

Open Spaces Audit Update 2010

L

D

F

Evidence Base Document

June 2010





Executive Summary

The purpose of this audit is to provide a comprehensive survey of open spaces within Wyre, which will form part of the evidence base for the formulation of Development Plan Documents for the Local Development Framework. The audit is the first stage in the process to determine standards and policies for the provision, protection and enhancement of our open spaces for the benefit of all sections of the community.

The audit has compared the amount of provision with the interim standards adopted by the Council in the saved policies of the Adopted Wyre Borough Local Plan. Further background to this report is provided by Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17. The audit results can only be related to previous quantity standards, in the absence of any previous quality or accessibility standards.

The 2007 Audit involved audits of over 250 sites within Wyre's urban and rural settlements. The update has involved a desk study to identify any sites which were omitted in the 2007 Audit or where clarification was required; following this, there were visits to and audits of 225 sites. The 2007 Audit classified each site into 7 categories, with two cross-cutting sub-categories. In the interests of strict compliance with PPG17's requirements, in this update to the audit, all sites have now been reclassified according to the typology in PPG17. However, an additional category has been identified, as allowed by PPG17, of water-based recreational space.

The amounts of each type of space that have been identified are set out in the report and appendices. The principal conclusions are:

- There are a small number of parks and gardens; they are of strategic importance and present opportunities for high quality provision; there are ongoing programmes of improvement and opportunities are being sought for funding of further improvements, for example through Sea Change, and for greater community involvement;
- Amenity greenspaces are well distributed through recent developments, but are more sporadic amongst more established residential areas; many could be made more usable as neighbourhood informal playspaces, with residents' support; the overall amount of amenity space together with children's play space falls short of the council's adopted target for informal play space in all settlements;
- Formal play spaces for children are well distributed, with a few exceptions, but will require continued progress with the improvement programme detailed in the Wyre Play Strategy to deliver effective provision to most areas;
- Outdoor sports facilities are provided in most settlements, with Cleveleys largely relying on provision in Thornton or Fleetwood; adopted targets are met in most but not all settlements, but the needs for such space will require further study; almost all school playing fields exclude the public from making use of them outside school hours;
- Allotments are grossly underprovided against waiting lists and compared with other boroughs;
- Cemeteries and churchyards are irregularly distributed, but where they occur provide beneficial sites with biodiversity benefits;
- Natural and semi-natural greenspaces in Wyre are often based on ponds, with a small number of woodlands; they are irregularly distributed, but being added to; the coast and estuary make strategic contributions;
- Green corridors are widely distributed, but are poorly linked and do not form an effective network; the promenades and Lancaster Canal provide strategically important corridors;
- Besides Poulton town centre, the principal areas of civic space are within private retail developments, and strategic areas of civic space are missing from the town centres of Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Garstang;
- Water-based recreational space is an additional category added to the typology, to note the importance of canal, yachting and other water-based facilities in Wyre.

Following on from this audit, the results will be incorporated into a larger study which will provide recommendations for the standards for the provision of the different types of open space in the borough, not just in terms of overall quantity but also in terms of accessibility of each type of open space and the quality of sites. The study will use these audit results to assess the adequacy of the existing provision and identify shortfalls and shortcomings, together with recommendations for overcoming these, including recommendations for planning policy responses, thus informing the development of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs.



1 Introduction	5
2 Background Policy and Guidance	7
Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning For Open Space, Sport and Recreation	7
The Six Acre Standard	8
Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard	9
The North West of England Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021	9
Wyre Borough Council Adopted Local Plan	10
Wyre Play Strategy 2007	10
3 Research Methodology	13
2007 Audit	13
2009 Update	14
4 Audit Results	17
Parks and Gardens	21
Amenity greenspace and provision for children and teenagers	25
Outdoor sports facilities	30
Allotments	35
Cemeteries and churchyards	37
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	39
Green Corridors	43
Civic space	45
Water-based recreational space	48
5 Summary and conclusions	51
6 Appendices	54

1 Introduction

“Open space and sport and recreation facilities can make a major contribution to ensuring that villages, towns and cities are places in which people will choose to live. The main role of the planning system is to ensure there are sufficient of them and that they are in the right places. But this is not enough. There is a need also to ensure they are of high quality, attractive to users and well managed and maintained.”
(PPG 17 Companion Guide)

1.1 The purpose of this audit is to provide a comprehensive survey of open spaces within Wyre, which will form part of the evidence base for the formulation of Development Plan Documents for the Local Development Framework. The audit is the first stage in the process to determine standards and policies for the provision, protection and enhancement of our open spaces for the benefit of all sections of the community.

Picture 1 Euston Park, Fleetwood



1.2 Wyre is a borough of contrasts, ranging from the almost-uninhabited moorland of the Bowland Fells, to the densely-populated areas of Fleetwood, Thornton Cleveleys and Poulton-le-Fylde. Whilst the contribution of the rural areas to wider green infrastructure needs is significant, this audit concentrates on the provision of open spaces which are within or adjacent to settlements, and which therefore contribute to meeting the open space needs of those communities.

2 Background Policy and Guidance

2.1 This section sets out the main documents that have provided the background to this study. Only those documents that have had a direct bearing on the conduct of the audit have been included here, and it should be noted that the wider study into which this audit feeds will need to have regard to a much wider range of documents.

Picture 2 Vicarage Park



Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning For Open Space, Sport and Recreation

2.2 PPG 17, published in 2002, provides the national planning policy for open space provision. It states that standards for provision should be set locally. It requires that local authorities conduct assessments of need for open spaces, together with audits of existing provision and opportunities. Following from this, local authorities are required to identify deficiencies (and surpluses) of open space, and from that to derive the specific needs to remedy any such situations. This then allows planning authorities to incorporate policies to achieve this within DPDs. The companion document Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17 gives guidance on methodology for this process. This methodology is quite specific, and the typology of open spaces that it requires is different from that used by the 2007 Audit. The PPG17 typology has been used for this update. This updated audit forms one stage in the process required by PPG17.

2.3 PPG17 states that urban green spaces should be classified according to the typology proposed by the Urban Green Spaces Task Force, or a variation of it. The typology is as follows:

Table 1 PPG17 Typology

Typology for planning purposes and open space strategies	Primary purpose	More detailed classification for open space audits and academic research
Parks and Gardens	To provide areas of general recreation, community events and areas for wildlife	Urban parks, Country Parks, formal gardens (including designed landscapes)
Natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces, including woodland or urban forestry	To provide areas for native flora and fauna and informal recreation	Woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. downland, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), open and running water, wastelands (including disturbed ground), bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs, quarries, pits)
Green corridors	To provide safe areas for flora and fauna to populate and migrate. To provide areas for activities such as cycling, walking etc., These areas can include Canals and towpaths.	River and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes within towns and cities, pedestrian paths within towns and cities, rights of way and permissive paths
Outdoor sports facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces)	To provide formal areas for sporting activities including bowls, football, tennis and rugby.	Tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches (including artificial surfaces), golf courses, athletics tracks, school playing fields, other institutional playing fields, other outdoor sports areas
Amenity Greenspace (most commonly, but not necessarily, in housing areas)	To provide areas within communities for informal activities or for the enhancement of residential areas.	Informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, domestic gardens, village greens, other incidental space
Provision for children and teenagers	Areas designed for the purpose of play for younger children and youth shelters for young people.	Play areas (including LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs), skateboard parks, outdoor basketball goals, 'hanging out' areas (including teenage shelters)
Allotments, community gardens, urban farms	To provide areas for people who wish to grow their own produce	Allotments, community gardens, city (urban) farms
Cemeteries and Churchyards	To provide areas for quiet contemplation. These areas are also important for wildlife and conservation	Churchyards, cemeteries
Civic Spaces	Provide an area for more formal events within a settlement	Sea fronts (including promenade), civic squares (including plazas), market squares, pedestrian streets, other hard surfaced pedestrian areas

2.4 PPG17 also requires that existing open space is not built on unless an assessment has been undertaken that shows it is surplus to requirements. It also states that open spaces that are of high quality or particular value to the community should be given protection through policies in plans. This audit does not identify surplus sites or those deserving protection; these judgements can only follow from the assessment of needs, which will be conducted after this study.

The Six Acre Standard

2.5 Fields in Trust (FIT), formerly The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA), have put forward a generic national standard for the provision of recreational open space, known as the Six Acre Standard, set out in their publication, which is also entitled The Six Acre Standard (2001). It states that for each 1000 residents there should be 2.4 hectares (6 acres) total playing space comprising 1.6 hectares (4 acres) for outdoor sport and 0.8 hectares (2 acres) for children's play, the latter including either designated areas with a range of facilities or casual/informal playing space within housing areas.

2.6 The adopted local plan makes direct reference to the NPFA standards (see below). Whilst PPG17 strongly asserts that standards for provision should be set locally, the Six Acre Standard remains relevant as it is referred to in current development plan policy.

2.7 The Wyre Play Strategy (see below) makes reference to the NPFA typology of play spaces contained within the document The Six Acre Standard. This divides areas into Local Areas for Play (LAPs), Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs), with progressively increasing quantities of play equipment. LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs are given to have catchments of 60m, 240m and 600m respectively, and this is applied to equipped sites in the borough by the Wyre Play Strategy. This NPFA guidance can therefore be treated as best practice guidance which has been formally recognised by the council.

Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard

2.8 Natural England is the statutory body responsible for providing advice to government and local government on the natural environment. It has put forward the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGst) Model, which is referred to by PPG17. The ANGst Model advocates that in towns and cities: every home should be at least within 300m from their nearest 2ha area of natural greenspace; there should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home; there should be at least one accessible 100ha site within 5km; and there should be at least one accessible 500ha site within 10km.

2.9 The ANGSt model, whilst useful as an aspiration, has problems with definition (what areas should be considered to be “natural” and, if an area is not, does it imply that the area is not fulfilling a need?) There are also clear difficulties with the achievability of the model’s targets. Although these are the closest thing to a national standard that appears in PPG17, whilst these levels of provision may be an aspiration, they do not form part of any local standards, in advance of the assessment of needs which will follow on from this study.

The North West of England Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021

2.10 The adopted RSS forms the regional level part of the statutory development plan. Outside the Fleetwood-Thornton AAP area, the RSS provides the most recently adopted statutory development plan policy, and therefore its policies carry great weight. In addition, future policies of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs will have to be in conformity with the RSS policies. The review of legislation being undertaken by the new coalition government is likely to result in the scrapping of the RSS; however at the present time the legal position remains that RSS policies form part of the statutory development plan and therefore must be considered.

2.11 Policy DP9 requires plans and strategies to contribute to reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and to the provision of adaptation measures to climate change as an urgent priority.

2.12 Policy EM3 Green Infrastructure requires local authorities to conserve and manage existing green infrastructure, create new green infrastructure, and to enhance its functionality, quality, connectivity and accessibility. The importance of biodiversity, adaptation to climate change, the historic environment and links with regeneration are stressed.

2.13 Policy L1 requires plans and strategies to ensure provision for all members of the community of sport, recreation and cultural facilities; in doing so they must take account of the views of the local community and carry out assessments of needs in local communities. It requires that plans and strategies ensure that accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling is a central consideration.

Wyre Borough Council Adopted Local Plan

2.14 The Wyre Borough Local Plan was adopted in July 1999. A number of policies have been “saved” under direction of the Secretary of State, and these, together with the Fleetwood-Thornton Area Action Plan, provide the existing statutory development plan for the borough at local level. The Adopted Local Plan states that the Council has set as an interim target of provision for the urban area of an overall provision of 1.74 hectares per thousand population. This comprises a target of 1 hectare per thousand population of land for youth and adult use for the purposes of outdoor sport and 0.74 hectares per thousand population for children's play space.

2.15 The justification for this target provision of playspace is set out in the supporting text to adopted local plan policy TREC14. It notes:

- the context of the particular character of the urban area
- the target is viewed by the council as an appropriate interim target to aim for given the nature of and demand for facilities in the urban area
- the council will generally have regard to the guidance contained within the NPFA standards
- the council will endeavour to realise opportunities to establish new or improve existing play facilities
- the availability of the beach, seafront and riverside open space areas provides a fundamental reason why a lower figure is considered acceptable
- the local population structure is biased toward the older age ranges providing further justification
- trends in recreational activities provide further justification for the lower figure (though what these trends were and how they provide justification is not set out)
- recent substantial investment in indoor leisure facilities further justified a lower figure

2.16 Policy TREC 14 of the adopted local plan identified, on the Proposals Map, areas contributing to open space need in the urban area. Each of these sites has been considered by the audit. An appendix to the adopted local plan listed sites considered to contribute to the play space target; these sites are considered in this audit/update.

2.17 The adopted local plan identified a predicted shortfall of playing fields during the plan period, and in consequence allocated land for new public open spaces on three sites. Only one of these has been brought forward, a second site is in abandoned condition and is included in the audit as such, but the third site has been redeveloped for other uses and there is no purpose in including it within the audit.

2.18 There is a policy to protect existing sport and recreational facilities through the policy TREC8 of the adopted local plan. This policy also includes criteria for improvements to such facilities.

2.19 The adopted local plan included a policy to protect “defined open areas” on the edges of rural settlements. The defined sites have been considered as part of the update to the audit, but these sites are just farmland on the edge of settlements, providing a strategically important role in maintaining the open setting for the settlement; these do not contribute to recreational open space need and have not therefore been included in the audit.

Wyre Play Strategy 2007

2.20 The Wyre Play Strategy 2007 was produced by the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Team. It sets out a detailed and comprehensive play audit and assessment of equipped play areas throughout the Borough and sets a timescale for various actions to be completed. Its findings are informed by a number of consultations which identified the desires of particular groups. The programme of actions has been partly undertaken, and this audit reflects the updated situation where significant improvements or changes have been made to sites.

2.21 The Play Strategy includes a strategic vision for play in Wyre, which is to: ***develop a network of high quality, accessible, safe and creative play opportunities and facilities that contribute to thriving communities and enhancing the quality of life for all Wyre residents.***

2.22 Key conclusions of the Play Strategy were:

- There is demand for a greater provision of equipped play areas catering for a wider age range, to be met in some areas by enhancing provision on existing sites to extend a site's catchment;
- There is a need for a greater variety of equipment with more challenging equipment for older children;
- There is demand of multi-use play sites, with a range of facilities for different ages are provided at one location;
- Community led projects at West View People's Park and Hawthorne Park provide exemplars;
- The countryside and beaches provide opportunities for play;
- There is a deficiency of play provision in the rural communities; in some cases this can be met by enhancing provision to extend catchment areas;
- Barriers to children accessing opportunities include traffic, poor quality of provision, safety concerns and stranger danger;
- Existing skate park provision is commended and well-used, but there is demand for complementary provision of youth shelters and MUGAs.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 This report derives from the findings of the 2007 audit, combined with the additional surveying and desk study undertaken in 2009 to update the 2007 findings and to ensure that they are in compliance with PPG17. The methodology is therefore set out in two sections: that for the original 2007 audit and that for the update carried out in 2009.

2007 Audit

3.2 During May/June 2007 members of the Planning Policy Team conducted surveys of open space provision within settlement areas. All settlement areas were surveyed where these form part of a village or town; isolated groups of dwellings were not included.

3.3 PPG17 specifies 10 types of open space. However, for the purpose of the 2007 audit, the open space categories were classified so that comparisons could be made in relation to the Six Acre Standard. It therefore covered the following open space categories: **playing pitches** (including bowls, football, tennis and rugby), **dedicated children's / youth area** (including equipped playgrounds, skateboard parks and teenage shelters), **general recreational area** (including parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces), **areas NOT suitable for children's informal play** (including cemeteries and churchyards and civic spaces), **overall playspace provision** (including dedicated children / youth areas and areas for informal play provided by playing fields that are open to the public), **golf courses** and **allotments**. Golf

Picture 3 West View People's Park



courses and allotments were not included when making comparisons against the Six Acre Standard in the 2007 audit, on the grounds that they are privately owned and cannot be freely used. However, as valuable pieces of green infrastructure serving urban populations, they were included as separate categories and recorded in the audit so as to provide a true representation of open space availability within the borough.

3.4 For the purposes of the 2007 audit only areas of open space within settlements were audited; therefore the Wyre Estuary Country Park, beaches such as Pilling Sands and the Lancaster Canal were not included. Although it was acknowledged that these areas are valuable, they have benefit for seasonal visitors as well as the local community. Excluding these was intended to allow a truer representation of community open space within developments to be gained. For the same reason school playing fields were omitted from the audit calculations and were only included if they allowed general public access to their grounds.

3.5 During May/June 2007 members of Planning Policy Team visited open spaces within the Borough. Approximately 300 sites were visited, 250 of which were audited. The audit questionnaire used can be seen in Appendix 1. The results are included with those seen in Appendix 2, which also reflects the update of the audit.

3.6 Population figures for the 2007 audit were derived from mid-year population estimates from Lancashire County Council. These figures were used in order to calculate the amount of each type of open space per head of population within each settlement in the borough. These have been updated (see below).

2009 Update

3.7 In order to ensure strict compliance with the PPG17 requirements and to ensure that the issues would be identified in a way that would adequately inform the Core Strategy, the 2007 audit has been reassessed through a process consisting of a number of stages.

Picture 4 Tithebarn Street, Poulton



3.8 A desk-based study of sites was undertaken using aerial photographs and maps on Lancashire County Council's Mapzone system. This was used to identify sites which had been omitted altogether from the 2007 survey, in particular school playing fields and green corridors within/adjacent to urban areas. It was also used to help identify those sites which have multiple distinctive uses (where the presence of distinct uses may require the site to be divided, in particular to ensure accurate recording of the amount of equipped play space and outdoor sports facilities).

3.9 A desk-based reassessment of all sites against the PPG17 typology was undertaken, using evidence gathered in the 2007 audit. Sites where doubt

remained about the correct classification were identified.

3.10 A review was undertaken of sites protected or allocated by the saved policies of the Adopted Local Plan against the 2007 audit, by comparison of mapped sites in the two documents. Sites to be further investigated were identified.

3.11 Maps and aerial photographs were printed for all those sites requiring surveying, including sites which required dividing, and any sites where a doubt about the extent has been raised.

3.12 225 visits were then undertaken to sites where doubt remained about classification, where the site needed splitting into distinctive uses within the typology, and those where no previous survey had been undertaken (particularly school playing fields and green corridors within/adjacent to urban areas). Audit forms were completed where necessary and photographs taken.

3.13 It was not possible to determine the area of space occupied by green corridors, as being essentially linear features it would be meaningless to do so. However, green corridors within or adjacent to the urban areas have been identified as far as possible. In some cases these run through areas identified as other types of greenspace: this highlights the multi-functional nature of open space. The green corridors have been shown in such spaces notwithstanding their other functions: no double counting is involved as the green corridors are linear and have therefore not been included as areas in the calculations.

3.14 The information gained was retabulated and mapping on the GIS system was corrected in line with new information.

3.15 In the case of Barton, where most of the village lies outside the borough boundary, those sites providing open space lying outside the borough have not been included in the audit. Conversely, in Bilborough, where the great majority but not all of the settlement lies within the borough, the site lying adjacent to but outside of the borough boundary has remained included, as contributing to the needs of a settlement that is essentially within the borough.

3.16 Population figures have been derived from the mid-2007 ward estimates, with the populations for smaller settlements based on those used in the 2007 audit with the growth rate from the mid-2007 ward estimates applied to the census figure. This allows the raw hectares of each type of space to be related to the population of each settlement, giving an amount of each type of space per 1000 persons.

3.17 It was identified that a number of sites, specifically yacht and canal marinas and other water-based sites, did not fit easily into the PPG17 typology. As PPG17 allows variations to provide for the identification of additional types of site, it was decided that an additional type of site should be identified as part of the typology, to be known as "water-based recreational space", on the basis that such space was characteristic of the borough of Wyre. The typology used therefore includes this as an additional category. Appropriate sites were recategorized on the GIS system and in tables.

Picture 5 Sycamore Road, Bilborough



4 Audit Results

Picture 6 Taylors Lane pitch and play area, Pilling



4.1 Table 2 gives a summary of the amount of open space of each type within each settlement. The detailed results for individual sites, tabulated and mapped for each settlement, is shown in Appendix 2. Table 3 shows the amount of each type of space per 1000 persons by settlement.

Picture 7 Garden at St. Andrew's Church, Cleveleys



Table 2 Open space in Wyre, ha, by settlement and PPG17 typology

Settlement	Parks and gardens	Amenity greenspace	Outdoor sports (schools)	Golf	Outdoor sports	Allotments	Cemeteries and church yards	Natural and semi-natural green space	Children and teenagers (schools)	Children and teenagers	Green corridors	Civic spaces	Water-based recreational space	Total
Bisborrow	0.00	0.19	0.00	0.00	2.42	0.00	0.73	0.00	0.76	0.10	N/A	0.03	1.29	5.52
Caldar Vale	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00	1.13	0.00	0.42	0.00	0.48	0.00	N/A	0.06	0.00	2.30
Catterall	0.00	0.69	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11	N/A	0.00	0.00	2.80
Churchtown	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	0.00	0.86	0.00	0.27	0.03	N/A	0.07	0.00	1.81
Cleveleys	0.00	6.71	27.04	0.00	1.09	0.00	0.73	4.12	4.03	0.84	N/A	3.74	0.00	48.30
Fleetwood	15.53	13.70	11.71	50.34	23.38	0.67	7.47	15.39	5.74	2.62	N/A	0.84	11.60	158.99
Forton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.49	0.00	0.14	0.12	0.71	0.06	N/A	0.01	0.00	3.53
Garestang	0.00	2.34	6.73	53.49	9.64	0.24	1.63	4.11	4.94	0.33	N/A	0.42	6.39	90.26
Great Eccleston	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.00	2.53	0.00	0.64	0.00	1.10	0.04	N/A	0.13	0.00	4.79
Hambleton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.14	0.00	0.62	0.00	0.93	0.12	N/A	0.00	8.80	13.61
Inskip	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.70	0.00	0.48	0.28	N/A	0.00	0.00	1.64
Myerscough	10.98	0.00	0.00	18.77	14.70	0.00	0.00	1.75	0.00	0.00	N/A	0.00	0.00	46.20
Pilling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.11	0.00	1.27	0.00	1.16	0.14	N/A	0.00	0.00	4.68
Poulton-le-Fylde	3.17	7.52	10.68	19.17	13.86	0.14	3.46	1.05	7.92	0.57	N/A	0.21	0.00	67.75
Preesall & Knott End	0.00	0.53	5.44	35.59	2.92	0.00	0.61	0.00	0.97	0.04	N/A	0.48	0.00	46.58
Scorton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.00	0.49	0.00	0.15	0.05	N/A	0.01	0.00	1.25
St Michael's	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.44	0.00	0.45	0.02	N/A	0.00	0.00	1.87
Stalmine	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.00	3.53	0.00	0.14	0.00	0.69	0.05	N/A	0.00	0.00	4.57
Thornton	0.00	8.95	5.00	0.00	30.47	0.92	2.25	13.45	7.73	0.76	N/A	0.46	4.89	74.88
Borough total	29.68	41.51	66.6	177.36	117.52	1.97	22.6	39.99	38.51	6.16	N/A	6.46	32.97	561.33

Table 3 Open space in Wyre, ha per 1000 population, by settlement and PPG17 typology

Settlement	Parks and gardens	Amenity greenspace	Outdoor sports (schools)	Golf	Outdoor sports	Allotments	Cemeteries and church yards	Natural and semi-natural green space	Children and teenagers (schools)	Children and teenagers	Green corridors	Civic spaces	Water-based recreational space	Total
Blisborrow	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.00	1.58	0.00	0.48	0.00	0.50	0.07	N/A	0.02	0.84	3.61
Calder Vale	0.00	0.54	0.00	0.00	2.88	0.00	1.07	0.00	1.22	0.00	N/A	0.15	0.00	5.87
Catterall	0.00	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	N/A	0.00	0.00	1.31
Churchtown	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.67	0.00	2.48	0.00	0.78	0.09	N/A	0.20	0.00	5.22
Cleveleys	0.00	0.41	1.64	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.04	0.25	0.24	0.05	N/A	0.23	0.00	2.93
Fleetwood	0.56	0.50	0.42	1.82	0.85	0.02	0.27	0.56	0.21	0.09	N/A	0.03	0.42	5.75
Forton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.95	0.00	0.11	0.09	0.55	0.05	N/A	0.01	0.00	2.76
Garstang	0.00	0.35	1.02	8.11	1.46	0.04	0.25	0.62	0.75	0.05	N/A	0.06	0.97	13.68
Great Eccleston	0.00	0.17	0.00	0.00	1.24	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.54	0.02	N/A	0.06	0.00	2.35
Hambledon	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.89	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.26	0.03	N/A	0.00	2.49	3.85
Inskip	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.55	0.32	N/A	0.00	0.00	1.87
Myerscough	15.69	0.00	0.00	26.81	21.00	0.00	0.00	2.50	0.00	0.00	N/A	0.00	0.00	66.00
Pilling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.89	0.00	0.53	0.00	0.49	0.06	N/A	0.00	0.00	1.97
Poulton-le-Fylde	0.17	0.40	0.57	1.03	0.75	0.01	0.19	0.06	0.43	0.03	N/A	0.01	0.00	3.64
Preesall & Knott End	0.00	0.09	0.95	6.20	0.51	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.17	0.01	N/A	0.08	0.00	8.11
Scorton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50	0.00	1.34	0.00	0.41	0.14	N/A	0.03	0.00	3.42
St Michael's	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.00	1.22	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.68	0.03	N/A	0.00	0.00	2.84
Stalmine	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.00	4.57	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.89	0.06	N/A	0.00	0.00	5.91
Thornton	0.00	0.53	0.30	0.00	1.82	0.05	0.13	0.80	0.46	0.05	N/A	0.03	0.29	4.46
Borough average	0.27	0.38	0.61	1.63	1.08	0.02	0.21	0.37	0.35	0.06	N/A	0.06	0.30	5.34

4.2 The results only show absolute quantities and quantities per 1000 persons, and therefore do not in themselves indicate the acceptability or otherwise of the levels of provision. However, although up-to-date standards for the amount of open space of each type that there ought to be within each settlement have yet to be determined, the figures can be assessed against the targets set out in the supporting text to the saved policies of the adopted local plan. The amount of space of each type is considered further for each type of open space against these targets in the sections below.

Picture 8 Wyre Estuary Country Park



4.3 Assessments of the population within specific distances of individual types of open space have not been used in this updated audit, with the exception of provision for children, because the task of determining the acceptable distances will be part of the determination of local standards, which will follow from further study. However, the locations of the individual open spaces have been mapped by open space type, and their distribution can be seen in the maps in Appendices 2 and 3. Notable features of the distributions are discussed for each type of open space below.

4.4 Assessment of quality of the facilities cannot relate to any particular standard in advance of formal assessment of need and the adoption

of standards by the council, which will follow from this updated audit. However, quality information is included in the audit and the results are tabulated in detail in Appendix 2; deriving from this, any noteworthy features of the survey are set out in relation to the individual types of open space below. However, more useful is qualitative appraisal of the sites. Where a specific opportunity for improvement or specific current failing has been noted, this has been identified in the notes column of the tables in Appendix 2, and recurrent findings from this information are considered in relation to the individual types of open space below.

Parks and Gardens

4.5 There are only a small number of formal parks and gardens in the borough. These vary in nature from the linear Marine Gardens in Fleetwood to the more traditional Victorian urban park at Memorial Park in Fleetwood and the smaller Vicarage Park in Poulton. The typology has been applied generously to open spaces in Wyre Borough; it might be expected that the larger formal parks and gardens as defined by PPG17 would offer refreshments for visitors, but at none of the spaces in the borough are visitors so obliged.

Picture 9 Jubilee Gardens



4.6 There is potential for areas to change from one typology to another over time. Jubilee Gardens was once a formal park with a wide range of visitor attractions based on the seaside visitor economy. The area is now classified as amenity greenspace as the demand for facilities has fallen, but has been used to provide a youth and children's facility, and to retain a bowling green; the area also connects to the award-winning promenade opposite, with its cafe. The key in such cases is to retain the maximum functionality possible. There is also the potential for sites previously considered under other typologies to improve to meet the criteria of being considered as a formal park. Although not recorded as such in the current audit, the newly developed and still immature/incomplete sites at Hawthorne Park and West View People's Park may meet these criteria in the future.

4.7 The remaining parks show opportunities for restoration and improvement, in particular to introduce new recreational opportunities in place of those previously abandoned. The council has a continual programme of improvement and has made some major investments in facilities at Marine Gardens, Vicarage Park and elsewhere. Other opportunities are being sought to secure improvements that could not be justified by the parks alone, by incorporating new built facilities within adjoining new developments.

4.8 The quantity of parks and gardens in each settlement is shown in Table 2, and a listing of each site is shown in Table 4 below. However, the quantity is perhaps less important than the quality of the offer. The audit records quality data on each site in the standard way in Appendix 2, and opportunities for improvement are



Picture 10 Mount Gardens

included in the Table 4 below.

4.9 Of particular importance is Mount Gardens, recently recorded by English Heritage on its Register of Parks and Gardens. Juxtaposed with Mount Gardens is Marine Gardens, subject of proposals for a major new scheme of improvement in conjunction with the Fleetwood Masterplan and "Sea Change" funding.

Picture 11 Marine Gardens from Mount Gardens



Table 4 Parks and Gardens

Site	Settlement	Area	Features/notes
Jean Stansfield Memorial Park	Poulton	2.18	Opportunity to include better features, e.g cafe/kiosk, toilets, outdoor events space
Civic Centre Grounds	Poulton	0.99	Opportunity to improve accessibility for the public. High quality space, considerable biodiversity value, used for weddings
Memorial Park	Fleetwood	6.15	Impressive avenues of mature trees, memorial. Opportunity for restoration of historic features to high quality facility capable of marketing as visitor attraction: potential for café, restored gardens, removal of fencing to pond, restoration of tennis courts etc
Marine Gardens	Fleetwood	15.53	Boating and model yacht lakes, picnic area, crazy golf, gardens providing setting for Marine Hall. Opportunities for further improvement, being taken forward with Sea Change funding. Strategically important site within Fleetwood Masterplan
Mount Gardens	Fleetwood	2.94	Landmark site, now included in Register of Parks and Gardens. Includes The Mount listed building
Euston Park	Fleetwood	0.35	Obelisk, former fountain, shelter. Small park provides setting for adjacent listed buildings

Site	Settlement	Area	Features/notes
Myerscough College gardens	Myerscough	10.98	High quality parks around college; excellent biodiversity resource. Provides for staff, campus residents and students, also general public route through.

Amenity greenspace and provision for children and teenagers

4.10 Although these are separate classifications within the PPG17 typology, they are considered together in this section as both types of space contribute to the needs for informal play. The results for each are set out separately in Tables 2 and 3; however, the figures are summed in the separate Table 5 below, which gives results for each settlement in a way that can be compared with the council's target.

Table 5 Amenity greenspace and provision for children

	Provision for children (schools), ha	Provision for children (schools), ha/1000	Provision for children (other), ha	Provision for children (other), ha/1000	Amenity green space, ha	Amenity green space, ha/1000	Space contributing to play space need (excluding schools), ha	Space contributing to play space need (excluding schools), ha/1000
Bilsborrow	0.76	0.50	0.10	0.07	0.19	0.12	0.29	0.19
Calder Vale	0.48	1.22	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.54	0.21	0.54
Catterall	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.05	0.69	0.32	0.80	0.37
Churchtown	0.27	0.78	0.03	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.09
Cleveleys	4.03	0.24	0.84	0.05	6.71	0.41	7.55	0.46
Fleetwood	5.74	0.21	2.62	0.09	13.70	0.50	16.32	0.59
Forton	0.71	0.55	0.06	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.05
Garstang	4.94	0.75	0.33	0.05	2.34	0.35	2.67	0.40
Great Eccleston	1.10	0.54	0.04	0.02	0.35	0.17	0.39	0.19
Hambleton	0.93	0.26	0.12	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.03
Inskip	0.48	0.55	0.28	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.28	0.32
Myerscough	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pilling	1.16	0.49	0.14	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.06
Poulton-le-Fylde	7.92	0.43	0.57	0.03	7.52	0.40	8.09	0.43
Preesall and Knott End	0.97	0.17	0.04	0.01	0.53	0.09	0.57	0.10
Scorton	0.15	0.41	0.05	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.14
St Michael's	0.45	0.68	0.02	0.03	0.16	0.24	0.18	0.27
Stalmine	0.69	0.89	0.05	0.06	0.16	0.21	0.21	0.27
Thornton	7.73	0.46	0.76	0.05	8.95	0.53	9.71	0.55
Borough totals/average	38.51	0.35	6.16	0.06	41.51	0.38	47.67	0.44

4.11 The results for children's and teenagers' provision has been divided into schools and all other provision. In the 2007 audit, the schools were not included. Schools have been added to the survey in this update, in accordance with the requirements of PPG17; however, the amount of space has been divided from other provision because, at the present time, none of the school grounds have genuine public access. For consistency, primary school grounds have been assessed as provision for children and teenagers, reflecting their prime use for play activities, whilst secondary school grounds have been assessed as outdoor sports facilities, reflecting their prime use for that type of activity.

4.12 This update includes dedicated children's play spaces as a distinct category within the PPG17 typology, as required, but as the results in Table 5 show, these spaces tend to cover very small areas, and the area they occupy is less important than their distribution and the amount and range of equipment they provide. The importance of schools in providing dedicated play spaces for children is highlighted; the amount of provision for schools is controlled by education legislation and consideration of those standards is outside the remit of this study. The Wyre Play Strategy aims to improve provision for play by rationalising the number of equipped play spaces whilst providing an improved standard and range of equipment at those retained.

Picture 12 Cottam Hall play area



4.13 In relation to play space considered more generally, the amount can be considered in relation to the Adopted Local Plan target of 0.74ha/1000 population in each settlement, and to the NPFA recommendation of 0.8ha/1000. One difficulty is that the NPFA description of areas considered against the children's playspace standard, and the corresponding Adopted Local Plan description, does not easily correspond with the PPG17

typology. The 2007 Audit included public sports pitches as areas suitable for informal play, which was not intended by the NPFA definition and skews the results, as well as resulting in double counting. The Adopted Local Plan listed sites that were considered to contribute, and included within the list large sites of natural and semi-natural greenspace such as Pheasants Wood, and some of the formal parks; again this is not in accordance with the NPFA guidance. This update has assessed children's play space as comprising amenity greenspace (open spaces that are generally within residential areas and therefore provide a local informal facility that can be used by children), plus dedicated (equipped) play spaces.

4.14 Combining those columns from Table 3 as shown in Table 5 and comparing against the target of 0.74ha/1000 shows that all settlements fall some way short of the target. Of the urban areas, provision in Fleetwood (0.59ha/1000) and Thornton (0.55ha/1000) are closest to meeting the target, whilst Garstang (0.40ha/1000), Poulton-le-Fylde (0.43ha/1000) and Cleveleys (0.46ha/1000) are further adrift. It is important to note that these results do not indicate whether play spaces are sufficiently accessible or of acceptable quality, and again it is must be understood that this quantity target is from the Local Plan adopted in 1999, and requires reassessment.

Picture 13 Wolsey Close, Cleveleys



4.15 Although the council has no established accessibility standards, reference can be made to the NPFA standards to which the adopted local plan states that the council will have regard, and which are also used to classify sites in the Wyre Play Strategy. This recommends that unequipped areas suitable for informal play be located within a 1 minute walk of home (100 metres via pedestrian routes or 60 metres straight line distance), whilst equipped play areas should be within 5 minutes (400 metres or 240 metres straight line distance) and neighbourhood equipped areas (featuring MUGAs) should be within 15 minutes (1km or 600 metres straight line distance).

The distribution of informal and equipped spaces is shown in appendix 3, and the application of these catchments to the distribution of these spaces is shown in Appendix 4. Clearly, access to open spaces within 60 metres of dwellings is difficult to achieve, even in new developments, and although adopted planning policies have made a contribution in providing good coverage in newly-built estates, the council will need to reconsider whether it is realistic to retain regard to this element of the NPFA guidance. It is particularly hard to retrofit any reasonable form of local provision to areas developed privately in the 1930s or earlier, such as large parts of Cleveleys, where spaces are absent altogether. However, planning policies have been successful in ensuring that spaces are included in new developments, and the results can be seen in developments throughout the borough. The continuous improvement programme following from the Wyre Play Strategy is intended to allow equipped play spaces to serve a larger catchment. The catchments shown for the equipped play spaces in Appendix 4 assume each space is upgraded to the amount of equipment considered necessary to serve 240 metre catchments; whilst the details of play equipment are beyond the scope of this audit, this process is continuing as part of the Play Strategy programme. Coverage by catchments of equipped spaces is also sporadic, with some areas well covered (e.g. parts of Fleetwood) and others less so (e.g. Thornton east of the railway, and west of Fleetwood).

Road). Some sites have been further upgraded to serve a 600m catchment and this programme also is ongoing; however, these catchments only really apply to older children and have not therefore been considered separately within this audit update.

Picture 14 Carleton Green



4.16 In respect of the quality information recorded in the audit, and in particular the qualitative assessment of sites set out in Appendix 2, several issues recur. Several new areas of amenity space include unnecessary mounds which make informal ball games difficult and which obscure natural



Picture 15 Slinger Road, Cleveleys

surveillance. Similarly, a number of relatively new amenity spaces have sporadic landscaping across the space which has a similar effect, particularly after a few years when the vegetation has thickened. Many more mature spaces are flat areas of grassland within housing areas, but often with "no ball games" signs, apparently to prevent instances of children running into roads chasing balls or causing damage to vehicles. Suitable fencing would make such areas greatly more useful for children and would eliminate any problems from sites being juxtaposed with roads. Other sites have areas where water collects and ground becomes muddy, in the worst cases completely preventing access to the sites. By contrast, most school sites provide very high quality facilities, though none allows general community use.

Picture 16 Bentley Green, Thornton



Outdoor sports facilities

4.17 Under the PPG17 classification outdoor sports includes, as well as pitch sports, spaces used as formal bowling greens and tennis courts, golf courses and school sports fields. As previously explained, secondary school playing fields are considered within this category whilst primary school fields are classified as provision for children. These spaces have not been considered together in terms of hectarage, as the sheer size of golf courses in relation to other spaces, and the sporadic distribution of secondary schools, would shroud the useful findings of the survey.

Picture 17 Fleetwood Golf Club



The results are therefore set out within three categories: golf courses, outdoor sports (schools) and outdoor sports facilities (which includes all other types of provision), shown in Table 6 below. During the survey of the number of pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and other facilities have been identified and are shown recorded in Appendix 2; these are shown separately in Table 7.

Table 6 Outdoor sports provision

Settlement	Golf courses, ha	Golf provision, ha/1000	Outdoor sports (schools), ha	Outdoor sports (schools), ha/1000	Other outdoor sports, ha	Other outdoor sports, ha/1000
Bilsborrow	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.42	1.58
Calder Vale	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.13	2.88
Catterall	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	0.94
Churchtown	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.58	1.67
Cleveleys	0.00	0.00	27.04	1.64	1.09	0.07
Fleetwood	50.34	1.82	11.71	0.42	23.38	0.85
Forton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.49	1.95

Settlement	Golf courses, ha	Golf provision, ha/1000	Outdoor sports (schools), ha	Outdoor sports (schools), ha/1000	Other outdoor sports, ha	Other outdoor sports, ha/1000
Garstang	53.49	8.11	6.73	1.02	9.64	1.46
Great Ecclestone	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.53	1.24
Hambleton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.14	0.89
Inskip	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.20
Myerscough	18.77	26.81	0.00	0.00	14.70	21.00
Pilling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.11	0.89
Poulton-le-Fylde	19.17	1.03	10.68	0.57	13.86	0.75
Preesall & Knott End	35.59	6.20	5.44	0.95	2.92	0.51
Scorton	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.55	1.50
St Michael's	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	1.22
Stalmine	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.53	4.57
Thornton	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.30	30.47	1.82
Borough total/average	177.36	1.63	66.60	0.61	117.52	1.08

Table 7 Sports facilities by settlement

Settlement	Pitches	Bowling greens	Tennis courts	Other facilities
Bilsborrow	2	2	0	
Calder Vale	1	0	0	
Catterall	2	0	0	Skate ramp
Churchtown	1	0	0	
Cleveleys	12	4	2	Athletics ground
Fleetwood	34	10	7	Golf course, 2 pitch and putt courses, skate park, bmx track (also indoor sports centre with swimming pool)
Forton	2	1	0	
Garstang	12	2	6	Golf course, skate park (also indoor sports centre and separate indoor swimming pool)
Great Ecclestone	3	1	0	
Hambleton	1	1	2	
Inskip	1	1	0	
Myerscough	11	0	0	Golf course, separate putting green (also indoor sports centre)
Pilling	2	3	1	
Poulton-le-Fylde	21	2	9	Golf course (also indoor sports centre with swimming pool)

Settlement	Pitches	Bowling greens	Tennis courts	Other facilities
Preesall & Knott End	10	2	4	Golf course (also indoor sports centre)
Scorton	1	1	0	
St Michael's	1	1	2	
Stalmine	4	1	0	
Thornton	25	5	7	(Also indoor sports centre)
Borough total	146	37	40	

Picture 18 NPL Bowling Club, Thornton



4.18 The amount of space for outdoor sports generally, other than golf and for schools, varies between settlements. On average across the borough's settlements, the target of 1 ha per 1000 persons from the adopted local plan is met. The target is met in the majority of rural settlements, though there a number falling short: Inskip and Preesall/Knott End are dramatically short, whilst Pilling, Hambleton and Catterall are only marginally so. Myerscough is greatly in excess of the standard, but this relates to the particular emphasis of the college on outdoor- and sport-related courses. Of the urban areas, Cleveleys stands out as being dramatically short of space, having no playing fields for pitch sports other than those within Rossall School. Poulton has a significant

shortfall, and Fleetwood has a shortfall but less significant. An issue for consideration is the determination of the standards for accessibility; in particular, whether a shortage of provision in one settlement can be offset by an excess against the target in an adjoining settlement. Examples where this might be considered are: Cleveleys and Thornton, though there would remain a deficit if considered jointly; whether the shortage in Preesall/Knott End should be considered to be offset by the very generous provision in Stalmine; and Catterall where the shortfall might be considered offset by provision in either Churchtown or Garstang, or both. The distribution of outdoor sports facilities within the urban areas is shown in Appendix 3, and shows the location of the larger sports fields around the fringes of the towns, with particularly significant the series of fields on the western side of Thornton (i.e. within reach from Cleveleys).

Picture 19 Hudson Park, home of Garstang RUFC



4.19 The amount of space dedicated to sports facilities for schools in each settlement is related to the presence of a secondary school in that settlement. As with primary school provision, the requirements for space provided by secondary schools is dependent on education-related legislation. Notable from the results is the larger quantity of space per 1000 persons in Cleveleys; this relates to the private Rossall School, the only secondary school within or adjacent to Cleveleys, and which is located between Cleveleys and Fleetwood.

Picture 20 Millfield High School, Thornton



4.20 Golf courses are located adjacent to only a few settlements in the borough. Each serves a significant catchment, generally larger than the individual settlement. The unusually large provision at Myerscough reflects the provision at Myerscough College of courses related to golf management and greenkeeping. Therefore, although there are no golf courses in Thornton or Cleveleys, the course at Poulton is close to large parts of Thornton, whilst the course at Fleetwood is accessible from Cleveleys. However, decisions on standards of quantity and accessibility to be adopted will follow. With one exception, the courses all appear to be high quality facilities although the assessment has been made using the standard survey form and is therefore not a technical assessment of the standard of golfing facilities. The exception is the pitch-and-putt facility at Marine Gardens, Fleetwood, which has suffered from a lack of maintenance connected to poor levels of usage.

Allotments

4.21 The borough has a limited number of sites which are owned by the council, supplemented by a private site and one controlled by Garstang Town Council. Table 8 sets out some details about the sites in the borough for each urban settlement. There are no formal sites in the villages, although there may be individual sites where a single piece of land is rented privately.

Table 8 Allotments

	No. of sites	Area	No. of plots
Fleetwood	1	0.67	22
Thornton	3	0.92	44
Cleveleys	0	0	0
Poulton-le-Fylde	1	0.14	6
Garstang	1	0.24	3
Borough total	6	1.99	75

4.22 The number of plots can also be compared with the number in other boroughs. A comparison is shown in Table 9. It should be noted that the data for other boroughs is not wholly up to date. This shows clearly that, despite the urban concentration of the population of the borough and the high density of much of that population, Wyre has a dramatically lower provision of allotments than most other boroughs in Lancashire.

Picture 21 Fleetwood Road allotments, Thornton

Table 9 Allotment provision by borough

Borough	No. of plots	No.of plots/1000 persons
Wyre	75	0.68
Fylde	306	4.00
Preston	510	3.86
Chorley	110	1.05
South Ribble	140	1.31
Ribble Valley	121	2.07
Lancaster	673	4.68
Average per borough	276	2.52

4.23 Whilst need will be formally assessed as a follow up to this audit, the pressing requirement for additional provision is demonstrated by the council's own waiting list, which has 276 individuals waiting, with the longest waiting almost 6 years. This in itself suggests substantial latent demand, as a wait so long is likely to be enough to discourage many potential applicants.

Cemeteries and churchyards

4.24 Cemeteries and churchyards, although beneficial in terms of the open space thereby provided, exist essentially for a different purpose. The audit has identified those spaces that contribute in some way to open space need and allowed a quantity of space in each settlement to be calculated in Tables 2 and 3, repeated below in Table 10. The quantity cannot be compared with any standards at present, but it is unlikely that a standard could be justified for the provision of such space on the basis of its ancillary benefit as an area of open space.

Table 10 Cemeteries and churchyards

Settlement	Area	Area/1000 persons
Bilsborrow	0.73	0.48
Calder Vale	0.42	1.07
Catterall	0.00	0.00
Churchtown	0.86	2.48
Cleveleys	0.73	0.04
Fleetwood	7.47	0.27
Forton	0.14	0.11
Garstang	1.63	0.25
Great Eccleston	0.64	0.31
Hambleton	0.62	0.18
Inskip	0.70	0.80
Myerscough	0.00	0.00
Pilling	1.27	0.53

Settlement	Area	Area/1000 persons
Poulton-le-Fylde	3.46	0.19
Preesall & Knott End	0.61	0.11
Scorton	0.49	1.34
St Michael's	0.44	0.67
Stalmine	0.14	0.18
Thornton	2.25	0.13
Borough total / average	22.60	0.21

4.25 Generally, the rural settlements have a larger amount of space devoted to cemeteries and churchyards per head than the urban settlements. Larger cemeteries are located in the urban settlements, except Cleveleys which relies on provision in Thornton. The absence of provision in Catterall may be considered balanced by the provision in the adjacent village of Churchtown, the churchyard of which provides the setting for the grade 1 listed St. Helen's Church.

4.26 The quality element of the audit identifies that in general most cemeteries and churchyards provide very good quality space. Unclear from the tabulated results is that many sites have very good biodiversity value. Particularly notable is Fleetwood Cemetery, where the site is managed in a particular way to support the Purple Ramping Fumitory, a rare protected species found at the site. There are a small number of sites where the churchyard is just a grassed area around the building; these represent opportunities to create more of a garden, for the purpose, as described in the typology, of "quiet contemplation".

Picture 22 St. Hilda's Church, Bilsborrow



Natural and semi-natural greenspace

4.27 Table 11 sets out the distribution of natural and semi-natural greenspaces adjacent to or serving settlements within the borough. The distribution of natural and semi-natural greenspace is variable, essentially opportunity-based. Of key importance are the two wooded areas in Thornton Cleveleys: the Towers and Pheasants Wood; also the country park at Stanah and Fleetwood Nature Park. Other areas of space are generally smaller in scale. Particularly noteworthy is the number of ponds (it should be noted that several areas which are primarily amenity greenspace also include a pond as a feature); ponds are a defining characteristic of the borough, and their retention has usually been required within development sites. The coastal flats and estuary provide an important, internationally-designated strategic resource, local to the main urban areas, and although they have not been included as areas of space within the audit, they are clearly of relevance when the need for space and accessibility to it is assessed.

Picture 23 Fleetwood Nature Park



Table 11 Natural and semi-natural greenspaces

Site	Settlement	Description	Size, ha	Remarks
Swan Pond	Cleveleys	Pond with trees	0.26	Mature site
The Hermitage	Cleveleys	Pond	0.65	Within estate
The Towers	Cleveleys	Mature woodland with pond	2.13	Strategically important site
Moorhen Place	Cleveleys	Stream	0.31	In modern estate
Swan Drive	Cleveleys	Pond and stream	0.46	In modern estate
Anchorsholme Lane	Cleveleys	Pond	0.09	In modern estate
Fleetwood Nature Park	Fleetwood	Large area of marsh with lakes	15.39	Inaccessible
House Field Pond (The Pit)	Forton	Pond	0.14	
Millennium Green	Garstang	Uncut grassland, hedgerows, copses and river bank	4.08	Strategic site: award-winning
The Toppings	Garstang	Pond	0.17	High quality site of great biodiversity benefit, but hidden, with gated entrance

Site	Settlement	Description	Size, ha	Remarks
Crow Wood	Myerscough	Mature wood	1.75	Within college grounds
Chew Gardens	Poulton-le-Fylde	Pond and surrounding landscaping in manner of village green	0.68	Within modern estate
The Laurels	Poulton-le-Fylde	Pond	0.17	In modern estate
Buckingham Way	Poulton-le-Fylde	Small woodland area	0.17	Neglected. Previous access route blocked: opportunity to reinstate
Wyre Estuary Country Park (Wyre Road)	Thornton	Picnic site set in mix of uncut grassland and hedges/trees	0.46	Identified for woodland planting as part of council's urban woodland creation scheme
Wyre Estuary Country Park (Stanah)	Thornton	Grassland, hedges and trees providing setting for estuary	6.15	Strategic site: visitor centre, picnic tables, views across estuary. Identified for woodland planting as part of council's urban woodland creation scheme
Branksome Ave / Linden Ave	Thornton	Pond, grassland, overgrown hedges	1.94	Identified for woodland planting as part of council's urban woodland creation scheme
Pheasants Wood	Thornton	Mature wood with pond	1.53	Strategic site
East of Amounderness Way	Thornton	Wetland strip with reeds and hedges	1.28	Identified for woodland planting as part of council's urban woodland creation scheme
Thornton YMCA Leisure Centre	Thornton	Wooded embankment and stream	0.65	Neglected
Hawthorne Park	Thornton	Newly-created area of wetland with planting	0.48	Immature site
Bourne Way	Thornton	Overgrown hedges, grass and scrub	0.86	Neglected but identified for woodland planting as part of council's urban woodland creation scheme. Need for restoration of link to adjacent estate.
Graveners Field	Thornton	Pond	0.10	Very good biodiversity, but needs cleaning

4.28 In terms of the quantity of such spaces in relation to each settlement, the absence of semi-natural greenspaces within rural settlements is less likely to be of consequence, as the public rights-of-way network provides access to some form of natural space beyond the settlement edge in the case of virtually all settlements. Table 11 does not include features which do not form discrete areas, so for Fleetwood and Cleveleys, the beach must be also considered; for Fleetwood and Thornton, the estuary must be considered; for Garstang the River Wyre must be considered. Considering the data in Table 11 and these further considerations, Poulton is the urban settlement with the smallest amount of space.

4.29 The majority of natural and semi-natural greenspaces are high quality sites. Detailed results appear in Appendix 2. At some sites, maintenance of ponds was an issue. A small number of sites appear to be almost entirely abandoned to nature, and require management. The council's programme of urban woodland creation schemes will enhance six areas by the planting of native tree species to form urban woodland areas, including some of the more neglected sites.

Picture 24 Graveners Field, Thornton



4.30 In most cases natural and semi-natural greenspaces adjoin or are within housing areas; similarly the resource provided by the beach is within easy access on foot from large parts of the urban areas of Fleetwood and Cleveleys. The accessibility problem of Fleetwood Nature Park, at present only accessible via a long access road, will be solved when the adjacent Fleetwood Docks site is redeveloped for housing. As there are no current standards for accessibility to this type of space, the issue remains to be considered as part of the forthcoming study.

4.31 There is a programme to provide a number of additional accessible woodlands in the borough, under the Urban Woodland Creation Scheme. Five of the above sites will be affected, with two additional areas converted from amenity greenspace. It is intended that the areas will include picnic tables, bench seats, improved footpaths and information boards. The areas will be planted with native species to create mixed broad-leaved woodland that is intended to provide habitat for nationally important species including bats and the song thrush. This programme will therefore make a major contribution to the provision of this type of space.

Green Corridors

4.32 The quantity of green corridors cannot be measured by area, and their length can be misleading as short lengths can be of great value, whilst longer lengths might only be useful if they have high connectivity. The length of green corridors in an area is likely to depend on the existence of routes where there is an opportunity to create them, and whether that opportunity has been taken up. The distribution of green corridors in the main urban area, and those in Garstang/Catterall, is shown on the maps in Appendices 2 and 3. The main feature of the distribution is how disconnected the routes are, although in certain areas quiet roads can provide some of the functionality of green corridors and provide links between them. The distribution is therefore an incomplete picture. However, starkly clear is the absence of routes altogether from large parts of all of the urban settlements. The strategic importance of the promenade in and between Cleveleys and Fleetwood, the sea defence at Knott End, and the Lancaster Canal and River Wyre in Garstang is notable.

Picture 25 Promenade/sea defence, Knott End



4.33 The quality of these routes is highly variable. In particular, some routes are very high quality, such as those following the routes of natural watercourses or the canal, where there is continuous habitat along the route which allows for wildlife migration. Others are green in name only; whilst allowing for sustainable access by pedestrians and cyclists they follow constricted routes between developed sites with little room for biodiversity. Some sites have specific problems with drainage or poor surfacing; some, particularly in Fleetwood, are affected by graffiti, litter or dog fouling. There are opportunities to make several routes much more useful by means of quality

Picture 26 Poulton town centre to Garstang Road West



improvements such as the provision or improvement of signage, better lighting, designating quiet roads as connectors between green corridors to provide longer routes (for example safer routes to school), improved landscaping and removal of obstructions. On a wider scale, there is an opportunity to create a strategic network of such routes: a strategic network need not necessarily include long or inter-urban routes, but instead could have coverage and connectivity throughout each urban settlement.

4.34 The nature of green corridors is that they themselves provide additional accessibility. But access to some routes is compromised by the design of developments around them. Opportunities to improve accessibility to green corridors is often difficult to achieve without purchase and reconfiguration of an adjoining property; nevertheless there are opportunities to use this method to provide additional links to green corridors from housing areas. It also highlights the importance of designing developments to face towards such routes; there exist some examples of very bad layouts of new developments which back on to important green corridors, such as the Lancaster Canal.

Picture 27 Lancaster Canal



4.35 Where green corridors exist they do provide important linkages for pedestrians and cyclists, and some provide beneficial linkages for wildlife by providing corridors of particular habitat. Particularly notable are the role of green corridors providing linkages between Thornton and Cleveleys across the A585 trunk road whilst avoiding the heavily-trafficked road junctions, the role of green corridors providing connections in the Carleton Green estate, with its perimeter road design, and the promenade between Cleveleys and Fleetwood.

Civic space

Picture 28 Cleveleys Promenade



4.36 Civic spaces provide focal points within settlements, usually in the centres. This may be for a particular type of gathering, such as at a war memorial, or may be for general pedestrian use or outdoor markets such as within town centre areas. The distribution reflects the existence of either pedestrianised shopping areas or war memorials, but also in Wyre due to the particular nature of the borough with its coast, the main promenade areas provide important civic space. Only those promenade areas which are used in the way described by the PPG17 typology are included in this category; those sections which just form linear paths between places are listed as green corridors. There are also some small hard-surfaced areas which function as small meeting places. The sites included are listed in Table 12 below:

Picture 29 Marsh Mill



Table 12 Civic spaces

Name of space	Area, ha	Remarks
Memorial Gardens, Bilsborrow	0.02	
Lancaster Road, Bilsborrow	0.01	
War memorial, Calder Vale	0.06	
Owd Will's, Churchtown	0.07	
Cleveleys Promenade	3.74	Award-winning space
Pocket Park, Fleetwood	0.03	
Freeport, Fleetwood	0.81	Resembles pedestrianised town centre streets
War memorial, Forton	0.01	
Pat Seed Memorial, Garstang	0.04	
High Street, Garstang	0.03	
Booths, Garstang	0.35	New square; links supermarket to town centre
Village Square, Great Eccleston	0.13	
Market Place/Church Street, Poulton	0.21	
Knott End Esplanade	0.44	
War memorial, Sandy Lane Preesall	0.04	
War memorial, Scorton	0.01	
War memorial, Thornton	0.16	

Name of space	Area, ha	Remarks
Marsh Mill, Thornton	0.21	Squares providing setting for craft shops and windmill
Burn Naze, Thornton	0.09	
Borough total	6.46	

Picture 30 Fleetwood Freeport



4.37 The sites listed above mostly represent high quality spaces. They include some high quality town centre spaces, notably at Poulton, Freeport, Marsh Mill and the new Booths at Garstang; the last three of these are related to private developments but have created effectively public space. Lacking such spaces are the town centres of Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Garstang; in the latter two traffic management schemes have lessened the impact of traffic but have not provided space which can be considered to fulfil the functions described in the PPG17 typology.

Picture 31 Booths, Garstang



Water-based recreational space

4.38 This additional category within the typology has been included for the purpose of recording the various canal marinas, yacht marinas, fishing lakes and other actively-used water-based facilities, none of which easily falls into the PPG17 typology and which are numerous enough to be considered a distinctive feature of the borough. It does not include the natural ponds which occur throughout the borough and which are in most cases included within the natural and semi-natural greenspace category.

4.39 Due to the nature of the borough with its coast and canal, there are facilities in the form of marinas which provide for water-based recreation, whether for sport or pleasure-cruising. Such facilities have been included within this survey without attempting to make crude and false distinctions between sport and pleasure cruising. Marinas on the canal are included similarly for consistency. In addition to the formal marinas, less formal areas for the mooring of boats exist, in the form of jetties and moorings. Fishing lakes provide another type of recreational facility based on water. Taken all together, such facilities make a considerable and distinct contribution to recreational open space in the borough. The sites are listed in Table 13 below. Moorings along the general course of the canal have not been included in this, as they do not occupy an area as such, and therefore regard should be had to the existence of moorings along the actual canal course within Garstang and Bilsborrow, over and above the results of the survey.

Picture 32 Fleetwood Marina



Table 13 Water-based recreational spaces

Settlement	Area, ha	Remarks
Barton Grange Marina, Bilsborrow	1.29	New canal boat facility
Fleetwood Marina	4.02	Within dock; access at high tide through dock gates
Bridge House Marina, Garstang	2.14	Canal marina
Garstang Marina	4.25	Canal marina
Hambleton Fisheries	7.46	Extensive fishing lakes complex
Wardley's Creek, Hambleton	1.34	Yacht moorings on tidal creek
Yacht Club, Thornton	4.89	Jetties on estuary providing yacht moorings
Borough total	25.39	

4.40 There are three self-contained canal marinas, with additional ad-hoc mooring points on various other parts of the canal. The port of Fleetwood includes a marina for sea-going craft within the dock area, whilst further up the estuary there are a large number of individual jetties providing moorings at Skippool and a smaller number at Wardley's Creek, Hambleton. These have been included in the audit but offer a different type of facility from other types of space. Similarly, the fishing lakes at Hambleton provide a distinct but beneficial facility.

4.41 The provision of these types of space is inevitably opportunity-based. Whether additional facilities could be provided depends on the existence of potential sites. Provision of further moorings on and around the estuary is constrained by potential impact on wildlife within the internationally-designated site. Further canal-based facilities would depend on the identification of suitable sites in sustainable locations. Fishing lakes are often more easily sited away from settlements. The inner dock at Fleetwood currently remains in some use for the fishing fleet, but any spare capacity may offer the opportunity to develop further recreational use.

Picture 33 Wardley's Creek, Hambleton



5 Summary and conclusions

5.1 This updated audit has identified the distribution of open spaces in the borough according to the PPG17 typology. It has related the amounts of each type of space to the population of each settlement, to provide an amount of each per 1000 persons. Comparisons have then been made between settlements and against adopted standards. Major quality issues have been identified. The principal conclusions are:

- There are a small number of parks and gardens; they are of strategic importance and present opportunities for high quality provision; there are ongoing programmes of improvement and opportunities are being sought for further funding of improvements, for example through Sea Change, and for greater community involvement;
- Amenity greenspaces are well distributed through recent developments, but are more sporadic amongst more established residential areas; many could be made more usable as neighbourhood informal playspaces, with residents' support; the overall amount of amenity space together with children's play space falls short of the council's adopted target for informal play space in all settlements;
- Formal play spaces for children are well distributed, with a few exceptions, but will require continued progress with the improvement programme detailed in the Wyre Play Strategy to deliver effective provision to most areas;
- Outdoor sports facilities are provided in most settlements, with Cleveleys largely relying on provision in Thornton or Fleetwood; adopted targets are met in most but not all settlements, but the needs for such space will require further study; almost all school playing fields exclude the public from making use of them outside school hours;
- Allotments are grossly underprovided against waiting lists and compared with other boroughs;
- Cemeteries and churchyards are irregularly distributed, but where they occur provide beneficial sites with biodiversity benefits;
- Natural and semi-natural greenspaces in Wyre are often based on ponds, with a small number of woodlands; they are irregularly distributed, but being added to; the coast and estuary make strategic contributions;
- Green corridors are widely distributed, but are poorly linked and do not form an effective network; the promenades and Lancaster Canal provide strategically important corridors;
- Besides Poulton town centre, the principal areas of civic space are within private retail developments, and strategic areas of civic space are missing from the town centres of Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Garstang;
- Water-based recreational space is an additional category added to the typology, to note the importance of canal, yachting and other water-based facilities in Wyre.

5.2 The conclusions from the raw distributions and quantities of provision shown in this audit are only of limited importance. This audit represents only the first stage in the production of evidence to support the Local Development Framework. Following on from this audit, the results will be incorporated into a larger study which will provide recommendations for the standards for the provision of the different types of open space in the borough, not just in terms of overall quantity but also in terms of accessibility of each type of open space and the quality of sites. The study will use these audit results to assess the adequacy of the existing provision and identify shortfalls and shortcomings, together with recommendations for overcoming these, including recommendations for planning policy responses. It is when these further stages have been completed that robust evidence will be available that can inform the development of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs.

