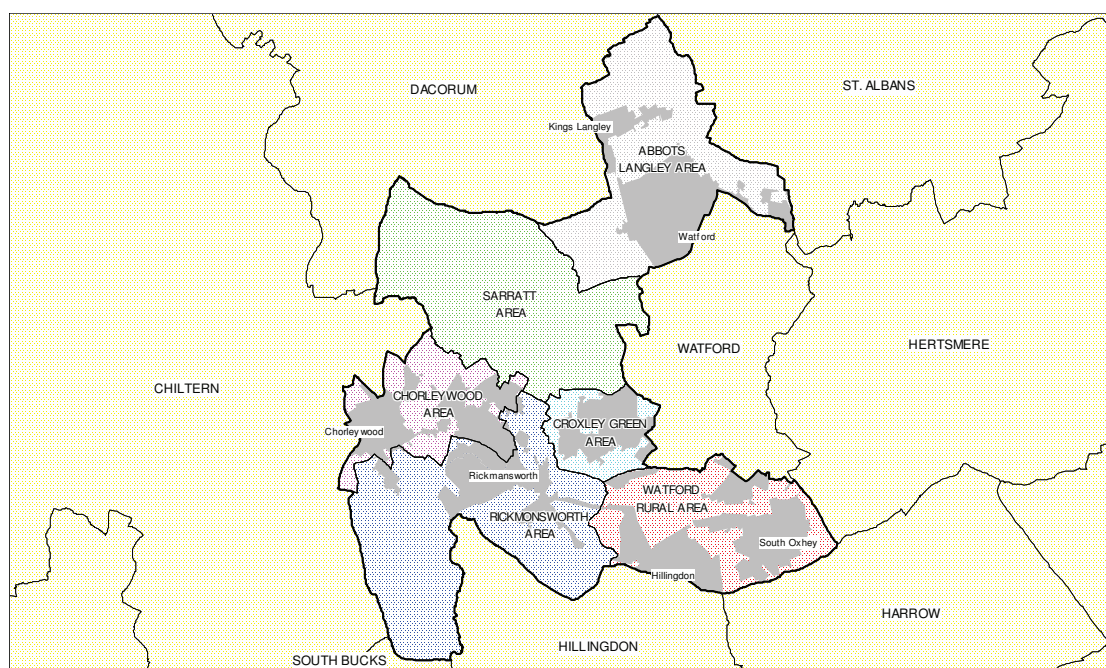
## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document is the Strategy and Action Plan for open spaces provision in Three Rivers. A separate document has been created to outline a process for planning contributions. The Strategy has been developed from the results of research and analysis of open space provision within the Three Rivers District. This information is set out in the Open Space Assessment Report, which details the quality and distribution of open space typologies with consultation results.

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) commissioned Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) to undertake the study in October 2004. The principal research was carried out between November and December 2004.

The Strategy and Action Plan sets out a vision over the next ten years for TRDC and its partners in relation to the provision and improvement of open space provision within the Three Rivers District.

*Figure 1: Map demonstrating analysis areas and settlements*



# **THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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## **2. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The following section provides a framework for TRDC and partners to maintain and improve open space provision within the District. It outlines ways in which the District can work towards providing a level and quality of provision, which will cater for the District's population. The general objectives highlighted have been identified in the context of the four themes of the TRDC Strategic Plan to make communities safer, sustainable, prosperous and healthy.

### **2.2 Aim**

The aims of the Strategy and Action Plan are to:

- ❑ Lead TRDC and its partners forward in prioritising strategic sites for the enhancement and development of open space facilities.
- ❑ Steer TRDC and partners towards funding agencies that can aid this process.
- ❑ Provide quality and management targets for general open space and individual typologies.
- ❑ Provide information, which can be used within the Local Development Framework and supplementary planning guidance.
- ❑ Protection of sites, which increase biodiversity and support nature conservation, from over use.



# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## 2.3 General objectives

This section sets out general objectives for the development of open space provision in Three Rivers. They seek to address the issues raised in the Open Spaces Assessment Report.

1. *Support the development of safer communities in Three Rivers through the provision of open spaces:*

1.1 *Decrease anti social behaviour and the associated vandalism and perceptions of crime with regards to open space sites, in particular play areas.*

The street survey highlights that many residents do not use open spaces because they believe them to be poorly maintained and they feared being a target of crime. Consultation demonstrated that often anti-social behaviour including vandalism maintains this perception. (This view was not generally supported by the site visits conducted by KKP and the views of open space users that responded to the Survey.)

1.2 *Explore ways of imposing further controls on motorbike use within open spaces and provide appropriate facilities.*

Explore options and partnerships to increase signs and perimeter fencing and gates to deter motorbike users from using public open spaces. Examine ways in which the motorcycle project at Tolpits Lane can be supported.

2. *Support the development of healthier communities in Three Rivers through the provision of open spaces:*

2.1 *To develop open spaces as informal recreational provision, thereby facilitating an increase in the District's physical activity and health, e.g. increasing the use of trim trails and ranger/warden led outdoor activities.*

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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### 3 *Support the development of sustainable communities in Three Rivers through the provision of open spaces:*

#### 3.1. *Identify sources of funding to meet identified shortfall and need in the provision of open spaces.*

Partners in Three Rivers should work together to identify funding (e.g., external funding, Section 106) to meet identified shortfall and need in the provision of open spaces. Priorities for action are set out in the action plan. Development pressures in areas such as Chorleywood should be acknowledged and appropriate provision incorporated into proposals. Provision should take into account the nature of the surrounding area and the demographics of its catchment.

#### 3.2. *Review relationship with Countryside Management Services (CMS) and promote working relationships between community/friends of groups connected to open space sites. CMS to clearly identify how its annual work plan fits with TRDC priorities and strategies before discussion of budgetary support.*

#### 3.3. *To work in partnership with other agencies and parish councils to improve sites, where appropriate, through the adoption of the Green Flag principles as an aspirational target, e.g. Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Chorleywood House Estate.*

The Green Flag Award scheme is the national standard for parks and green spaces across England and Wales. The award is managed by The Civic Trust on behalf of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Green Flag Advisory Board.

#### 3.4. *Manage the protection of areas of biodiversity value through TRDC planning policies in line with relevant legislation and the District's Biodiversity Action Plan.*

This should incorporate more proactive work to develop, for example, local nature reserves, and to deliver the action of the Three Rivers Biodiversity Action Plan.

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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4. *Support the development of prosperous communities in Three Rivers through the provision of open spaces:*

4.1. *Continue to invest further in improving open space provision to meet/exceed DDA standards and the site specific requirements highlighted in the Access Audit 2001 and TRDC Disability Action Plan 2003.*

Specific sites and actions are noted in the action plan. These are consistent with the Council's Disability Action Plan.

4.2. *To secure provision through planning contributions and the delivery of commuted sums for new recreational provision or upgrading of existing facilities and maintenance of open space, when developments occur in the District.*

# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## 3. HIERARCHY OF PROVISION

It is not feasible for a full range of facilities to be created in all areas due to the number of rural settlements within the District deficient in certain types of open space provision. A settlement hierarchy has therefore been created to assist with the strategic creation and investment in open space provision.

In rural areas, it is often more appropriate to use a settlement hierarchy to analyse access to provision, due to the large expanses of agricultural land between settlements and the lower population/density.

The settlement hierarchy is taken from the Three Rivers Local Plan 1996 - 2011. The settlements within this hierarchy are shown in the table below.

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Settlement</i>
A	Rickmansworth.
B	Chorleywood, Abbots Langley, Kings Langley (TR only), Garston (TR only), Croxley Green, Oxhey Hall, Carpenders Park, South Oxhey, Eastbury, Northwood, Moorpark.
Other settlements	Maple Cross, Bedmond, Huntonbridge, Sarratt.

The table overleaf demonstrates the distribution of open space, which will underpin the Action Plan detailed later in this report.

# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Other settlements</b>
<b><i>Parks and gardens</i></b>	<p>A large site providing facilities to cater for sports events, outdoor music concerts and fun/activity days.</p> <p>The site contains toilets, seating and electricity points.</p> <p>Several well distributed smaller sites.</p>	<p>A park or garden able to facilitate small community events.</p> <p>The site contains toilets and electricity points.</p>	<p>A park or garden area for use by the local community.</p>
<b><i>Semi/natural greenspace</i></b>	<p>A large, well planned semi/natural greenspace with environmental education facilities.</p> <p>Several smaller individual sites strategically placed or incorporated within existing parks and gardens/amenity greenspace.</p>	<p>A large individual site, able to facilitate environmental education.</p> <p>Sites within a larger park or amenity greenspace.</p>	<p>A semi/natural greenspace within current provision or on an individual site.</p>
<b><i>Green corridors</i></b>	<p>A network of green corridors interconnecting rural and urban areas catering for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.</p>	<p>Green corridors linking the settlement internally and with other towns.</p>	<p>A connecting route to settlements within the analysis area.</p>
<b><i>Amenity greenspace</i></b>	<p>Informal recreation areas contained within defined housing estates.</p>	<p>Informal recreation areas contained within residential areas.</p>	<p>An open space able to facilitate informal recreation.</p>

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Other settlements</b>
<b>Provision for children and young people</b>	<p>A SEAP located within the settlement containing facilities for teenagers, children and toddlers.</p> <p>LEAPs and LAPS located strategically across the settlement and included in new housing estate developments accordingly.</p>	A NEAP and several other LEAPs and LAPs located strategically across the town in order to provide facilities to all residents.	A LEAP located within the settlement.
<b>Allotments</b>	Several sites located in areas of dense housing development.	An allotment site in the settlement catering for demand within the analysis area.	Access to an allotment within the analysis area.
<b>Cemeteries</b>	<p>A large, public cemetery catering for a variety of religions and specialist burials.</p> <p>Including a Garden of Remembrance.</p>	A small cemetery located within the settlement, with adjacent land for future expansion	Access to a cemetery within the analysis area.
<b>Civic spaces.</b>	A large hard surfaced space in the centre of the settlement providing an aesthetic centrepiece and a place to facilitate small events, e.g., Christmas lights switch on.	A civic space large enough to facilitate small events and provide an aesthetic focal point.	Access to a civic space within the analysis area.

# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## 4. TYPOLOGY TARGETS

The following targets have been developed through the combination of information gathered during consultation, site visits and the catchment mapping. They reflect the key areas to be addressed over the lifetime of the Strategy. However, implementation must be considered in the context of financial implications and the need for some proposals to meet planning considerations.

### **4.1 Parks and gardens**

- ☐ Identify ways of decreasing vandalism, e.g., through increased security presence
- ☐ Consider options to decrease unofficial motorbike use, e.g., by increasing deterrent signs, perimeter fencing and gates.
- ☐ Continue to improve paths in line with DDA guidelines and the TRDC Disability Action Plan - particularly path surfaces and widths.
- ☐ Explore the potential to enhance parking facilities for able and disabled bodied persons at large sites.
- ☐ Create provision where possible in Chorleywood, Sarratt and Watford Rural.

### **4.2 Semi/natural greenspaces**

- ☐ Continue to support external agencies working in the District, e.g. CMS and HMWT, through the Environment Forum.
- ☐ Increase tree planting near the M25 to decrease air pollution.
- ☐ Flytipping - publicise prosecutions in the local press, work in partnership with the Police and relevant agencies. Erect barriers at car park entrances.
- ☐ Implement CONFIRM system to proactively survey and manage all TRDC owned trees.
- ☐ Erect more bins and signs on site.
- ☐ Review options for the management of Whippendell Woods with Watford BC.

### **4.3 Green corridors**

- ☐ Support objectives of HCC PROW improvement plan.
- ☐ Support HCC to combat the problems of overcropping, vegetation pruning, vandalism and motorbike use on PROWs.
- ☐ Assist HCC to deal with PROW technical obstructions and the alteration of sign directions.
- ☐ Explore options to create with HCC and parish councils further routes, which can be used by cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians.
- ☐ Consider the potential to enhance commuter cyclepaths between Rickmansworth and Watford.
- ☐ Alter the designation of feasible footpaths to create multiuser routes.
- ☐ Support the Local Access Forum set up by HCC.

# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## ***4.4 Amenity greenspace***

- ☐ Continue to follow a decreased grass cutting regime for certain amenity greenspace sites to increase biodiversity.
- ☐ Work with the Local Strategic Partnership and other community based initiatives to address security at problem sites.
- ☐ Explore the potential to install fencing, gates and signs to deter motorbike use.
- ☐ Identify sites to provide further amenity greenspace in Croxley Green.

## ***4.5 Provision for children and young people***

- ☐ The creation of further provision in Sarratt, Chorleywood and Croxley Green.
- ☐ Continue to create larger play areas such as SEAPS and decrease the number of strategic LAPS by adding further equipment.
- ☐ Increase the opening hours of Croxley Green skatepark, especially in summer, so that it acts as a diversionary activity for young people.
- ☐ Ensure perimeter fencing and safety surfacing is evident at all new and existing play areas.

## ***4.6 Allotments, community gardens and city farms***

- ☐ Develop provision in Watford Rural analysis area.
- ☐ Support allotment associations to improve access at allotment sites.
- ☐ Assist allotment association to maintain unoccupied plots to encourage further participants.
- ☐ Support the allotment association to secure funding for security improvements at the Ebury Way site.
- ☐ Increase the role of the Three Rivers Allotment Association to provide external funding advice.

## ***4.7 Cemeteries, disused churchyards and burial grounds.***

- ☐ Assess the opportunities to create woodland burial sites to meet future demand (The District currently has 20 years burial space left) particularly in Croxley Green and Sarratt.
- ☐ If the Woodcock Hill site is extended plans should include space for further parking or the formal designation of the adjacent road lay by as additional parking including a reduction in the speed limit.

## ***4.8 Civic space***

- ☐ The development of further sites should be considered especially in Rickmansworth to act a community focal point.



# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## 5. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

### 5.1 Justification of sites within the Action Plan.

*The following criteria have been used to identify priorities and justify the inclusion of sites within the action plan.*

- ❑ The appropriate catchment is deficient in the specified typology.
- ❑ The Site suffers from access problems in terms of safety, poor signage and poor disability provision.
- ❑ A project is currently underway to enhance the existing site and/or funding has been secured.
- ❑ An evaluation of the site's use is required as it is of poor quality and is underused.
- ❑ The desired action is small scale, short term and will enhance the quality of current provision, whilst aiding community empowerment.
- ❑ The importance of the site is identified in other District or regional strategies.

### 5.2 Management and development

The following issues should be considered when undertaking site development or enhancement.

- ❑ Financial viability.
- ❑ Security of tenure.
- ❑ Planning permission requirements and any foreseen difficulties in securing permission.
- ❑ Gaining revenue funding from planning contributions in order to maintain existing sites.
- ❑ Gaining contributions in the form of planning contributions, which assist with the creation of new provision where need has been identified.
- ❑ Analyse the possibility of shared site management opportunities.
- ❑ Opportunities to lease site to external organisations(s).
- ❑ Assisting community groups/parish councils to gain funding to enhance existing provision.
- ❑ Negotiation with landowners to increase access to private strategic sites.

Short/medium and long-term priorities are detailed in the subsequent Action Plan.



## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

### ACTION PLAN 2004 - 2014

The Action Plan has been created to be undertaken over a ten-year timescale. The information within the assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur. It is not feasible to include all sites with identified development issues in the Strategy and Action Plan. Only Sites, which meet the criteria listed in section 6.1 have, therefore, been included. The Action Plan will be implemented subject to the approval of the Council's Executive Committee.

Timescales: Short (0-3 years), Medium (3-6 years), Long (7-10 years).

### *Abbots Langley*

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Leavesden Country Park	Park and Garden	B	There is lack of signs and toilet facilities. Path surfaces should be improved to increase disabled access. Alterations to street furniture are also required.	Seek funding to improve the facility in order to increase disabled access and awareness.	TRDC.	A quality site that caters for able and disabled persons.	Medium

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Toms Lane, Bedmond	Play	C	The Site is suitable for toddler use however many teenagers gather at the Site. Youth consultation demonstrated a demand for teenage provision including a MUGA, BMX facility and youth shelter.	Identify ways of extending provision at the Site to include provision for young people. Further consultation should be completed once this site is a priority in order to clarify which type of provision would be preferred.	SDDC, Local youth club, Hertfordshire Youth Service, local community.	A play site which caters for toddlers and young people.	Long
Southway; Leavesden Country Park; Tanners Wood Lane; Manor House; Love Lane	Play		Safety surfaces inadequate	Upgrade safety surface	TRDC, local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium
Huntonbury Cheshire Way; Tanners Wood Lane	Play		Fencing incomplete or missing	Upgrade fencing	TRDC; local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

### *Chorleywood*

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Chorleywood House Estate	Informal	A	A management plan has been created by Chorleywood House Estate Partnership, CMS, TRDC and Chorleywood Parish Council, which includes various objectives relating to maintenance, biodiversity, access improvements, marketing and building improvements.	Support the relevant agencies to implement the management plan. TRDC should consider applying for a Green Flag Award once a large proportion of this work has been completed.	Chorleywood House Estate Partnership, CMS, TRDC and Chorleywood Parish Council and the Civic Trust.	A Site, which has been improved and has achieved Green Flag status.	Short
The Swillett	Play		Safety surfaces inadequate	Upgrade safety surface	TRDC, local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short medium

Croxley Green

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Croxley Hall Wood	Informal	B	CMS is developing a plan for the site which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Improving sight lines through the site.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Making entrances more welcoming.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the number of guided walks.</li></ul>	TRDC should support CMS and the community to gain funding to support events and improvements.	TRDC, CMS and local community.	A welcoming site with improved access. Increased awareness and use of the Site by the surrounding community.	Medium



## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Barton Way Playing Fields	Informal and play		Young people gather at the site and cause vandalism and litter problems.	Secure facility during the evening/night More morning clean-up 'teams' Improving lighting Install signs at the site warning of the age limit of the facility and providing a contact number so that damage and vandalism can be reported immediately Install traffic signs warning motorists of the playground's locality.	TRDC, HCC, local resident groups.	A welcoming site, well used by local groups	Medium
Chorleywood analysis area	Play		Identified catchment deficiency	Develop play area to address deficiency	TRDC, local community	Site that meets identified catchment deficiency	Medium

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Croxley Hall Wood Allotments / Barton Way Allotments	Formal		Vacant plots	Improve site so that plots can be advertised to those on Barton Way waiting list. Remaining ten allotments - seven of these should be turned into a community garden or semi natural area due to surrounding landscape.	TRDC, CMS, allotment associations	Site that meets identified shortfall and need	Medium
Croxley Common Moor	Informal	B	This Site is a strategic link for bridleways in the area. The footpaths in the area are being used extensively by horse riders as the bridleways are currently fragmented.	TRDC should continue to develop a bridleway at this site.	TRDC, local bridleway action groups, British Horse Society.	A bridleway across the moor, which links other routes in the area.	Medium
Baldwins Lane	Play		Safety surfaces inadequate	Upgrade safety surface	TRDC, local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium
Cassiobridge Recreation Ground	Play		Fencing incomplete or missing	Upgrade fencing	TRDC; local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

### *Rickmansworth*

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Rickmansworth Aquadrome	Informal	A	Youth nuisance problems. Five year management plan created by TRDC which includes various objectives relating to maintenance, biodiversity, access improvements and increasing environmental education provision.	TRDC should continue to work to carry out these objectives. TRDC should consider applying for a Green Flag Award once a large proportion of this work has been completed.	TRDC, local community, Civic Trust.	A Site, which has been improved and has achieved Green Flag status.	Short
Ebury Road Allotments	Formal	A	Lack of water supply	Water supply	Allotment association	Improved site	Short
Woodcock Hill	Formal	A	Creation of site extension	Woodland burial area development.	TRDC	Addressing capacity issues	Long
Rickmansworth Town Centre	Formal	A	Creation of a civic site required which will serve the District.	Explore options for sites in area	TRDC	Meeting identified shortfall	Long
Lavrock Lane Allotments	Formal	A	3 on waiting list cannot be catered for at other sites within the analysis area	Extend site if possible. Advertise other sites	TRDC, allotment association	Meeting identified need	Medium
	Play		Need for play area identified by local community	Develop play area to address identified need	TRDC, local community	Site that meets identified need	Medium



THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
	Play		Safety surfaces inadequate	Upgrade safety surface	TRDC, local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium
	Play		Fencing incomplete or missing	Upgrade fencing	TRDC; local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium



# THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

## Sarratt

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Frogmore Meadow	Informal	B	The site is managed by HMWT who aim to replace fencing along the river chess, install interpretative signs and extend the site.	Support HMWT to carry out these objectives. Use planning contributions to purchase and maintain an extension to the Site.	HMWT, TRDC, landowners, funding bodies.	An extended site with improved fencing and interpretative facilities.	Medium
Analysis area	Play		Only one site (LEAP) in analysis area.	Create a large play area serving various ages across the analysis area	TRDC, Sarratt Parish Council, local community.	A play area (SEAP), which serves the analysis area	Short



## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

### *Watford Rural*

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Oxhey Woods LNR	Informal	B	CMS aims to set up a friends group at the site and gain funding for coppice management and access improvements.  There is demand for an environmental education centre at this site.	TRDC should complete a feasibility study for an environmental education centre at the site.  TRDC should support CMS to develop a friends group, coppice management and access improvements.	TRDC, CMS and the local community.	An improved site, which supports community events.	Short
Pond Wood	Play		Local people believe that this is good site for a play area.  The site is currently inaccessible and is plagued by litter and fly tipping problems.	A new play area could open the site up and increase community use, thus decreasing vandalism and misuse.	TRDC, local community.	A new play area meeting community demand.	Medium
Watford Rural area	Play		Identified catchment deficiency in Moor Park, Eastbury and Northwood	Develop play areas to address deficiencies	TRDC, local community	Sites that meet identified catchment deficiencies	Medium

## THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL: OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Site	Typology	Hierarchy level	Current site issues	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Timescale
Otley Way	Play		Safety surfaces inadequate	Upgrade safety surface	TRDC, local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium
Otley Way; Huntonbury Dowding Way/ Westland Close; Ballater Close; Chilwell Gardens; Oaklands Avenue.	Play		Fencing incomplete or missing	Upgrade fencing	TRDC; local community	Play sites which are safe and appropriate for use	Short - medium

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

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# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## **GLOSSARY**

ACRE	Action with Communities in Rural England
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
FPM	Facilities planning model
HSP	Hertfordshire Sports Partnership
HS	Hertfordshire Squash
HTTA	Hertfordshire Table Tennis Association
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh & Page
LAs	Local authorities
LC	Leisure Connections
LEA	Local education authority
LTS	Learn to Swim
NGBs	National governing bodies of sport
PCT	Primary care trust
SE	Sport England
TRDC	Three Rivers District Council
PPG17	Planning Policy Guidance 17
WBC	Watford Borough Council
WSP	Whole sport plans
YMCA	Young men's community association

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## **PART I. INTRODUCTION**

This is the Assessment Report considering supply and demand issues for indoor sports facilities and their ancillary facilities in Three Rivers, Hertfordshire. This section of the report centres on provision of 'sports facilities' and the demand created for these facilities by sports clubs use. In summary it evaluates the following types of facilities:

- ☐ Leisure centres.
- ☐ Community centres.
- ☐ Village halls.
- ☐ Schools.

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) Planning Department commissioned the study in September 2004. The principal research was carried out between October 2004 to February 2005. This report sits alongside assessment reports which cover open spaces and outdoor sport and recreation facilities. Collectively the reports make up the District Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

**This report does not include strategic recommendations and policy objectives. This is included within the Strategy document.**

### **Audit**

Each facility is considered as 'like for like' facilities within its own facility type, in order that it can be assessed for adequacy. The report considers the distribution of, and interrelationship between, all built facilities in Three Rivers and evaluates demand. It gives a clear indication of areas of high demand, where there is potential to provide improved and/or additional facilities to meet this demand and to, where appropriate, protect the current stock.

The term 'sport facilities' includes large, purpose built sports centres with 'District wide' significance, local village facilities and facilities provided by both the education and private sectors. Within this framework, ownership and management are fundamentally important. They determine the effectiveness with which facilities service the community and meet local need.

Each leisure centre and community centre was visited in order to further identify demand for improved or additional facilities. An assessment and audit of the village halls in the District was also carried out. This feeds into a scoring criteria developed by KKP to enable TRDC to develop a clear focus for these facilities and identify priorities for support and investment in the subsequent Strategy and Action Plan. TRDC can also use it to estimate the effect of enhancing one facility on others in the study area.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The assessment of facilities and demand identified within this report feeds into the Strategy and Action Plan. This information will be used to develop a settlement hierarchy both for leisure facilities and community facilities.

Further detail on the assessment report methodology can be found in Section One, including detail of the pro-formas used to collate the audit information from parish councils and village halls.

Sports and clubs that are included within this report are considered in the context of both their developmental and facility requirements. Sports have been identified because it is understood that the development of opportunities to participate in them is being inhibited by facility related issues or have been identified as being significant sports in the District through consultation. All clubs identified by TRDC and NGBs have been contacted either by telephone/face to face consultation or via questionnaires. The summaries included are from those clubs that responded.

### **Analysing the audit**

#### ***Catchment areas***

Catchment areas for different types of provision provide a tool for identifying areas currently not serviced by existing sport and recreation facilities. It is recognised that catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour. This problem has been overcome in PPG17 by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment', defined as the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users.

KKP uses a variety of methods in order to assess each form of provision's catchment area. Sport England surveys have found that 75-80% of the users of swimming pools and sports halls come from within a 15 minute drive time. Consultation with user groups and clubs included questions related to where users travel from or how far they would expect members to travel. This coupled with KKP's experience of working with leisure facilities and having completed such assessments for similar local authorities, has enabled the identification of accurate catchment areas for each facility in Three Rivers in relation to the size and type of facilities it provides.



## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Scoring criteria**

The development of built facility studies has necessitated the production of a scoring criteria for comparing 'like for like' facilities, namely community centres, village halls and leisure centres. The scoring criteria model has been established by KKP and used in a number of local authority studies.

Its purpose is to clearly identify the possible importance of individual facilities comparatively within their own category (through a ranking). It has been set up as a mathematical model only to underpin the qualitative work completed during the course of the study. It is not necessarily a planning tool. It has been developed and amended according to the individual requirements of Three Rivers in line with the Council's Community Plan objectives.

The basic level of analysis, which has been provided for TRDC, includes the following categories:

Category	Justification
Under 16 population living within 1km of facility	Importance placed on the provision of (potentially) 'walk-to' facility for people, particularly young people.
Under 16 population living between 1 and 5km of facility	Importance placed on the availability of public/private transport facility for people, particularly young people.
Over 65 population living within 1km of facility	Importance placed on walk-to accessibility of facility for older people.
Over 65 population living between 1 and 5km of facility	Importance placed upon accessibility of facility via public/private transport for older people.
Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD)	Importance placed on the role community sports and leisure facilities and opportunities can play in addressing social inequalities in Three Rivers.

The criteria for village halls has been adapted slightly in that it does not include the population between 1km and 5km of the facility. KKP deemed it inappropriate to assess this distance, as invariably village halls are local community facilities often 'walk to' facilities.

Each category is scored against a weighting of 10. The scoring criteria is based upon facility postcodes. It is used, where necessary as quantitative justification underpinning recommendations later in the Strategy and Action Plan (to be produced subsequent to agreement of this report). However, it is important to note that this model is a mathematical one and does not take account of qualitative information gathered independently through consultation and site visits. It is not, therefore, at any time used in isolation. It does, however, add further verification to the research undertaken.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The results of the scoring criteria are detailed within the relevant sections in this document. Due to the small number of leisure centre facilities, the analysis has only been developed for community facilities at this stage.

### ***Facilities Planning Model (FPM)***

Specific to sport, the FPM was developed by Sport England, as a planning tool to inform the process of deciding if and where new community sports and leisure facilities are needed. Although, the methodology utilised can be, and has been, questioned, it has provided, based upon established demand patterns/use, objective assessments of the relationship between likely demand and the current or proposed supply of sports facilities in specific areas. It covers provision of sports halls (minimum three badminton courts), pools and synthetic turf pitches.

The basic function of the model is to compare demand for facilities with supply using the same unit of measurement, this being the number of visits per week at peak times.

The planning approach has three components:

- ❑ Demand is estimated by applying a sports participation and frequency rate to various population bands, thereby identifying who participates and how often.
- ❑ Supply of sports facilities is calculated by identifying the number of visits which a facility can accommodate in the peak period.
- ❑ Catchment areas are identified for each facility.

By comparing demand and supply and applying to the catchment area, it is possible to identify:

- ❑ Where demand is located.
- ❑ Whether demand exceeds supply and by how much.
- ❑ Whether the scale of unmet demand is sufficient to consider provision of additional facilities.
- ❑ Whether there is in fact spare capacity (i.e. supply exceeds demand).

The FPM does not take into account the age, condition or 'attractiveness' of facilities. It also does not take into account future demographic change or changes in participation rates.

According to Sport England representatives, there have been no recent model runs in Three Rivers. However, an original run was made in the context of a Sport England Lottery Fund application (1997) and summarised that there was no need for additional indoor or outdoor facilities. This is mainly due to its location in the catchment areas of other facilities in neighbouring authorities.

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## **PART 2: SPORT CONTEXT**

As a District, Three Rivers provides a number of sports and recreational facilities for its community with a mix of management styles. TRDC owns three main sites:

- ❑ William Penn, which is managed on behalf of the Council by Leisure Connections.
- ❑ Sir James Altham Pool, a small community facility, currently managed 'in house'.
- ❑ The Centre, a relatively new community centre providing a range of sport and recreational activity opportunities also managed 'in house'.

The District also relies heavily on the provision of indoor sports facilities from its education stock both private and local education authority (LEA) facilities. In particular facilities at Royal Masonic School and Merchant Taylor School are extensive and provide a range of community use to local clubs. Three Rivers is neighboured by eight local authorities in total. Both Watford and Dacorum provide facilities that significantly service parts of Three Rivers. This is most significant from Watford into the East of Three Rivers. The other local authority areas are predominately rural.

### ***Hertfordshire Sports Partnership (HSP)***

HSP supports sport across the County. It is a partnership encompassing sporting organisations, clubs, coaches and officials, governing bodies of sport, local authorities, Sport England, education and health providers.

Currently in a transitional period, HSP is moving away from its traditional focus of Active Sports and is developing new sports and programmes to focus on and developing a more strategic role for sport in the County.

Sport England recently announced its four year funding for 31 priority and development sports in England. HSP is currently working with 19 of these sports, identified after consultation. In terms of indoor sports these are:

- ❑ Badminton.
- ❑ Netball.
- ❑ Swimming.
- ❑ Gymnastics.
- ❑ Squash.
- ❑ Table tennis.
- ❑ Tennis.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***National governing body (NGB) facilities strategies***

A number of NGBs have developed facilities strategies. Although the period of time covered by these strategies has expired, many of the aim and objectives remain valid. The aim facilities strategies relevant in this assessment are:

- ❑ Basketball Facilities Strategy (1999 – 2004).
- ❑ Badminton Development & Facilities Strategy (1999 – 2003).
- ❑ Netball Facilities Strategy (1999).
- ❑ National Swimming Facilities Strategy (2002 – 2005).
- ❑ Gymnastics Facilities Strategy (2003).

Analysis of the facilities strategies has been supplemented by consultation with regional officers. This has been used to identify current supply and demand issues.

### ***Whole Sport Plans (WSP)***

Sport England's new way of directing funding and resources to national governing bodies (NGBs) will be through delivery of WSP. Sport England is now working with the NGBs to assist the development and implementation of their WSP.

WSP are plans for the whole of a sport from grass roots right through to the elite level that identifies how it will achieve its vision and how it will contribute to Sport England's start, stay and succeed objectives.

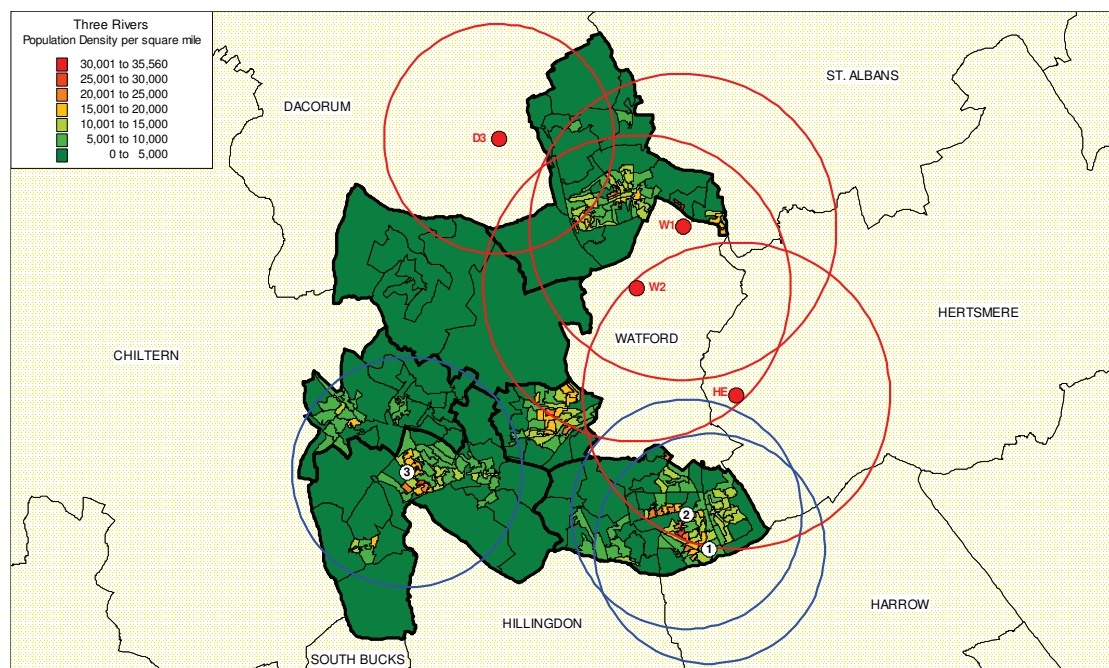
These plans will identify the help and resources NGBs need to deliver their whole sport plans, for example, partners such as county sports partnerships and programmes such as PE, School and Sport Clubs Links (PESSCL) and the Community Club Development Partnership (CCDP).

It will give Sport England the opportunity to measure how the NGBs are delivering their sports. The WSPs will allow Sport England to give focused investments to NGBs against the resources they need to drive their sport. WSPs will help create more links with regions and partners in all aspects of sport, benefiting all through shared best practice.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART 3: SUMMARY OF LEISURE PROVISION

*Leisure provision distribution against population density in Three Rivers. Where appropriate, it also identifies facilities servicing significant parts of Three Rivers from neighbouring authorities:*



Id	Site	Catchments <sup>1</sup>
1	Sir James Altham Pool	3km
2	The Centre	3km
3	William Penn Leisure Centre	4km
W1	Watford Leisure Centre	5km
W2	Bill Everett Community Centre	4km
D3	Kings Langley School	3km
HE	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	4km

<sup>1</sup> Catchment area identified during consultation with managers and users. 75% - 80% of users travel this distance to use the facility.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### **3.1 Leisure centres**

#### ***William Penn Leisure Centre***

This centre is currently managed by Leisure Connections (LC) on behalf of TRDC. The contract has operated for eight years but is due to expire, in December 2005.

Facilities include:

- ☐ Swimming pool – 25m x 3/4 lanes – viewing area (50 capacity).
- ☐ Sports hall – 4 badminton courts.
- ☐ Dance studio – 28 capacity.
- ☐ Crèche.
- ☐ 2 squash courts.
- ☐ Fitness suite – 2 separate areas (30 and 13 stations).
- ☐ Café – run as a franchise.

The swimming pool is reported to have been constructed in 1972 as part of a school complex. This was extended upon to provide the dryside in 1995, following a successful lottery bid after the school closed. Therefore, as the oldest part of the facility, according to TRDC officers and the centre manager, it is in need of refurbishment in order to continue to meet current and future demand.

The 'Learn to Swim' programme is delivered by LC. There are currently no competitive swim clubs based at the site. With the popularity of the 'Learn to Swim' programme, the Manager believes there is demand for a club to provide an exit route for swimmers.

TRDC is keen to develop this facility as the 'swim centre' for the District, but in order to achieve this further investment in the site is required. The size and quality of the pool currently inhibits its use for galas and competitions. The Manager also identifies demand for a learner pool to be added to the facility.

The majority of use of the sports hall is through block bookings of casual users rather than clubs. The only investment required is general ongoing maintenance. The Manager reports some unmet demand for martial arts. Without a dedicated martial arts studio it is difficult to accommodate such use and still provide a balanced programme of other activities and hire.

Squash is popular and courts are fully booked at peak times with the majority of bookings for casual use. Some minor work is required for patch repairing and re-plastering.

The fitness suite has good take up of direct debit membership, currently at 1,500 members. Provision is split over two areas at opposite sides of the building.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Amalgamation of the fitness provision would allow for greater efficiency in terms of staffing issues and user satisfaction.

Current main usage of William Penn is by local users within a five to ten minute drive catchment area. It does not tend to attract many users from the Croxley Green area even though this is the closest leisure centre for these residents. This may be the result of it not being a high profile facility with a location somewhat 'off the beaten track'.

Following a feasibility study to consider the options for refurbishment of the site, TRDC has committed (funds allocated in the budget) to carry out a full refurbishment and partial redevelopment of the existing facility.

### ***Sir James Altham Pool***

Originally built in 1979 as a school pool, it is now almost entirely used by the public and is managed by TRDC (the swimming pool is 25m x 4 lanes with viewing gallery for 20 people (suitable for galas)). Serving the needs of the local community, this small facility has recently achieved Quest status. The pool was refurbished six years ago and is fully DDA compliant.

The 'Learn to Swim' programme is delivered by the Centre and has a constant waiting list of 300 – 400, the majority of these being beginners. The Centre Manager confirms that provision of a learner pool would free time in the main pool for additionally required public swimming. Aqua Bats is the resident swim club (recreational only) and hires the facility for six hours per week but reports demand for additional pool time of two hours per week.

Aqua Bats is a development/recreational category swim club with approximately 60 members. The 'Learn to Swim' programme effectively feeds into the Club. However, due to the loss of two high quality coaches, there is no squad training and members have now been lost to clubs in Watford. The future of the Club is uncertain.

Only a small number of clubs are able to hire the facility due to the large number of swim lessons being provided. None of these clubs expressed latent demand but are as follows:

- ☐ Masters Swim Club – 1 hour per week – training only.
- ☐ Asian Swim Club – 1 hour per week.
- ☐ Octopush underwater hockey – 1 hour per week.

Although only provided as a local facility, the catchment area stretches to attract some demand from Harrow and Pinner.

The Centre, also located in South Oxhey, provides fitness and sports hall, approximately five minutes drive away.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***The Centre***

This relatively new facility was opened two years ago to replace the old sports centre on the same site and a youth centre in the area. It is currently managed by TRDC. As a dry facility it acts as both a sports centre and community centre and provides a good range of facilities:

- ❑ Fitness suite (48 stations).
- ❑ Sports hall (2 badminton courts).
- ❑ Ancillary hall (1 badminton court).
- ❑ Dance studio.
- ❑ Aerobics studio.
- ❑ Art room.
- ❑ Crèche.
- ❑ Music suite with recording studio.

The facility mix was designed as such after much consultation with local people. It was never designed to high sport specification but more focuses on provided the right type of community facilities for local people.

The Centre has minimum club hire and focuses on sports development, providing classes and lessons for a variety of activities 'in house'. However, the sports hall does have block bookings for local badminton, trampolining and short mat bowls clubs. It is currently operating at capacity.

There are two resident groups using the Centre: Gypsy Booth Theatre School and South Oxhey Youth Club (run through the Youth Service). Both have dedicated areas running their own programmes.

The Manager reports some demand for gymnastics provision in the area. The Centre receives many enquires about gymnastics. Its provision of trampolining lessons creates a broader interest in gymnastics. The site has suffered from some serious incidents of vandalism.

### ***Woodlands YMCA***

This modern building was acquired by Three Rivers Leisure from the Health Authority. Watford YMCA was awarded a lease to develop and refurbish the building as a leisure facility and the Centre opened in September 1998.

It provides a fully equipped gymnasium (35 stations) and a dance studio with fully sprung floor, providing fitness classes including Tae Kwon Do, aerobics, circuits and Fit For Life 50+. The Centre also runs play schemes during school holidays.

The Centre has secured Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) funding for new fitness equipment that services disabled users. This is due to installed in April 2005.



## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***Watford Leisure Centre***

Located close to the Three Rivers boundary, this is a dryside facility owned and managed by Watford Borough Council (WBC). Centre staff report that it has a large catchment area covering both Watford and part of Three Rivers. This large scale site has both indoor and outdoor provision. Indoor facilities include:

- ❑ Sports hall - 8 badminton courts.
- ❑ Five squash courts.
- ❑ 60 station fitness suite.

Consultation with WBC officers suggests that Watford Leisure Centre is likely to be redeveloped following its own indoor facilities strategy. As can be seen from previous mapping, this facility services a major area of Three Rivers, to the East of the District, particularly the Abbots Langley area. It would be particularly beneficial to Three Rivers if this included provision of wet facilities.

### ***Bill Everett Community Centre***

Located on West Hertfordshire College campus on Leggatts Way, the Centre provides a combination of sports/leisure facilities and social amenities for the local community. Although the facility is owned by Hertfordshire County Council, WBC currently manages community use as part of a dual use agreement. It provides the following indoor facilities:

- ❑ Swimming pool – 25m x 4 lanes.
- ❑ Sports Hall – 4 badminton courts.
- ❑ Meeting room.
- ❑ Community hall.
- ❑ Bar/lounge.

Centre staff report that its catchment area does extend to some parts of Three Rivers including Abbots Langley. As can be seen from the mapping, its catchment area does also stretch into Croxley Green.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Summary**

William Penn:

- No competitive swimming clubs using the facility.
- Demand identified for a learner pool.
- Demand for martial arts.
- Pool in need of refurbishment and options identified for this by TRDC.
- Squash courts in need of refurbishment.

Sir James Altham Pool:

- Demand identified for a learner pool.

The Centre:

- Some demand identified for gymnastics.

Watford Leisure Centre:

- Site likely to be redeveloped in 2006/7.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### **3.2 Scoring Mechanism – quantitative summary**

The scoring mechanism has been run for leisure centres in Three Rivers using the overall leisure facility mathematical prioritisation model for the District. All facilities, regardless of management have been included. It is intended to be a supplement for qualitative local assessment and evaluation.

The priority attached to leisure centres across the District is as follows:

<b>Three Rivers Leisure Centres</b>	<b>Analysis area</b>	<b>Total score</b>	<b>% Total score</b>	<b>Priority Rank</b>
Sir James Altham Pool	Watford Rural	55.54	69.43%	<b>3</b>
The Centre	Watford Rural	73.24	91.55%	<b>1</b>
William Penn Leisure Centre	Rickmansworth	65.39	81.73%	<b>2</b>

### ***Scoring criteria summary***

The Centre scores the highest within the scoring criteria indicating its potential importance to the category agendas. As a relatively new facility this is significant, suggesting that it has been built in an optimum location of importance with its catchment area.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 3.3 Education provision (both LEA and private)

A summary of the provision, quality, usage and any identified latent demand from the schools is outlined below:

#### ***Francis Combe School***

Officially in Watford it is located on the Three Rivers District boundary. Therefore the School's catchment area covers both Three Rivers and Watford.

The School does not have a sports hall, but pays for access to nearby Watford Leisure Centre. Although there is demand to access the facilities more often the cost is prohibitive. The School representative believes that the Leisure Centre is underused during the day and that a better partnership should be developed with the School.

Facilities	Community use
2 gymnasium with wooden sprung floors (50yrs old). Dance studio (new provision) 2 changing rooms of basic school quality.	TAGB – 4hrs per week (Tai Kwon Do)

#### ***St Michaels Catholic High School***

Located in Three Rivers but close to the boundary with Watford, its catchment area covers both Three Rivers and Watford.

Although the School has adequate playing field space, this large school has expressed demand for additional access to indoor provision. It currently has a 1950's gymnasium, which is inadequate to deliver a full sports programme or offer extensive community use. A bid to the Arch Diocese for 'targeted capital funding' has been made.

Built facilities	Community use
Gymnasium – 1950's Small dance studio (new provision) 2 changing rooms – basic school use.	Limited community use. Local badminton club use two nights per week.  Has received lots of enquires about use of the new dance studio.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Merchant Taylor Boys School***

This independent school has a total of 250 acres including farmland and lakes. The land is owned by Trust and has been available for community use for the past 20 years acting as both an income stream and a means of developing a relationship with the local community.

It is true to say that community use of the indoor facilities could be developed further. The sports hall is used each evening during the week and the swimming pool has some regular uses. According to school representatives the main inhibitor for further community use of facilities is lack of community changing accommodation. In particular there are no women's facilities because this is a boy's school, with exception of the pool, which caters for both genders.

The School is considering options to further develop both its indoor and outdoor sports facilities in partnership with Merchant Taylor Sports Club (Old Boys Club) currently based in Croxley Green.

<b>Built facilities</b>	<b>Community use</b>
4 squash courts and 4 fives courts Small climbing wall 2 indoor cricket lanes Sports hall – 4 badminton courts Gym – 20 stations Pool – 25m, 6 lanes, no spectator area. 2 changing rooms.	Extensive community use.  Minimal community use of the gym (1 night per week).

### ***St Clement Danes***

The School is perceived to be 'well off' in terms of sports provision with good quality outdoor facilities and two main indoor areas. Although it has a varied programme of community use, the indoor facilities are not always booked to capacity. For example, there is capacity for use of the gymnasium, which could accommodate martial arts groups.

<b>Built facilities</b>	<b>Community use</b>
Sports Hall – 4 badminton courts. Hall – 3 badminton courts. Both facilities of adequate quality.	Facilities not always booked to capacity.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***St Joan of Arc***

Located close to the centre of Rickmansworth, this large school has poor quality sports facilities. The School struggles to accommodate a full sports programme and finds many pupils miss out on sports during the winter months due to lack of indoor space and poor quality playing fields.

The only indoor facility is an old gymnasium. Current changing accommodation in the School is inadequate according to the School representative.

There is no community use of facilities on a regular basis due to the inadequacy of current provision. It is considered a priority by the School to investigate funding opportunities for a new sports hall.

Built facilities	Community use
Gymnasium, wooden floor – inadequate for amount of demand.	Not on a regular basis due to poor quality.

### ***Parmiters School***

This large school is well known in the area for provision of good quality sports facilities. It is a key provider of both indoor and outdoor facilities. The School is committed to continued investment and maintenance of its sports facilities. The Thomas Parmiter Sports Centre is a good quality facility catering for a range of indoor sports with extensive community use.

Club consultation highlighted some issues with programming. In particular a number of netball clubs feel that they are unable to access peak time slots. This is disconcerting given that the site is the County netball centre. Netball representatives also stated that hiring the facility for netball matches was cost prohibitive and the School seems reluctant to renegotiate.

The sports hall is provided at national basketball league standard, although there are no teams currently using the facility to this standard.

Built facilities	Community use
Sports hall – 4 badminton courts Gym – 15 stations. Dance studio.	Extensive.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Royal Masonic Girls School***

This private girls' school has extensive indoor sports provision, all with some form of community use. The sports facility was opened in 2001 and is therefore relatively new. It is owned and operated by a trust.

There are some issues around access to the site because this is a single sex boarding school. Although community use is available, it is not extensive. For example, the swimming pool is located in a separate building further in the School's grounds, creating a potential security issue for this private school. It therefore has minimal use and has significant spare capacity to increase community use if the issues could be resolved.

According to both school representatives and clubs car parking for the whole site needs to be increased to adequately accommodate community use.

Built facilities	Community use
Sports hall – 8 badminton courts open in 2001. 4 squash courts. 3 studio areas. Pool – 25yards 3/4 lanes.	Extensive.  The sport hall is the key facility provider for the district fencing clubs.

### ***Rickmansworth School***

Rickmansworth School, situated on the outskirts of Rickmansworth, has 1,500 pupils. It has Arts College Status, but is the main hub for the School Sports Coordinator Programme in Three Rivers. The School has expanded over recent years and now struggles to facilitate all the sporting needs, both curricular, extra curricular and community use.

Built facilities	Community use
Sports hall (2court). Gym. 25m swimming pool (with separate changing). Dance studio.	There is consistent community use of the swimming pool and sports hall.

### ***Kings Langley School***

Kings Langley is an isolated location, situated in Dacorum but close to Three Rivers. It provides a swimming pool (25m x 4 lanes), which is located in a self contained facility opposite the main school building. There is no specific sports hall and the School reports demand for use both for curricular and community use.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

As can be seen from the map above, the catchment area for the swimming pool facility stretches into Three Rivers. However, the M25 acts as a significant physical barrier and reduces the extent to which the facility is used by Three Rivers residents.

### **Summary**

Education sector is a large provider of community facilities. Two large private schools with extensive facilities well used by the community. Improvements to programming identified at Parmiters and St Clement Danes to increase community use or provide a more balanced programme of use.

- Four secondary schools with no sports hall provision all reported curricular demand for access to a sports hall: Francis Combe, St Michaels, St Joan of Arc and Kings Langley. Rickmansworth School also report demand for increased indoor provision.

It is often difficult for the local authority to gain access to these sites for sports development use i.e. coaching courses, because of pricing issues. School facilities are often expensive to hire. From a school point of view, this is in order to create a strong business case for their continued existence.

Many school sites come under access restrictions i.e. opening times. Given the move towards the Extended Schools agenda it is deemed inappropriate not to consider school facilities in the equation. However, community use is presently offered at the discretion of the schools themselves and this, in itself, allows for discrepancies in use to occur.

### **Primary school summary**

All primary schools were sent questionnaires and of the 24 in Three Rivers, 75% replied. The following table provides a summary of the indoor facilities at each site and its use, if any, by community groups:

Site	Indoor facilities	Community Use	Comments
Arnett Hills JMI	Multi purpose hall.	No.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Chorleywood Primary School	Multi purpose hall with wooden floor.	Yes – Community groups such as Drama and Church Services.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Christ Church School	Multi purpose hall.	No.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Divine Saviour RC Primary	1 badminton court, multi purpose hall with wooden floor.	Limited use – predominately during school holidays.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Eastbury Farm JMI	2 badminton court, multi purpose hall.	Yes – but not used for sport.	Insufficient space to affectively deliver the curriculum – too small and unsuitable floor for PE delivery.



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Site	Indoor facilities	Community Use	Comments
Harvey Road Primary School	12.5m x 10m hall.	Yes – Tai Kwon Do Club (2 hours per week)	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum and allow community use.
Little Green Junior School	No specific sports facilities available.	No.	-
Oxhey Wood School	2 multi purpose halls available – 1 used for PE delivery.	No. Lack of personnel to deal with bookings.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Sarratt C of E School	No specific sports facilities available.	-	-
Shepherd Primary School	Multi purpose hall.	No.	-
St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School	Multi purpose hall (15m x 15m)	No.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
St Mary's C of E School	Multi purpose hall.	No.	-
St Meryl School	Multi purpose hall.	Limited.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
St Paul's C of E School	Multi purpose hall.	No.	Insufficient space to affectively deliver the curriculum – too small and lack of storage space.
St Peters C of E School.	Multi purpose hall with wooden floor.	Limited – After School Gymnastics Club.	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum.
Tanners Wood School	1 badminton court, multi purpose hall with wooden floor.	No.	Too small space for the number of children in each class.
The Russell School	1 badminton court hall, wooden floor with low ceiling.	Yes – After School Gymnastics Club (9.5 hours per week).	Sufficient space to deliver curriculum and allow community use.
Warren Dell Primary School	1 badminton court, multi purpose hall with tiled floor.	No.	-
Yorke Mead Primary School	1 badminton court, multi purpose hall with wooden sprung floor.	Yes – Badminton Club (3 hours per week). Yoga Class (3 hours per week). Holiday play schemes.	Insufficient space to affectively deliver the curriculum – too small for classes of 30. No storage space.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Summary***

It would appear that generally there is good provision of multi use space for sports in primary schools.

Five of the schools that responded are available for regular use by community groups ranging from badminton clubs to adult education.

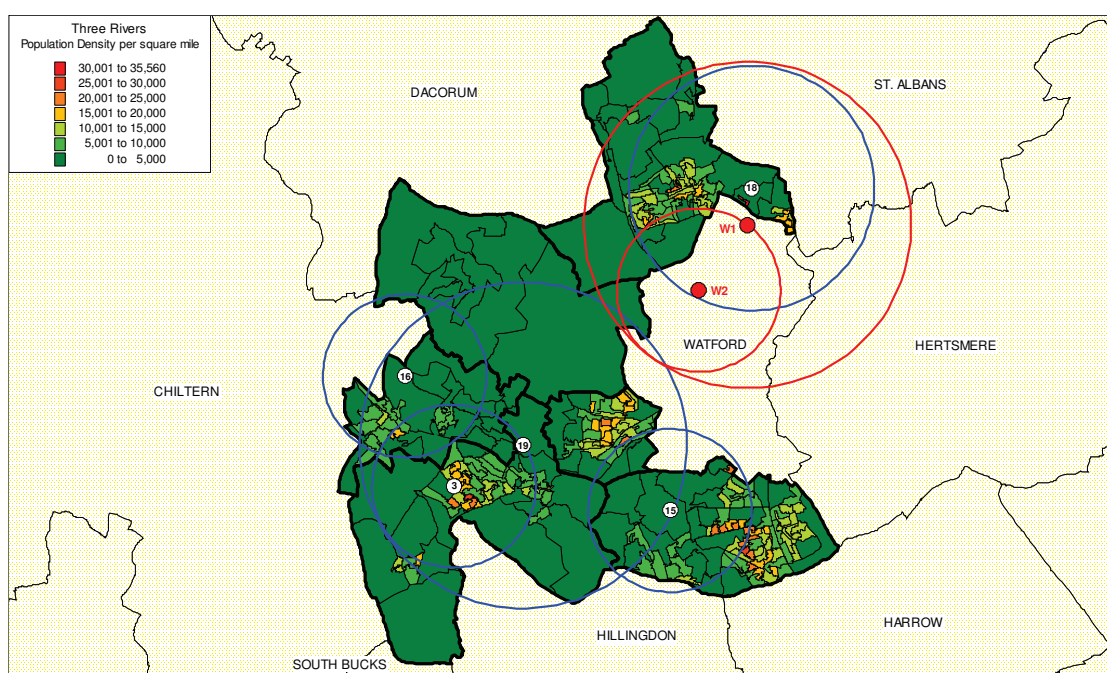
Four of the schools that responded report that facilities are insufficient to adequately deliver the sports curriculum.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 3.4 Sports halls

There are five adequately sized sports halls (defined as four badminton courts or more), which are available for community use within Three Rivers. These consist of one, eight badminton court hall and four, four badminton court halls. One is provided at the major leisure centre facility and the other at school sites. There are three secondary schools with no sports hall provision. All of these schools report that provision of a sports hall is a priority.

*Distribution of (minimum specification 4 badminton courts) sports halls in Three Rivers:*



Id	Site	Type	Size of facility	Catchment area <sup>2</sup>
15	Merchant Taylor School	Private School	4 badminton courts	2km
16	St Clement Danes School	LEA	4 badminton courts	2km
18	Parmiters School	LEA	4 badminton courts	3km
19	Royal Masonic Girls School	Private School	8 badminton courts	4km
3	William Penn Leisure Centre	TRDC Leisure Centre	4 badminton courts	2km
W2	Bill Everett Community Centre	LEA	4 badminton courts	2km
W1	Watford Leisure Centre	WBC	8 badminton courts	4km

<sup>2</sup> Catchment area identified during consultation with managers and users. 75% - 80% of users travel this distance to use the facility.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***Gaps in provision***

The majority of settlements within the District appear to fall within a catchment area of one facility or another. Although there are some catchment area gaps, these are predominately rural areas.

It is recognised that the majority of sites are school facilities and this is, of course, predicated upon the basis that senior schools with sports halls allow appropriately scheduled, balanced community use of their facilities. Given the move towards the Extended Schools agenda it is deemed inappropriate not to consider school facilities in this equation. However, community use is presently offered at the discretion of the schools themselves and this, in itself, allows for discrepancies in use to occur.

The only area which appears to have a gap in provision is South Oxhey. Although The Centre is located in South Oxhey, providing two small sports halls, totalling three badminton courts, these are not capable of providing for key activities such as netball, basketball and others such 5 aside football or volleyball (the site was never designed in this way).

### ***Sport by sport***

#### ***Basketball***

The County's basketball is governed by the Hertfordshire Basketball Association (HBA). It works closely with HSP and its basketball development officer. The HBA run the local men's and women's leagues and recently has been working with Active Sports to help develop junior basketball. Basketball in Hertfordshire has three main focus areas as follows:

- ❑ Coach education.
- ❑ Club development.
- ❑ Competitive development, particularly for the 11-14 age range.

There are two national league basketball clubs in the County, Essex & Herts Leopards and West Herts Warriors. West Herts Warriors is very prominent in the County and hire facilities in Three Rivers. It runs primary school coaching sessions as well as secondary school district trials.

TRDC sports development officers believe there is little demand for basketball in Three Rivers. What little demand exists is met by West Herts Warriors. However, the Club reports that the hiring of a basketball court is cost prohibitive and this is the reason for the lack of clubs in the area. Club representatives believe the Council could do more to financially support small clubs through facility hire subsidising.

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The HSP Basketball Development Officer also believes that hiring basketball courts is cost prohibitive and that other sports are considered more financially lucrative for facilities. For example, you can split sports halls into more courts for badminton.

Considering that schools are a major facility provider, there is currently a lack school basketball being played. The HSP Basketball Development Officer believes that the lack of demand for basketball in the District is also due in part, to poor school club links. Secondary school consultation highlighted that those schools with demand for basketball are inhibited to develop because of poor facilities, usually where courts are deemed to be unsafe for competition i.e. poor safety margins.

### **Summary**

- Little demand for basketball.
- Basketball appears to be cost prohibitive in Three Rivers, particularly at school sites.

### *Netball*

The County is governed by Hertfordshire Netball Association and works closely with HSP and its netball development officer.

Netball is played both indoors and outdoors in Three Rivers, although predominately outdoors. According to TRDC sports development officers, netball in the District is healthy. Watford Premier Netball Club, currently playing in the National Clubs League, is the largest club and plays the majority of matches at Parmiters School. It is also the only junior club in the area. Parmiters is the County base for netball.

On a regional level, netball in Hertfordshire has three main focus areas as follows:

- ❑ 11-16 development.
- ❑ Grass roots to talented performer development.

The only club using indoor provision is Watford Premier Netball Club due to league specification (second highest league in the competitive structure). However, club consultation highlighted that there is demand for more indoor use for winter netball.

Growth of winter netball is inhibited due to the same issue arising from basketball. Hiring netball courts is cost also prohibitive and other sports are considered more financially lucrative for facilities. For example, you can split sports halls into more courts for badminton. According to Shelley Netball Club, Parmiters School is unsympathetic to the facility needs of netball. Given that Parmiters is the base for netball in Hertfordshire this is concerning.

According to All England Netball Association Development Officer, a county facility should provide a balance of both indoor and outdoor provision or at least balanced

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access to these facilities. County matches are often played on the same day for all age groups and better provision of both indoor and outdoor courts could be made at the same time at Parmiters School.

A number of clubs raised concerns with facilities at Parmiters School during the consultation. These comments related to lack of car parking, poor quality outdoor courts and expensive hire charges for indoor courts.

### **Summary**

- Identified demand for more indoor use for winter netball.
- Netball appears to be cost prohibitive in Three Rivers, particularly at school sites.

### *Badminton*

The County is governed by Hertfordshire Badminton Association. As a new sport to HSP, it is likely that Badminton Association of England will provide a development officer based at HSP.

Competitive badminton is played in the South West Herts League, with five clubs playing in Three Rivers. The majority of these teams are from South Oxhey and consequently use the Merchant Taylor School in Northwood. Three clubs in Hertfordshire have applied for Clubmark (club accreditation).

Hertfordshire Schools Badminton Association makes use of Royal Masonic School for after school coaching and can accommodate up to 100 children for a session. Officers feel the facility has sufficient capacity but requires modernisation.

### **Summary**

- No additional demand identified for badminton.

### *Gymnastics*

The County is governed by Hertfordshire Gymnastics Association and works closely with HSP providing support including club development, community coach and school/club links. There are 12 clubs in Hertfordshire, which provide opportunities for recreational and competitive artistic gymnastics for men and women, pre-school, sports acrobatics, sports aerobics and disabilities.

There is currently no competitive gymnastics club operating in Three Rivers. TRDC sports development officers suggest that there is some demand, predominately coming from after school coaching/activities. Pinnacle Trampolining Club provides

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sessions at Parmiters School and there is also trampolining coaching at The Centre, where the Manager also reports demand for a larger gymnastics club.

Clubs based in neighbouring authorities meet the majority of gymnastics demand. Sapphire Gymnastics Club in Dacorum, based at Hemel Sports Centre, is regionally significant and the Club representative reports that its catchment area covers Three Rivers. It has plans to further extend the facility at Hemel Sports Centre. A small club in Three Rivers could act as a satellite centre and feed into Sapphire Gymnastics Club with its support.

### **Summary**

- No competitive gymnastics in Three Rivers.
- Demand identified for a gymnastics for various sources.

### *Table tennis*

The County is governed by Hertfordshire Table Tennis Association (HTTA) and works closely with HSP to provide support including club development, community coach and school/club links. There are over 26 clubs for table tennis in Hertfordshire.

TRDC sports development officers suggest that there is a lack of competitive clubs in the District and recognises that this as an area for further development. Competitive table tennis is thriving in neighbouring Dacorum suggesting that there is demand in the area.

Provision of facilities for recreational table tennis is not necessarily an issue. School and village halls are often sufficient facilities. However, to progress to a competitive level, HTTA require use of sports halls in order to meet competitive specifications. It is true in Three Rivers that it is not finding a facility that is the problem but provision of the equipment, which is expensive and storage is also an issue.

Bedmond Village Hall and Sarratt Village Hall both provide opportunities for recreational table tennis. As the main competitive club in Three Rivers, Oxhey Table Tennis Club currently plays at Little Furze School. However, the school is due for closure and the Club has not yet found a new facility.

### **Summary**

- Lack of competitive table tennis in Three Rivers.
- Some current demand from Oxhey Table Tennis Club to find a new home venue.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Martial arts*

Competitively, martial arts are governed by a number of different bodies/agencies, all falling within the same definition. Governance tends to be on a national level rather than regional.

Martial arts covers the following:

- ☐ Aikido.
- ☐ Judo.
- ☐ Karate.
- ☐ Kendo.
- ☐ Tang Soo Do.
- ☐ Chinese Martial Arts.
- ☐ Ju Jitsu.
- ☐ Tai Kwon Do

Martial arts are becoming increasingly popular in Three Rivers according to sports development staff. In particular, karate and tai kwon do appear to be the most popular in the District, each providing competitive clubs. The major club is BJ Academy, hiring four sites. The majority of martial arts clubs hire small community facilities and club consultation suggests that demand is being met.

#### **Summary**

- Consultation suggests demand is being met but William Penn reports some demand for an additional facility.

### *Fencing*

Fencing is governed by the British Fencing Association. Governance tends to be on a national level rather than regional.

Competitive fencing is popular in Three Rivers and there are two clubs both based at Royal Masonic School, one predominately junior club (Three Rivers Young Blades) and one senior club (Watford Fencing Club). Fencing can be accommodated in a sports hall type facility within an area similar size to a badminton court. Clubs in the Hertfordshire/Bedfordshire/Buckinghamshire league, which requires significant travel for competitive matches. Demand appears to be met.

#### **Summary**

- No identified additional demand.

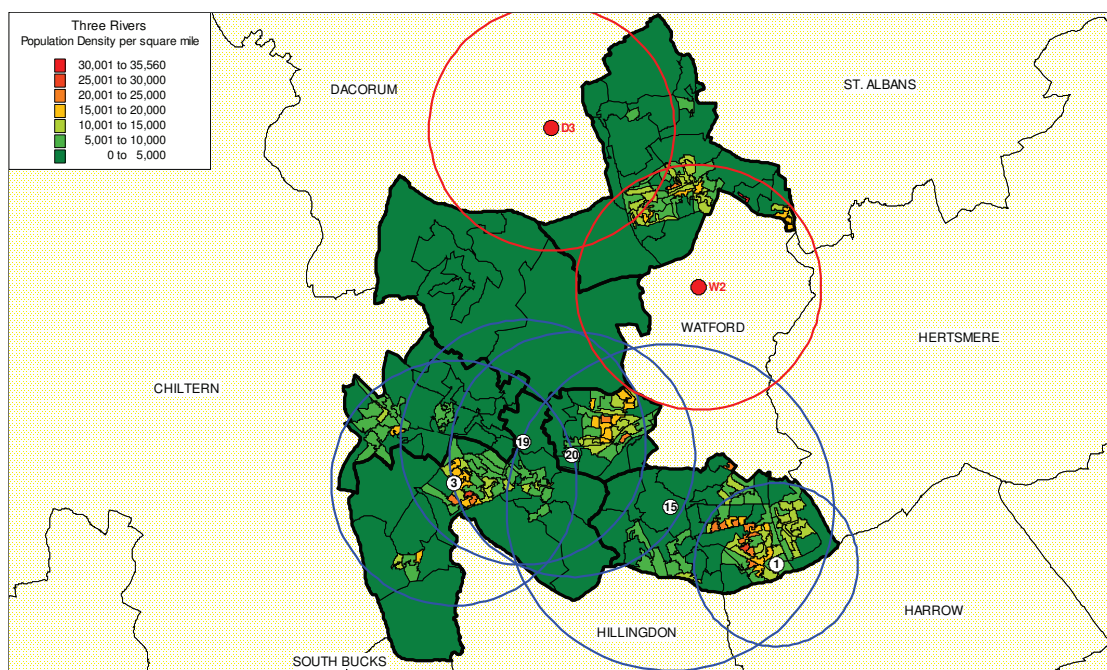


# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 3.5 Swimming pools

There are five main swimming pool facilities in Three Rivers. TRDC provides two of these, one is currently managed on their behalf by Leisure Connection.

*Distribution of swimming pools in Three Rivers:*



<b>Id</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Size of facility</b>	<b>Catchment area<sup>1</sup></b>
1	Sir James Altham Pool	TRDC Leisure Centre	25m x 4 lanes	2km
3	William Penn Leisure Centre	TRDC Leisure Centre	25m x 3/4 lanes	3km
15	Merchant Taylor School	Private School	25m x 6 lanes	4km
19	Royal Masonic Girls School	Private School	25yds x 4 lanes	3km
20	Rickmansworth School	LEA	25m x 4 lanes	3km
W2	Bill Everett Community Centre	LEA	25m x 4 lanes	3km
D3	Kings Langley School	LEA	25m x 4 lanes	3km

<sup>1</sup> Catchment area identified during consultation with managers and users. 75% - 80% of users travel this distance to use the facility.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***Gaps in provision***

As can be seen from the map above, the South of the District is well serviced by swimming pool provision. However, the North appears to have a gap in provision.

According to leisure officers, there has been some significant pressure and lobbying from local people, reporting that there is demand for a swimming pool in Abbots Langley. Public transport is also particularly poor in Abbots Langley and in this respect it is seen as an isolated area of the District.

As demonstrated in earlier maps, the swimming pool at the Bill Everett Centre (25m x 4 lanes) services Abbots Langley area, being located approximately 10 minute drive away (5km) and any developments that would include a wet facility at Watford Leisure Centre would also service a similar area.

Again, a significant proportion of swimming pools are provided by schools, two of these being private schools. Community use is presently offered at the discretion of the schools themselves and this in itself allows for discrepancies in use to occur. TRDC should be working closely with these providers to encourage further community use.

### ***Swimming***

County swimming is governed by the Hertfordshire Amateur Swimming Association and works closely with HSP and its swimming development officer. There are 28 clubs across the County.

Hertfordshire comprises several small clubs. According to the HSP Swimming Development Officer, this has created a defensive culture and much rivalry between clubs, which 'could come together to be one bigger voice'. There are no competitive clubs in Three Rivers and, as such, swimming development focuses on festivals.

Both Sir James Altham Pool and William Penn Leisure Centre provide successful 'Learn to Swim' programmes and there is the potential for a club to be provided as an exit route for swimmers.

Aqua Bats Swim Club is a development club and meets demand for recreational swimming which then feeds the 'learn to swim' programme at Sir James Altham Pool. Links with Watford Swimming Club have been established to meet competitive demand in the District. Recreational swim clubs operate at William Penn Leisure Centre. However, there are no competitive clubs based here.

#### ***Summary***

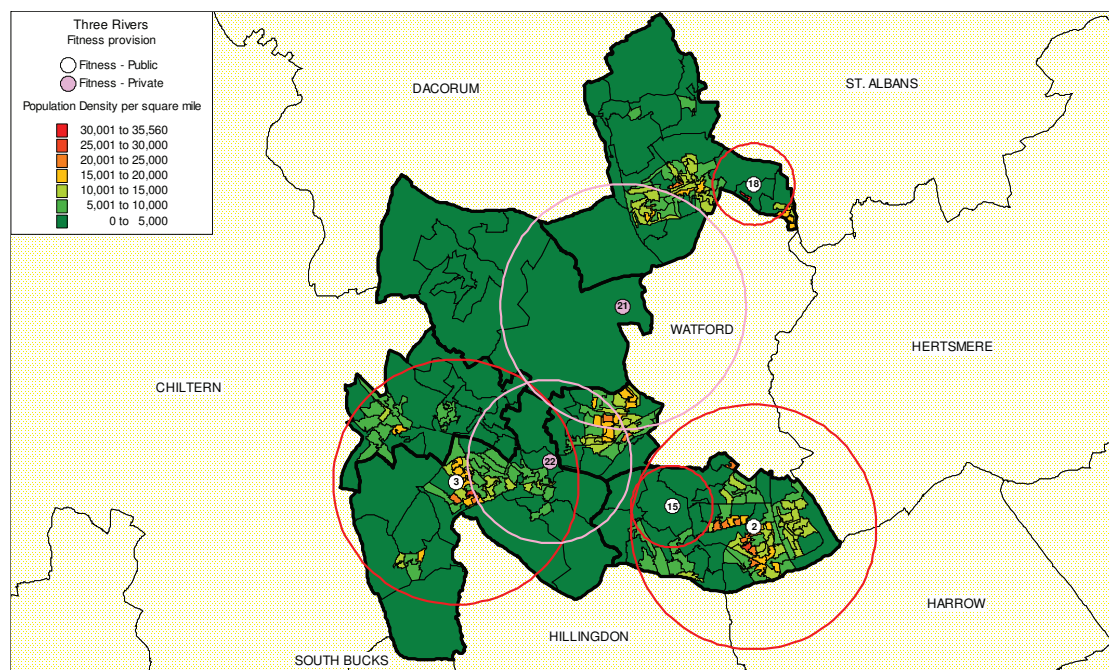
- No competitive clubs in Three Rivers but links formed with Watford Swimming Club to meet current competitive demand.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 3.6 Fitness facilities

There is a good spread of fitness provision across the District provided by a mixture of management styles. TRDC being the largest provider at William Penn Leisure Centre and The Centre.

*Distribution of fitness provision in Three Rivers:*



Id	Site	Type	Size	Catchment <sup>1</sup>
2	The Centre	TRDC	48 stations	3km
3	William Penn Leisure Centre	TRDC	43 stations	3km
15	Merchant Taylor School	Private School	20 stations	1km
18	Parmiters School	School	15 stations	1km
21	The Grove	Private	50 stations	3km
22	The Fitness Centre	Private	30 stations	2km

<sup>1</sup> Catchment area identified during consultation with managers and users. 75% - 80% of users travel this distance to use the facility.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### ***Gaps in provision***

Although there appears to be good fitness coverage across the District, some of the provision has accessibility issues. For example, it is recognised that Merchant Taylor School and Parmiters School have limited fitness provision. Although school representatives confirmed that the community is using these facilities on a regular basis, this is more likely to be ad hoc use by sports club members hiring other facilities rather than specific membership to the gym. However, this does not have a significant impact on total provision.

The Grove provides a large, well equipped fitness suite which is primarily aimed at more affluent users and customers of the Hotel.

Watford Leisure Centre also provides a large, good quality fitness suite and its catchment area covers the Abbots Langley area.

No middle range private fitness providers such as Fitness First or Cannons have been identified in the District.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 3.7 Squash courts

In 2000 the Squash Rackets Association published its National Facilities Strategy for 2000-2005. The Strategy identified a national over-supply of courts and concludes that the focus of the sport should be one of consolidation and upgrading of existing facilities rather than new build.

As a nationwide trend, many squash courts located in leisure centres have been converted into other more popular uses such as additional gym space.

Three Rivers currently has twelve squash courts. Private school sites are the biggest provider of squash courts in the District. Courts are located at the following venues:

*Squash venues in Three Rivers:*

Venue	Number of courts
Merchant Taylor School	4
Royal Masonic Girls School	4
William Penn Leisure Centre	2
Durrants Sports Ground	2

Watford Leisure Centre also provides five squash courts and services Three Rivers.

William Penn Leisure Centre reports that squash is popular at the Centre and courts are fully booked at peak times with the majority of bookings for casual use.

Community use is presently offered at the discretion of the schools themselves and this in itself allows for discrepancies in use to occur. The majority of school squash court use is for competitive club use and there is minimal casual use.

#### *Squash*

The County is governed by Hertfordshire Squash (HS). This is a voluntary organisation and its aim is to promote squash at all levels throughout Hertfordshire. HSP works with HS and provides support including club development, community coach and school/club links.

HS suggests that there is a lack of competitive squash being played in the District, especially given the number of courts being provided (12 courts).

Merchant Taylor Old Boys Squash Club used to play competitive squash at Durrants Sports Ground. The sports ground was reportedly issued a closure notice ten years ago. Although the facility still exists, the Club has since disbanded. However, the

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Club representative reports that there is demand to reform and this is planned in partnership with Merchant Taylor School.

### ***Summary***

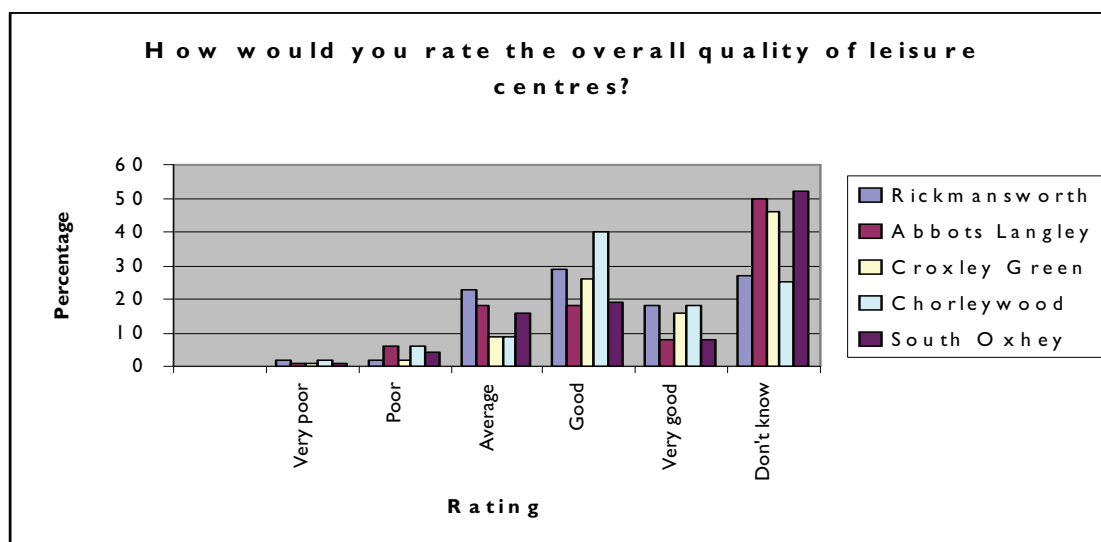
- Identified lack of competitive squash being played. Demand expressed by Merchant Taylor Old Boys Club.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 3.8 Street survey results

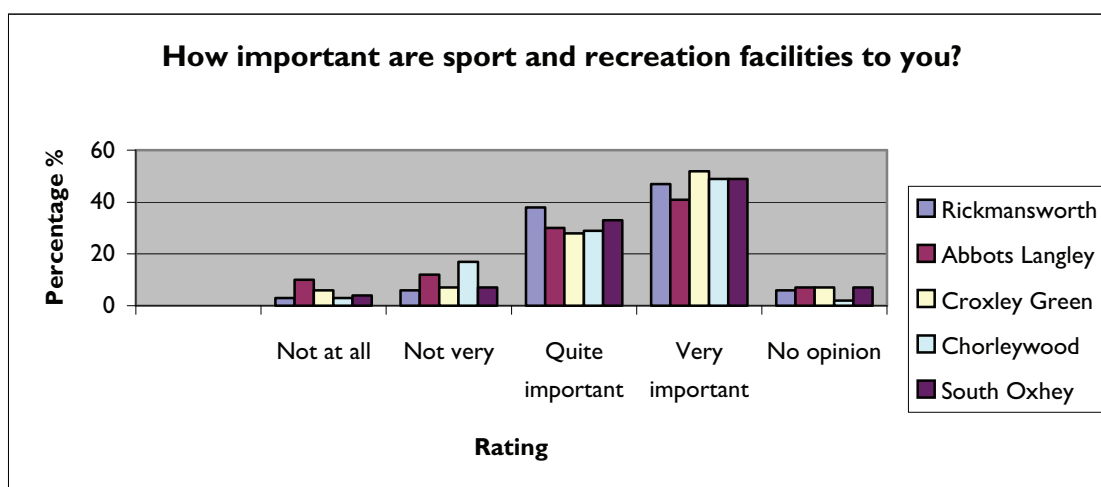
The street survey was conducted using the methodology identified in Section One of this report. The following results provide an insight into the needs and opinions of the Three Rivers population.

Figure 1: Quality of leisure centres



In total, 13% of respondents rated the quality of leisure centres as either good or very good. Although this may seem a relatively low percentage, 84% stated that they didn't know the quality. In fact this may be a more disconcerting figure, in that a high percentage of respondents couldn't answer the question, suggesting they haven't visited a leisure centre.

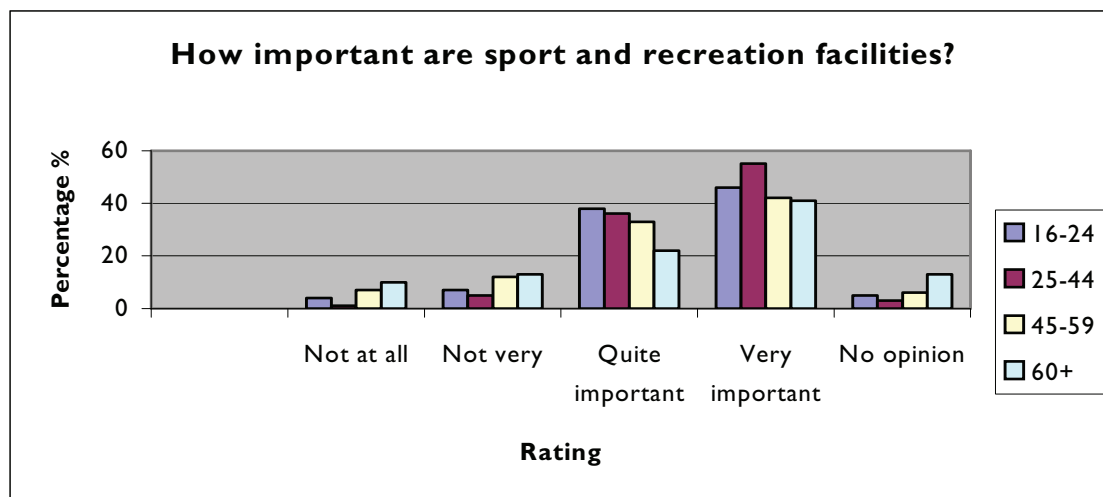
Figure 2: Importance of sport and recreation facilities:



## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Of those respondents that said these facilities were not important to them, 25% don't use the facilities and 20% said the facilities were too old. This was particularly noticeable in Abbots Langley, where 37% of respondents don't use such facilities.

Figure 3: Importance of sport and recreation facilities:



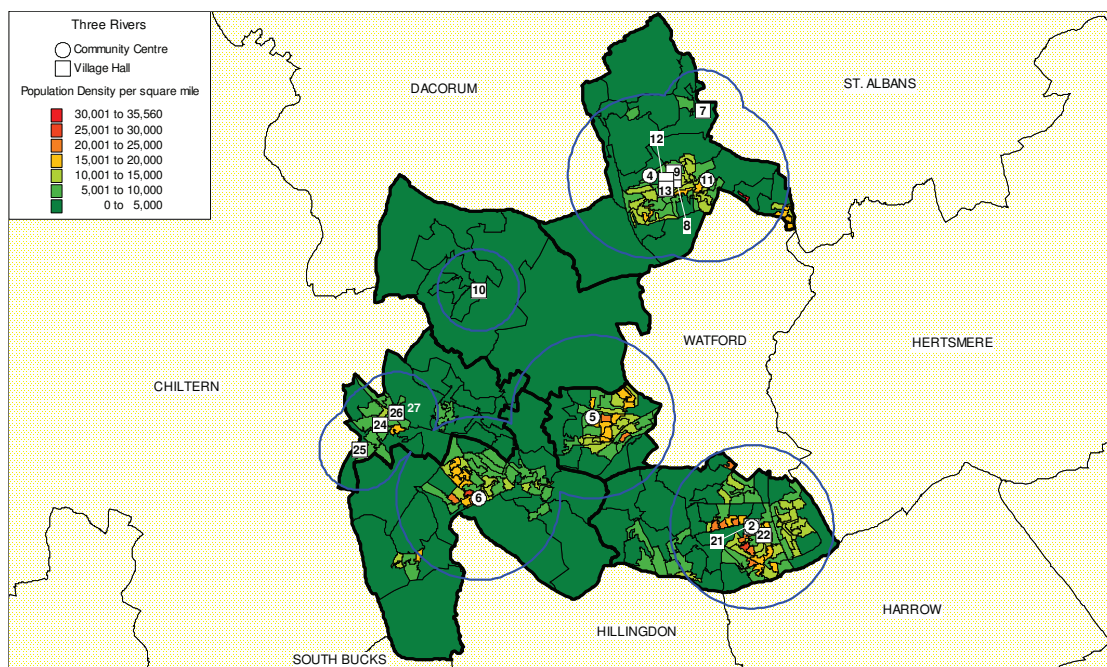
Sport and recreation facilities appear to be more important to those aged between 16 and 44. These facilities are least important to those aged 60+. This is in comparison to the importance of village halls for those respondents aged 60+ where these facilities were rated as of high importance (please refer to section 4.3).



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART FOUR: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY PROVISION

*Distribution of community provision in Three Rivers:*



Id	Site
4	Abbotts Langley Community Centre
5	Croxley Green Community Centre
6	Mill End & District Community Centre
7	Bedmond Village Hall
8	Hillside Hall
9	Henderson Hall
10	Sarratt Village Hall
11	Woodlands YMCA
12	Manor Lodge
13	Manor House
21	All Saints Centre (Ascend)
22	Watford Rural Parish Hall
24	Florence Brown Hall
25	Bullsland Hall
26	Hollybush Hall
27	War Memorial Hall
2	The Centre

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 4.1 Community buildings

Village halls and community centres are important to residential neighbourhoods and rural areas for supporting social benefit and interest. These types of facilities are not primarily for use as sports facilities, although many are utilised for such activities as badminton, table tennis, martial arts and keep fit classes. Within this section, facilities are considered not only for their sporting benefit but also their general recreation value. Assessing the need for them is essential in order to help promote sustainable communities.

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) is a national charity whose purpose is to support sustainable rural community development. It provides a national platform for its founder member rural community councils, other bodies and individuals which work at local, county, regional and national level to alleviate rural disadvantage in England. ACRE's aim is to facilitate the development of thriving, diverse and sustainable communities throughout rural England. ACRE's definition of a village hall is:

*“Community facilities are normally owned, as well as managed, by the local community. They provide a focus for activities which improve the social cohesion of rural life including activities that are essential to the maintenance and improvements in delivering services that, in most urban areas, are considered to be the function of local authorities and statutory agencies.”*

ACRE has recently carried out a study in rural areas exploring the roles played by different village halls within the community. It looked at the different types of activity taking place and developed five classes of use, which focussed on the reasons why people were using the hall. The classes are explained below with examples of types of activity:

Table 1: ACRE's classes of use

<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Governance and participation</b> Includes community events, fetes and festivals, activity such as community planning and community governance, contributing to the civic renewal agenda within government.
<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Social benefit</b> Functional delivery of advice, aid and services or support to individuals which has a direct outcome in learning, financial benefit, health and personal welfare contributing to the health and well-being of residents and addressing issues of social inclusion.
<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Social support</b> Basic clubs and activities that could attract diverse attendance and may produce individual benefit but through group participation e.g. youth clubs, luncheon clubs, elderly persons' club, and mother and toddler.
<b>Class 4</b>	<b>Social interest</b> This is group activity where people are meeting because of a specific shared interest and contributes to the wider social capital of the community e.g. bowls, drama, uniformed youth groups and structured social groups such as WI.
<b>Class 5</b>	<b>Private events</b> Events run for private benefit and other events not open to the public.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Although Three Rivers has rural areas it may not necessarily be classified as a 'rural' area. However, ACRE classifications have been used because more often than not the purpose of village halls remains the same regardless of location. It is therefore on this basis that the village halls in Three Rivers have been classified. It is a useful tool to gain a clearer understanding of the roles of such facilities and how potentially this can be developed further.

### ***Summary***

There are four community centres, including YMCA Woodlands, and twelve other community hall facilities located in Three Rivers. There is a heavy concentration of community facilities in Abbots Langley through a mixture of council and parish council ownership.

The main facility in the village, Abbots Langley Community Centre, is earmarked for refurbishment which is being managed through a partnership between Abbots Langley Community Centre Management Committee, the land owners, Abbots Langley Parish Council and more recently the Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Village hall provision is generally of a high standard across the District and the facilities generally meet the needs of the local community. In particular, Bedmond Village Hall and Sarratt Village Hall are of a high standard having received significant funding for refurbishment over the last few years.

The majority of community facilities in Three Rivers provide a mixture of social support and interest (classes 3 and 4) and, although there are some community facilities providing social benefit (class 2) for example YMCA Woodlands, there are not yet any multi functional facilities (one stop shops) providing the majority of ACRE classes on one site.

In order to increase the sustainability of village hall provision, it is worth considering the benefits of increasing the social benefit to these facilities (class 2). This may include increasing 'drop in' services, advice and counselling services, adult education, and health services/clinics etc.

### ***Council facilities***

TRDC currently owns three community facilities across the District, all managed by local trusts and committees:

- ☐ Croxley Green Community Centre.
- ☐ Hillside Hall.
- ☐ YMCA Woodlands.
- ☐ Bullsland Hall.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Abbots Langley Area**

It appears that there is a high concentration of community facilities within the village of Abbots Langley. The Parish Council believes there is probably over provision of community halls. However, this is not to say that these are all adequately meeting the needs of the community. In fact the audit and consultation rated Abbots Langley Community Centre as poor quality. Consultation indicated that the facility does not adequately meet the needs of the users due to damp issues, heating problems and the hall is apparently too small for many activities requested.

This analysis area is split in half by the M25 motorway. Bedmond Village Hall adequately services the population of the northern area. However, it is also serviced by Kings Langley in Dacorum, where there is one community centre and one village hall.

Abbots Langley Parish Council has just completed a 'halls review'. It is concerned that the halls in its ownership do not currently operate at a profit. Through improved facility management and increased promotion of use of the halls this it aims to achieve this in the next three years.

Abbots Langley Area contains the following facilities:

<b>Facility name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Main hall capacity</b>	<b>Sports users</b>	<b>ACRE Class</b>
Ticknall Village Hall			Ticknall Village Hall	
Sutton on the Hill Village Hall			Sutton on the Hill Village Hall	
Milton Village Hall			Milton Village Hall	
Reoton Village Hall			Reoton Village Hall	
Abbots Langley Community Centre	Poor quality. Managed by a community association. Main hall with good storage and basic kitchen facility. Is booked at peak times. Some security issues i.e. lack of lighting in the car park.	80	Evergreen Indoor Bowls Club. Tai Kwon Do. Judo Club.	3 & 4
Bedmond Village Hall	Good quality. Owned and managed by charitable trust. Built in 2000. Well used but not always booked to capacity. Some issues with youth club users and damage to the facility. Good range of users including sports clubs.	120	Bedmond Table Tennis Club.	3, 4 & 5
Hillside Hall	Adequate quality. Owned by TRDC and managed by parish council. Main hall only. General decorative refurbishment required – dated exterior not attractive	120	Judo Club. Martial Arts Club.	3, 4 & 5

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Facility name	Description	Main hall capacity	Sports users	ACRE Class
	for users.			
Henderson Hall	Adequate quality. Managed by trust. Main hall, meeting room and kitchen facility. General decorative refurbishment required.	120	None.	3, 4 & 5
Manor Lodge	Adequate quality. Owned and managed by parish council. Small facility in need of general redecoration. Used for local clubs and groups for meetings.	30	None.	4
Manor House	Good quality. Owned and managed by parish council. Attached to the changing facility for football/cricket pitches. Used for party/function hire only.	120	None.	5
YMCA Woodlands	Provides a variety of social and recreation facilities and is an active partner in pursuing the need for additional sports facilities in Abbots Langley.	-	-	2, 3 & 4

### *Condition of buildings*

The condition of the buildings in the area varies. Bedmond Village Hall is of high quality following a rebuild. However, in comparison Abbots Langley Community Centre is of poor quality. There are problems with damp and damage to the roof and realistically needs a replacement. The majority of buildings conform to DDA legislation.

### *Use of buildings*

There is a fairly versatile range of users within the community facilities in the area. However, the majority of these facilities do cater for young people either through pre school activities or through a youth club. Abbots Langley Community Centre has a good range of local sports clubs using the facility. Centre representatives believe that, although the facility is rated as poor quality, the large storage in the main hall still makes this a popular facility.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Chorleywood Area***

The Parish of Chorleywood is situated in the south west corner of Hertfordshire alongside the Buckinghamshire border. This area is well serviced by community facilities providing a good range of meeting space and sporting activities.

Chorleywood Area contains the following facilities:

<b>Facility name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Main hall capacity</b>	<b>Sports users</b>	<b>ACRE Class</b>
Ticknall Village Hall			Ticknall Village Hall	
Sutton on the Hill Village Hall			Sutton on the Hill Village Hall	
Milton Village Hall			Milton Village Hall	
Reoton Village Hall			Reoton Village Hall	
Bullsland Hall	Adequate quality. Owned by TRDC. The hall is run by a management committee from the Chorleywood Tenants and Leaseholders Association. In need of disabled facilities and kitchen extension to meet demand. Not booked to capacity. Currently has bookings for toddler sessions, bridge club and children's parties. Also provides meals on wheels service. Grant received from TRDC to refurbish.	40	None	2 - 5
Florence Brown Hall	Adequate quality. Attached to the Baptist Church is only used occasionally as a meeting room.	-	None	5
Hollybush Hall	Good quality. Hollybush Golf Club, which had premises behind the War Memorial Hall decided to amalgamate with the Chorleywood Golf Club and has handed its building to the Parish Council. This small village hall is available for lettings for small gatherings i.e. music lessons and meetings.	40	None	4 & 5
War Memorial Hall	Good quality. Owned by the Parish Council. Opened in 1922. It has a wide variety of regular village activities including dog training, WI, antique fares and indoor bowls. Horticultural shows, dog shows, jumble sales, theatre school and private functions all make full use of its facilities. The Committee has set in motion plans for maintenance and	220	Badminton Indoor bowls	3, 4 & 5

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY

## INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Facility name	Description	Main hall capacity	Sports users	ACRE Class
	improvements to the Hall. Theatre facilities are available and also a fully fitted kitchen.			

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Condition of buildings*

All facilities are rated as either adequate or good quality, basic redecoration is required in some facilities. TRDC is investing approximately £100,000 to refurbish Bullsland Hall.

### *Use of buildings*

There is a good range of users within the facilities, servicing ACRE classes 2 through to 5. In particular, Bullsland Hall provides a 'meals on wheels' service increases its ACRE classification to 2 (social benefit).

### **Croxley Green Area**

Croxley Green is located close to Watford and is serviced by a range of facilities in its neighbouring local authority and links well by main road and public transport. It is principally a residential area and in order to adequately service the needs of the local community, TRDC provides Croxley Green Community Centre, the only community facility in this analysis area.

Croxley Green Area provides the following facilities:

Facility name	Description	Main hall capacity	Sports users	ACRE Class
Croxley Green Community Centre	Adequate quality. Leased to Croxley Green Community Association. Main hall facility with bar.	120	Evergreen Bowls Club. Amber School of Dance.	3, 4 & 5

### *Condition of building*

The condition of the building is rated as adequate quality by the Manager. Some redecoration work has been recently completed and no major refurbishment work was identified.

### *Use of building*

There is a fairly basic range of users within the facility servicing ACRE classes 4 and 5 only. The Community Centre reports no additional demand for use. Its main user is currently Amber School of Dance. The range of users could be extended to include more sports club users. The hall provides activities geared towards the social interest class and allows private function hire. The facility has plenty of daytime availability.



## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Rickmansworth Area***

As the main settlement area in Three Rivers there is only one community facility servicing the area.

Rickmansworth Area provides the following facilities:

Facility name	Description	Main hall capacity	Sports users	ACRE Class
Mill End & District Community Centre	Adequate quality. Old school building. Community Association leases the attached social club and gain income from the lease to balance the Community Centre losses. General interior redecoration required.	80	None.	3, 4 & 5

### ***Condition of building***

The condition of the building is rated as adequate to meet the needs of the community by the Manager. Although the building conforms to DDA legislation, some improvements could be made. As an old school building, the interior is somewhat dated and although fit for purpose, general redecoration and refurbishment is required.

### ***Use of building***

Located in the heart of the community there is a good range of users, including a popular parent and toddler group. The facility generally services ACRE classes 3, 4 and 5. This is an ideal site to further develop use of the centre as providing ACRE class 2 (social benefit), which could include delivery of advice, aid and services to the local community.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Sarratt Area**

As the most rural of the analysis areas in the District, the village of Sarratt is an isolated village that often relies on the provision of such community facilities for both social interest and support. Sarratt Village Hall is the main community facility servicing the area, which geographically is large but only has a population of around 2,000.

Sarratt Area provides the following facilities:

Facility name	Description	Main hall capacity	Sports users	ACRE Class
Sarratt Village Hall	Good quality facility. Refurbished and partly rebuilt in 2000. Provides main hall with adaptable stage, theatrical lighting and curtains.	200	Sarratt Table Tennis Club.	3, 4 & 5
Sarratt Baptist Church Hall	Small basic facility with kitchen. Provides parent and toddler group and is available for party/function hire.	50	None.	4 & 5

### *Condition of buildings*

The condition of the buildings is good. All buildings conform to DDA legislation. Sarratt Village Hall had a major refurbishment in 2000 and now provides high quality facilities for the local community. Facility representatives believe there is further demand for increasing the capacity of the Hall to have two more rooms.

### *Use of buildings*

The two facilities complement each other and between them, offer a broad variety of activities from music festivals to parent and toddler groups. A youth club is due to start at the Village Hall. The local theatre group uses the facility on a regular basis and attracts members from all over the District. Facility representatives report that there is demand for an IT suite to be provided in the Village and in particular from the Youth Club. This could be linked in to usage of the building for further social benefit delivery of adult education programmes/classes, increasing its ACRE classification.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Watford Rural Area***

Although included in more detailed in the leisure facility section of this report, The Centre is the main community facility in this area. This relatively new facility was opened two years ago to replace the old community centre on the same site and a youth centre in the area. It is currently managed by TRDC. It acts as both a sports centre and community centre and provides a good range of facilities for the local community.

With the greatest population, this area has two other community facilities. Some of the population is also serviced by facilities in neighbouring Watford.

Watford Rural Area provides the following facilities:

<b>Facility name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Main hall capacity</b>	<b>Sports users</b>	<b>ACRE Class</b>
Watford Rural Parish Hall	Good quality. A number of meeting rooms available for hire for meetings and some exercise classes.	-	None	
All Saints Centre	Part of the Church and hires facilities for meetings only. ASCEND (All Saints Centre for Employment and New Directions) works with people who are over 20 years of age and are unemployed. It offers a number of free courses and provides a free creche. ASCEND run courses through West Herts College to improve on Basic Skills. They also give advice and help to stop young people sleeping on the streets.	-	None	

### *Use of buildings*

The two smaller facilities only provide meeting room space and it is provision at The Centre that really provides the majority of community facilities to service this area. Community facilities include:

- ☐ Fitness suite (48 stations).
- ☐ Sports hall (2 badminton courts).
- ☐ Ancillary hall (1 badminton court).
- ☐ Dance studio.
- ☐ Aerobics studio.
- ☐ Art room.
- ☐ Crèche.
- ☐ Music suite with recording studio.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The facility mix was designed as such after much consultation with local people and focuses on provided the right type of community facilities for local people. Centre representatives believe that local resident perceptions of the Centre are that it is a sports facility for young people, especially given that the two resident groups are primarily aimed at this age group (Theatre School and Youth Club). However, this is not necessarily reflected in the user information, which shows a broad range of users of the site.

### *Condition of buildings*

The condition of the two smaller community buildings is adequate. All buildings conform to DDA legislation. Being a relatively new facility, The Centre is of good quality but has suffered from some vandalism.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

### **4.2 Scoring Mechanism – quantitative summary**

The scoring mechanism has been run for community facilities using the overall community facility mathematical prioritisation model for the District. All facilities, regardless of management have been included. It is intended to be a supplement for qualitative local assessment and evaluation.

The priority attached to community facilities across the District is as follows:

<b>Three Rivers Community Centres</b>	<b>Analysis area</b>	<b>Total score</b>	<b>% Total score</b>	<b>Priority Rank</b>
Abbotts Langley Community Centre	Abbotts Langley	38.39	47.99%	<b>9</b>
Croxley Green Community Centre	Croxley Green	45.10	56.37%	<b>4</b>
Mill End & District Community Centre	Rickmansworth	36.15	45.19%	<b>10</b>
Woodlands YMCA	Abbotts Langley	42.97	53.71%	<b>5</b>
Hillside Hall	Abbotts Langley	40.60	50.75%	<b>7</b>
Henderson Hall	Abbotts Langley	39.16	48.96%	<b>8</b>
Manor House	Abbotts Langley	41.53	51.92%	<b>6</b>
Bedmond Village Hall	Abbotts Langley	27.79	34.74%	<b>11</b>
Sarratt Village Hall	Sarratt	22.20	27.75%	<b>14</b>
All Saints Centre (Ascend)	Watford Rural	67.16	83.95%	<b>3</b>
Watford Rural Parish Hall	Watford Rural	73.29	91.61%	<b>1</b>
Florence Brown Hall	Chorleywood	23.69	29.62%	<b>12</b>
Bullsland Hall	Chorleywood	17.78	22.22%	<b>16</b>
Hollybush Hall	Chorleywood	23.34	29.18%	<b>13</b>
War Memorial Hall	Chorleywood	21.92	27.40%	<b>15</b>
The Centre	Watford Rural	68.29	85.37%	<b>2</b>

### ***Scoring criteria summary***

Watford Rural Parish Hall scores the highest within the scoring criteria indicating its potential importance to the category agendas. The other facilities in Watford Rural: The Centre and All Saints Centre also feature highly in the ranking for community facilities.

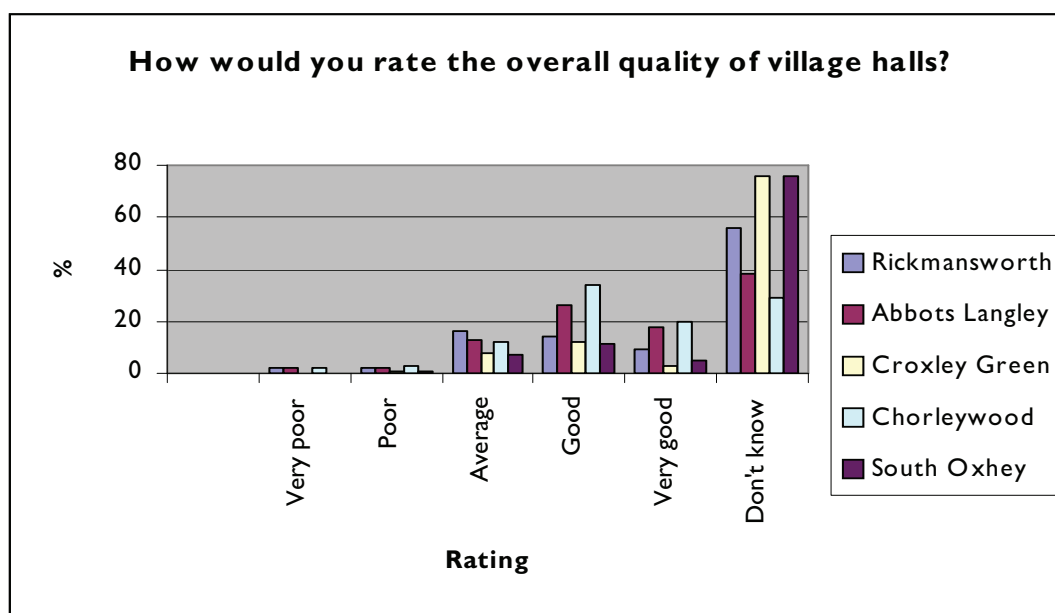
Croxley Green Community Centre is also high up and is important as it was identified that the range of users could be extended to include more sports club users and the facility has plenty of daytime availability.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## 4.3 Street survey results

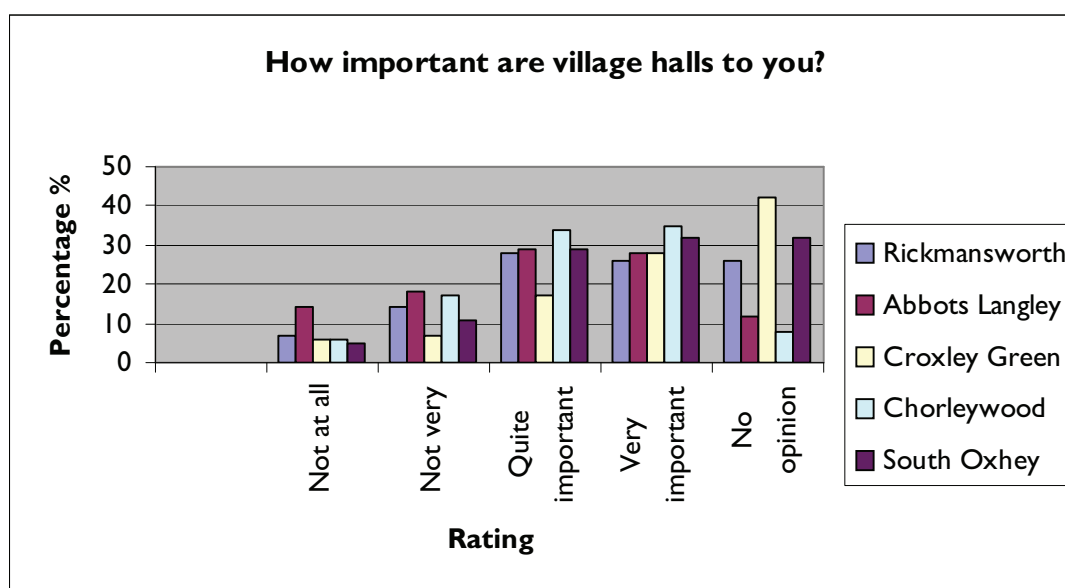
The street survey was conducted using the methodology identified in Section One of this report. The following results provide an insight into the needs and opinions of the Three Rivers population.

Figure 1: Quality of village halls



In total, 13% of respondents rated the quality of village halls as either good or very good and only 1% rated the quality as either poor or very poor.

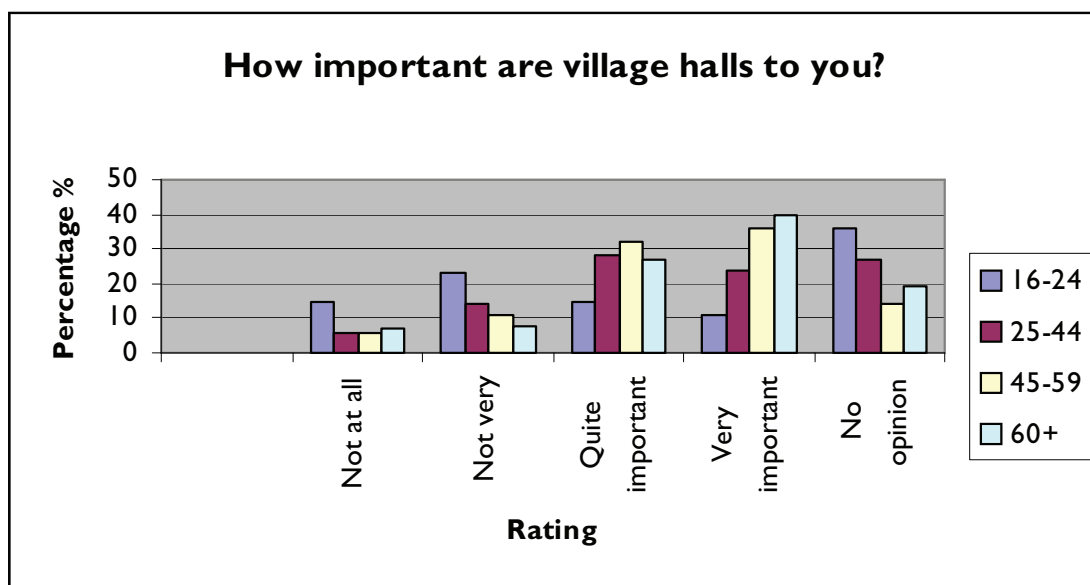
Figure 2: Importance of village halls:



## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

Of those respondents that said village halls were not important to them, 52% said this was because of mobility difficulties, although this wasn't an issue in Abbots Langley and 27% said it was because they were uninterested.

Figure 3: Importance of village halls:

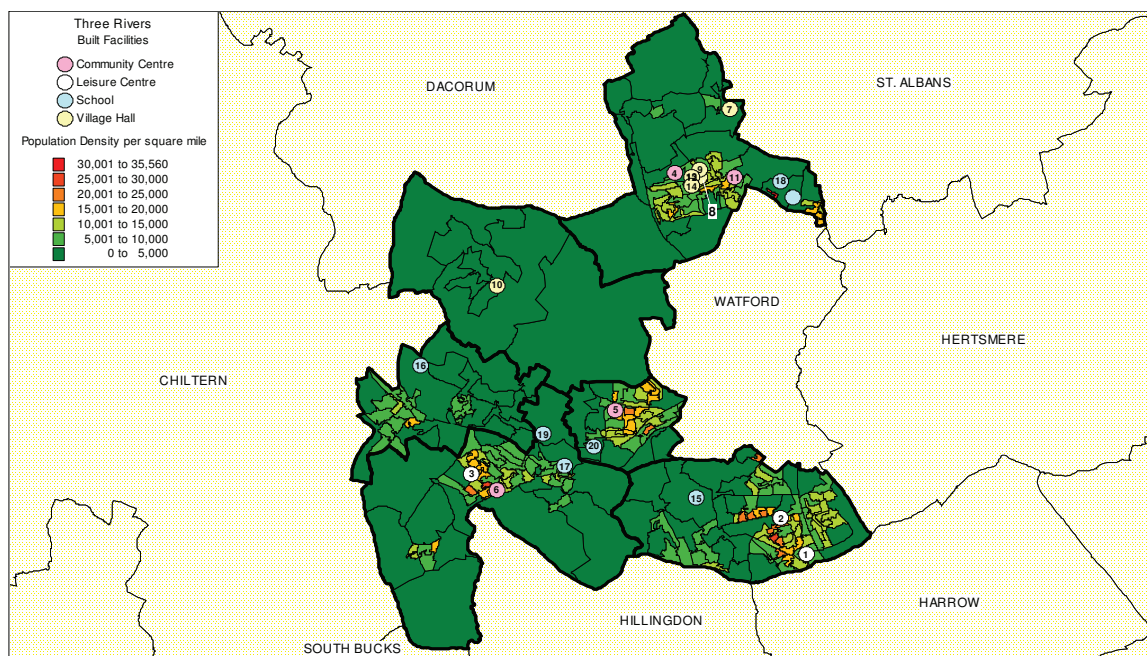


Village hall facilities appear to be very important to those aged 60+. These facilities appear to be significantly less important to those aged 16 - 24. This is in comparison to the importance of leisure facilities for those respondents aged 60+ where these facilities were rated with low importance.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART FIVE: SUMMARY OF PROVISION

*Distribution of all indoor facilities within Three Rivers mapped against population density:*



Id	Site	Type	Id	Site	Type
1	Sir James Altham	Leisure facility	14	St Michaels Catholic High School	School
2	The Centre	Leisure & Community facility	15	Merchant Taylor School	Private School
3	William Penn Leisure Centre	Leisure facility	16	St Clement Danes School	School
4	Abbotts Langley Community Centre	Community facility	17	St Joan of Arc School	School
5	Croxley Green Community Centre	Community facility	18	Parmiters School	School
6	Mill End & District Community Centre	Community facility	19	Royal Masonic Girls School	Private School
7	Bedmond Village Hall	Community facility	20	Rickmansworth School	School
8	Hillside Hall	Community facility	21	All Saints Centre (Ascend)	Community facility
9	Henderson Hall	Community facility	22	Watford Rural Parish Hall	Community facility
10	Sarratt Village Hall	Community facility	24	Florence Brown Hall	Community facility
11	Woodlands YMCA	Community Centre	25	Bullsland Hall	Community facility
12	Manor Lodge	Community facility	26	Hollybush Hall	Community facility
13	Manor House	Community facility	27	War Memorial Hall	Community facility



# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY

## INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 5.1 SUMMARY OF ISSUES

#### Leisure facilities

##### *William Penn Leisure Centre*

- ❑ Refurbishment of site already agreed by TRDC.
- ❑ There are no competitive swim clubs based at the Centre. Clubs are being inhibited by the size and quality of the pool, which currently inhibits galas and competitive use. With the popularity of the 'Learn to Swim' programme, the manager believes there is demand for a club to provide an exit route for swimmers.
- ❑ KKP would suggest that any refurbishment considers amalgamating the fitness provision for greater efficiency in terms of staffing issues and user satisfaction.
- ❑ The manager reports some unmet demand for martial arts.
- ❑ KKP believes there could be better borough wide marketing/advertising.

#### *Education*

- ❑ Large provider of community facilities. Two large private schools with extensive facilities well used by the community. Improvements to programming identified at Parmiters and St Clement Danes to increase community use or provide a more balanced programme of use.
- ❑ Three secondary schools with no sports hall provision all reported curricular demand for a sports hall.

#### *Sports specific*

- ❑ It was reported that basketball and netball is cost prohibitive in Three Rivers, particularly at school sites. Officers believe it is true of facilities in Three Rivers that some are not prepared to hire out whole courts to clubs or it is too expensive.
- ❑ There is currently no competitive gymnastics club operating in Three Rivers. TRDC sports development officers suggest that there is some demand. The Centre manager also reports demand for a gymnastics club. The manager reports demand for gymnastics provision in the area. Sapphire Gymnastics School in Hemel Hempstead reports that a number of its members travel from Three Rivers.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

- ❑ KKP would suggest that there is a lack of competitive squash being played in the District, especially given the number of courts being provided (10 courts).

### ***Sports halls***

- ❑ Any increase in quality or quantity of sports hall provision at Merchant Taylor School would further benefit provision of competitive facilities within its catchment area.. TRDC would have to work closely with the School to achieve this.

### ***Swimming pools***

- ❑ South of the District is well serviced by swimming pool provision. However, the North appears to have a gap in provision but due to provision in neighbouring Watford and potential provision at Watford leisure Centre, KKP believes demand is being met in this area. However this is not to say that current facilities do not require improvements. In fact KKP identified demand for learner pools at both TRDC sites.
- ❑ With the popularity of the 'Learn to Swim' programme at William Penn, there is identified demand for a learner pool to be added to the facility.
- ❑ The 'Learn to Swim' programme is delivered by Sir James Altham has a constant waiting list of 300 – 400. It was identified that there is high demand for provision of a learner pool in order to free time in the main pool for additional public swimming.
- ❑ Aqua Bats is the resident swim club (recreational only) operated by Sir James Altham Pool and hires the facility for six hours per week but reports demand for additional pool time of two hours per week.

### ***Fitness***

- ❑ Although there appears to be good fitness coverage across the District, much of the provision has accessibility issues i.e. school sites, where membership options and opening times are limited or private sites with expensive membership for example The Grove.
- ❑ KKP did not identify any middle range private fitness providers for example Fitness First or Cannons in the District. This could be explored as further provision in the Croxley Green area.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Community facilities

- ❑ Abbots Langley Community Centre was identified as poor quality and not currently meeting the needs of the community. In need of major refurbishment and possible rebuild.
- ❑ Requirement for improved facility management and increased promotion of use of the halls in Abbots Langley.
- ❑ KKP identified that Croxley Green Community Centre programming could be improved to increase capacity and meet the needs of the community further.
- ❑ Mill End and District Community Centre was identified as an ideal site to further develop use of the centre to include delivery of advice, aid and services to the local community.

### Summary of Shortfall

Sufficient evidence was identified during consultation to suggest that there is a shortfall of the following:

Facility	Analysis area	Size
William Penn Leisure Centre	Rickmansworth Area	Learner pool
Sir James Altham Pool	Watford Rural Area	Learner pool
Swimming pool	Abbots Langley Area	25m x 4 lanes
Community Centre	Abbots Langley Area	Replacement

This is based on:

- ❑ A quantitative element (how much new provision is required).
- ❑ A qualitative element (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities).
- ❑ An accessibility element (distance thresholds and barriers associated with cost of using a facility).

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## **APPENDIX ONE: strategy & action plan**

The identified shortfall above will be addressed within the Strategy and Action Plan document and will be produced following the 'sign off' of this document. It will also address a number of refurbishment options also relating to maintaining current usage at sites that have been considered of poor quality. It will include:

- ❑ Aims and objectives.
- ❑ Targets.
- ❑ Summary of demand from the Assessment Report.
- ❑ Development of standards.
- ❑ Action plans.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## GLOSSARY

DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh & Page
LAs	Local authorities
LEA	Local education authority
LTS	Learn to Swim
NGBs	National governing bodies of sport
PCT	Primary care trust
SE	Sport England
TRDC	Three Rivers District Council
PPG17	Planning Policy Guidance 17
WBC	Watford Borough Council

# **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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## **PART I. INTRODUCTION**

This is the Strategy and Action Plan for indoor facilities in Three Rivers. It includes community halls and indoor sports facilities, e.g. sports halls and swimming pools. This Strategy has been developed from research and analysis of the provision and use of indoor facilities for sport and active recreation within Three Rivers. It follows an Assessment Report, which considers supply and demand issues.

Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) Planning Department commissioned the study in September 2004. The principal research was carried out by KKP between October 2004 and February 2005. This report sits alongside strategy and action plans, which cover open spaces and outdoor sport and recreation facilities. Collectively the reports make up the District Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

The Strategy sets out a vision for the next five years in relation to the provision and improvement of indoor facilities for sport and active recreation. The Action Plan recommends a number of high priority projects for the District, which should be worked towards between 2005-2015. It should be recognised that the Strategy and Action Plan is outlined to provide a framework for improvement of facilities.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## PART 2. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FROM THE ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Leisure facilities

#### *William Penn Leisure Centre*

- ❑ Refurbishment of site already agreed by TRDC.
- ❑ Demand identified through the 'Learn to Swim' programme. Requirement for a learner pool to allow for its further development.
- ❑ Refurbishment should consider amalgamating the fitness provision for greater efficiency in terms of staffing issues and user satisfaction.
- ❑ The manager reports some unmet demand for martial arts.
- ❑ District wide marketing/advertising requires improvement.

### Education

- ❑ Large provider of community facilities. Two large private schools with extensive facilities well used by the community. Improvements to programming identified at Parmiters and St Clement Danes to increase community use or provide a more balanced programme of use.
- ❑ Four secondary schools with no sports hall provision all reported curricular demand for access to a sports hall: Francis Combe, St Michaels, St Joan of Arc and Kings Langley. Rickmansworth School also report demand for increased indoor provision.

### Sports specific

- ❑ It was reported by clubs and governing body representatives that basketball and netball can be cost prohibitive in Three Rivers, particularly at school sites (this is not uncommon across the country). Consultation highlighted that in some facilities it is difficult to hire out whole courts to clubs, usually due to it being too expensive. This is because it is often more cost effective for the facility to hire split courts for sports such as badminton.
- ❑ There is currently no competitive gymnastics club operating in Three Rivers. TRDC sports development officers suggest that there is some demand. Representatives from The Centre in South Oxhey also reports demand for gymnastics provision in the area. Sapphire Gymnastics School in Hemel Hempstead reports that a number of its members travel from Three Rivers.
- ❑ There appears to be a lack of competitive squash being played in the District given the number of courts being provided (10 courts). However, it is difficult to quantify this as demand because the majority of courts are located at private school sites with minimal community use. No specific unmet demand was expressed from our sites or clubs.



## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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### ***Sports halls***

- ❑ Any increase in quality or quantity of sports hall provision at Merchant Taylor School would further benefit provision of competitive facilities within its catchment area. TRDC would have to work closely with the School to achieve this.

### ***Swimming pools***

- ❑ The South of the District is well serviced by swimming pool provision. Although, the North appears to have a gap in provision, provision in neighbouring Watford and potential provision at Watford Leisure Centre, would cater for demand in this area. However this is not to say that current facilities do not require improvements.
- ❑ The 'Learn to Swim' programme delivered at both William Penn Leisure Centre and Sir James Altham Pool has constant waiting lists of 300 – 400. It was identified that there is high demand for provision of a learner pools at both sites in order to free time in the main pool for additional public swimming.
- ❑ Aqua Bats is the resident swim club (recreational only) at Sir James Altham Pool and hires the facility for six hours per week but reports demand for additional pool time of two hours per week.

### ***Fitness***

- ❑ Although there appears to be good fitness coverage across the District, much of the provision has accessibility issues i.e. school sites, where membership options and opening times are limited or private sites with expensive membership e.g. The Grove.
- ❑ No middle range private fitness providers such as Fitness First or Cannons were identified in the District. This could be explored as further provision is required in the Croxley Green area.

### ***Community facilities***

- ❑ Abbots Langley Community Centre was identified as poor quality and not currently meeting the needs of the community. It is in need of major refurbishment and possible rebuild.
- ❑ There is a requirement for improved facility management and increased promotion of use of the halls in Abbots Langley.
- ❑ Programming at Croxley Green Community Centre could be improved to increase capacity and meet the needs of the community further.
- ❑ Mill End and District Community Centre was identified as an ideal site to further develop use of the Centre to include delivery of advice, aid and services to the local community.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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### Street Survey

- ❑ A high percentage of respondents didn't know the quality of Village Halls or Leisure Centres. This could suggest a lack of use by respondents.
- ❑ Those respondents that don't go to Village Halls stated that it was either because of mobility issues or they were uninterested.
- ❑ Village Halls are very important to 60+ and less important to 16 – 24 age groups. This could suggest less usage by younger people.
- ❑ Leisure Centres are very important to 16 – 24 age group and less important to 60+. This could suggest less usage by older people.
- ❑ The results showed a lack of Leisure Centre usage in Abbots Langley (37%). This may be as a result of a lack of facilities in the area.

### Summary of shortfall

Sufficient evidence was identified during consultation to suggest that there is a shortfall of the following:

Facility	Analysis area	Size
William Penn Leisure Centre	Rickmansworth Area	Learner pool
Sir James Altham Pool	Watford Rural Area	Learner pool
Swimming pool	Abbots Langley Area	25m x 4 lanes
Community Centre	Abbots Langley Area	Replacement

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## PART 3. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR BUILT FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

### Introduction

The following section provides a framework for Three Rivers District Council and partners to maintain and improve the indoor sport and recreation facilities within the District. It links closely with the themes outlined in TRDC's Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008. Four themes have been set by the Council:

- ❑ Safer communities.
- ❑ Sustainable communities.
- ❑ Prosperous communities.
- ❑ Healthy communities.

TRDC, through this report, recognises that the development of sport and the linked development of its facilities is fundamental to its vision for the District. This Strategy will only make a difference if it is tailored to the requirements of the communities that it is designed to serve. It must, given the Council's pivotal role, recognise and reflect corporate aims and objectives. To this end, it acknowledges key 'cross-cutting' issues such as lifelong learning, health and social inclusion and encourages the pursuit of local priorities within regional and national contexts.

### ***The Strategy supports a number of statutory, corporate and wider objectives:***

- ❑ *Three Rivers Community Strategy* concentrates itself on creating healthy, prosperous, safe and sustainable communities. A number of priorities have been identified including increasing physical activity amongst young people.
- ❑ *TRDC Corporate Plan (2005-2008)* highlights the Council's aims to balance its efforts between delivering good services, safeguarding the well being of all and reducing inequalities of access to services.
- ❑ *Three Rivers Local Plan* sets out a development strategy for the plan area and contains all land use policies and proposals needed for the future development of the plan area for the period up to 2011. In relation to sport and leisure:
  - Provide sport and leisure opportunities to meet the needs of the local community.
  - Promote increased multi-purpose use of existing facilities.
  - Protect environment from adverse effects of leisure activities.
- ❑ The revision of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 'Sport, Open Space and Recreation'* (Consultation Paper) requirement for local planning authorities to carry out robust assessments of need and policies for the protection/provision of new facilities.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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- ❑ *The Department of Culture, Media & Sport 'Game Plan' 2002* requirement for a major increase in participation in sport and physical activity and a sustainable improvement in success in international competition.
- ❑ *Saving Lives – Our Healthier Nation* This Government White Paper was published in 1999 with the stated aim of improving the 'health of the nation'. Targets are set to improve health across the Country. This is to be achieved via joint work between health organisations, local authorities and local people. National targets are set to improve services and health by 2010.
- ❑ *National framework for sport* - The Framework for sport signals a new way of working through partnerships to deliver a shared vision for sport. It sets out a vision for sport in England – *to be the most active and the most successful sporting nation in the world*. It is a vision shared by all of sport. The commitment is to refine and review priorities on a regular basis.
- ❑ *Sport England* is the national agency driving sports development. Its stated future role is to be the strategic lead for sport in England. The Regional Plans for Sport have set a target of making England an active nation by 2020 by achieving 1% increase in participation in sport and physical activity annually with the objective of achieving at least 50% of the population playing sport by 2020.

# THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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## **PART 4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The following aim and objectives have been developed as a result of the identified key issues within the Assessment Report. They link closely to the Council's corporate objectives by highlighting the aims to balance its efforts between delivering good services, safeguarding the well being of all and reducing inequalities of access to services.

### **4.1 Aim**

*'TRDC aims to provide, or have assisted in the provision of an appropriate distribution and range of good quality, accessible leisure facilities with balanced programming, which will provide opportunities for participation in indoor sports by residents from all sections of the community.'*

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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### **4.2 Strategic objectives**

1. To provide good quality sport and recreation facilities.
2. Provide affordable facilities which are accessible to all sections of the community.
3. New facilities will only be provided or supported if they contribute to the appropriate distribution of facilities.
4. Increase access to indoor sports facilities:
  - Locate any new sites near public transport hubs.
  - Increase public transport links to larger sites, especially at weekends and throughout the summer.
  - Increase partnerships with local education authority sites i.e. schools.
  - Further support schools to maximise the availability of community space for both sport and recreation activities.
  - To meet identified gaps in demand.
5. Support schools, community groups and sports clubs in providing balanced programming within non TRDC facilities.
6. Ensure provision of accessible leisure facilities:
  - Residents should have access to good quality leisure centres within at least a 15 minute drive time (Sport England guidelines) catchment of the settlement area.
  - Residents should have access to good quality community facilities within at least a 1-2 km catchment.
7. Develop facilities that function as a catalyst for community participation in a range of activities that contribute to the social life and well being of the community. Increase the quality of life and health of Three Rivers residents.
8. Market leisure centres and community facilities to enhance public awareness.
9. Fully DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant facilities to be achieved by 2007.
10. To use the results from the street survey to further develop services according to the needs of the residents of Three Rivers.

## **THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

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### **4.3 Management objectives**

A number of management objectives should be implemented to enable the above strategic objectives to be delivered. They include:

1. Within a phased programme, improve the quality of indoor sports facilities including their ancillary facilities such as car parking.
2. Use development opportunities and consult with the sporting community, local residents, parish councils and management committees to identify facility need and increase and/or improve the existing in line with the findings of the Assessment Report.
3. Develop a general framework to enable specific management committees and parish councils, where needs have been identified, to implement development proposals.
4. Strive to ensure that where sites may be lost, through development or closure, that facilities of the same or improved standard are provided to meet the continued needs of residents.
5. Work with and assist partner agencies (such as Hertfordshire County Council) to provide usable, accessible and viable community buildings and leisure centres.
6. Provide assistance and support to those facilities that have yet to meet DDA requirements and seek to ensure that facilities are accessible to all residents.
7. Strive to ensure that there is a clearly identified community and sporting need for development of new facilities with minimal displacement of usage from other sites.
8. Ensure that all new or replacement of facilities is developed to meet minimum contemporary specifications in the context of length, breadth, lighting, floor spaces etc. as set out by Sport England.
9. Develop written agreements for provision of new facilities located on school sites to ensure appropriate levels of usage to all sections of the community.
10. Continue to gather the views and opinions of local residents in a rolling five year programme of survey work.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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### PART 5. TARGETS

A number of targets have been produced and should be implemented to enable the policy objectives to be delivered. It is recommended that TRDC adopt these to enable it to achieve the Strategy's aims and objectives.

#### TARGET 1 – *link to objective 1*

Adopt a provision hierarchy, which enables resources to be targeted at sites of strategic importance on a local and district-wide level for the refurbishment and development of new facilities. (KKP to provide)

#### TARGET 2 – *link to objective 8*

Linked to an overall marketing plan, invest in further promotional activity to raise the awareness of facilities and activities in particular to disadvantaged communities.

Improve the quality of signage advertising facilities on a borough wide basis.

Encourage other facility providers, i.e. schools to increase awareness of facility access.

#### TARGET 3 – *link to objective 9*

Support the management committees/schools/sports centres in ensuring that all new built facilities must meet DDA guidelines, and existing facilities to make reasonable adjustments to meet with DDA legislation. Support those village halls, in gaining funding, if required, to upgrade buildings to meet with DDA requirements.

#### TARGET 4 – *link to objective 4*

Where new sports facilities are provided at school sites, encourage greater accessibility. Increase car parking to withstand both curricular and community usage of the site. Changing rooms to be located close to the sports facilities.

#### TARGET 5 - *link to objective 6*

Work with the management committees of community buildings and school facilities to provide balanced programme for all sections of the community.

#### TARGET 6 – *link to objective 3*

Where appropriate support schools, community groups and sports clubs in the provision of appropriately distributed facilities.

#### TARGET 7 - *link to objective 1*

Continue building partnerships with neighbouring local authorities playing a critical role in providing facilities to service areas of Three Rivers, particularly in relation to the Abbots Langley area.



## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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### TARGET 8 – *link to objective 2*

Compare and contrast the pricing policies of the different facilitators within Three Rivers and neighbouring authorities to make informed decisions about affordability of facilities for all sections of the community. Encourage schools with community use to provide better value for money.

### TARGET 9 – *link to objective 6 and 7*

To provide learner pools at TRDC leisure centres to meet facility identified shortfalls and continued development of the District's 'Learn to Swim' programme at William Penn Leisure Centre and Sir James Altham Pool.

### TARGET 10 – *link to objective 7*

To encourage provision of 'community gyms'. Most appropriately these could be provided at school sites with the relevant support.

Develop further relationships with partners such as the Primary Care Trust (PCT) for provision of GP referral schemes.

### TARGET 11 – *link to objective 4 and 6*

Detailed community use agreement to be written into planning applications for new sports and leisure facilities, particularly at school sites. This will ensure appropriate community usage of new facilities in line with TRDC policies.

Monitor and update community use agreements of facilities on a yearly basis. Offering guidance and support to facility providers throughout the rest of the year.

## THREE RIVERS OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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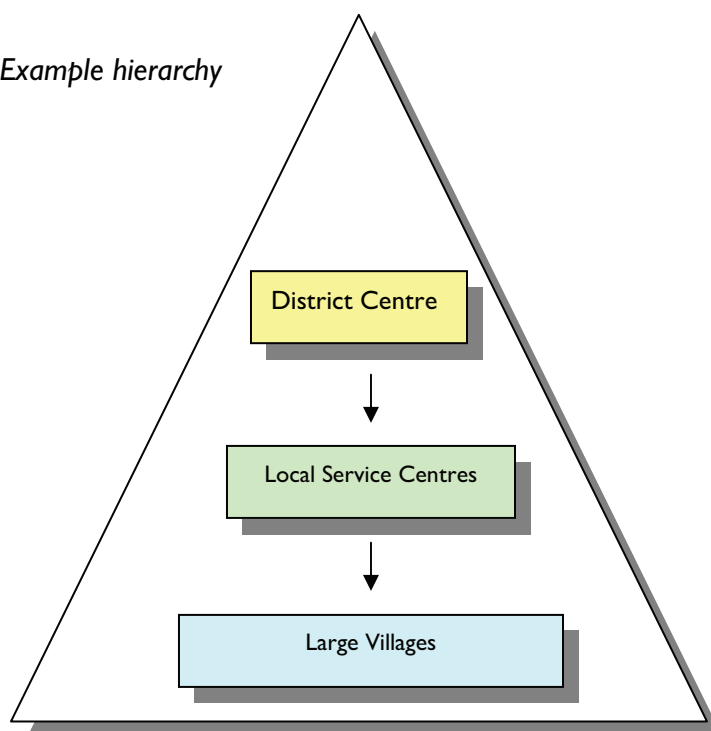
### PART 6. SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

In relation to TARGET 1 - a settlement hierarchy has been created to assist with the strategic creation and investment in indoor sports facility provision. It is recommended that this be adopted by TRDC.

According to PPG17: In rural areas or where some populations are isolated from the main district centre, there can be significant distances between settlements. At the same time it is rarely possible for every settlement to have its own school, post office, general store, village hall and recreation ground. This gives rise to the concept of 'settlement hierarchy' in which some forms of provision are concentrated in a limited number of 'key settlements' but intended to serve several settlements.

Three different levels of settlements have been created for Three Rivers. The largest type of settlement being 'district centre' and the smallest settlement being 'large village'. These levels have been determined by KKP based on the analysis areas used in the Assessment report for mapping as agreed by the steering group and developed following consultation.

*Figure 1: Example hierarchy*



In the case of TRDC, 'district centre' sites should be designated as high priority for investment. TRDC and its partners should secure and commit significant funding to their improvement and work should be carried out in the short-term (next one - three years).

Generally, 'local service centre' sites have the potential to become 'district centre' sites but are often smaller, more localised facilities with more ongoing maintenance required. They should be designated as medium priority for investment. TRDC and

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partners should secure and commit significant funding to their improvement and work should be carried out in the medium-term (within the next four - six years).

‘Large village’ sites are classified as such because infrastructure is already in place or has the potential to be developed further. These may be school sites (local education authority or private). The majority of these sites will require capital investment for improvements. In the case of Council owned sites, TRDC should make a long-term commitment to securing them for sports and recreational use. TRDC and partners should secure and commit some funding to their improvement and/or continued maintenance in the long-term (within the next seven - ten years).

It is appropriate for indoor sport and recreation facilities to provide two separate hierarchies one for community facilities covering village halls and community centres and one for leisure facilities covering the typologies of sports halls, swimming pools, fitness suites and squash courts.

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### 6.1 Hierarchy leisure facilities

The hierarchy for leisure facilities has been defined in the following classifications:

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Settlement areas</b>
District centre	Rickmansworth
Local service centre	Croxley Green, Watford Rural, Abbots Langley
Large village	Chorleywood

It is important to note that Abbots Langley has been classified as a 'local service centre' because although it could also be considered as a 'large village', its geographic position in an isolated area of the District, may justify it for more services of its own or provided in neighbouring boroughs if appropriate.

For each settlement type, minimum provision standards have been set. This is an aspirational hierarchy based on consultation and identification of current and future demand. Included in the size and type of facilities to be provided is the facility shortfall identified within the Assessment Report and detailed at the beginning of this report. TRDC aim to meet these standards by 2015.

These standards are what should be in place within each settlement area by 2015. However, some provision is already in place, for example William Penn Leisure Centre as the 'district' centre but requires some additional facilities to fully meet the standards set, whilst others require new facilities, for example in the Abbots Langley area.

<b>Settlement type</b>	<b>Size and facility type</b>	<b>Requirement needed to meet the standards</b>
District centre <b>(Rickmansworth - William Penn Leisure Centre and Merchant Taylor School)</b>	25 metre, 4 lane swimming pool with learner pool. 4 badminton court sports hall with storage. Fitness suite: 30 - 50 pieces of equipment (CV and resistance). 2 squash courts. Dance studio and dedicated martial arts studio. Ancillary changing facilities including individual and group changing rooms. Cafeteria. Adequate car parking for peak time usage in a safe and secure location adjoining the facility.	Additional lanes required. Learner pool. Dedicated martial arts space.

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Settlement type	Size and facility type	Requirement needed to meet the standards
Local service centre <b>(Watford Rural - Sir James Altham Pool/The Centre)</b> <b>(Croxley Green - Rickmansworth School)</b> <b>(Abbots Langley – not yet identified)</b>	25 metre, 4 lane swimming pool with learner pool. Sports hall with storage. Fitness suite: 20 – 30 pieces of equipment (CV and resistance). Dance studio. Refreshments via vending machines. Adequate number of car parking spaces in a safe and secure location adjoining the facility.	Infrastructure already in place at two sites. Learner pools required at all sites.  New facility required in Abbots Langley or within its catchment area.  Increased sports hall provision at Rickmansworth School.
Large village <b>(Chorleywood – Clement Danes School)</b>	Sports hall to accommodate fitness classes and martial arts activities. Fitness suite: 10 - 20 pieces of equipment (CV and resistance). Car parking available locally.	Lack of fitness facilities available to the community at these sites. No fitness provision at Clement Danes.

### Summary

The proposed settlement hierarchy aims for a balanced spread of provision against population and accessibility. Provision of these facilities does not necessarily have to take the form of TRDC managed/owned facilities but may be provided as the result of developing relationships with neighbouring authorities or external providers through privately managed facilities.

The biggest gap in provision is provision of learner pools at all current TRDC sites. The other significant gap in provision is that of leisure facilities to service the Abbots Langley area.

At the lower end of the scale (large village), some gaps in fitness provision have been identified. These will contribute to the social life and well being of the community by increasing the quality of life and health of Three Rivers residents on a more localised basis. Such provision could incorporate a small sports hall and some fitness provision as identified in the hierarchy. It does not necessarily require new build but could be developed as additional provision in current community facilities.

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### 6.3 Hierarchy of community facilities

The hierarchy for community facilities has been defined in the following classifications:

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Settlement</b>
District centre	Rickmansworth
Local service centre	Croxley Green, Watford Rural, Chorleywood, Abbots Langley
Village	Bedmond, Sarratt

For each settlement type, minimum provision standards have been set. This is an aspirational hierarchy based on consultation and identification of current and future demand. This is very much what TRDC should be aiming to provide by 2015.

TRDC must be cognisant of non-council managed facilities in relation to the further development of the hierarchy for community provision. The majority of facilities, although owned by TRDC, are externally managed by community associations and should be encouraged by the Council to achieve the hierarchy.

The only identified shortfall for community provision is the need for the replacement of Abbots Langley Community Centre. Given that the majority of community facilities are non-council managed facilities the hierarchy is provided as a basis for encouragement in terms of the services provided rather than so much emphasis on facilities.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Size and facilities</b>	<b>Services</b>
District centre <b>Rickmansworth</b> – Mill End & District Community Centre Rickmansworth School?	Four or more rooms with at least one statutory service on site. Complete DDA compliance. No minimum/maximum size of facility. Should reflect identified demand for such facilities in the area. Should provide community, health, education, sports, cultural and play facilities of a high standard. Complementing other specific services e.g. libraries. Adequate car parking for peak time usage in a safe and secure location adjoining the facility.	TRDC services such as a library and customer service centre. Other external partnerships to provide services such as PCT or Connexions. Café. Meeting space and community rooms. Children's play area. Crèche. Youth activity space. Outdoor sports provision. Card access to facility and equipment to track/monitor use (people counter).

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Classification	Size and facilities	Services
Local service centres <b>(Croxley Green</b> – Croxley Green Community Centre) <b>(Watford Rural</b> – The Centre and Watford Rural Parish Hall) <b>(Chorleywood</b> – Bullsland Hall) <b>(Abbots Langley</b> – Abbots Langley Community Centre)	Minimum three rooms. Smaller scale facilities supporting the local community as appropriate depending on the make up of the neighbourhood and identified demand. Complete DDA compliance. Traditional community centre style facilities. Provides a mixture of residential space and room hire.	Community gym specifically aimed at disadvantaged communities. Exercise on Referral and other 'Health' referral routes. May provide some additional complementary services such as café or crèche. Card access to facility and equipment to track/monitor use. (people counter).
Large villages <b>(Bedmond</b> – Bedmond Village Hall) <b>(Sarratt</b> – Sarratt Village Hall)	Generally one meeting space. Very localised facilities, which may be church hall type provision. Usually room hire only.	Generic community space that may be utilised for a number of purposes e.g. art classes, sport and meetings.

### Summary

The hierarchy for community facilities aims to give a balanced spread of provision against population and accessibility. Provision does not have to be in form of TRDC managed/owned facilities but may be provided as the result of developing relationships with parish councils and privately managed facilities.

Three Rivers already has a good physical spread of community hall provision with only one major requirement for rebuild or refurbishment. There is great potential for current facilities to increase sustainability through improvement of services offered as suggested in the hierarchy. This could be implemented at Mill End and District Community Centre as the 'district centre' and also Abbots Langley Community Centre. This facility in particular has been highlighted in consultation as being of poor quality and not currently meeting the needs of the community and in need of major refurbishment and possible rebuild.

As the only major community facility in Rickmansworth, Mill End and District Community Centre naturally becomes the 'district centre' facility. However, it is recognised that this facility does not currently have a catchment area that stretches the whole of Rickmansworth. It may be that facilities such as Rickmansworth School could further develop its community use to increase delivery of the hierarchy in this area.

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## 7. SITE SPECIFIC ACTION PLAN 2005-2015

### 7.1 Criteria to justify the inclusion of sites within the action plan

*The following criteria have been used to identify priorities and justify the inclusion of sites within the action plan.*

- ☐ The area is deficient in the development/enhancement of sites.
- ☐ Sites included within the hierarchy.
- ☐ The site has received a relatively high score via the scoring criteria from within the analysis area.
- ☐ Significant demand has identified for new or improved facilities at the site.
- ☐ The site requires some support to increase awareness of services and facilities available.
- ☐ The site suffers from access problems in terms of safety, poor quality facilities and poor disability provision.

### 7.2 Actions for specific sites:

Site	Priority	Hierarchy	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Link to Objectives
William Penn Leisure Centre	High	District centre	Provide a learner pool. Within the planned refurbishment provide a dedicated martial arts space. Amalgamating the two fitness areas.	TRDC, LC or equivalent management.	Provision of good quality facilities meeting current demand and the needs of the users.  Meet gaps identified within the hierarchy.  To further accommodate and develop the 'Learn to Swim' programme.  Greater efficiency in terms of staffing issues and user satisfaction.	1, 2 and 5



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Site	Priority	Hierarchy	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Link to Objectives
Sir James Altham Pool	Medium	Local service centre	Provide a learner pool on site.	TRDC	Provision of good quality facilities meeting current demand and the needs of the users.  Will allow time in the main pool for additional public swimming and required additional club hours.	1 and 2
Merchant Taylor School	Low		Support increased sports hall provision. Encourage further community use of fitness equipment.  Detailed community use agreement to be written into any planning application, including pricing policies and opening time commitments.  Monitor and update community use agreements on a yearly basis. Offer guidance and support to the providers throughout the rest of the year.	MTS, TRDC	To meet competitive demand for sports hall usage in its catchment area.  Will ensure appropriate community usage of the facilities.	2, 5 and 6
Rickmansworth School	Medium	Local service centre	Increase sports hall provision and consider refurbishment of swimming pool.	RS, LEA, TRDC	Provision of good quality facilities to meet both curricular, extra curricular and community use at this school sports 'hub' site.  Meet gaps identified within the hierarchy.	1, 2 and 5
Watford Leisure Centre	Medium	Local service centre	Support neighbouring authority, WBC, in provision of 'wet' facilities at Watford Leisure Centre.	TRDC, WBC	Meeting current demand and the needs of users from Abbots Langley as expressed during consultation and in the street survey.	2, 5 and 7

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Site	Priority	Hierarchy	Recommended actions	Partnerships	Outcomes	Link to Objectives
Clement Danes School	Low	Large village	Support and encourage the School to increase community use of the sports hall and to provide a balanced programme of use.  Provide and develop a 'community gym' with 10 - 20 pieces of equipment (CV and resistance).	CDS, LEA, TRDC	Increasing accessibility to facilities for a range of sports and users.	2, 5 and 6
Parmiters School	Low	-	Support and encourage the School to increase the variety of community use of the sports hall.  Increase car parking.	PS, LEA, TRDC	Increasing accessibility to facilities for a range of sports and users.	2, 5 and 6
Abbots Langley Community Centre	Medium	Local service centre	Complete refurbishment or replacement or existing facility.	ALCA, TRDC, ALPC, PCT	Provision of good quality facilities meeting current demand and the needs of the users.	1, 8 and 10
Croxley Green	Medium	Local service centre	Encourage provision of a middle of the range private fitness provider such as LA Fitness, Cannons or similar within the Croxley Green area.	TRDC	Increasing accessibility to facilities for a range of sports and users.	2, 5 and 6

Key:

High priority – one to three years

Medium priority – four to six years

Low priority – seven to ten years

### GLOSSARY

TRDC – Three Rivers District Council  
SS – Sportspace  
LC – Leisure Connections  
ALCA – Abbots Langley Community Association

MTS – Merchant Taylor School  
RS – Rickmansworth School  
LEA – Local education authority  
ALPC – Abbots Langley Parish Council

WBC – Watford Borough Council  
CDS – Clement Danes School  
PS – Parmiters School  
PCT – Primary care trust