

RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE:
TENDRING DISTRICT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(February 2003)

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Background

The Strategy has been developed through analysis of the provision and use of outdoor sports facilities, including playing pitches and non-pitch facilities, children's play facilities and through the production of an inventory of other recreational open space land in the Tendring District.

The principal objective of the study was to assess the adequacy of existing provision and the requirement for additional provision to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future users. The study in respect of playing pitch and non-pitch facilities and children's play facilities assesses the adequacy based on both the quantity and quality of provision as perceived by facility managers and users. This adequacy of provision is translated into a hectareage per 1,000 head of population to give a local standard for existing and future need. The document also includes a detailed strategy and action plan for both the pitch and non-pitch facilities, and for children's play facilities in the District. In respect of the study on other recreational land it is not feasible or meaningful to produce a local standard for this type of open space. This is due to uncertainties in relation to usage, the fact that it does not assess qualitative issues and the fact that there are no benchmark standards which could be applied to the District from other studies.

Summary of Playing Pitches and Non-pitch facilities

Available outdoor sports provision in Tendring

Settlement*	Senior football	Junior football	Mini-soccer	Cricket	Rugby	ATP	Grass hockey	Softball/Baseball	Tennis	Bowling green	Netball	Athletics	Petanque	Croquet
Brightlingsea	4	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	6	1	4	0	0	0
Clacton	18	0	2	4	4	1	2	3	21	4	4	0	1	0
F, W & KC	5	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	31	3	0	0	0	0
H, D, P & LO	7	1	3	3	2	1	0	0	13	2	2	0	0	1
L, M & M	4	2	2	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0
RTD	15	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	0	0	0
TDC	53	8	10	16	9	2	5	3	74	14	14	0	1	1

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Football

In general, evidence indicates that there has been a lack of appropriate investment in pitch infrastructure and the ancillary facilities necessary to meet the various football leagues' ground specifications and/or the needs and aspirations of local football clubs. This is particularly relevant to a number of TDC-owned pitches such as Frinton Park, Old Road playing fields and Low Road Recreation Ground. A number of football clubs indicated the need for additional pitches within Tendring. These issues, amongst other factors, have affected participation at open age level with a move away from Saturday to Sunday play. Conversely, junior participation has increased, particularly since the advent of mini-soccer and the development of girls' football.

Cricket

Cricket, and in particular junior cricket, is relatively strong within the District. A number of large clubs provide opportunities for competitive play. The research indicates that, with the rise of junior cricket, the provision of good quality artificial turf wickets is needed to reduce wear and tear on grass wickets. There are a number of club specific facility issues, the most severe relating to the reinstatement of the square at Plough Corner and the quality of the outfield and square at Eastcliff Recreation Ground.

Rugby

Rugby club development within the District is affected by Colchester RFC's centre for youth excellence which attracts the best players from Tendring. The majority of the four clubs are struggling, in particular Clacton RFC which has seen a significant reduction in playing membership. Harwich & Dovercourt RFC has active junior development but is inhibited by pitch surface and localised waterlogging problems at Low Road Recreation Ground.

Hockey

The provision of artificial turf pitches (ATP) is set to increase to three with the development of a new pitch at Colne Community School. However, the carpet on the ATP at Dovercourt Swimming Pool is old and of poor quality. This is causing safety concerns for hockey users. The four principal hockey clubs within the District are actively seeking to develop the sport

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through engagement with the Active Sports Programme or club related development initiatives. These need to be facilitated by TDC's sports development staff.

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Softball

The popularity of softball and baseball within the District peaked in the early 1990s when clubs had around 250 members. Membership has since fallen to around 120 members. One club based at Vista Road Recreation Ground which uses three diamonds marked out over a rugby pitch. It is focusing on re-establishing its membership base and seeking improvements to facility provision including better quality outfielders and mobile backstop cages.

Tennis

Competitive tennis is serviced through five tennis clubs within the District. Frinton-on-Sea TC is by far the largest and is looking to increase court provision to meet demand. Vista Road Recreation Ground has the largest provision of tennis courts for 'pay and play' within the District. According to booking records there is significant spare capacity at the site even during peak months. The development of a club at the site would ensure more effective use of the facility.

Bowling

Bowling club membership continues to decline with the Tendring Hundred & District Bowling Association indicating that entries for 2002 competitions were down 25% on the previous year. The provision of indoor bowls centres is one of the contributory factors to a decline in the numbers playing the outdoor game at club level.

Netball

Competitive netball within the area is organised through Colchester Netball 2000 and the U15/U12 Colchester Netball leagues. These are run at two central venue sites within Colchester. There is currently no Tendring based teams playing in these competitions. However, administrators indicated that Tendring residents play within Colchester based teams. Clubs within Tendring appear to be struggling to attract a critical mass of players at a particular age group to allow them to enter the above competitions.

Athletics

Athletics participation for Tendring residents takes place in Colchester at the Garrison stadium. Issues connected with accessibility to the stadium

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and the quality of track and ancillary facilities are presently being assessed by the Colchester & Tendring Athletics Club.

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Petanque

The Clacton Petanque Club is only one of three clubs with a purpose built piste. Despite this the Club is struggling to attract enough members to qualify it to enter competitive leagues.

Recommendations

Summary of qualitative and quantitative inadequacies

Settlement*	Inadequate existing provision	Shortfall in existing provision
Brightlingsea	One senior football pitch at Regent Park and non-turf wicket for junior cricket at Brightlingsea CC.	One senior football pitch, one junior football pitch and four mini-soccer pitches.
Clacton	Two senior football pitches at Old Road and cricket pitch at Eastcliff Recreation Ground.	Two senior, three junior, four mini-soccer pitches and one half sized ATP.
F, W & KC	Three senior football, one junior football, one cricket pitch and a tennis court at Frinton Park and Kirby playing fields.	Multi-use games area and four mini-soccer pitches.
H, D, P & LO	Four senior football, two rugby and one ATP at Low Road and Foster Road.	One senior football, four junior football and four mini-soccer pitches.
L, M & M	Three senior football pitches and one rugby pitch at Furze Hill and School Lane, Lawford.	One senior football, three junior football, four mini-soccer pitches and one multi-use games area.
RTD	Six senior football pitches and two cricket pitches at various sites.	Half a senior pitch, six and half junior pitches and one cricket pitch.

The Strategy is aimed at supporting a number of statutory, corporate and wider objectives, to which TDC is a partner. It should support TDC and its partners in prioritising actions for improvements to playing pitch provision and applying for major funding streams.

TDC will work to provide, and assist in the provision of, good quality, accessible outdoor sports facilities appropriate to meet the needs of the various communities within Tendring. The achievement of the strategic aim should be carried out through the implementation of the following policy objectives:

- Increase the *quality* and *capacity* of outdoor sports facilities.

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- ❑ *Maintain and increase* the current quantity of outdoor sports facility provision.
- ❑ Improve *accessibility to and opportunities at* existing outdoor sports facilities.
- ❑ Provide *usable, accessible and viable* facilities in the context of the District Local Plan.
- ❑ Increase the *demand for and participation* through sports development initiatives.
- ❑ Improve *health and well being* by providing high quality opportunities for sport.
- ❑ Support the *development of local sports* clubs to meet their needs and aspirations.

It is recommended that TDC pursue the following actions in the short term:

Settlement*	Priority site	Recommended action
Brightlingsea	Colne Community School	Support school indevelopment of ATP. Support school to establish sports development initiatives with college students, local sports clubs and community. Invest in new changing facilities and parking provision at Strangers Corner playing fields.
Clacton	Vista Road Rec. Ground	Replace rugby pitch with junior football pitch. Replace grass hockey pitch with junior football pitch. Investigate positioning the two new junior football pitches adjacent to cricket pitches. Rugby pitch replaced with football pitch. Allocate junior football teams on pitch to reduce impact. Investigate provision of portable backstop cages and storage facilities. Support Clacton Petanque Club in advertising facility and club and investigate provision of secure fencing around the piste.
	Old Road Recreation Ground	Target investment in changing facility, security improvements and parking provision. Improved security measures, dog litter bins and awareness raising amongst the local community.
F, W & KC	Frinton Park	Target investment in pitch surface, drainage infrastructure, changing facility, security improvements and parking provision. Form Frinton Park Sports Development Group to assist in the long-term development of facilities. Replace green with all weather floodlit MUGAs for football training, tennis, basketball and causal use.
H, D, P & LO	Low Road Recreation	Form Low Road Rec. Sports Development

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Settlement*	Priority site	Recommended action
	Ground	Group to assist in the long-term development of facilities. Target investment into the provision of new pitch surface and improved security. Target investment in pitch surface and drainage infrastructure. Target investment at additional changing provision within Harwich & Dovercourt RUFC clubhouse.
L, M & M	School Lane	Support Lawford Sports Development Group to carry out proposals for the site. Targeted investment into new pavilion with at least six changing rooms of appropriate specification. Replace tennis and netball courts with floodlit MUGA suitable for football, basketball, tennis, etc.
RTD	Plough Corner Playing Fields	Support Little Clacton Recreational Trust to facilitate the development of a viable and sustainable sports facility. Targeted investment into pitch surface and drainage infrastructure improvements. Targeted investment in cricket square and pitch. Provide floodlit MUGA suitable for football, basketball, tennis, etc.

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Settlement*	Priority site	Recommended action
	Weeley Playing Fields	Support Weeley Parish Council and Weeley Athletic FC to investigate additional pitch provision on site. Targeted investment in pitch surface and drainage infrastructure improvements.

* Legend: F, W & KC – Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross; H, D, P & LO – Harwich, Dovercourt, Parkeston & Little Oakley; L, M & M – Lawford, Mistley & Manningtree; RTD – Rural Tendring District and TDC – Tendring District Council.

Summary of children's play

There are 67 children's play area sites within the District. 36 of these are owned and managed by TDC. Parish/town councils, trusts and voluntary sector organisations own the remaining 31.

Hectare provision per 1,000 head of population

Play area site analysis for five principal settlement areas

District/Settlement	Tendring District	Brightlingsea	Clacton-on-sea	Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross	Harwich and Dovercourt	Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley
Population	134,468	7,943	53,531	18,314	17,288	7,681
Number of Sites	68	2	17	7	9	8
Unassigned	4	0	1	0	1	2
LAP	20	1	5	4	1	1
LEAP1	21	1	4	2	1	2
LEAP2	10	0	4	0	2	2
LEAP3	9	0	1	1	3	1
NEAP1	2	0	1	0	1	0
NEAP2	1	0	0	0	0	0
NEAP3	1	0	1	0	0	0
SEAP	1	0	0	0	0	0
Equipped play area (ha)	6.67	0.075	3.12	0.62	0.92	0.45
Casual play area (ha)*	67.92*	*	41.31	12.56	14.05	*
Total area for play (ha)	74.59*	*	44.43	13.18	14.97	*

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District/Settlement	Tendring District	Brightlingsea	Clacton-on-sea	Frinton, Walton & Kirby Cross	Harwich and Dovercourt	Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley
Required provision based on 0.8ha standard	107.57	6.35	42.83	14.65	13.83	6.15
Available play area space - ha per 1,000 head of population	0.56*	0.01	0.82	0.72	0.87	0.06
Deficiency/Surplus - ha per 1,000 population	-0.24*	-0.79	0.02	-0.08	0.07	-0.74
TOTAL DEFICIENCY / SURPLUS (ha)	-32.98*	-6.28	1.60	-1.47	1.14	-5.70

Play area site analysis for the rural area

Wards	Alresford	Ardleigh	B & T	Elmstead	Great Bentley	Great Bromley	Little Clacton	G & LO	Ramsey	St. Osyth	T & W	Bradfield
Population	3,676	2,026	2,409	1,977	2,289	1,796	2,814	2,243	1,516	4,279	2,462	2,224
Number of sites	3	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	3
LAP	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0
LEAP1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
LEAP2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	1
LEAP3	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
NEAP1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NEAP2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NEAP3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEAP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Total hectares	1.08	0.18	0.07	0.05	0.13	0.02	0.05	0.08	0.92	0.21	0.08	0.35
Required provision based on 0.8ha standard	2.94	1.62	1.93	1.58	1.83	1.44	2.25	1.79	1.21	3.42	1.97	1.78
Available play area space - ha per 1,000 head of population	0.29	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.61	0.05	0.03	0.16

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Deficiency/Surplus - ha per 1,000 population	-0.51	-0.71	-0.77	-0.78	-0.74	-0.79	-0.78	-0.76	-0.20	-0.75	-0.77	-0.64
TOTAL DEFICIENCY / SURPLUS (ha)	-1.86	-1.44	-1.86	-1.54	-1.70	-1.42	-2.21	-1.71	-0.30	-3.21	-1.89	-1.43

Legend: B & T – Beaumont and Thorpe, G & LO - Great and Little Oakley and T & W – Tendring and Weeley.

* These figures are taken from information on TDC maintenance contract records for recreation grounds, seafronts and open spaces which are all assumed to function as areas for casual play. There are no related figures available for Brightlingsea and Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley or any of the rural wards.

Where data is available for the settlements of Clacton-on-sea, Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross and Harwich and Dovercourt it is interesting to note that the provision for children's play in terms of the equipped play area and casual play area equates to around 0.8ha. This is equivalent to the recommended national minimum standard advocated by the NPFA.

Recommendations

The following tables provide a series of recommended actions within each of the catchments. These actions are based on the assessment within Part 5 of the Report on Children's play areas which analyses the catchment zones around existing play areas.

Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Brightlingsea	36	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the size of the equipped play area to 1,000m ² . Erect appropriate signage	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with a RCZ of 660m. Southern part of the settlement lies within the catchment zone. Meets NPFA guidelines.
	38	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
New provision			
Colne Community School		Investigate the feasibility of play area provision on the school site to service the north of the	Provision of at least a LEAP providing for the north of the settlement.

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		settlement.	
Brightlingsea County Junior School		Investigate the feasibility of play area provision on the school site to service the west of the settlement.	Provision of at least a LEAP providing for the west of the settlement.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Clacton-on-sea Golf green	1	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	2	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area to 400m ² and increasing the play units to 5. Provide seating.	Play area becomes a LEAP1 with a RCZ of 240m. Southern part of eastern Jaywick lies within catchment zone. Meets NPFA guidelines.
	31	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area to 400m ² and increasing the play units to 5.	Play area becomes a LEAP1 with a RCZ of 240m. The majority of western Jaywick lies within catchment zone.
Bockings Elm	3 4 5	Investigating the feasibility of consolidating these three play areas onto one site and decommissioning the other two.	Creation of a NEAP with a wider catchment area than the existing three play areas
	6	Investigate the feasibility of 3 additional play units. Provide litter bins.	Play area becomes a NEAP2 with a RCZ of 825m covering the majority of the southern part of Bockings Elm ward. Meets NPFA guidelines
	65 (5A)	Investigate the development of the play area to a NEAP 1.	Catchment area would cover the majority of the central part of Bockings Elm.
New provision			
	-	Investigate the feasibility of enclosing the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines.	Provision of at least a LEAP providing for the north of the settlement.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Rush Green	7	Investigate the feasibility of enclosing the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines.	Meets NPFA guidelines.
St. James	33	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area to 1,000m ² .	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of St. James ward.
Southcliff	8	Investigate the provision of skateboard park. Provide seating.	Meets the needs of younger people in the settlement. Meets NPFA guidelines.
	13	Investigate the feasibility increasing the equipped play area to 1,000m ² and the numbers of units to 8.	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the south of Southcliff ward and west of St. Bartholomews ward.
St. Johns	9	Investigate the feasibility of the equipped play area to 800m ² .	Play area becomes a LEAP3 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the north and east of the ward.
	10	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	11	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 6-9. Erect appropriate signage.	Play area becomes a NEAP2 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the north and west of the ward. Meets NPFA guidelines.
Haven	13	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 5-7.	Play area becomes a LEAP3 with catchment area extended to cover the majority the ward and St. Bartholomews ward.
Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross Frinton	15	Investigate the feasibility of developing a skateboard park on the unused bowling green, a MUGA on the tennis court and extending the play area	Key facility for children and young people in the settlement.
Walton	16	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the	Play area becomes a LEAP2 with catchment area extended by five

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		equipped play area to 6,00m ² .	times its current area.
	17	Decommission as an equipped play site and target resources at Bath House Meadow (18).	Site maintained as open space.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
	18	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area to 1,000m ² .	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of central part of the ward.
	19	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 5-7.	Play area becomes a LEAP3 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of north of the ward
Holland & Kirby	14	No fencing, seating, signage or litter bins. Investigate fencing a 400m ² area and providing two additional play units.	Play area becomes a LEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of Kirby Cross.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Harwich & Dovercourt Harwich East	22	Maintain to appropriate standard. Erect appropriate signage.	Good quality play area. Meets NPFA guidelines.
	23	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	24	Maintain to appropriate standard. Erect appropriate signage.	Good quality play area. Meets NPFA guidelines.
Harwich East Central	28	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 6-8. Erect appropriate signage and provide litter bins.	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended 40% to cover the majority of south of the ward. Meets NPFA guidelines.
Harwich West Central	21	Investigate the feasibility of enclosing the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines Erect appropriate signage Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 7-9	Meets NPFA guidelines Meets NPFA guidelines Play area becomes a NEAP 3 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the ward.
	30	Decommission as an equipped play site and target resources at Ray Avenue (21).	Site maintained as open space.
Harwich West	20	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	27	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	67	No play equipment.	Site maintained as open space.
New provision			
Dovercourt Bay Estate	-	Investigate the feasibility of play area provision in the north of the	Provision of at least a NEAP providing for the south of Dovercourt.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes	
Lawford, Manningtree & Mistley	29	Erect appropriate signage and provide litter bins. Maintain to appropriate standard.	Meets NPFA guidelines. Good quality play area.	
	55	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.	
	56	Erect appropriate signage	Meets NPFA guidelines. Good quality play area.	
	57	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area	
	58	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area	
	59	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area	
	61	Investigate the feasibility of creating a fenced equipped play area on site	Meets NPFA guidelines and provides safe and secure facility for the west of Lawford	
	60	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area	
	New provision			
			Investigate the feasibility of play area provision in the west of Manningtree.	Provision of at least a LEAP providing for the west of Manningtree.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Rural Area Alresford	37	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	39	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	41	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
Ardleigh	62	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	63	Decommission as an equipped play site and target resources at Millennium Green (64).	Site maintained as playing field.
	64	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
Beaumont & Thorpe		Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area by 16m ² .	Play area becomes a LEAP1 with catchment area extended to 240m which covers the settlement.
	44	Erect appropriate signage.	Meets NPFA guidelines.
	47	Investigate the decommissioning of sites as an equipped play area pending outcome of TTC (below).	Site maintained as playing field.
New provision			
Tendring Technology College		Investigate the feasibility of play area provision on the college site to service the settlement.	Provision of at least a NEAP providing for the settlement.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
Elmstead	26	Investigate the feasibility of enclosing the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines. Erect appropriate signage	Meets NPFA guidelines. Meets NPFA guidelines.
Great Bentley	42	Investigate the feasibility of enclosing the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines. Erect appropriate signage	Meets NPFA guidelines. Meets NPFA guidelines.
	66	Investigate the feasibility of providing a safe crossing on Plough Road to access play area from settlement.	Improved safer route to play area.
Great Bromley		Investigate the feasibility of enclosing 600m ² of the play area to conform with NPFA guidelines. Erect appropriate signage	Play area becomes a LEAP2. Meets NPFA guidelines. Meets NPFA guidelines
Little Clacton	49	Erect appropriate signage	Meets NPFA guidelines.
Great and Little Oakley	46	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	50	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area by 60m ² .	Play area becomes a LEAP1 with catchment area extended to 240m which covers the settlement.
Ramsey	32	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	51	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.
	52	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.

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Ward/ Settlement	Site (ref.)	Action	Outcomes
St. Osyth	34	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area by 130m ² .	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the settlement.
	35	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the play units from 5-8.	Play area becomes a NEAP1 with catchment area extended to cover the majority of the settlement.
Tendring and Weeley	25	Erect appropriate signage and provide seating and litter bin.	Meets NPFA guidelines.
	43	Investigate the feasibility of increasing the equipped play area up to 1,000 ² .	Play area's catchment area extended to cover the majority of Weeley Heath and Weeley.
Bradfield	45	Provide seating.	Meets NPFA guidelines.
	53	Erect appropriate signage and provide seating.	Meets NPFA guidelines.
	54	Maintain to appropriate standard.	Good quality play area.

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Tendring District Council local standards

The table below summarises the local standards for the catchment areas within the District based on the local demand and an evaluation of the adequacy of current provision to meet the needs of local sports clubs. It considers the local standard for playing pitch and non-pitch facilities, children's play and other informal playing space as advocated by the NPFA and the new PPG17. As mentioned earlier it does not show a local standard for other recreational open space such as amenity and greenspace, nature reserves or woodlands.

Catchment area	Playing pitch and non-pitch local standard ha./1,000 population	Children's play area local standard ha./1,000 population	Playing space local standard ha./1,000 population
Brightlingsea	2.85	0.80	3.65
Clacton-on-Sea	1.01	0.80	1.81
Frinton, Walton and Kirby Cross	1.04	0.80	1.84
Harwich, Dovercourt, Parkeston and Little Oakley	1.67	0.80	2.47
Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley	2.54	0.80	3.34
Rural Tendring District	1.44	0.80	2.24
TENDRING DISTRICT	1.39	0.80	2.19

Summary of recreational open space

This part of the study considered the supply of other recreational open space in the District. The scope of the work was to look at open spaces, not included in the pitch and non-pitch facility study or in the children's play area work, and to determine the role, that particular piece of open space could play in a hierarchy of provision. The aim was to produce an inventory or audit of these open spaces and to distinguish the principal function and vegetation/typology of that open space, for example differentiating between informal public open spaces, nature reserves and village greens.

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The study was undertaken principally on a desk top basis using information from the Council's maintenance contract records entitled 'Maintenance of Ground, Bill of Quantities' for August 1999 to July 2004, and assessed provision within the five main settlements and the various wards within the rural area of the District.

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This contrasts with methodology for the playing pitch and children's play area study where every site in the District was visited, its usage determined, its quality assessed and a surplus or deficiency of provision identified. The recreational open space study therefore solely identifies existing open spaces and is not concerned with the linked and more important issues of usage, demand and quality.

The open spaces study, whilst solely looking at identifying existing sites has been carried out in accordance with PPG 17 and particularly chapter 10 of the Companion Guide, in that a hierarchy of provision has been used. This is essentially based on the premise that 'large or high quality spaces or facilities' tend to attract users from a wider area than small or poor quality ones and tend to have a higher local profile. The guide makes reference to a three-level hierarchy relating to open spaces. Using a simple mapping technique each significant piece of open space has then been illustrated on a map with its potential user catchment and accessibility threshold identified. The distance thresholds, are based upon other work acknowledged in the field, particularly work by LPAC.

Using a recreational open space hierarchy as advocated by PPG17 the study attributes the importance of different types of parks & gardens and amenity open space at four levels of significance. Each type of recreational open space within the District is classified under a typology such as seafront or large public open spaces. Each typology is considered to have a relative significance in the context of the District and its residents and visitors with a catchment zone attributed to it.

Due to the numbers and size of various open spaces it was decided, for the purposes of mapping the catchment areas, that those sites smaller than 0.04h would not be mapped as they were considered not to have sufficient recreational value. In addition amenity greenspace (highway buffers) were also discounted from mapping as they were also considered not to have a safe recreational value. Therefore from a total of 338 identified sites only 191 met the criteria, and subsequently mapped by settlement. This is shown in the table below.

RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY: TENDRING DISTRICT

The table below provides a summary of the total number and hectarage of significant recreational open space provision by typology and location.

<i>Typology/Location</i>	Greenspace network		Housing estate		Seafront		Urban fringe		TOTAL	
	(ha)	No.	(ha)	No.	(ha)	No.	(ha)	No.	(ha)	No.
Amenity greenspace	23.38	17	26.48	122	5.29	6	19.29	9	74.44	154
Country park	0.56	2	0	0	41.29	1	0	0	41.85	3
Recreation ground	11.67	9	5.71	6	0.69	3	5.30	3	23.37	21
Seafront	0	0	0	0	79.87	5	0	0	79.87	5
Seafront with gardens & amenities	0.30	1	0	0	4.76	5	0	0	5.06	6
Village green	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.08	2	4.08	2
TOTAL	35.91	29	32.19	128	131.90	20	28.67	14	228.67	191

Looking at the table above it is evident that certain types of this open space could be used to help meet the deficiencies found in the pitch and non-pitch sport facilities and children's play areas studies. For example the above table shows that there are 23.38 ha of amenity greenspace. This could in theory meet some of the shortfall for playing pitches and children's play areas. However, this study is just a first stage desk top exercise and it will require further work to assess in detail the suitability of these sites and to determine whether they could help to meet the shortfalls identified. Such work will need to assess other factors such as topography accessibility, and funding.

The accompanying maps to this part of the study show the three principal settlements as well as the rural areas. It uses a hierarchy of provision which assesses the catchment of an area of open space, and whether it is, on this basis, of local neighbourhood significance or settlement significance,

RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY: TENDRING DISTRICT

depending on the size and function of the open space. In addition the mapping exercise also clearly identifies those areas in the Borough requiring additional provision in order to meet the accessibility standard. However, it should be noted that whilst there may be a requirement for additional provision it is important to remember that these areas may be well served by other forms of recreational open space such as playing fields and children's play areas.

RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY: TENDRING DISTRICT

As mentioned earlier in this summary, it has not been possible to produce a local standard for this type of open space provision. This is due to the following reasons:-

- The study was principally desktop based looking primarily at the size and location of this type of open space.
- The assessment has not considered and examined local needs, demand and usage as well as the quality of these open spaces.
- The guidance in PPG 17 is still emerging and it is not apparent that any local authority has produced a local standard to cover this type of open space.
- The only national standard which is used to assess informal recreational open space is that provided by the NPFA as part of the 6 acre standard, which states that 0.8 ha should be for informal recreational playing space. This has already been used and a local standard produced in the children's play areas strategy.
- The local standards produced for pitch and non-pitch sports and children's play (both formal and informal) provide an excellent starting point for assessing recreational open space in the District. They fully meet the recommendations of Sport England, the NPFA and the latest PPG 17. It is the meeting of these standards that the Council should be prioritising.

The District needs to take this part of the work further and look at the initial results of this exercise with a view to generating local standards for the sub-divisions of these open spaces based upon other guidance produced. This might include looking at producing a Local Biodiversity Action Plan, to help determine the desirable levels of provision of wildlife habitats and species populations that reflect local, regional and national conservation targets.

It will also be important to do further work to assess the local needs, usage and quality of recreational open spaces and to assess the opportunities for these to meet the shortfall identified in the pitch and non-pitch study and children's play areas assessment.

In addition the Council may wish to consider more detailed distance thresholds (that is, the maximum distance that typical users can be expected to travel to each type of provision using different modes of transport). A further analysis could then be conducted using maps to determine the percentage of the population that lives within a certain distance threshold of a significant local open space, subsequently

RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY: TENDRING DISTRICT

mapping those areas requiring additional provision in order to meet the accessibility standard.

Finally, Tendring District Council needs to devise and draft robust policies which address the issues raised in this study, in liaison with the various Council departments, stakeholders and other interested bodies. It is particularly important to ensure that new development wherever possible does not exasperate the deficiencies, but contributes to providing the required recreational provision either through on-site provision or through contributions to off-site provision.