

Mansfield District Council

Local Plan (2013-2033)

Community Open Space Assessment Non-Technical Summary



May 2018

www.mansfield.gov.uk



Mansfield
District Council



1	About the document	2
2	Summary of key findings	6
3	The Standard	27

1 About the document

Picture 1.1



Introduction

1.1 An increasing emphasis for people to adopt healthier lifestyles supports the need to have good quality open space close to where people live. Collectively, green spaces also provide the '*green lungs*' for an area, reducing the impact of air pollution, providing shade and absorbing flood waters - helping urban areas adapt to the impacts from climate change. Equally important, these spaces provide spaces for learning, relaxation, and social cohesion necessary for our mental health and well-being (e.g. stress reduction, alleviation of depression, coping with dementia).

1.2 According to the most up-to-date Public Health England's health profile report for Mansfield district (2016), the health of residents is generally worse than national levels. This is based on key health indicators such as deaths from heart disease, obesity levels, diabetes life expectancy. Thus, it is important to ensure that existing and future residents have access to good quality green and open spaces - essential infrastructure for supporting healthy populations.

1.3 This requires planning for an effective balance of open space provision, including formal parks and recreation grounds and informal areas, such as, natural green space, areas for informal play and other landscaped areas.

1.4 It is expected that as the district grows, so too will the need for open space. Where need exists, new residential development, independently and cumulatively, can help contribute the creation of new open space and/or the upgrading of existing open space and its facilities. To a lesser extent, other sources of investment, where and when available may also help contribute to improvements.



The Assessment

The **Community Open Space Assessment**, published in May 2018, is an important evidence base underpinning the Mansfield District Council Local Plan (2013 to 2033) and the Mansfield District Council Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

It responds to the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework to review and assess the need for community green and open spaces on a local (district) level, now and for the future. In doing so, it draws upon National guidance, local knowledge, the health and well-being agenda, and district and community needs.

It is an important document for understanding how the current and future provision of open space in the district can contribute positively towards supporting the health and well-being of its residents. This included setting out a standard for guiding where provision is needed and ensuring that open spaces are good quality, referred to as the **Mansfield Green Space Standard**.

1.5 The assessment aims to address health and well-being by defining a green space ⁽¹⁾ standard that takes into account:

- different access needs (e.g. different age groups)
- physical barriers restricting easy access to open space
- a balance and range of different types of open spaces
- key quality assessment indicators relating to, for example: accessibility, social cohesion, safety, etc.
- access to natural play space and nature and
- the wider role and significance of green spaces, in addition to their recreational functions.

1.6 Community open spaces is defined as *land used for the purposes of public recreation and is available for community use and enjoyment in a variety of ways, regardless of ownership*. These support formal sport and play and/or informal activities (e.g. walking, cycling and relaxation). They include a range of facilities and areas of interest, including but not limited to: play parks, outdoor sports pitches, community orchards, seating and picnic areas, sensory gardens, woodland, rivers and other natural areas, bandstands, pathways for walking and cycling, memorials, etc.

1 Please note that 'green space' and 'open space' are used interchangeably in the open space assessment and this summary document

1.7 The different types of open space identified in this assessment range from local-level parks and recreation grounds at the neighbourhood level, amenity spaces, natural green spaces, and larger district-level (i.e. destination) parks and recreation grounds that generally serve wider community need based on a larger catchment, including from across the district.

1.8 Four main issues explored in the Community Open Space Assessment include:

1. **Amount of green space:** Is there the right amount of green space for everyone in the district now and for the future?
2. **Access to green space:** Is green space in the right location near enough to where people live? If there are barriers to accessing open space, what are these and where are they located?
3. **Quality of green space:** Is open space welcoming & accessible, safe & secure, clean and well maintained? Do they support a range of recreation activities, wildlife and a positive image for the area? What defines 'good' quality?
4. **Wider significance:** Are there other unique roles, other than recreation, that green and open spaces provide? This looks at other significant roles that green spaces play such as helping to lessen the impacts from climate change, supporting biodiversity, historic significance, and supporting health and well being.

1.9 The table below sets out the main functions of the Community Open Space Assessment. More information on the methodology used can be found in Section 3 of the assessment.

Table 1.1

What the document sets out to do
Establishes an understanding the district's existing provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what types of open spaces there are and where these are located • what is the quality of these spaces • how close are these open spaces in relation to where people live and if they are accessible, and • what are some of the wider roles that open spaces provide (e.g. minimising flood risk, supporting healthy lifestyles and overall well being).
Reviews current policy (1998 adopted local plan) and makes revision recommendations.
Provides a locally-based approach for assessing and identifying quantitative and qualitative gaps, deficits and surplus in open space provision based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community, elected member and officer feedback • future growth and • review of national benchmarks, best practice and guidance.



What the document sets out to do
Sets out key priorities and actions for future investment based on identified need.
Establishes a standard for informing and defining:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where new open space and improvements to existing open space area needed to fill gaps in provision • where open space could be considered surplus to requirements, meaning that the whole or part of the site could be developed • how much open space is expected from new development and • defines what <i>good</i> quality means.

Related local plan evidence

1.10 Separate playing pitch studies - *Mansfield District Council Playing Pitch Assessment and adopted Strategy/Action Plan (2015)* - identify protection and enhancement needs in relation to outdoor sports provision. These evidence documents focus on team and club use of playing pitches only and not the on wider role of a park or recreation ground.

1.11 Additionally, the Mansfield District Council Green Infrastructure Study (2018) identifies strategic green infrastructure networks in the district, of which open space makes up a portion of these networks where open spaces are physically or functionally connected to other areas of green space (e.g. recreational green corridors) and countryside.

1.12 Collectively, these documents help to inform the protection and enhancement of open space in the district.

1.13 Allotments are considered separately in the Mansfield District Council Allotment Strategy (2014).

Picture 1.2



2 Summary of key findings

Picture 2.1





2.1 Below is a summary of key findings from the Community Open Space Assessment (2018). These are summarised by:

- quantity, distribution and balance of green space
- accessing green space
- quality of green space and
- supporting healthy communities.

2.2 More details on key findings can be found in Section 4 and also Appendices A and D of the assessment, including, for example: additional maps, addressing barriers to access, summaries of open space by type and ward and priorities for addressing deficits at ward level. Below is a summary of the key findings; more area-specific information is found in the Community Open Space Assessment (2018), including more maps and summary tables.

2.3 Key priorities have also been identified based on the assessment's findings. The key findings and identified priorities have helped to define the Mansfield Green Space Standard.

Quantity, distribution and balance of green space

Table 2.1 Summary of findings on quantity, distribution and balance of green space across the district

Headline facts and figures

Types of open space and play provision in the district

All publicly accessible green spaces, regardless of ownership, were included in this assessment. The focus is on all green and open spaces that are accessible (open) to the public and intended for public use. It was important to distinguish between the different types or categories of open space, in order to better understand how green space is used. In order to make sense this, five different categories (i.e. typologies) of open space were identified:

- **district-level parks:** district-wide important parks and recreation grounds
- **local-level parks:** locally important parks and recreation grounds
- **amenity space:** larger amenity spaces (greater than 0.4 hectares)
- **incidental open space:** smaller amenity spaces (0.4 hectares and less)
- **natural green space:** generally includes areas of informal recreation such as Local Nature Reserves, green corridors and restored pit tips.

Headline facts and figures

Incidental open space accounts for the majority of open space by type (36.8 percent), followed by natural green space (24.9 percent), local-level parks (20.5 percent), larger amenity space (9.7 percent) and district-level parks (8.1 percent); these percentages are based on the total number of open spaces.

It is also recognised that some formally managed green spaces (i.e. incidental open space, district-level parks and local-level parks) include natural areas, thus providing an important resource for people accessing nature, especially within urban areas. When assessing access to natural green space, these formally managed types of open spaces with natural areas were included in this part of the assessment.

Natural green space accounts for approximately 75 percent of the total area of open space in the district; this is due to some very large open spaces (some over 50 hectares). This is followed by district-level parks (14 percent), local-level parks (9 percent) and amenity and incidental open space (a combined 3 percent).

The types of play provision identified include:

- **Teenager play areas:** facilities which typically cater for young people aged 12 and over but due to their multi-use, may be used by younger children. For example: Nationally Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs), BMX and skate parks, multi-use games areas, outdoor exercise gyms. Some of these facilities also cater for adult formal recreational provision.
- **Children play areas:** facilities which typically cater for children aged up to 8 years of age but may be used by older children up to 12 years of age. Typically meet the National Playing Fields definition for Locally Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs) and Local Areas of Play (LAPs).

Amount of open space in the district

A total of 185 green spaces were mapped and surveyed. This makes up a total of 886.48 hectares of usable public green space. This equates to 8.42 hectares of green space for every 1,000 people. That's slightly larger than one Fisher Lane Park or slightly smaller than eight international sized rugby pitches.

A large proportion of open spaces are owned by Mansfield District Council (approximately 66 percent). Others are owned by Nottinghamshire County Council, the Forestry Commission, community groups/trusts and others unknown. Figure 3.1 in Section 3.2 in the assessment shows the distribution of ownership.

Section 4.1 show detailed results for how well the district's amount of green space fares in relation to type and National benchmarks. Overall, the district's green spaces appear to either fall short of national benchmarks (outdoor sport and amenity space) or exceed national benchmarks (parks and natural green space). In relation to play space, it is unclear as to whether national benchmarks are met, although there are noticeable large gaps when assessing the distribution of play provision across the district (see findings on 'access to green space' below).

It was clear from this assessment, that the amount of open space in the district and subsequent comparison with National benchmarks, gives a rather incomplete and skewed picture in relation to overall need. Therefore, the amount of open space findings (i.e. per 1,000 population) are not used to help develop the *Mansfield Green Space Standard*.



Headline facts and figures

Rather, it was found that it's more important to consider: 1) how well the various types of open spaces and play areas are distributed across the district; 2) how accessible these are to residents and 3) what is their overall quality. As such, these three elements have helped with informing the standard and for prioritising:

- which spaces should be protected
- where new green spaces should be created (and what types) and
- improvements to the existing supply.

Balance of natural green space and formally managed open space

Although around a quarter of the land consists of formally managed provision (e.g. parks, recreation grounds, amenity space), a good proportion of these spaces have significant natural areas or areas for informal play contained within them. The balance is 53 percent (%) of green spaces with natural space and 47% without. The urban area has a significant number of open spaces with natural areas than compared those without natural areas.

Overall, there appears to be a good balance of open spaces offering some form of natural green space, although the western half of the district is generally lacking in this resource (see Figure 4.3, Section 4.1 in the assessment).

Balance of formal and informal recreational provision

Another key factor includes the balance of formal and informal recreation provision. Formal recreation includes open spaces with play or sports provision and informal includes amenity and natural green space. The ratio of sites with formal to informal recreational provision is 1 to 3. This is reflective in gaps identified in access to play provision across the district.

There are a number of wards (10) in which informal recreational provision accounts for 80% or more of the total area. These areas need prioritising for creating additional (new) formal recreational provision, through the creation of new play areas, trim trails (i.e. outdoor gyms), and/or public outdoor sports facilities.

Providing access to natural green space and also to formal recreational provision are important factors for supporting healthy communities. The aim should be to provide balanced access to both formal and informal recreational provision (i.e. facilities, resting areas, natural areas). This could be either provided within a single open space or on a combination of separate types of open spaces located within close proximity of each other.

Balance of size

This study considers that the use or function of open space is more important than its overall size, granted they are well designed to be safe, welcoming and accessible. Incidental amenity spaces (less than 0.4 hectares) are on the small end of the spectrum and natural green space and district-level parks are on the other end. Generally, larger open spaces can offer a wider range of recreational opportunities and thus can better meet the diverse recreational needs of residents.

Headline facts and figures

Although amenity space can offer valuable spaces for informal play areas or spaces to sit and socialise, they tend to offer limited opportunities for more active recreation pursuits. Over a third of the overall number of open spaces in the district is made up of small amenity space (less than 0.4 ha). This means that, in some areas, residents are disadvantaged when it comes to having sufficient types of green space to support active, healthy lifestyles. Open space of 0.4 hectares or less accounts for 42.2 percent (%) of the total number of open spaces in the district; this includes mainly incidental open space and a small number of local-level parks.

District-level parks

There are 15 recognised district-level parks in the district, including for example: Titchfield Park, Berry Hill Park and Manor Sports Complex. These are established green spaces that generally, but not always, provide a landscape setting with a variety of facilities and features including; outdoor sports facilities, play areas and informal recreation opportunities. Or the space offers at least one unique facility or experience of wider district importance. These green spaces with a district or greater community importance include, for example: Green Flag awarded parks, green spaces that accommodate district-wide events (e.g. carnivals, ParkRuns, championships, festivals) and green spaces with key facilities that aren't wide-spread in the district (e.g. band stand, memorials, sports facilities, and skate parks). These differ from local-level parks which are limited to no more than two facilities and are generally of local (neighbourhood) importance.

These are mostly located very centrally within the district (exceptions are Bullfarm Park, The Carrs, Queensway Park and Forest Town Miners Welfare). These offer a range of activities and experiences for residents (e.g. concerts, sporting events, fairs, sport, play).

Given their central distribution, some residents living on far eastern and western areas of the district don't have access to a district-level park. Having access to district-level parks is especially important where residents' existing access to green space is limited to small amenity spaces. Where access is restricted to amenity space, especially incidental open space (less than 0.4 ha), residents are likely to lack access to a wider range/choice of facilities required to support healthy lifestyles. Studies show that providing a greater amount of features (e.g. trails/paths, formal and informal play space, sports and outdoor exercise areas, social spaces, etc.) has a positive impact on increased uptake of physical activity and improved health and well being.

Play space

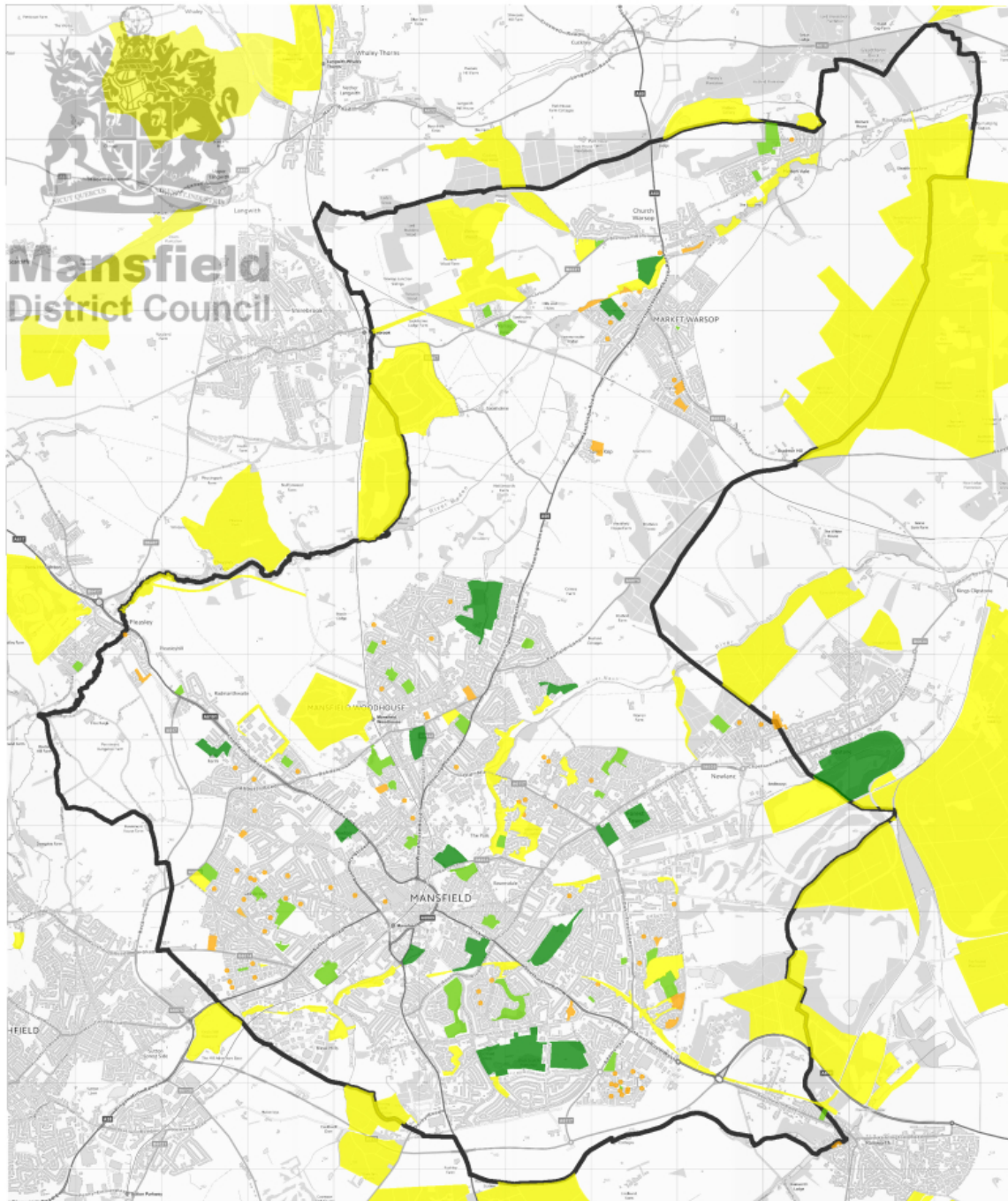
Based on distribution, there are noticeable areas within the district that lack play provision, including (but not limited to): southern Market Warsop, southwestern Mansfield, central Mansfield, northern Mansfield Woodhouse and eastern Mansfield.

This pattern is reflected within wards that have a higher proportion of amenity and natural green space.

It is unclear from the Fields in Trust guidance about how to apply the national benchmark for play space. Thus, it's difficult to determine if the quantity of play provision is either under or over provided in the district. Clearly assessing the distribution of play areas, how close these are to where people live (access to green space) and their quality are key factors in determining where improvements are needed. Quality and access to play provision are summarised below.



Types of green space

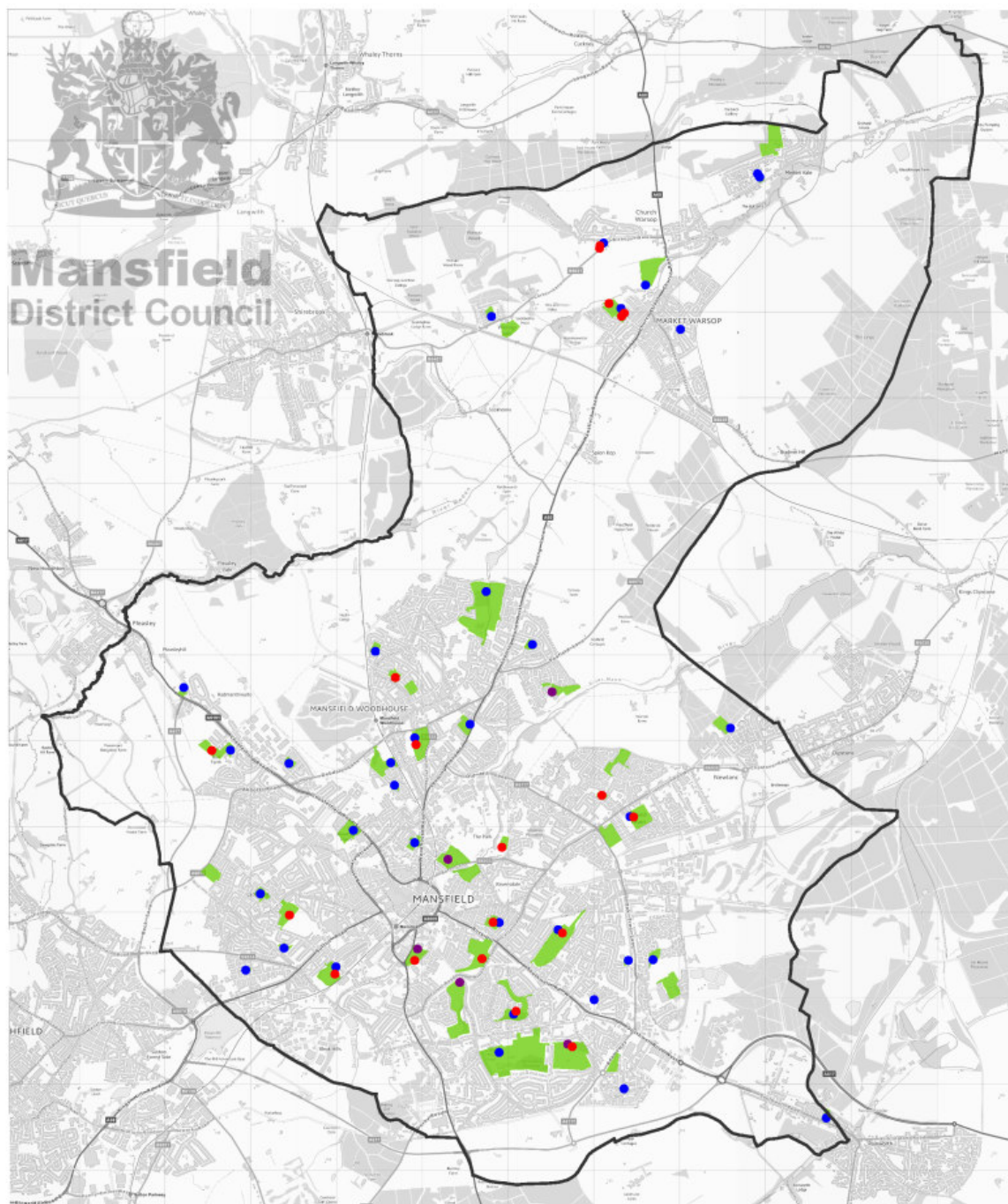


Key

- | | |
|---|---|
| District park and recreation ground | Amenity space |
| Local park and recreation ground | Incidental open space |
| Natural areas | |

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823

Types of play space



Key

- Park and recreation ground
- Childrens play area

- Teenage area
- Both childrens and teenager provision

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823



Accessing green space

Table 2.2 Summary of findings on access to green space

Headline facts and figures
<p>Access to green space (any type)</p> <p>Overall, a majority of residents (82.8 percent) have access to some form of open space within a 5-minute walk from where they live. But there are clearly gaps where this isn't the case that require closer attention. In general, these areas include (but are not limited to): southern areas of Market Warsop, Church Warsop/Meden Vale, parts of Forest Town, northern Mansfield Woodhouse, parts of Oak Tree, and western, central and southern Mansfield urban area.</p> <p>Ten wards were identified in which 25 percent (%) or more, of residential properties currently don't have access to any type of green space within a 5-minute walk. These are listed in Table 4.12 (Section 4.2 in the assessment). In summary, these areas are likely to benefit from the creation of new green space, where opportunities arise. These gaps in provision are most likely to be financed through developer contributions (Section 106) or external funding such as grants. Understanding where these gaps exist should help inform where contributions are best prioritised.</p> <p>When taking into account geographical barriers, which limit/prevent direct access or lengthen the journey times to nearby green space, the number of residents who don't have access to nearby open space is likely to increase.</p>
<p>Addressing access barriers</p> <p>Geographical barriers include, for example: busy roads, rivers, railway lines, lack of appropriate access point(s) and awkward road layouts. These prevent or limit access to nearby green space, and can increase journey times. Busy roads are also likely to act as psychological barriers deterring people from using green spaces nearby, especially children and the elderly. Increased walking journeys to green space can deter people from using their local green space resource, potentially leading to lower physical activity levels or inactivity altogether.</p> <p>Ten wards were identified as having likely 'major access barrier issues', further limiting access to open space for existing residents within a 5-minute walk. These wards include: Bull Farm and Pleasley Hill, Carr Bank, Kingsway, Ling Forest, Oakham, Peafield, Portland, Sherwood, Spion Kop (Market Warsop) and Woodlands. Additionally, medium-graded access issues (e.g. B-listed roads) are present for residents living within a further 14 wards. These are detailed in Section 4.2 in the assessment (Table 4.7).</p> <p>Major and then medium access barriers need prioritising when considering improvements within identified wards and where new development is proposed. Addressing improvements to access barriers is likely to result in safer and more appropriate access for residents. If these barriers can't be overcome, then new green space may need creating close to where people live. When considering whether an open space may be surplus to requirement, resolving access barrier is an important consideration. If these can't be resolved, it is important to retain the existing open space.</p> <p>As above, improvements are likely to be funded through Section 106 contributions or part of capital improvement schemes.</p>

Headline facts and figures

Identifying improvements to support access to a healthier and more diverse range of open space provision

The choice of recreational provision available to residents is likely to impact on how and when people use green and open spaces; thus, improving residents' physical and emotional wellbeing. This means having access to both formal and informal provision, including natural areas, close to where people live.

Under a third (31%) of households have access to both forms of informal and formal recreational provision. This indicates that there are significant gaps to be filled in order to ensure that the district's residents have equal opportunities to improve health and wellbeing based on the balance of facilities available.

For residents within a small number of wards (seven in total), access to green space is mainly limited to small amenity areas (incidental open space) of less than 0.4 hectares (ha). This means that, in some areas, residents are disadvantaged when it comes to having access to sufficient types of green space for supporting active, healthy lifestyles. Priority should be given to improving the quality of these spaces and, where opportunities arise:

- create new formal provision (e.g. play areas) on existing nearby open spaces
- create new formal open space, or
- improve access to local-level or district-level parks.

Only where it isn't feasible to improve resources within a 5-minute walk (e.g. lack of available land), improvements to the next nearest open space are key. Wards are identified in Figure 4.5 and priorities summarised in Table 4.12 (Section 4.2 in the assessment).

Sixteen (16) wards were identified in which residents' access to green space is primarily limited to informal green space (natural green space and/or larger formally managed amenity spaces) within a 5-minute walk. Households in these wards would benefit from prioritising the creation of new formal recreation provision (e.g. play equipment or outdoor activity hubs) on existing amenity and natural green spaces (see Tables 4.8, 4.10 and 4.12 in the assessment).

Access to nature nearby

Having access to good quality natural green space is important for our emotional and physical well-being. The majority of households (84.7% of residential properties) have good access to natural green space within a 10-minute walking journey.

Table 4.11 identifies recommended actions to improve access to nature within wards where some residents lack access to existing natural areas and/or where access barriers are likely to increase walking distances. Thirteen wards were identified in which approximately 25-49% of residents don't have access to natural areas within this journey time or where existing access barriers are likely increase journey times. Three wards were identified in which approximately 50% or more of residents don't have access to natural areas within this journey time or where existing access barriers are likely increase journey times.

Key actions to address deficiencies include: 1) creating new open space with natural areas, 2) natural areas within existing parks and amenity spaces and 3) improving access to the countryside and strategic green infrastructure via multi-user routes and safe road crossings (see Section 4.2 tables 4.10 and 4.12 in the assessment).



Headline facts and figures

Access to district-level parks and recreation grounds

Larger parks and recreation grounds that offer a range of recreational facilities (e.g. play areas, sports pitches, bandstand, paths for longer walks) and experiences (e.g. concerts, Parklife events, fairs, ParkRun, etc.) are most likely to support more active lifestyles. 62 percent (%) of residents have access to a district-level park, within a 15-minute walking journey. This may be due to the fact that they are, generally, located centrally within the district.

Play provision

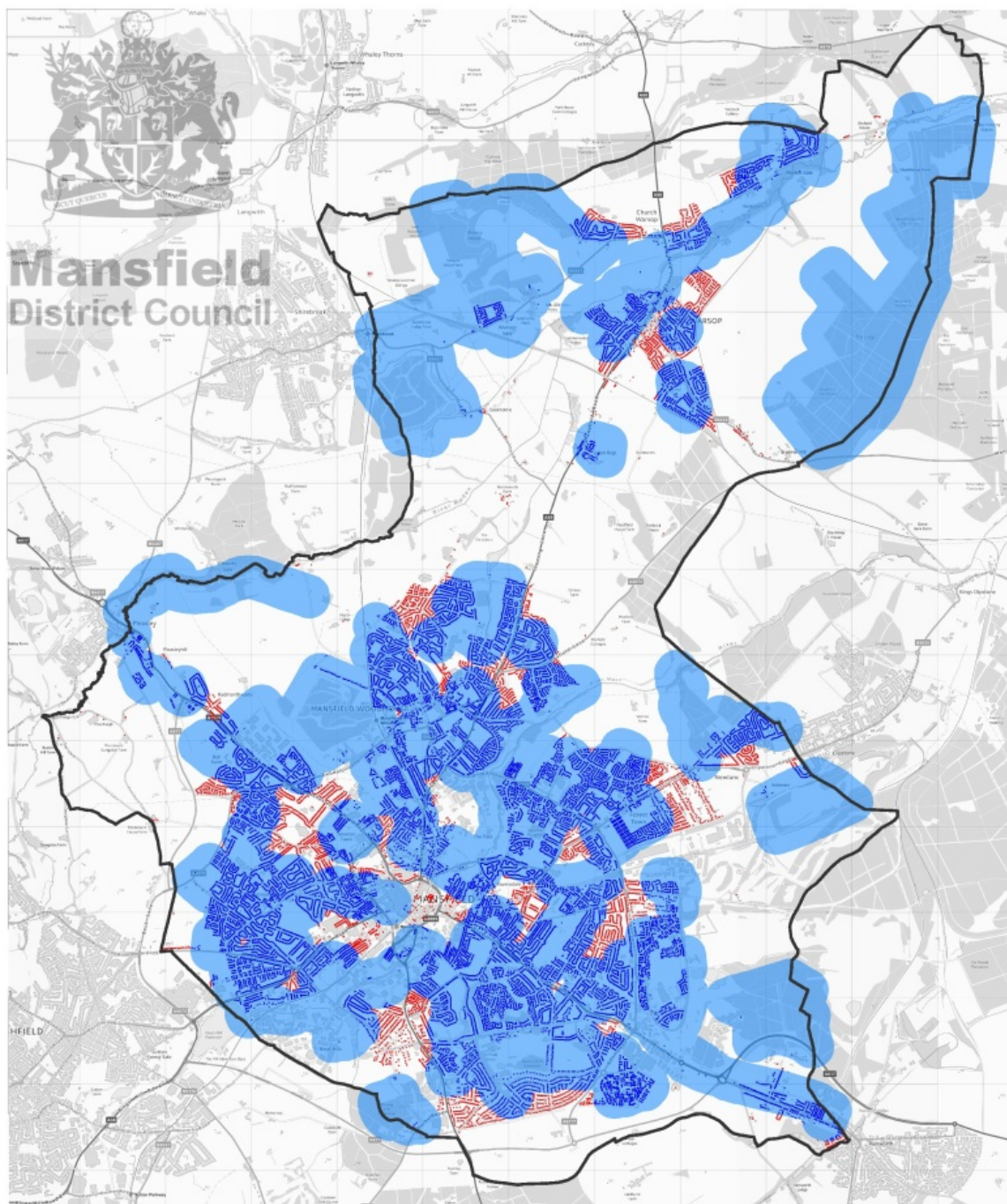
Based on a 5-minute walking distance to local-level and district-level parks with play provision, 50.1% of the district's households have access to formal play provision. When considering only children's provision (up to 12), 45.2% of households have access within a 5-minute walk. The figures for teenager provision is greater, with 64.7% of households having access within a 15-minute walk.

Overall, these figures indicate significant gaps in access to play provision. For 21 wards, 50% or more households didn't have access to children's play provision within a 5-minute walk. This includes eight wards, where 80% or more of residents lack access to play space; these were: Broomhill, Holly, Ladybrook, Ling Forest, Market Warsop, Maun Valley, Oakham and Park Hall.

For 12 wards, 50% or more households don't have access to teenager provision within a 15-minute walk. This includes five wards, where 75% or more of residents lack of access to play space. These are: Manor, Meden, Netherfield (100% lacked access), Newlands and Oaktree.

Priority should be given to providing new areas of play provision (formal or informal) within these areas of the district where opportunities arise. Reducing access barriers also needs to be considered on a site by site basis, including areas outside the wards highlighted in this report. Table 4.12 in the assessment summaries the findings.

Access to open space (all) within a 5-minute walk



Key

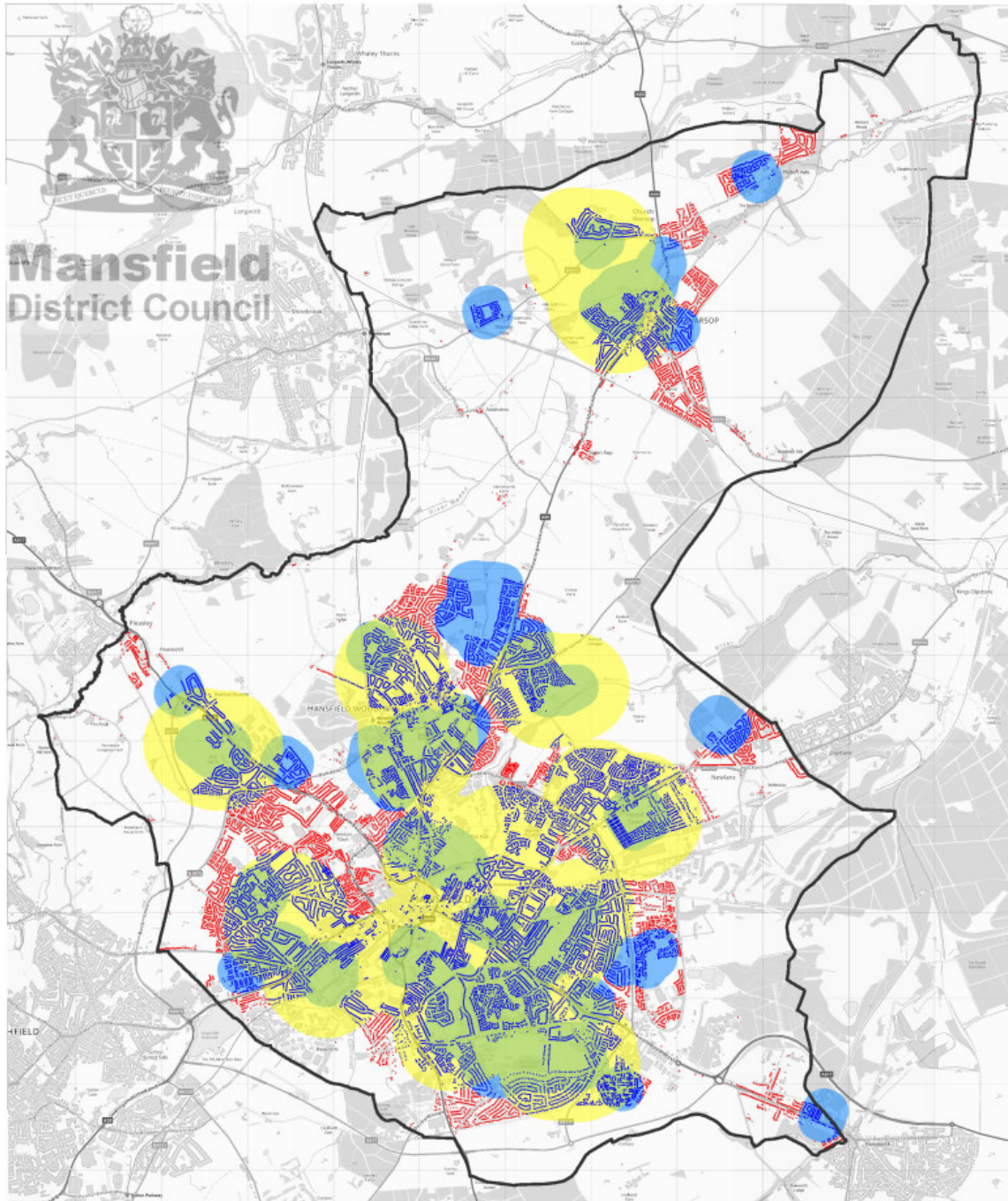
*Access is defined as being within a five minute walk (400m)

- Access* to open space(s)
- Residential property with access* to open space
- Residential property without access* to open space

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823



Access to play space

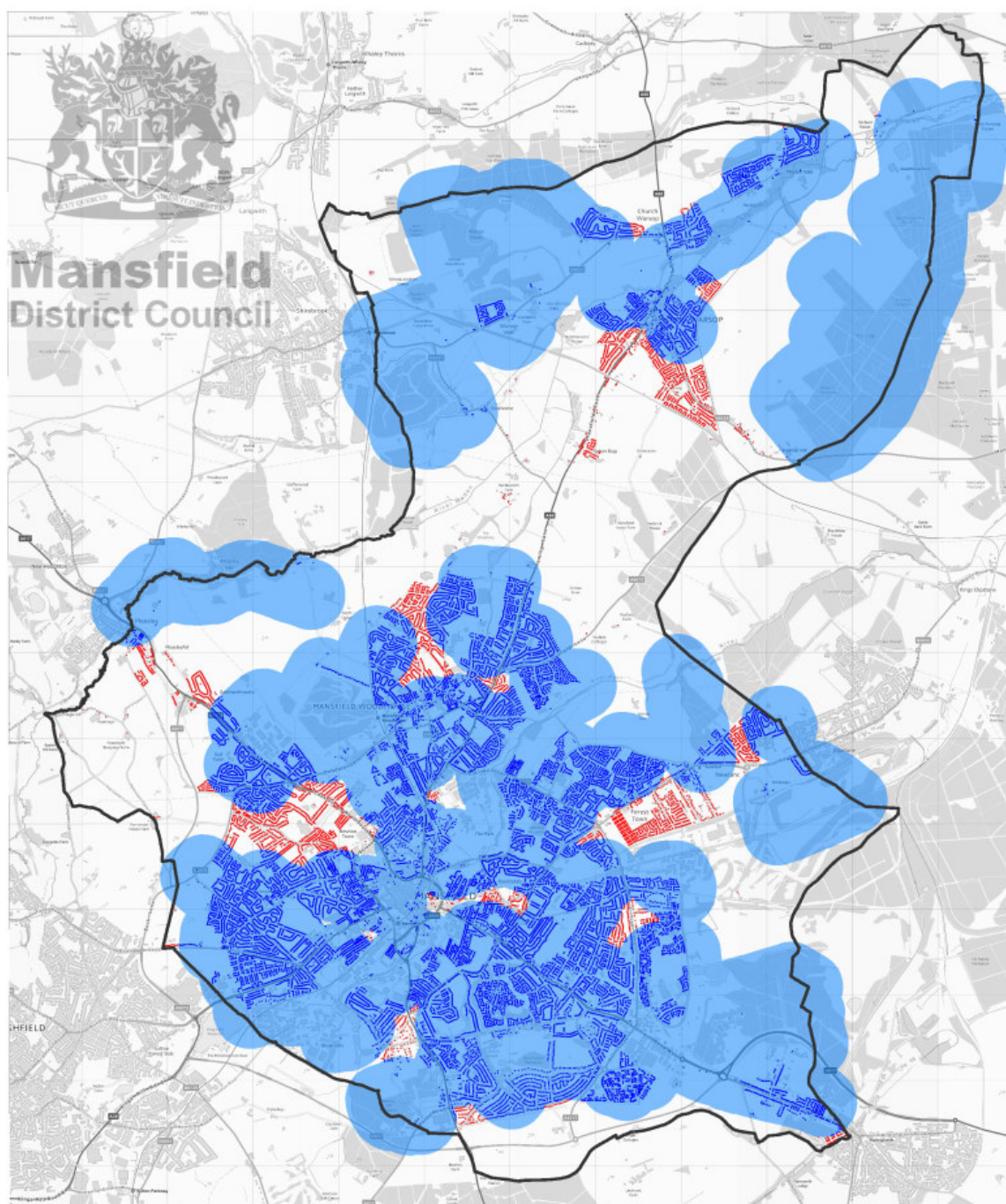


Key

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Access to childrens play area within a five minute walk (400m) |  | Access to both types of play provision |
|  | Access to teenage area within a fifteen minute walk (1km) |  | Residential property with access to play provision |
| | |  | Residential property without access to play provision |

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823

Picture 2.2 Access to natural green space in 10-minute walk



Key

*Access is defined as being within a ten minute walk (700m)



Access* to natural green space(s)



Residential property with access* to natural green space



Residential property without access* to natural green space

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823



Quality of green space

Table 2.3 Summary of findings on green space quality

Headline facts and figures
<p>Defining good quality</p> <p>The quality of green space can influence how it is valued by residents which can, in turn, influence how and if a site is used. A good quality green space is one which is accessible, welcoming, safe, clean and well-maintained and positively supports biodiversity and social interaction. Where new facilities (e.g. play equipment, benches, landscaping, etc.) are required, it is important that they are easy to maintain and replace so that their quality can be sustained.</p> <p>A design guide checklist is provided in Appendix C in the assessment.</p>
<p>Overall findings</p> <p>When taking all green and open spaces in the district into consideration, the overall quality is <i>good</i>. The category 'cleanliness and maintenance' scored the highest followed by 'safe and secure' and then 'welcoming and accessible', which all fell within the very good to good ranges.</p> <p>Improvements to place shaping are needed to ensure that the district's open spaces are better able to contribute positively to the image of the surrounding area, biodiversity and supporting positive social interaction. The 'overall use, image and setting' category also showed the largest variation in quality scores.</p> <p>Section 4.3, Table 4.20 provides details where improvements are needed in the district.</p>
<p>Quality and type of green space</p> <p>District-level parks generally scored the highest and natural green space the lowest (although natural green spaces also had the greatest variation in quality).</p> <p>Improvements to district-level parks - Chesterfield Road and Bull Farm parks are especially important to prioritise as residents living within a 15-minute walk of these parks, generally only have access to small (incidental) amenity spaces nearby (i.e. within a 5-minute walk). These scored <i>average</i> in relation to their 'overall use, image and setting' qualities.</p> <p>Generally, most local-level parks require improvements to 'welcoming and accessible' and 'overall use, image and setting' qualities. Areas within ten wards require improvements (see Table 4.16).</p> <p>For natural green spaces, better interpretation around entrances, parking, accessible entrances and surfacing and cutting back obtrusive vegetation are some examples of what is needed to improve the overall quality of these types of green spaces. Natural green spaces which are supported by Friends groups generally scored <i>good</i> to <i>very good</i>. Thus, securing support from committed voluntary groups or other formal management arrangements is to supporting good quality natural green space. Management needs to take into account the special protection status of certain sites and respect sensitive habitats and species.</p> <p>Amenity spaces generally scored <i>average</i> with one space scoring <i>poor</i> on overall quality. The following amenity spaces contribute positively to available green space but require quality improvements: Millennium Green, Skegby Lane, Land off Wainwright Avenue, Teversal Avenue, Pleasley Hill, Amenity</p>

Headline facts and figures

Space at Spion Kop, Former Welbeck Colliery Cricket Ground in Market Warsop (now small pocket park - Mw003). This will ensure that these areas support healthy communities. The inclusion of formal recreational provision or enhancements to informal play areas is a key consideration.

Incidental open spaces (small amenity spaces) generally scored good but improvements to 'overall use, image and setting' qualities require attention. Generally, these spaces lack features to entice people to stop and socialise, engage in play or contribute positively to the natural environment. Although small, these spaces often play, or have the potential to play, a positive role within a neighbourhood's or estate's identity. Specific wards where improvements to 'place shaping' qualities should be prioritised for the following wards include: Abbott ward, Bellamy estate (Ransom Wood ward), Broomhill ward, Ladybrook ward, Penniment ward and, Park Hall ward (northern part).

Access and quality (open space)

Not all residents have access to good quality green space. There are localised areas within the district in which residents only have access to *average* quality green spaces. These areas provide the best locations to prioritise quality improvements in order to ensure that all residents have equal access to good quality green space nearby.

General areas where the quality of open space is *average* include: Rainworth, parts of Oakham, Pleasley Hill, Mansfield parts of Woodhouse, Newlands, Spion Kop, parts of Market Warsop, Brick Kiln and Penniment wards and Grange Farm and Portland wards and parts of Forest Town. More detailed results are provided in Table 4.20 in the assessment.

Access and quality (play provision)

The majority of play spaces (children and teenager combined) scored good (74.1%). These results mirror quality scores for the two play provision age group types (children and teenagers).

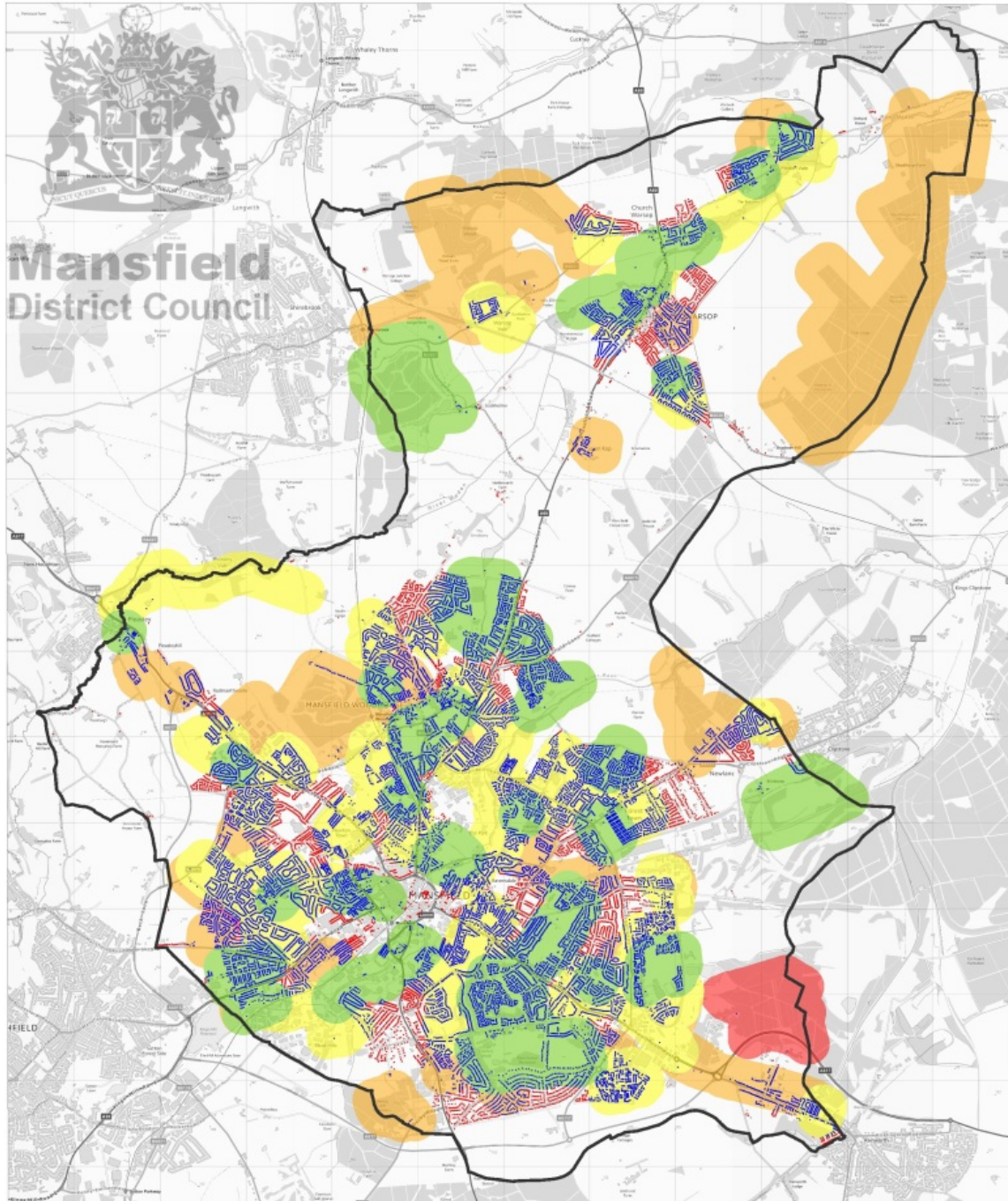
Drilling down further into the quality results, enhancing the 'play value' of provision is key for supporting quality improvements. Over half (56.9%) of the play areas in the district scored either *poor* or *average* for this quality component. This includes ensuring equipment is suitable for children with disabilities and also that the layout, features and equipment are able to offer a range of activities for supporting healthy play and socialising. This is a key priority to improving the provision of play space across the district.

Eleven wards were identified in which the majority of residents only have access to *average* quality play provision. Within wards such as Abbott ward, residents have no access to play provision. Other wards have localised areas that lack sufficient access to play spaces. These issues are highlighted in Section 4.3 in the assessment (Table 4.20).

Overall in the district, residents have access to good quality teenage provision within a 15-minute walk. Assessment results show that residents in the following wards have access primarily to 'average' quality teenager spaces: Abbott, Bull Farm and Pleasley, Brick Kiln, Broomhill, Carr Bank (eastern area of ward only), Grange Farm (south of Skegby Lane), Ladybrook, Maun Valley, Park Hall, Penniment and Woodhouse. Priority should be given to improving teenager provision in these areas.



Quality of green space within a 5-minute walk -Overall Average



Key

*Access is defined as being within a five minute walk (400m)

- Access* to very good site(s)
- Access* to good site(s)
- Access* to average site(s)
- Access* to poor site(s)

- Residential property with access* to open space
- Residential property without access* to open space

© Crown copyright and database rights 2017 Ordnance Survey 100017823

Supporting healthy communities

Table 2.4 Summary of key findings on how green spaces support communities

Headline facts and figures
<p>Health profile</p> <p>Deprivation in the district is higher than the national average. It is ranked 38 out of 353 districts in the UK, where a rank of '1' is considered to be the worse deprived. The district also is worse than several national indicator averages that relate to health (e.g. obesity, physical activity, heart disease). See Section 2.4 in the assessment.</p> <p>Based on an informal ward-level analysis comparing health indicators and access to play provision and open space (see section 4.4 in the assessment), a very weak but positive relationship is present between poor health (child and adult obesity and general health) and lack of access to green space within a 5-minute walk. There are likely to be other <i>lifestyle</i>, <i>quality of open space</i> and <i>ease of access to open space</i> factors that influence on how active people are. Disentangling these factors is beyond the scope of this study.</p> <p>Overall, research studies indicate that having access to green space has positive effects on health and well-being (see Section 3.6 in the assessment). Positive impacts include better air quality, increases in physical activity and/or improvements to mental well-being, etc. Thus, if these areas of <i>green</i> infrastructure are not in place, then there are likely to be few opportunities to address inequalities locally. It is often much harder and costlier to re-create these retrospectively.</p>
<p>Existing provision</p> <p>The following are key contributors for supporting healthy communities in relation to green and open spaces in the district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● nature friendly spaces - 54.1% of open spaces support biodiversity.● climate change resilience - 42.2% of open spaces play a role in minimising flood risk and 72.4% of all open space contains trees or woodland to help provide shade.● socially inclusion spaces - 21.1% of open spaces support established <i>friends</i> groups or district or neighbourhood events and/or have key facilities that help community come together to socialise (e.g. community centres, band stand, skate parks, outdoor sports pitches and changing facilities).● historic importance - 19.5% of all open spaces provide important settings for heritage assets (e.g. listed buildings).● Access for all - 75.3% of open spaces scored <i>good</i> or <i>very good</i> in their ability to provide inclusive access for all. Access for all is inclusive of a variety of mobility, sensory, and learning difficulty needs. 76% of play areas provide 'good accessibility for those with impairments and push chairs' BUT just 25% of play provision provide 'good quality provision for disabled children'. <p>These are important considerations when designing new green space and planning for improvements to the existing resource.</p>



Headline facts and figures

Improving open space to better support health and well-being

From the results of this assessment, there is room to improve our existing green and open space resource so that they can better support health and well-being, for example:

- planting more trees and small pockets of urban woodland and improving flood attenuation within open spaces will help us adapt better to climate change
- improving accessibility to and around open spaces and access to their facilities for those with disabilities, including those with dementia, will improve social cohesion
- designing spaces that are nature friendly will improve the value and attractiveness of open spaces and
- improving the overall quality of open spaces will ensure more people use these spaces.

These qualities feed into the design guide checklist in Appendix C in the assessment.

Picture 2.3



Key priorities

2.4 The following table identifies the key priorities as identified in this assessment. It needs to be looked at in combination with summary tables in Section 4 of the Community Open Space Assessment. These should be read alongside strategic objectives set out in the Mansfield District Council's Parks and Green Space Strategy⁽²⁾.

Table 2.5 Priorities and actions

Ref	Priorities	What this means in practice
A	Address the balance between informal and formal recreational provision to better support choice and healthy lifestyles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate this through the creation of formal recreational provision as part of new open space and/or improvements to existing open space where access is locally restricted to amenity space or natural green space. For example, create outdoor gyms, play areas or exercise trails. This needs to be looked at in combination with addressing gaps in play provision. Larger areas of planned new development may need to provide both on-site provision and off-site contributions depending on the location and size.
B	Improve access to natural green space to better support health and well-being of residents within a 10-minute walk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create natural landscaped areas within existing parks and recreation grounds. This could include new areas of natural play spaces where play provision is needed. Ensure that new open space is designed to include natural areas (e.g. community orchards, woodland or small copse, wildflower meadow, sensory garden, etc.). As part of new development, facilitate improved access to existing and new green space via green corridors and through links to the wider green infrastructure network and the wider countryside.
C	Improve access to larger open spaces with better provision where access to green space is primarily restricted to small amenity spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise the location of new development within areas where access to open space is limited to small amenity spaces. This will help facilitate the creation of new larger open and help support healthy communities. Link existing smaller sites together through facility and/or quality improvements via, for example: new signed pathways or exercise trails or themed social spaces. Facilitate better access to district-level and local-level parks through e.g. new access points and green corridors and/or walking and cycling routes and improved road crossings.
D	Improve access to open space and children's play provision where access is lacking within a 5-minute walk to where people live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise the location of new development within these areas to facilitate creation of new open space. Create new access corridors and access points from new development to leading to existing open spaces.



Ref	Priorities	What this means in practice
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new play space (equipped and/or natural play provision) on existing or new sites where deficiencies are identified. Only where it isn't feasible to improve resources within a 5-minute walk (e.g. lack of available land), improvements to the next nearest open space are key.
E	Address major and medium access barriers such that walking journeys/ routes to green space are made safer and shorter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create new pedestrian crossings across busy roads and/or create car-free routes which direct pedestrian away from busy junctions. Create new access routes and points into existing open space from adjacent development. Create more direct routes and avoid complicated layouts leading to new and existing open spaces. Create new green space where barriers can't be improved.
F	Improve access to district-level parks where access is lacking within a 15-minute walk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where feasible, prioritise location of new larger developments in these areas where provision is lacking. Improve provision on existing local-level parks to create a more diverse range of recreational facilities (e.g. social spaces, play, sport pitches and/or exercise gym or trail) and on these sites.
G	Improve access to teenager provision where access is lacking within a 15-minute walk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise the location of new development within these areas Create new teenager provision on existing or new sites where deficiencies are identified. This could be outdoor gyms or equipped exercise trails. Only where it isn't feasible to improve resources within a 5-minute walk (e.g. lack of available land), improvements to the next nearest open space are key.
H	Improve the quality of existing open space to good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise improvements to the place-shaping qualities of Chesterfield Road and Bull Farm district-level parks. Prioritise improvements to the quality of natural green spaces, e.g. better interpretation around entrances, parking, accessible entrances and surfacing and cutting back obtrusive vegetation, whilst respecting designations, sensitive habitats and species. Secure maintenance support for natural green space from a variety of sources (e.g. Friends Groups, private management services).

Ref	Priorities	What this means in practice
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritise improvements to 'welcoming and accessible' and 'overall use, image and setting' qualities for local-level parks. ● Prioritise improvements to open spaces in the district where access to open space is predominately of <i>average</i> quality. ● Prioritise improvements to existing open space such that the overall design and facilities are suitable for people with disabilities and dementia to in order to address aging the needs of an aging population.
I	<p>Improve the quality of existing children's and teenager's play provision to <i>good</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritise improvements to the play value of existing open space such that the layout of these spaces and the facilities are suitable for children with disabilities. ● Ensure that the layout, features and equipment of play areas are able to offer a range of activities to best support healthy play and socialising. ● Prioritise improvements to play provision in the district where access to open space is predominately of <i>average</i> quality.
J	<p>Design new open space to a <i>good</i> quality standard such that they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accessible for all Welcoming Safe support positive social interactions help define place support biodiversity and support health and wellbeing by providing an appropriate range of leisure, recreation and play provision and addressing climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide supplementary planning guidance on open space to help guide policy implementation building on draft guidance provided in this assessment (Appendix C).



3 The Standard

3.1 The following table sets out the **Mansfield Green Space Standard**. It's application is explained in more detail in Section 5.3 of the Community Open Space Assessment. It is essential to read this alongside the standard.

3.2 The standard is made up of three parts:

1. **Accessibility** – defines what type of open space provision should be provided within a safe and reasonable walking distance to where people live (Parts A and B).
2. **Quality** – defines a quality standard for new and enhanced open space provision and what is meant by good quality. Also sets out key principles for supporting safe, accessible and active design of open space (Part C).
3. **Amount of open space** – defines the percentage of on-site open space required within new development where access standards aren't met (Part D).

Please note: the pedestrian journeys distances, indicated in the standard, relate to on-the-ground walking journeys, not as-the-crow-flies.

Table 3.1 The Mansfield Green Space Standard

A. Core Green space requirements

The council will seek to ensure, where feasible, that the majority^(a) residents have safe and easy access^(b) to all of the following:

1. open space within a 5-minute (400 metres) pedestrian journey and
2. play space (formal or natural play area)^(c) suitable for a range of ages within a 5-minute (400 metres) pedestrian journey OR other form of formal provision to meet the needs of a new development and
3. natural green space^(d) within a 10-minute pedestrian journey (800 metres).

Please note: This part of the standard can be met though the creation of either separate open spaces or a single open space which combines: play or other form of formal provision and natural green space.

Where the access requirements are not met, new on-site open space within a development and/or off-site contributions to existing open space will be required. See Part D below.

B. Access requirements to wider facilities

The council will seek, where feasible^(e), to ensure that the majority^(a) residents have safe and easy access^(b) to:

1. a district-level park^(f) within a 15-minute pedestrian journey (1,200 metres) and
2. teenager provision^(g) with a 15-minute pedestrian journey (1,200 metres).

Please note: This part of the standard can be met through the creation of either separate open spaces or a single open space which combines open space typologies.

The following relates to Parts A and B above

(a) It is recommended that 100% of residents within a proposed development should, where practicable, have access to provision within the defined walking distances. The size of existing nearby open space also needs to be taken into account and should be adequate to meet the needs of new development. In these cases, a common sense approach and consultation with the Council will be needed to inform requirements.

(b) The walking journey needs to take into consideration geographical access barriers (e.g. busy roads, railway lines, rivers) **and** award road layouts that are likely to lengthen or restrict journeys. This should consider how these can be most appropriately addressed (e.g. safe crossing points, new entrances/pathways to nearby open space).

(c) Where feasible, new play or other form of formal provision should cater for a range of ages and abilities, as it relates to the community it will serve.

(d) Natural green space is open space where around one-third (1/3) or more of its area consists of natural areas/features (e.g. trees, woodland, orchards, wildflower meadows, sensory gardens, nature trails or areas of natural play). Formal landscaping can be included where it contributes to the park's overall setting and feeling of tranquility, softening impacts from any nearby urban influences. Natural green space are places where *human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate*.

(e) New provision for district-level parks and teenagers facilities will most likely depend on available land and viability factors. Addressing deficiencies in Part A should be prioritised before Part B, although new play facilities should cater for a range of ages and abilities where feasible.

(f) District-level parks are typically medium to larger parks that provide a range of recreational facilities, including play, sports facilities, or other features such as formalised gardens, sensory gardens, etc.). They may also support community facilities such as cafe, bandstand, outdoor theatre, or organised social events.

(g) Teenager provision includes open space with facilities such as, NEAPs, skate/BMX parks, trim trails, multi-use games areas, outdoor gyms, etc.



C. Quality Requirement

The council will seek to ensure that the all new and enhanced community open space is designed to meet the quality standard set out below.

1. **Overall quality** - All green spaces will be of overall 'good' quality, with priority given to following:
 - a. be welcoming and accessible, and be designed to be inclusive and accessible for all, including meet disability access requirements
 - b. incorporate safe and secure and active design principles and relevant codes of practice
 - c. support social interaction through design and available facilities
 - d. contribute positively to wildlife and access to natural green space, including natural play
 - e. contribute positively to the surrounding area through place shaping
 - f. meet the needs of local communities, for which a green space serves
 - g. incorporate principles and features which enable easy and cost-effective maintenance
 - h. offer a proportional range of facilities for supporting choice and active and healthy lifestyles and
 - i. integrate with and enhance nearby strategic and local green infrastructure.
2. **Location** - The location of new community open space should complement the existing land form, green infrastructure routes and other community facilities/civic spaces. Its location and design should enhance and help shape the identity of new estates, and where possible the wider setting. Its location, where all reasonably practicable, meet the 5-minute accessibility standard.
3. **Facilities and functions**- Minimum facility requirements include: accessible paths, signage, bins, bench(es), landscaping, and appropriate boundary treatment (e.g. knee rail, fencing, hedging, land forming, etc.).

D. Amount of open space within new residential development

1. Where new open space provision is required to meet Part A and/or B above, or the size of nearby open space isn't best suited to meet the needs of new development, a minimum amount of community open space to be provided on-site should be 10 percent (%) of the developable area of proposed residential developments.
2. The following green space/ landscaped amenity areas are **excluded** from the definition of open space; thus, should be provided in addition to the 10% requirement:
 - green space or landscaping (i.e. habitat buffer) required to mitigate impacts on protected species, priority society or designated sites

- the physical area that a sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) takes up as required to mitigate impacts from flooding and meet drainage needs (e.g. infiltration basin or swale)
- landscaping required to buffer industrial or other areas to mitigate impacts from statutory nuisances and
- landscaped or open grass verges along roads or cycle routes or other amenity areas required to meet road safety requirements, unless integrated as part of a wider multi-functional green corridor.