

Background

- i. PMP were appointed to undertake an assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the District of Ryedale in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation, July 2002) and its Companion Guide (September 2002).
- ii. The Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. The five step process is as follows:
 - Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
 - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
 - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
 - Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards
 - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.
- iii. The study considers nine typologies of open space, sport and recreation facilities:
 - informal market town open space
 - provision for children and young people
 - outdoor sport facilities
 - village open space
 - indoor sport facilities
 - allotments
 - green corridors
 - churchyards and cemeteries.
- iv. The analysis has been undertaken by type of open space looking at different geographical areas across the local authority boundary (referred to as analysis areas in this report), which were discussed and agreed by the Council. Analysis areas drive the whole consultation, audit and analysis process. They influence the setting and application of local standards, and the format for analysis for this report. PPG17 states that local authorities should use clearly identifiable neighbourhoods as the basis for analysis. Given the rural nature of Ryedale, a “neighbourhood” is taken to represent a market town and its surrounding hinterland. The remaining rural areas have been split up into two separate areas – one covering the north and the other covering the south.
- v. As a consequence, five analysis areas have been identified – these areas were based on ward boundaries.

Map 1 – Analysis areas of Ryedale District Council



vi. The key outputs of the study include:

- an assessment of the open space, sport and recreational needs of people living, working and visiting Ryedale derived from a series of consultations. These consultations built on those undertaken as part of previous open space assessments. A detailed audit was also undertaken as part of the previous study
- production of local provision standards (quantity, quality and accessibility) for each type of open space where appropriate, in accordance with local needs
- application of local standards to the existing open space provision, enabling the identification of surpluses and deficiencies in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
- recommendations to address the key findings and drive future policy.

- vii. Full details of the methodology can be found in Section 2 of the report and the standard setting process can be found in appendices E, F and G. The recommended local standards, key issues and recommendations for each typology are summarised overleaf.
- viii. The local standards set are summarised in the tables that follow, along with the key consultation findings for each typology. The priorities for each of the five geographical areas of the district, derived from the application of local standards are then summarised.

Parks and gardens and Market Town Amenity Space

Standards

Quantity Standard	1.3 per 1000 population
Accessibility Standard	15 minute walk (720m) 30 minute drive time
Quality Vision	<i>“A welcoming, clean and litter free site providing a one-stop community facility with a wide range of leisure, recreational and enriched play opportunities for all ages. These freely available sites should have varied and well-kept vegetation, appropriate lighting and ancillary accommodation (including benches, toilets in the locality and litter bins) and well signed to and within the site. The safety of sites should be enhanced wherever possible (e.g. through appropriate planting, CCTV and a park ranger presence)”</i>

- ix. Consultation highlights that there is an overall perception of insufficient amenity space in the market towns of Ryedale. There is also a fear amongst residents that amenity spaces will be lost in light of the planned development and projected population growth across the market towns.
- x. The quality of parks was perceived to be good overall, with 58% of respondents to the household survey indicating that sites were good, as opposed to only 10% who felt that it was poor. Analysis of current provision shows that the overall provision of open spaces across the district is uneven, with higher levels of provision per 1000 population in Malton than in Pickering and Helmsley and Kirkbymoorside.
- xi. Access for high quality local provision of parks and gardens in the market towns was a central focus obtained from the consultations.
- xii. Provision of market town amenity space in Malton and Norton is currently well distributed across the town with at least one site in each residential area. The overall quality of sites is good and a high proportion of market town amenity spaces were considered to be of value to the local community. Cleanliness and maintenance was also considered to be good.

Natural and Semi Natural Open Space

Standards

Quantity Standard	4.46 hectares per 1000 population (sites over 5 hectares)
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Accessibility Standard	15 minute walk (720m)
Quality Vision	<i>'A spacious, clean, well vegetated, litter free site with clear pathways and natural features that encourages wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental awareness across all open space sites, where appropriate. There should be a clear focus on balancing recreational and wildlife needs, while ensuring public access where appropriate and protection against flooding'.</i>

- xiii. The value of natural and semi natural spaces to residents is clear, with 36% visiting natural sites more regularly than any other typology. These sites are predominantly located on the border of urban settlements and all residents are able to access these sites within the recommended accessibility catchment. SSSI and SINC sites located across the district provide further opportunities for residents.
- xiv. The general perception is that there is sufficient natural open space across the district, with 66% feeling that additional provision was not required.
- xv. The overall quality of natural and semi natural open space was perceived to be good, with the main problems experienced being dog fouling and litter.

Children and Young People

Standards

Quantity Standard:	0.85 facilities per 1000 population
Accessibility Standard:	Children - 10 minute walk (480m) Young People – 15 minute walk time (720 metres) (Urban) 20 minute drive time (Rural)
Quality Vision:	Children - <i>"A well designed clean site of sufficient size to provide a mix of well-maintained and imaginative formal equipment and an enriched play environment in a safe, secure and convenient location. Sites should have clear boundaries, with dog free areas and include appropriate ancillary accommodation such as seating, litterbins and toilets in the locality of larger sites. Sites should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design and safety and safeguard residential amenity of neighbouring land users"</i> Young People - <i>"A site providing a robust yet imaginative play environment for older children in a safe and secure location, with clear separation from younger children facilities, overlooked from some aspects and that promotes a sense of ownership. The site should include clean, litter and dog free areas for more informal play and appropriately designed seating and shelter. Sites should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design"</i>

	<i>and safety”</i>
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- xvi. The Council has highlighted its commitment to children and young people in District through its Local Plan and Community Strategy.
- xvii. Consultation highlights an overall perception of insufficient facilities for children and young people with a combined 54% thinking that there is either nearly enough or not enough provision. The current facilities were also observed to be underused and abused.
- xviii. Distribution of these facilities is uneven across the district and Malton has the lowest number of facilities. A large number of facilities are located in the rural analysis areas of Ryedale.
- xix. 44% feel that there is not enough provision for young people and the majority of the sites were considered to be ‘satisfactory’. The two rural areas have the lowest quality sites, with the high quality sites being located in Malton. Regardless of this the highest levels of dissatisfaction were found to be in Malton.
- xx. The vast majority of existing sites for children and young people are within settlements that the bus route passes through. Due to the rural nature of the district public transport links to these facilities are essential.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

Standards

Quantity Standard:	2.05 hectares per 1000 population
Accessibility Standard:	15 minute walk time (URBAN AREAS) 20 minute drive time (RURAL AREAS)
Quality Vision:	<i>“A well-planned, clean, litter and dog fouling free sports facility site, that sits in harmony with its surroundings. The site should have level and well-drained good quality surfaces, appropriate good quality ancillary accommodation including changing accommodation and car parking. The site should have appropriate management ensuring community safety and include lighting and the use of CCTV where appropriate to address the miss-use of sites.”</i>

- xxi. Outdoor sports facilities is a wide-ranging category of open space which includes both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that are owned and managed by town and parish councils, sports associations, schools and individual sports clubs. Examples include playing pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens and golf courses with the primary purpose of participation in outdoor sports.
- xxii. This PPG17 study considers the provision of all the different types of outdoor sport facilities as one and does not break down the typology into more detailed assessments for each sport. If undertaken, a playing pitch strategy considers

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current and future pitch provision in detail as a bespoke element of outdoor sport facilities.

- xxiii. There are a significant number of outdoor sports facilities in the district across public, private, voluntary and education sites. The distribution of outdoor sports facilities across the district is even and there are no clear differences between the level of provision in the urban and rural analysis areas.
- xxiv. 34% of respondents to the household survey rated the general quality of outdoor sport facilities as good, whilst only 25% stated that it was poor. The major problem identified was dog fouling and litter. Also where the number of pitches was limited maintenance was a problem, which results in a reduced level of usage.

Allotments

Standards

Quantity Standard:	0.51 hectares per 1000 population
Accessibility Standard:	15 minutes walk time - 720 metres (Rural) 15 minutes drive time (Urban)
Quality Vision:	<i>"A clean, secure and well-kept site that encourages sustainable development, bio-diversity, healthy living and education objectives with appropriate ancillary facilities (e.g. 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>

- xxv. The household surveys indicate the current level of provision is perceived to be about right, although 20% of respondents felt there wasn't enough. 58% of respondents perceived the quality of allotments to be good and only 3 out of the 19 allotments were considered poor.
- xxvi. The distribution of allotments is poor with 74% located in Malton. There is a lack of provision in rural villages and those located on the extremes of Ryedale are outside the catchment area. From the consultation concern about allotments being lost to new developments and long waiting lists for allotment areas were emphasised. Where there is an express demand for allotments, amenity green space sites with overlapping catchments in the market town areas may provide opportunities for meeting these deficiencies.

Cemeteries and Churchyards

Standards

Quantity Standard:	No Standard Set (as recommended by PPG17)
Accessibility Standard:	No Standard Set (as recommended by PPG17)

Quality Vision:	<i>“A clean and well-maintained site providing long-term burial capacity, an area of quiet contemplation and a sanctuary for wildlife. Sites should have clear pathways and varied vegetation and landscaping and provide appropriate ancillary accommodation (e.g. facilities for flowers litter bins and seating.) Access to sites should be enhanced by parking facilities and by public transport routes, particularly in urban areas”</i>
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- xxvii. Local standards for accessibility and quantity have not been set. Despite this, it remains important to consider the future delivery of cemeteries and churchyards anticipating future demand as well as assessing the current level of provision.
- xxviii. The quality vision should guide the future development and improvement of cemeteries and churchyards across the district. The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in the district is good to moderate, with 65 out of the 80 sites within this typology very well maintained and free of litter.
- xxix. In some instances cemeteries and churchyards are the only type of open space within a village, making them a particularly valuable element of the rural green space network. The enhancement to the accessibility and quality should be prioritised in these areas.
- xxx. The wider benefits of churchyards are key and it is wrong to place a value on churchyards and cemeteries focusing solely on quality and accessibility. In addition to offering a functional value, many cemeteries and churchyards have wider benefits including heritage, cultural and landscape values.

Green Corridors

Standards

Quantity Standard:	No Standard Set (as recommended by PPG17)
Accessibility Standard:	No Standard Set (as recommended by PPG17)
Quality Vision:	<i>“A clean, well-maintained, safe and secure corridor with accessible pathways, linking major open spaces together, enhancing natural features and wildlife corridors that is suitable for a variety of activities. Corridors should provide ancillary facilities such as bins and picnic areas, seating and lighting in appropriate places and signage.”</i>

- xxxi. Green corridors provide opportunities close to peoples homes for informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling, as part of every day routines, for example, travel to work or shops. The development of a linked green corridor network will help to provide opportunities for informal recreation and improve the health and well being of the local community. Green corridors are key to the achievement of increased participation targets.

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- xxxii. There are already a large number of footpaths and green corridor networks within the study area and consultation indicates that they are well used. Residents also indicated they would like to see more green corridors.
- xxxiii. Future development needs to encompass linkages between large areas of open space, create opportunities to develop the green corridor network and utilise potential development sites such as dismantled railway lines and cross country nature trails that already exist in the District. Development should consider both the needs of wildlife and humans.
- xxxiv. A network of multi-functional greenspace will contribute to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and new sustainable communities in the future. An integrated network of high quality green corridors will link open spaces together to help alleviate other open space deficiencies and provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport.

Overview of Provision

- xxxv. An overview of the key issues resulting from the application of local standards for each of the five geographical areas is set out below. Detailed recommendations can be found within the full report.

Malton

- xxxvi. Under the Council's emerging Local Development Framework, Malton / Norton will be the main focus for new development. Provision of market town amenity space in Malton and Norton is currently well distributed across the town with at least one site in each residential area. The only area outside of the catchment area for any market town amenity space is Old Malton. All residents in the Malton area are able to access parks and gardens and natural open spaces. Although all residents are able to access natural open spaces and parks within the recommended catchments, consultation highlights that there are perceived shortfalls of more formal park facilities within the urban area of Malton. Delivery of a formal park within Malton should be considered a locational priority.
- xxxvii. There are a large number of residents within the town who have to travel further than a 10 minute walk time to reach a children's play area. Deficiencies include the western areas of Malton and the northern areas of Norton. Furthermore, with the exception of the largest site to the north of Malton, all of the existing sites cover a small geographical area in the context of the number of residents within their catchments. This would suggest that not only do accessibility deficiencies exist, but that current sites may be able to sustain higher levels of use. In light of the identified deficiencies in quantitative terms in the Malton area, new facilities located in the areas of accessibility deficiency should be considered a priority.
- xxxviii. With reference to outdoor sport facilities, many of the sites within the Malton / Norton area are of a substantial size. Sites are also well distributed across the geographical area. In light of the equitable distribution of outdoor sports facilities, it can be seen that all residents are within the recommended catchment area for an outdoor sports facility. Given that the existing provision of outdoor sports facilities appears satisfactory both in terms of quantity and accessibility, it is important that the focus is placed on improving the quality of existing facilities and ensuring that all sites are fit for the purpose for which they are intended and publicly available.

Pickering

- xxxix. Under proposals in the LDF Spatial Strategy, Pickering will be developed as the main centre for the northern part of the District. This open space, sport and recreation study reveals that there are four large amenity space sites to the north and south of Pickering (and a scattering of smaller sites across the town) that meet the needs of most residents. Consultations highlighted that there are perceived deficiencies in provision and the application of the local standards reveals that there are residents living in the east and west of the town without access to amenity space sites. The existing deficiencies in provision of market town amenity space could be addressed through the provision of local amenity space, or in the form of a more formal park. A lack of a formal park was a key issue throughout consultation with many residents feeling that they should have access to formalised local open space.
- xl. In terms of children's play area there are significant residential areas outside of the 10-minute walk time catchment. This is reinforced and heightened by the distribution of existing sites which are all located to the South and West of Pickering, with no provision to the North or East. Four small sites are located in close proximity to one other, serving very similar catchment areas. In light of the identified quantitative deficiencies and the number of residents currently living outside of the recommended catchment for play areas consideration should be given to addressing the needs of local residents through the provision of new sites.

- xli. The north of the town is particularly well served by outdoor sport facilities, as are the central areas, albeit to a lesser extent. Three of these sites in the north are located in very close proximity to one another to the north of Pickering, serving a similar catchment area. As a consequence, it is the residents to the east of Pickering who (whilst able to access facilities) have the smallest quantitative levels of provision. Given that the existing provision of outdoor sports facilities appears satisfactory in terms of accessibility, it is important that the initial emphasis is placed on improving the quality of existing facilities within the area.

Helmsley and Kirkbymoorside

- xlii. The largest quantitative deficiencies of market town amenity space can be found in the Helmsley and Kirkbymoorside areas of the district. Despite this, provision of market town amenity space is well distributed in Helmsley and all residents are able to access amenity spaces. With the exception of the large site to the eastern side of the town, all spaces are small in size, therefore providing only limited informal recreational opportunities. Although these sites are small in size they are serving large catchments that may potentially exceed that which they should be according to the recommended quantity standard. Residents in Kirkbymoorside in particular are well served in terms of access to natural spaces, with Kirkdale Woods, Hagg Wood and Ravenswick Wood all in close proximity to the settlement.
- xliii. Despite having only two sites in total, existing provision for children is well distributed in Helmsley, with very few residents outside of the accessibility catchment. Despite this, given that there are only two sites within the town, the number of residents each site is serving should be considered, as it may be that each site is sustaining higher levels of use than should be expected.
- xliv. Given the good distribution of play areas for children, further provision to satisfy the local quantity standard could be achieved through the expansion of existing sites or alternatively through the delivery of new sites. If new provision is considered necessary, it is residents within the centre of Helmsley who currently have the furthest distance to travel to reach a play area.
- xlvi. Although there is only one site for young people in Helmsley, located to the north of the town, almost all residents are able to access this site within the recommended 10 minute catchment with only those living to the south east of the town falling outside.
- xlvi. In terms of priorities, provision for young people in the south east of Helmsley would help to address the existing accessibility deficiencies and ensure that all residents are within the appropriate accessibility threshold. The area outside of the provision for young people accessibility catchment is shown below. This area should be a priority for new provision in Helmsley
- xlvi. Despite there being only two sites for children in Kirkbymoorside, provision is well distributed with few accessibility deficiencies. The multi-purpose site at Old Road that includes equipped children's play space and also a skatepark for older children offers a significantly wider variety of facilities than the Ryedale View site, which currently only includes a swing and a seat. Therefore in reality residents to the west of the town are more poorly served than residents living to the east. Although the facility at Old Road is located on the eastern side of the town, the majority of residents are within the recommended distance of the facility for young people. Only those living to the North West of Kirkbymoorside are outside of the catchment.
- xlviii. In terms of priorities for new areas, further provision in areas outside of the accessibility catchment to the west of the town would have substantial benefits in

terms of the quantity and accessibility of this typology. The expansion of the Ryedale View site should also be considered to ensure that equal opportunities are provided to all residents.

- xlix. In terms of outdoor sport facilities, Helmsley Sport and Recreation Club is the only facility located in the town of Helmsley. This equates to 1 facility per 1560 population (2001 Parish Populations), a ratio which is lower than both Malton / Norton and Pickering. The site is located on the northern periphery of the town. Given this location, it can be seen below that some residents to the south west are outside of the recommended 10 minute walk time.
- I. There are currently three outdoor sport facilities within Kirkbymoorside – the Golf Club, the Community Primary School and the Sportsfield. This equates to a level of provision of 1 facility per 960 population (2001 Parish Population of 2880). Despite there being only three sites, the distribution of these facilities (one to the north, one to the east and one to the west) across Kirkbymoorside ensures that all residents are within a 10-minute walk time of an outdoor sports facility. Given that the existing provision of outdoor sports facilities appears satisfactory both in terms of quantity and accessibility, it is important that the Council focuses on improving the quality of existing facilities within the area to ensure that these sites are able to sustain the recommended level of use.

Smaller Settlements

- li. In rural areas such as Ryedale, village populations can be very low and there are significant distances between different settlements. At the same time, it is not possible for every settlement to have provision for children and young people. Moreover, due to the age range and quantity of people living within some villages it would not necessarily be desirable to provide a facility of a small nature across all settlements. In such circumstances, village greens and informal play spaces can serve a similar function to formal play provision in some rural settlements (size permitting). Instead some forms of provision tend to be located only in larger settlements.
- lii. With respect of outdoor sport facilities, it can be seen that there is a good distribution of facilities across the rural analysis areas. Furthermore, analysis of the drive time accessibility catchments shows that almost all residents living within the rural settlements of the plan area are within a 15-minute drive of an outdoor sport facility. While the need to drive to facilities in the rural area is recognised, where possible, sustainable transport should be encouraged.
- liii. In light of the good spatial distribution of existing provision in the rural areas, it could be considered unfeasible and unnecessary to deliver additional facilities in settlements where there is currently no provision (particularly given the restraint policy on housing growth and subsequent reduction in the scope for developer contributions and other investment opportunities in these areas). However, where provision is considered appropriate this should be in the context of existing population and demographics, the nearest provision of outdoor sport facilities in surrounding settlements, the local demand for outdoor sports facilities, and potential for delivery.
- liv. Consultation highlights that there are mixed opinions regarding the overall quantity of public open space in villages. Many residents indicated that there is no public open space available within their settlement. It is important to consider village amenity space in the context of other types of open space provided in villages, such as outdoor sports facilities and provision for children. The roles of all of these spaces

overlap in these rural areas and it may be in some instances that one space performs a variety of roles and meets all local needs.

- iv. The recommended quantity standard aims to ensure that all villages containing over 150 residents provide at least one type of open space for local residents ensuring that residents within the larger villages are able to access facilities in close proximity to their home. The importance of the provision of a good network of public rights of way is also reinforced, ensuring that residents are able to access nearby countryside and other settlements as well as the more local spaces in their specific village.
- lvi. In light of the nature of village amenity space, no accessibility standard is recommended, as these local spaces are perceived to serve all residents of the village in which they are located. Analysis of the distribution of village green spaces suggests that provision is well dispersed across the more rural areas of the district. More detailed analysis highlights some settlements where village amenity space is of particular importance and value to local residents as it is the only type of space in that area.

Planning and Implementation

- lvii. This open space sport and recreation study is an invaluable tool in the formulation and implementation of planning policies. This relates to both the protection and enhancing of existing open space and the framework for developer contributions.
- lviii. The study provides the tools in which the value of an open space can be assessed on a site-by-site basis, as and when a development proposal is submitted for an existing piece of open space. Similarly, this approach can be the basis for determining what type of open space provision is appropriate to be provided within a housing development. The study also allows a broad area analysis that aids decisions in terms of priority areas and areas of over provision.
- lix. The review and assessment of Ryedale's policy structure suggests that a number of revisions should be made to extant planning policies as the Council progresses with its Local Development Framework. Of particular importance is a transition from nationally derived provision standards to the local standards advocated in this report. The Council should consider the preparation of an SPD detailing the approach towards open space developer contributions. The Council should ensure that all developments (1 dwelling +) make a proportionate contribution if an area has a quantity deficiency within the relevant accessibility catchment. This is particularly important given the rural nature of the district. Many smaller villages have very limited open space facilities but have a steady increase of small site housing completions which should contribute to open space provision rather than worsen deficiencies.