

Allotments

Introduction

- 8.1 This includes all forms of allotments with a primary purpose to provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.
- 8.2 Like other open space types, allotments can provide a number of wider benefits to the community as well as the primary use of growing produce. These include: -
- bringing together different cultural backgrounds;
 - improving physical and mental health;
 - providing a source of recreation; and
 - wider contribution to green and open space.

Strategic context and consultation

Strategic context

- 8.3 The Ryedale Local Plan 2002 recognises the important economic and recreational role that allotments play and also recognised the amenity and nature conservation value that these sites bring. Policy L8 states that planning permission will not be granted for any development which would result in the total or partial loss of existing allotments defined on the proposals map.
- 8.4 An allotment strategy would help provide specific guidelines for the management and development of allotment sites. At this present time Ryedale District Council does not have an allotments strategy.
- 8.5 The importance of safeguarding allotment provision is also highlighted within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. Allotment provision is considered to strongly link to the Strong Safe Communities theme set out in the community plan.

Consultation

- 8.6 Consultation on the provision of allotments across Ryedale was undertaken through a variety of methods. The emerging findings, which have contributed to the formation of the local standards include:
- consultation highlighted that overall the current quantity of allotments provision is perceived to be about right. Despite this, over 20% of respondents felt there was not enough.
 - of those residents suggesting that there was not enough provision, a common concern was that existing sites were being lost to development and there were numerous references to the lack of provision in rural villages. More generally, the majority of those people who thought that there is not enough allotments stated that were not aware of any provision locally.
 - there was a significantly higher focus on the quantity of allotments and few comments were raised regarding quality issues relating to existing allotments. It

was however suggested that high quality local provision would encourage children to participate alongside older family members and that allotments as open spaces for the community are currently undervalued.

- the household survey revealed that of those who do not currently own / manage / use an allotment 12% would be interested in a plot. Many of those who are interested state that demand is high amongst those with smaller gardens, and given the increasing desire for higher density housing this demand is likely to increase over time.
- consultation undertaken as part of the previous study highlights the popularity of allotments and the need to reduce waiting lists at some sites in the district.

Current position

8.7 There are currently 19 allotment sites across the district of Ryedale. The full distribution of these facilities alongside the overall quality is discussed in table 8.1 below.

8.8 The quality of each site was assessed taking into account the quality of the landscape and the condition of the buildings.

8.9 The key issues arising from table 8.1 overleaf include:

- the distribution of sites in Ryedale is uneven with 74% of sites located in Malton
- there is a significant focus on provision in the market towns, with only two sites located in rural settlements (one in Ampleforth and one in Sherburn). Provision in Malton is equivalent to 1.35 ha per 1000 population, the only area where provision exceeds 0.5 ha per 1000.
- pickering is the only other area (apart from Malton) where there is greater than one site
- on the whole the quality of allotments is good, with only three sites considered to be poor (all of which are located in Malton)
- 58% of allotment sites were considered to be of good quality.

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Table 8.1: Provision of allotments in Ryedale

Analysis Area	Key sites	Ha	Number of sites	Hectares per 1000 population	Overall Quality
Malton	Outgang Lane, Malton, Castle Howard Road, Garden Holders Norton, Easfield Avenue, Norton	15.95	14	1.35	21% of facilities were considered to be of poor quality and 50% were of good quality
Pickering	Hatcase Lane and Outgang Lane	4.14	2	0.40	Both facilities in Pickering were rated as good
Helmsley and Kirkbymoorside	Kirkbymoorside Allotment Association	1.56	1	0.24	The only facility in this area was considered to be good. It was also highly valued by local residents, with many commenting specifically on this site at drop in sessions
Rural North	Back Lane, Ampleforth	0.4	1	0.04	This facility was considered to be of satisfactory quality
Rural South	Vicarage Lane, Sherburn	4.2	1	0.34	Vicarage Lane allotment site was perceived to be good quality
DISTRICT WIDE		26.25	19	0.51	

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Setting provision standards

- 8.10 In setting local standards for allotments there is a need to take into account any national or local standards, current provision, other Local Authority standards for appropriate comparison, site assessments and consultation on local needs. Full justifications for the local standards are provided within Appendices E, F and G. The recommended local standards have been summarised below in context with the allotment sites in Ryedale.

Quantity Standard (see appendix E – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.51 ha per 1000	0.51 ha per 1000
Justification	
<p>Allotments are very much a demand led-typology and the recommended standard should be treated as a minimum standard. Household consultation also highlights that there is a lack of interest in allotments, with 39% indicating that they have no opinion. The majority of allotment provision is focused in Malton analysis area. In accordance with the demand led nature of allotments, the requirement for this level could be explored over the LDF period (in light on other open space deficiencies in the area) and how valuable the sites are.</p> <p>Given that allotments are a demand led typology, a standard equivalent to the current level of provision has been set – enabling the identification of locational deficiencies and protection of existing sites. However, analysis of waiting lists and demand should be of utmost important in triggering new provision.</p>	

Accessibility Standard (see appendix G)

Recommended standard
15 minutes walk – 720m (urban area)
15 minutes drive time (rural area)
Justification
<p>The emphasis is on walking versus driving to allotment facilities and hence allotment facilities should be accessible on foot. Due to the geographical nature of the rural area, it is not considered appropriate to provide allotments within a 15-minute walk time in the rural area.</p> <p>Although 60% of residents indicated that they would expect to walk to an allotment, it is suggested that this level of provision would be onerous on the Council and a drive time in the rural areas is therefore recommended. In line with the 75% threshold of those who felt it appropriate to drive to an allotment site, a 15-minute drivetime to be applied in the rural areas is considered appropriate.</p> <p>Although the standards set for the rural and urban areas have been established in line with the 75% threshold, they should be applied as a guide only as allotments is a demand led typology and it will not be appropriate to always have allotments within these catchments.</p> <p>The application of these standards will identify key areas of deficiency, which should be the focus for further investigation into the demand for allotments in that area.</p>

Quality Standard (see appendix F)

Recommended standard
<i>“A clean, secure and well-kept site that encourages sustainable development, bio-diversity, healthy living and education objectives with appropriate ancillary facilities (eg litter bins and water supply) to meet local needs, well kept grass and good quality soils. The site should be spacious providing appropriate access and clear boundaries.”</i>
Justification
Provision of allotments is demand driven. However, in times when the wider health agenda is important such sites need to be promoted. Good quality allotments with appropriate ancillary facilities which promote sustainable development will help attract more people to allotment sites in Ryedale

Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

- 8.11 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas with unmet local needs the quantity standard is applied together with the local standard for accessibility.
- 8.12 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies may be coupled by accessibility deficiencies.
- 8.13 Allotment provision is demand led and new allotment sites should only be created where there is evidence of public demand. This is of particular importance in areas where existing sites are not used to maximum capacity. It is therefore not appropriate to identify areas of deficiency, only to suggest where latent demand may exist due to reduced access to facilities.
- 8.14 In quantitative terms, the current supply of allotments is equivalent to the recommended local standards. However in light of the uneven distribution across the district, all geographical areas with the exception of Malton fall below the minimum recommended standard.
- 8.15 Provision of allotments in Ryedale when measured against the quantitative standard is set out below. This provides an indication of where latent demand may exist.
- 8.16 Consultation highlights that there are different expectations between people who live in rural areas and people who live in urban areas as to how they would expect to access allotment sites. Figure 8.1 overleaf exhibits the current distribution of allotments across the district considering those residents in the urban areas who expect to be able to walk to an allotment site. Figure 8.2 examines which residents are outside of the recommended drivetime catchment for allotments.

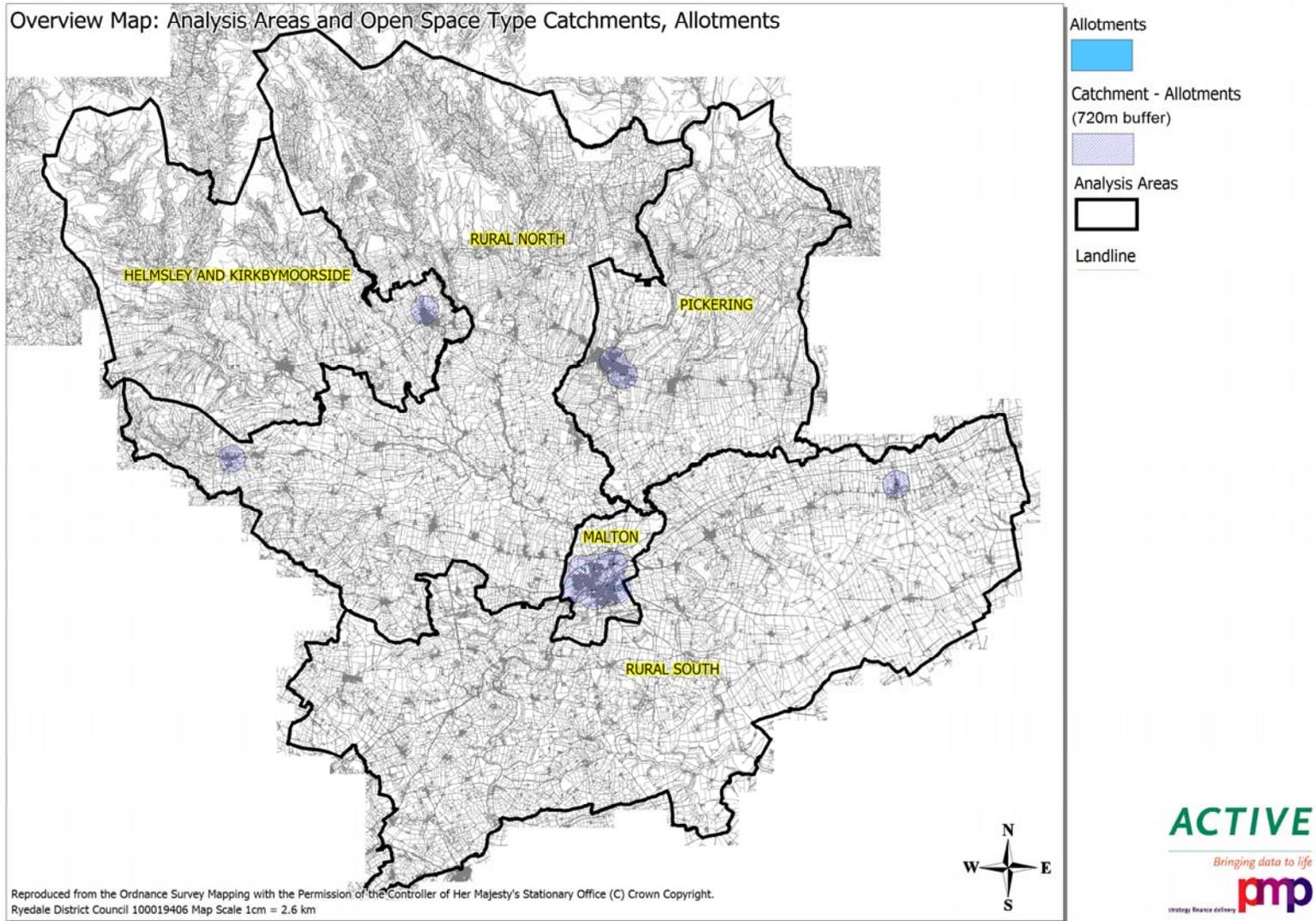
Table 8.1: Shortfalls / Surplus in provision for allotments

Analysis Area	Current provision per 1,000 population	Local Standard	Level of provision against local standard	Future requirement – Population Scenario 1	Future requirement – Population Scenario 2	Future requirement – Population Scenario 3
Malton	1.35	0.51	9.91	7.71	8.15	7.26
Pickering	0.4	0.51	-1.15	-2.25	-2.47	-2.03
Helmsley and Kirkbymoorside	0.24	0.51	-1.76	-2.42	-2.64	-2.20
Rural North	0.04	0.51	-5.04	-5.26	-5.24	-5.26
Rural South	0.34	0.51	-2.08	-2.31	-2.31	-2.31
District wide						

- 8.17 It can be seen on Figure 8.1 overleaf that as may be expected, in light of the high levels of provision in Malton and Norton all residents are able to access at least one site within the recommended local catchment. There are some residents living to the North West of Pickering who are outside of the distance threshold.
- 8.18 As may be expected given that most provision of allotments is located within the market towns, there are some settlements located at the far extremes of the plan area where residents are outside of the 15-minute drive time to an allotment site. Figure 8.2 illustrates this.

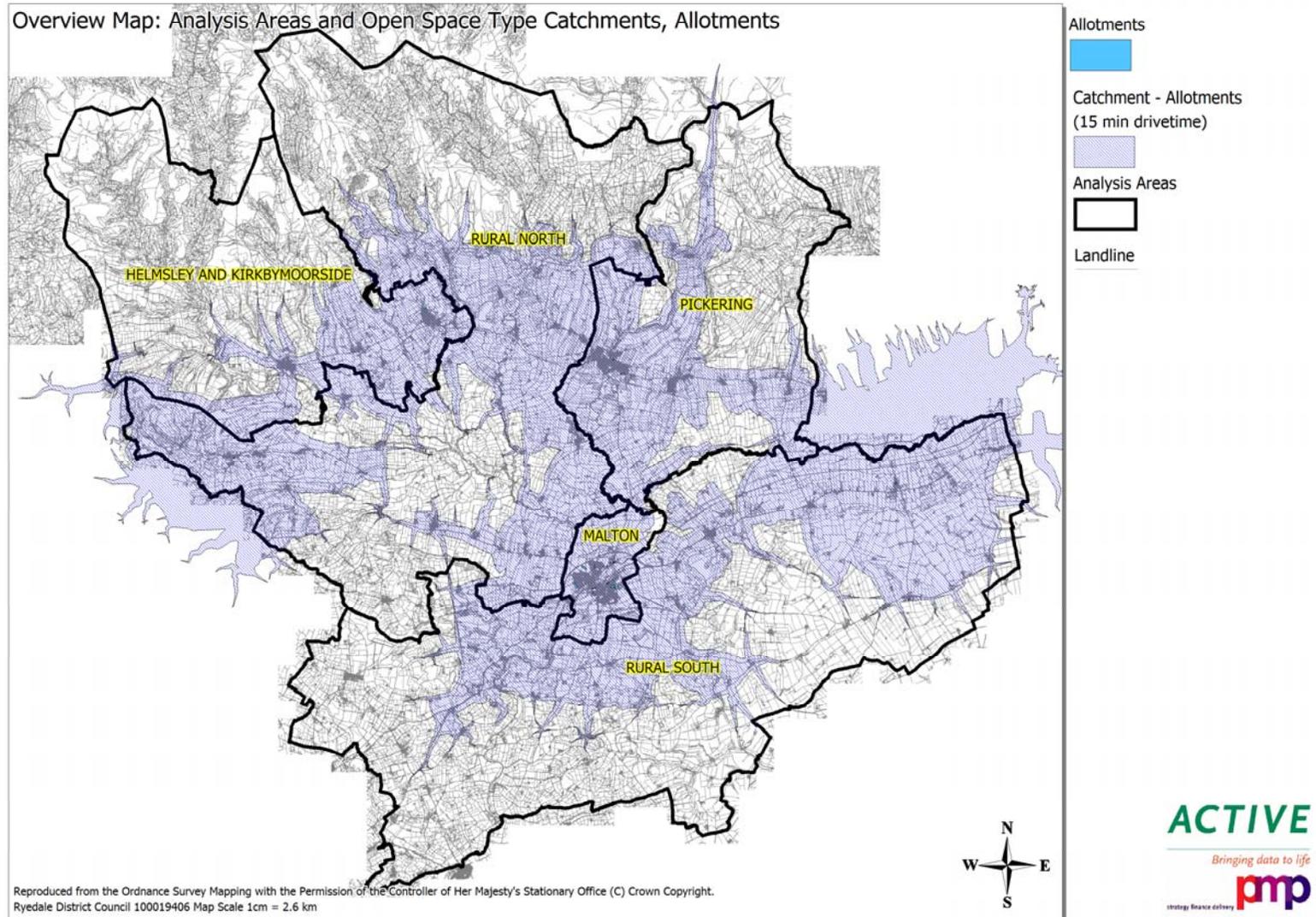
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Figure 8.1: Provision of allotments across the district



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Figure 8.2: Residents within a drivetime catchment of allotments



Value assessment and Recommendations

8.19 As identified in the geographical areas analysis, there are some residents outside of the recommended catchment areas for allotments in the market towns and rural hinterlands.

ALL1	Further investigate areas of deficiency in market towns.
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8.20 Particularly in the market towns, amenity green space sites with overlapping catchments may present a good opportunity for the redesignation of sites.

8.21 Most sites that have a high level of use would normally have a good or very good quality and accessibility rating. Most sites with a low level of use would have an average or poor quality and accessibility rating. This is because the factors are related and interlinked.

8.22 Of all the allotment sites in the district, only three are considered to be poor in terms of overall quality. Consideration should be given to enhancing the quality / access to these sites to enhance their value to the community. Even if the level of use is currently poor, consultation suggests that there is potential to increase the overall take up of allotments in the district. The quality of sites is often a key determinant of the level of use. Consultation highlights that there are long waiting lists for allotments. This reinforces their value to residents.

ALL2	Investigate opportunities to increase the value of sites currently considered to be poor including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lescelles Lane • Park Grove • Off Park Road
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8.23 Allotments can provide alternative means of physical activity for residents and hence can make a key contribution to achieving increased participation and reducing health and obesity problems for residents. In light of this opportunity, allotment sites in the district should be promoted, to increase awareness of sites and encourage increased take up of allotment plots.

ALL3	Promote allotment plots to the general public to raise awareness and encourage usage. This may include promoting the use of allotments to school children and encouraging use of facilities by schools.
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8.24 Many residents in the rural settlements are outside of the recommended drive time catchment for local facilities. This is also reflective of consultation, where some people suggested that they do not have access to any local facilities. There are significant benefits of partnership working and community involvement and

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ownership, both from a provider and community perspective. Given the identified deficiencies and demand in rural areas, it may partnership working with local Parish Councils and other key providers should be considered to provide additional allotment plots in the more rural areas.

ALL4	Encourage the management and ownership of allotment plots by allotment societies and provide support to Parish Councils and other providers to ensure provision of allotments can continue.
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- 8.25 An action plan should be devised setting out the proposed future provision of allotments and key targets for the Council to achieve. This should also include a strategy to increase participation.

ALL5	Devise an action plan for the future provision and usage of allotments in Ryedale
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Summary

- 8.26 Total provision of allotments in Ryedale is equivalent to 0.51 hectares per 1000 population across the district. Consultation indicates that there are some locational deficiencies and suggests that there may be latent demand for allotments, with 12% of respondents to the household survey who do not currently have an allotment plot indicating that they may be interested in an allotment in future years.
- 8.27 The quality of allotment sites in the district is good, with only three sites considered to be poor.
- 8.28 Consultation highlights different expectations across the district, with residents living in the urban areas expecting allotment sites in close proximity to their home (15 minutes walk) while residents in the more rural villages indicated that they would expect to drive.
- 8.29 The distribution of allotments across Ryedale is poor, with almost 74% of sites located in Malton. There are therefore some residents outside of the recommended catchment areas for allotments in both the rural areas and in the larger market town urban areas. Consultation indicates that there are long waiting lists at some allotment sites.
- 8.30 All recommendations should be followed in conjunction with the implementation of an allotment action plan.