



Parks Strategy

2010-2015

Chapter 1: Introduction

The need for a parks strategy

It is generally accepted that good quality parks and open spaces are important for enhancing the quality of urban life. Quality green spaces have been shown to support the local economy, enhance physical and mental health, benefit children and young people, reduce crime and fear of crime, support social cohesion, aid movement between spaces, and protect biodiversity and the environment (ODPM, 2005).¹

Corporate Strategy. The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Brent to 2010 and our Corporate Strategy both identify the parks in the borough as vital assets contributing to the health, wellbeing and overall quality of life of people living, working or studying in the borough.

As part of the Council's vision for Brent as 'a green place', our Corporate Strategy seeks to:

- Maintain the quality of parks and open spaces and upgrade the current range of facilities available within them, and
- Develop a programme of green activities – such as tree planting, developing 'pocket parks' and other open spaces to improve access to open space for residents

Local Area Agreement. Based on feedback from residents, among the Local Area Agreement (LAA) options identified by central government for local authorities, the Council has adopted priorities, in line with the Corporate Strategy, to:

- Reduce the adult mortality rate from circulatory diseases through measures tackling obesity (e.g. exercise referral, and health walks in parks)
- Reduce obesity among primary school pupils (through a wide range of measures including increased participation in physical activity (e.g. outdoor play and sport in parks)
- Increase participation in sport by both adults and young people (separate targets) through increasing capacity and clubs and sporting opportunities (with disabled people as a particular target group)
- Increase participation in regular volunteering (e.g. with play groups, allotment societies, sports clubs and Friends groups in parks)
- Raise satisfaction with parks and playgrounds among young people (a new agreement from 2009/10)
- Reduce CO2 emissions

¹ ODPM (2005), *How to Create Quality Parks and Open Spaces*. ODPM Publications.

Brent's parks and the Parks Service play an important role in helping the Council to achieve its LAA targets against all these priorities. The Parks Service has also developed a set of local objectives and performance indicators against these.

Biodiversity and Climate Change. The value of the borough's green spaces of all types is also recognised for their contribution to maintaining and improving local biodiversity. They are also vitally important in helping to adapt to climate change through, for example, planting and conservation of trees to provide shade from the sun, and consideration of the type of planting and of maintenance regimes in order to conserve water and provide floodplains.

Economic Development. Parks also make an important contribution to the wealth of the borough by helping to attract visitors and inward investment. Historic parks, such as the Victorian Gladstone and Roundwood parks, have a particular appeal and need to be protected and enhanced both for their inherent cultural value and their contribution to local wealth creation. Increasing the overall employment rate is a further priority (and Local Area Agreement) for the Council and a particular challenge in the current economic downturn.

The current Parks Strategy. The Council, with support from residents and a range of stakeholders, has achieved many of the recommendations set out in the current Parks Strategy that comes to an end this year. For example:

- Annual visits to our parks have increased to nearly 16 million a year from 13 million five years ago²
- Five of our parks - Gladstone, Roundwood, Barham, Preston, Mapesbury Dell and Queen's Park (in Brent and managed by the Corporation of London) - have received national ('Green Flag') recognition for the high standard of planting and facilities in these parks, and, in 2009 the Barn Hill Conservation Trust retained the 'Green Pennant' award for its work on the Roe Green Walled Garden
- Our allotment service has been re-vitalised and the quality of several sites has been transformed (eg. Gladstone Park Gardens and Townsend Lane)
- A comprehensive range of sports facilities in our parks have been upgraded and new facilities provided in areas of need (for example pitch drainage works a multi use games area and new sports pavilions at Gibbons Recreation Ground, Gladstone Park, John Billam, and the GEC, in addition to pavilion upgrades at Northwick Park, Vale Farm and King Edward VII Park and new multi use games areas at Vale Farm, Hazel Road and Grove Park)
- The results of the most recent annual Parks Survey show new approaches taken by the Park Warden Service have resulted in improved perceptions of security and safety in parks (including dog control, graffiti and vandalism), improved communications with users and greater community involvement; all issues identified as residents' priorities through the 'Best Value Review' consultation process in 2001
- In terms of Biodiversity, since 2001 the Council has achieved increases in hay meadow, woodland, hedgerow and pond habitats at Fryent Country Park; and of marshland conservation at the Brent Reservoir where 'Local Nature Reserve' status has been declared
- In 2008-09, Brent Parks Service received a 'London in Bloom' Silver Gilt Award for Horticultural Excellence and 3rd Place in both the Community Garden and Parks Bedding in the Discretionary awards. We have an

² Annual Brent Parks Surveys 2003 - 2008

excellent record in the local completion and have represented London in the regional Britain in Bloom competition in which won a silver gilt and came second in category. In 2009 we attained another Silver Gilt in the Large City category

- Brent Council Parks Service won the Beacon Status Award in 2002 under the theme 'Improving Urban Green Space'
- Our Parks Service has also secured a £1.2 million DCSF 'Playbuilder' grant to improve between 20-24 children's playgrounds across the borough. This project has resulted in improved working relationship with our Children and Families Departments and forged strong consultation networks with young people (For example, findings from the TELUS Survey 2009 shows that the young people of Brent have voted their local parks and playgrounds as the second best in the country. Results will be fed into the new NI199 indicator- 'Satisfaction with parks and playgrounds by young people')

Despite these successes, we know there is still much to achieve; not least how to address spatial deficiencies in open space, play and sports facilities to meet local needs in some of the most densely population parts of the borough and, looking to the future, how best to provide and sustain new areas of open space and facilities to meet the needs of the growing population linked to our area regeneration plans. We also know that many of our established park facilities are out-dated and inadequately maintained while improving residents' sense of security in our un-staffed parks and open spaces continues to be a priority. So too is the achievement of further Green Flag awards at Welsh Harp Open Space, King Edward VII Park, Brent River Park and, in time, other sites.

Now, a new plan is needed to guide the priorities for action in these and other areas of our work in the Parks Service for the coming five-year period.

At the same time that the current Parks Strategy is coming to an end, several changes are taking place in Brent that require new strategic planning when it comes to parks and green spaces and the amenities they provide.

Regeneration Areas. First, is housing growth planned around five regeneration areas – Wembley, Alperton, Church End, Burnt Oak/Colindale and South Kilburn. The Council has drafted a framework for investment in infrastructure to serve the people living in the new homes that these major regeneration schemes will attract. This 'Infrastructure & Investment Framework' includes consideration of access to parks and open space and management of these assets to help improve their quality.

The Local Development Framework. Second, all local councils in England are in the process of developing new Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) for future land-use as part of the government's statutory planning process. These LDFs replace the current Unitary Development Plans. As part of this change in Brent, the Council is preparing a Draft Core Strategy Submission Document.

To ensure that all future development in the Borough is properly supported with the necessary community infrastructure – including parks and open spaces – and that the Core Strategy is approved by the Secretary of State, a fully evidenced assessment of infrastructure needs is required.

This new Parks Strategy will help identify gaps in existing provision of parks and open spaces so that future investment (including contributions from developers) can be effectively targeted to achieve maximum community benefit.

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. One of the legacies of the Games coming to London will be an increased interest in sport and active recreation by people of all ages and abilities, particularly the young. Sports and recreation facilities in Parks and open spaces will play a vital role in capitalising on this new enthusiasm and interest in sport. The Parks Strategy will need to consider how best to respond to this opportunity in the context of the Mayor's 2012 Olympics legacy plan, A Sporting Future for London (April 2009)

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP). A further consideration for the Parks Strategy with regard to facilities for sport and active recreation is the government's major investment programme in transforming education through capital buildings and infrastructure investment at both secondary level (the ongoing BSF and Academy School programmes) and at primary level (the new Primary Capital Programme). One of the aims of these programmes is to improve access and opportunities for local communities to access quality facilities on school sites (such as sports pitches and play areas) outside the school day. Clearly, the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP to provide community access to the types of sports and play amenities that are also provided in many of our parks and recreation grounds (e.g. grass and synthetic pitches, games courts and equipped play areas) need to be considered carefully in preparing our next Parks Strategy.

What do we mean by Parks?

The scope of the strategy includes the following types of urban green space within the borough: **public parks** (including sports amenities within parks), **public open spaces**, **children's play areas** in parks and **allotments**.

Working with others

Although the drafting of this strategy has been led by Brent Council's Parks Service, it has been compiled with input and consultation from related Council services (notably Planning and Sports), a variety of partners and Brent residents.

Annual Parks Survey. The Council carries out surveys of 10% of residents each year to find out what people think about the borough's parks and patterns of use according to demographic group to determine future needs reflecting equality of access.

Consultation on parks and play issues and priorities has also taken place with the Citizen's Panel and with the Brent Community Friends (Youth Forum) as part of developing proposals for improved play provision under the 'Playbuilder' grant aid scheme.

Local Interest Groups. Regular consultation on sports issues in parks takes place as part of the Brent Community Sports & Physical Activity Network (CSPAN) developed from the Brent Sports Club Forum. Other ways in which the Council works with residents to address parks issues include the various Parks Friends Groups that make a major voluntary contribution to Brent park life, as well as several Allotment Forum. These groups have all helped shaped a range of major changes during the last five years in line with the last Brent Parks Strategy.

Regional Groups. Across the sub-region and London as a whole, the Parks Service attends a number of consultative groups to make sure it keeps abreast of park

developments of relevance to Brent in neighbouring boroughs as well as good practice in parks planning and management, new developments, trends and investment opportunities.

Public Consultation on the Draft Strategy. Public consultation on the draft strategy took place from October 2009 to January 2010. The draft Strategy was available in Brent's libraries and remaining One Stop Shops. It was also available to download from the Parks Service's website and was on the Council's Consultation tracker inviting people to feedback via the online consultation questionnaire. A web link and flyers were sent to members of the Council's User Consultative Forums and the Brent Magazine ran an article on the draft strategy. The Youth Parliament considered the draft strategy and provided feedback which will inform delivery of the actions within the strategy.

Letters and/or emails were sent to the following individuals and organisations together with copies of the draft Strategy and Executive Summary asking for their comments and feedback:

- Senior Council Officers and Members
- Local Friends of Parks and Open Spaces
- All of the listed Residents Associations
Youth Parliament
- Greater London Parks Benchmarking Group
- Greenspace
- Council's User Consultative Forums which include Brava, BME, Disability and Older People's Forums
- All local Schools through the Schools Extranet

The responses from the consultation process have informed the final version of the Strategy. The majority of comments supported the key themes and objectives.

What's in the document?

The strategy is divided into six chapters.

Chapter 1 - Introduction. This first chapter explains why the strategy has been written and the consultation processes that have been undertaken to inform the strategy.

Chapter 2 - A Profile of Brent. This provides an overview of Brent as a 'place', including the demographic profile and trends, socio economic and health issues and trends, transport issues and Brent's location in relation to other London boroughs. At the end of the chapter, these factors are considered in the context of what they means in terms of patterns of demand and need for public parks and open space. (Links are provided for those wishing to access more detailed needs information.)

Chapter 3 - Strategic and External Influences. This chapter reviews key local and external strategic influences and policies affecting parks and open spaces in Brent including: land use planning and regeneration, health and sport (including the 2012 London Olympic & Paralympic Games), climate change and biodiversity and, across all these areas, equality of opportunity.

Chapter 4 - Brent Parks Today. Current provision of public parks, public open spaces, sports facilities in parks, children's play areas and allotments is summarised in this chapter. Existing provision and programmes are considered in relation to their

quantity (benchmarked against other similar London boroughs and standards), distribution and accessibility to people from all parts of the borough, and their quality. Quality assessments are based on residents' own perceptions and those of an external assessor. (Links are provided for those wishing to access to more detailed reports, maps and data on which the summary is based.)

Chapter 5 - Identifying Service Objectives and Strategic Priorities. This chapter summarises the main issues arising from the evidence of needs set out in the preceding chapters and identifies service objectives and strategic priorities for the Brent Parks Service over the five-year period to 2014.

Chapter 6 – Action Planning and Review. The final chapter sets out a draft 5 Year Action Plan for implementation of the strategy and details how the strategy will be reviewed, enabling the comparison of achievements against actions and recognising new opportunities and unpredicted changes that may have an impact on parks provision in Brent.

Chapter 2: Profile of Brent

Introduction

Brent is a place of contrasts. It is characterised by a sharp divide between the relative affluence of the northern wards and high levels of social and economic deprivation in areas south of the North Circular Road. Although there are also pockets of deprivation in the Northern wards that should not be overlooked, the north of the borough is generally sub-urban in character with an older population whilst the south experiences many of the challenges faced by inner city communities.

Map 1: Wards within the London Borough of Brent



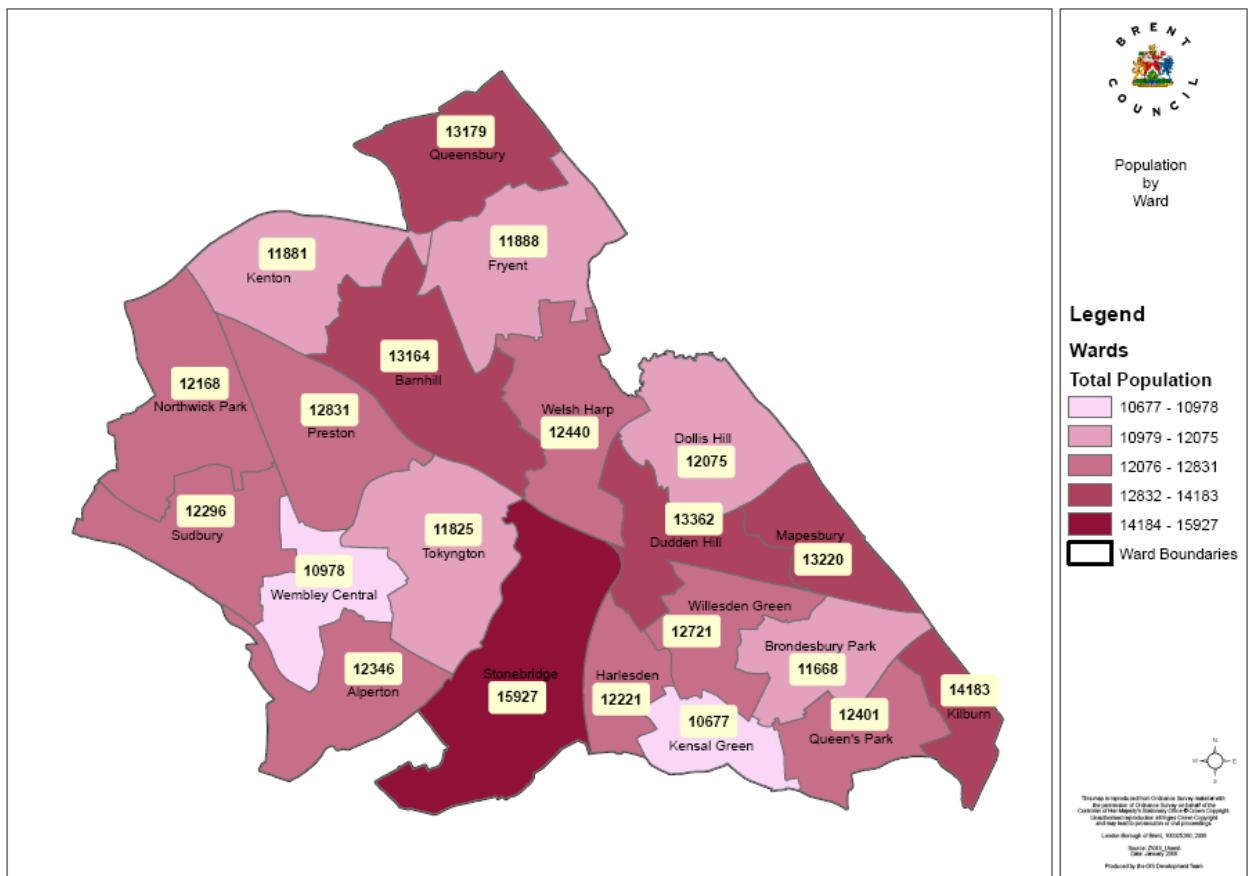
Within the West London sub-region Brent has the highest levels of diversity and multiple deprivation and is also the most densely populated borough. Brent shares its boundaries with 7 other boroughs (Barnet, Harrow, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster and Camden) and many Brent residents will use park facilities across the border, in neighbouring authorities.

Population and Projections

Brent's population is growing. Recent figures indicate significant numbers of people moving into the borough creating new emerging communities. Brent also has significant numbers of transient people. The GLA estimate Brent's population was at least 279,200 in 2007 and independent research commissioned by the Council estimates the figure to be nearer 289,000 at March 2007.

Population growth in Brent has largely occurred in the south of the borough and is predominantly the result of an increase in the number of young adults, often with pre-school or young children. This has resulted in a significant 8% increase in the birth rate in the past eighteen months. Brent has the second highest number of new National Insurance registrations in the country at 15,600 in 2007. Nearly 8% of Brent's population is classified as refugees or asylum seekers. The ONS 2006 mid-year estimates place Brent with a slightly higher male population at 136,000 with 135,400 females.

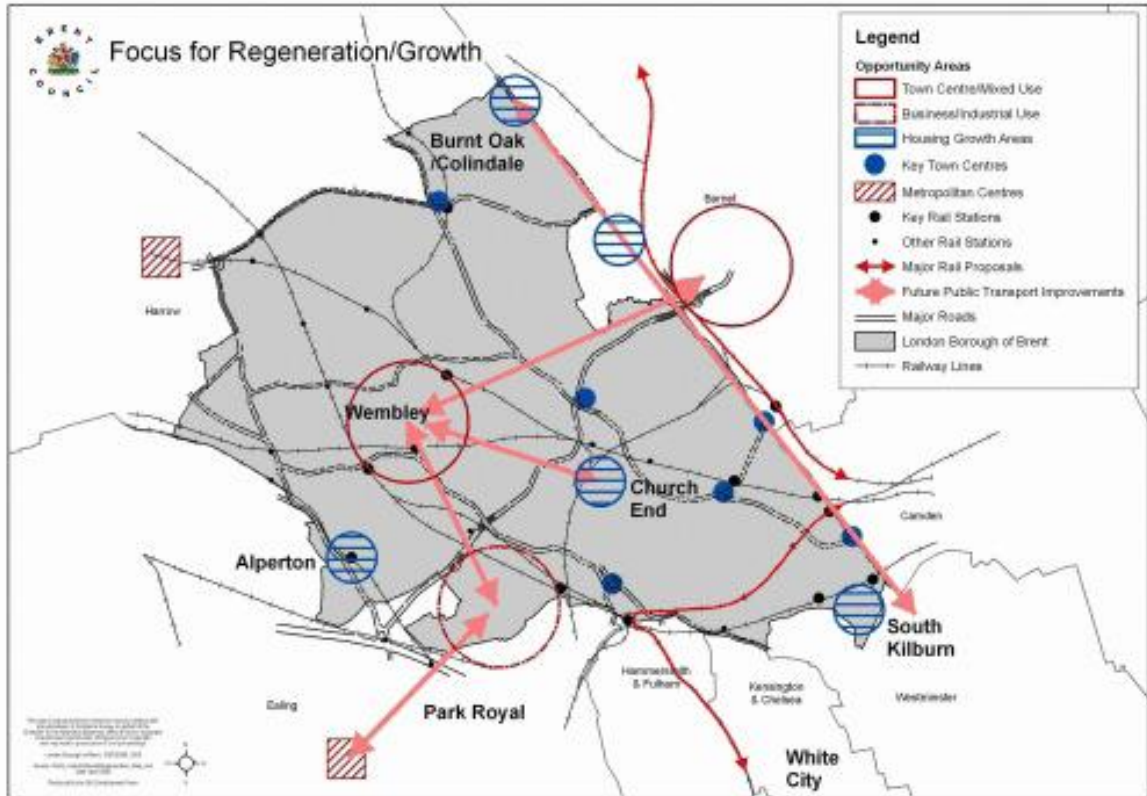
Map 2: Population densities by ward



The GLA projections estimate Brent's population to grow to over 291,000 by 2016, an increase of nearly 12,000. However, this figure does not incorporate the impact of additional housing in the borough and the London Plan identifies that Brent will

accommodate 11,200 new homes by 2017. **The population is therefore expected to grow to over 305,000.** These new homes will be focused in five housing growth areas; Wembley, Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale, Church End and South Kilburn. **Wembley, Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale and South Kilburn are expected to gain 1,000 - 1,500 additional households (2,500 - 3,750 people) and Church End is expected to gain 500 – 750 additional households.**

Map 3: Key regeneration areas within Brent



Currently the wards with the highest population figures are Stonebridge, Kilburn, Mapesbury, Queensbury and Dudden Hill. Stonebridge and Kilburn wards both have the highest population according to GLA estimates with just over 17,000 and 15,000 respectively.

Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

Brent is one of only two local authorities serving a population where the majority of people are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. 54.4% of Brent residents are from black and minority ethnic communities, this compares to approximately 40% of London's population and 12% of the population of England and Wales. These groups comprise of established Indian, Black Caribbean, Black African and Irish communities as well as emerging Eastern European, Somali, Turkish and Hispanic communities. Brent residents speak over 130 different languages but ethnicity varies by ward. The Asian population tends to be located towards the west of the borough, with Queensbury having the highest number of Asian residents and Wembley Central the highest number of Asian or Asian British Indian residents. The highest concentrations of Black African Caribbean residents are in Stonebridge and Harlesden wards. The white population tend to be located towards the east of the Borough and Kilburn. Mapesbury and Dollis Hill wards have the highest numbers of white Irish residents. In the next 10 years the BME population is expected to increase

to 60% of the population. The largest increase is expected to be in the Asian population which is expected to increase to just under a third of the population (32%) by 2016.

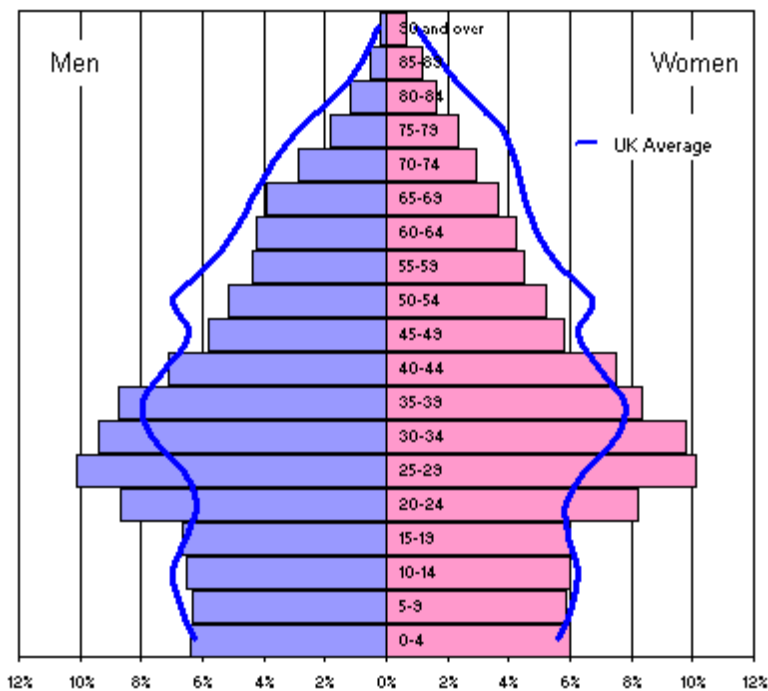
Age Structure

Brent has a relatively young population, a quarter of residents are aged 19 years or under. The South of the borough has the highest concentrations of young people and in Brent's five most deprived wards, a third of residents are aged under 16 years. 62% of people in Brent are under the age of 40 years (Nationally 52% of the population is aged under 40) and only 14% of the population are of pensionable age.

The largest numbers of children live in Wembley (28%) and the least in Kilburn (16%). Whilst many live in moderate prosperity, many however are still living in low income households in deprived areas. Harlesden has the highest percentage of children living in deprived households, (59% of all children in the area).

The population pyramid below shows the structure of Brent's population compared to that of the UK (shown by the blue line). This pyramid emphasises Brent's young population.

Graph 1: Population Pyramid



Gender

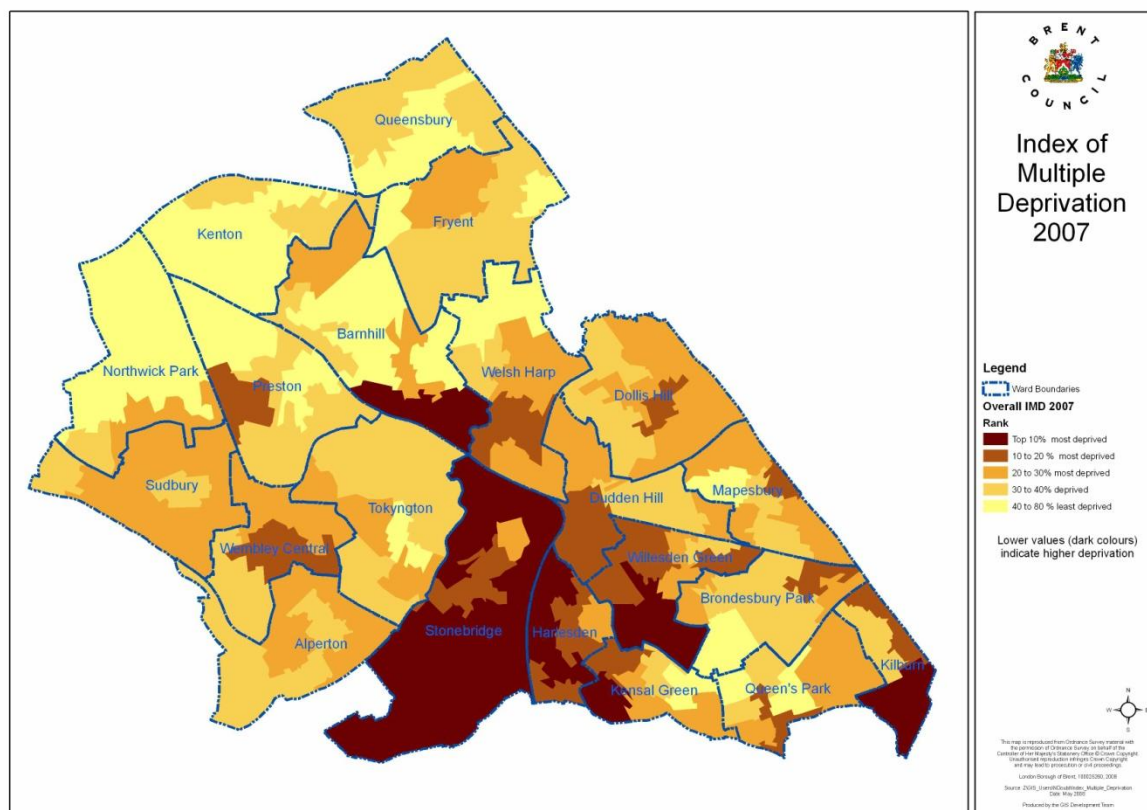
At the last census, 51.5% of the resident population of Brent were female very close to the London average of 51.6%.

Deprivation

The 2007 Index of Multiple deprivation identified Brent as the 53rd most deprived area out of 354 boroughs; previously the borough had been ranked 81st (1 = Most Deprived, 354 = Least Deprived).

This ranking now places Brent within the 15% most deprived areas of the country. While the main locations of multiple deprivation are in the South of the borough, particularly in Stonebridge, Harlesden, parts of Kensal Green, Willesden Green and Kilburn wards there are new pockets emerging in the North and West in parts of Barnhill, Welsh Harp and Wembley Central wards.

Map 4: Deprivation levels within individual Wards



Deprivation experienced within the borough is characterised by relatively high levels of long-term unemployment (24% of unemployed people are classified as long-term unemployed compared to a London average of 15%), low household incomes and dependence on benefits and social housing. Across Brent 65.5% of residents aged 16-74 were registered as economically active which is slightly down on the London average of 67.6%. Of those registered economically inactive, 5% were unemployed according to the Census data in 2001. In addition, qualifications and skills levels in Brent are low and Brent ranks 6th from bottom within London on overall residence-based skills and qualifications score.

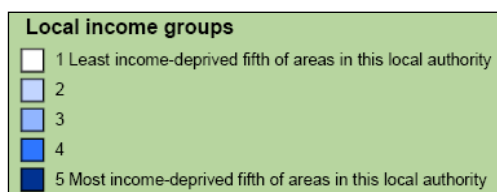
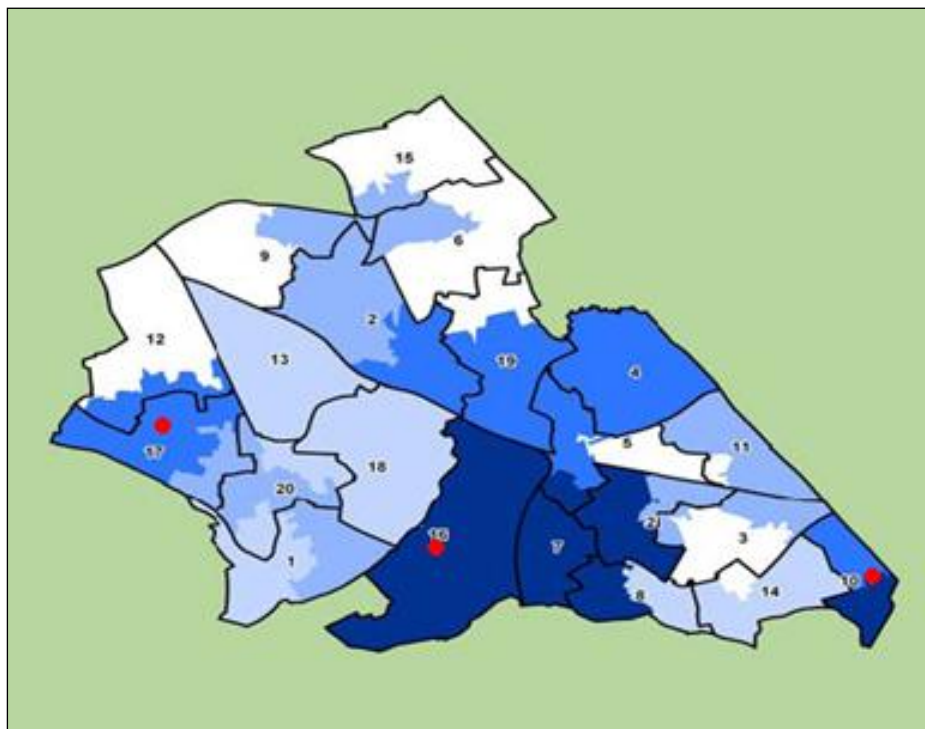
Children and young people are particularly affected by deprivation with a third of Brent's children living in low income households, a quarter in social housing and a fifth in single-adult households.

Income

According to the methodology PayCheck, Brent has the 4th lowest average mean income levels in London (Waltham Forest, Newham, and Barking & Dagenham are lower). PayCheck is a measure of household income from all sources including benefits (i.e. not just earnings). The mean or average household annual income for

Brent is £35,607 from 2007 dataset (Greater London is £38,781). There is a £13,000 difference in mean annual income between the wealthiest and poorest neighbourhoods within Brent. Mapesbury is the wealthiest ward with an average annual income of £41,053. In comparison Stonebridge has average annual income of £28,052. Stonebridge, Harlesden and Kilburn wards are the most income deprived areas in the Borough and the majority of the remaining wards fall within the 20% most income deprived areas in England.

Map 5: The most and least income deprived wards in the borough.



Health

There are significant health inequalities in the borough, linked to location, gender, level of deprivation and ethnicity. The most deprived wards in the South of the borough have a higher death rate, and lower life expectancy than the less deprived wards in the North of the borough. The prevalence of diabetes in Brent is high compared to the national average with 4.6% of the population being diagnosed with the condition, although the proportion that are undiagnosed may be closer to 6%. Brent has one of the highest rates of TB in London and in England.

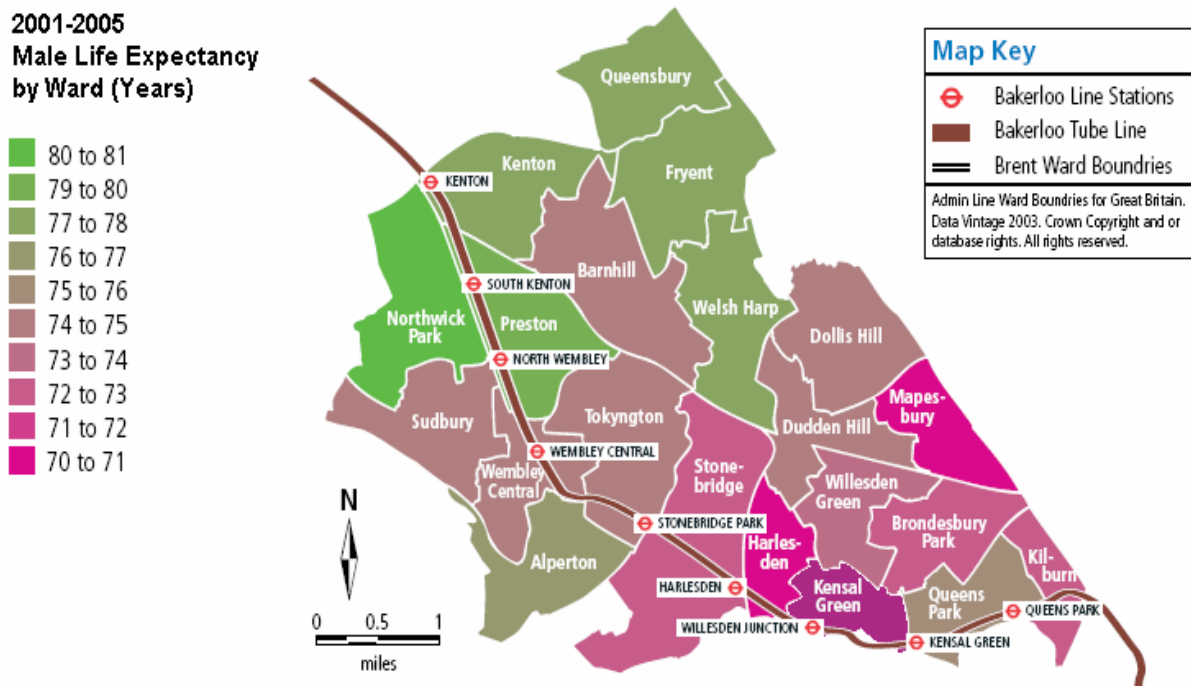
The 2001 Census found 70% of Brent's population to be in good health, with 21% rated fairly good and 9% as not good. Over the last ten years, rates of deaths from all causes have decreased for both men and women and are lower than the England average. Circulatory diseases, including heart disease, strokes and cancers, are the most common cause of death in Brent. The health status of the Borough is also a

reflection of income deprivation with the prevalence of life limiting health conditions and lower life expectancy in the most deprived wards in the south of the Borough.

The prevalence of diabetes in Brent is high compared to the national average with 4.6% of the population being diagnosed with the condition. Brent also has one of the highest rates of TB in London and in England.

The Department of Health's 2007 health profile of Brent in 2007 states that on average people live longer in Brent than England overall and female life expectancy is rising faster than in England. However there is a stark difference in the life expectancy within the deprived areas compared to the more affluent areas. These differences can be illustrated by examining male life expectancy along the Bakerloo line where a journey of 3.5 miles takes you from Harlesden which has the lowest life expectancy level for men to South Kenton where life expectancy is over 9 years longer.

Map 6: Male Life-Expectancy Gaps Between Deprived and Affluent Wards in Brent (Harlesden to South Kenton along the Bakerloo Line)



A high proportion of people rate their health as 'not good', and diabetes and tuberculosis are higher than the England average with diabetes affecting 1 in 20 people.

Approximately 19.6% of Brent's population are classed as obese which is slightly less than the 22.1% for the rest of England. However, **the percentage of children in year 6 who are obese is 22.5% in Brent** which is 5% higher than the national average. This places Brent with the 10th highest obesity levels for year 6 in England (compared against 152 PCT areas).

Use of parks and open spaces for physical activity and sport can have a huge influence on improving the health of the borough and contribute to the Council's LAA priorities to reduce mortality rate from circulatory diseases and to tackle obesity in both adults and children.

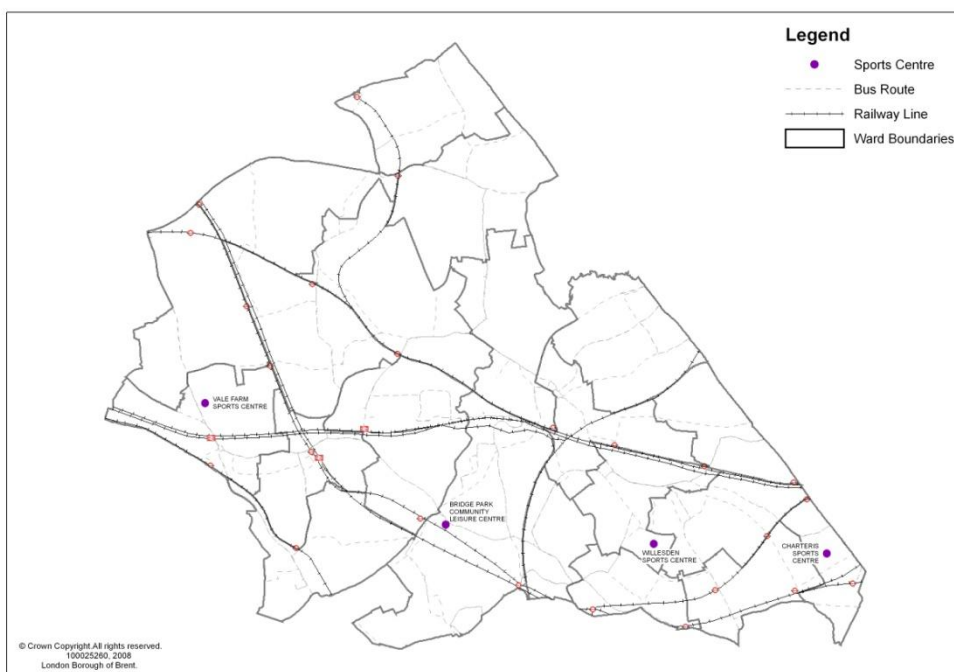
Accessibility

Car ownership. Brent has a very low vehicle ownership; 37.3% of households do not have access to a vehicle and therefore public transport plays a key role in transporting people around the Borough particularly in the southern wards with the lowest household income and car ownership rates.

Public transport. The Borough has a complex public transport network with 48 daytime bus services and 13 night bus services which are utilised by 30million people a year, a figure that is growing at more than 5% per annum. Some 26 stations provide access to one or more of the Bakerloo, Jubilee, Metropolitan and Piccadilly London Underground lines and national rail services operated by Chiltern Railways, Silverlink Trains and South Central.

There are some areas of Brent which have poor public transport accessibility and these are often areas of high deprivation where car ownership is also low. This includes the St Raphael's and Brentfield Estates which are severed by the A406 North Circular Road meaning access is restricted and it is compounded by infrequent bus services. Clearly, local parks and open spaces, small open spaces and 'pocket parks' accessible on foot are important in serving the open space, play and recreation needs of residents in these areas.

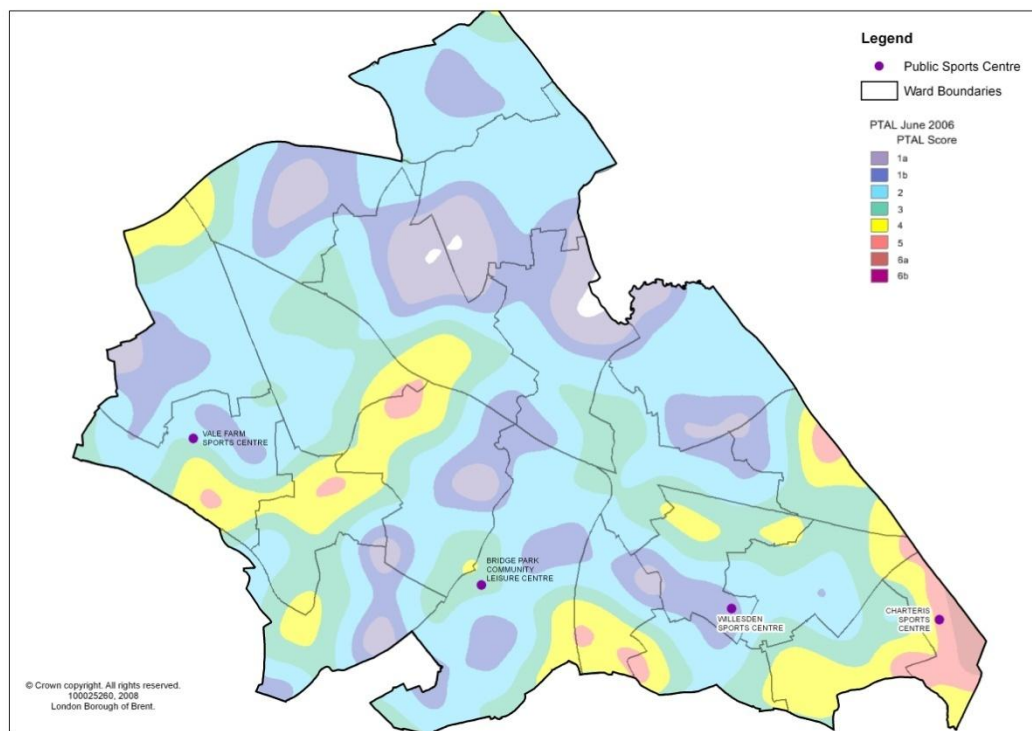
A further aspect of accessibility is severance, where major highways or rail corridors create physical and psychological barriers which effectively cut off communities from key services. Key examples of this in Brent are the A406 North Circular Road and the West Coast Mainline railway which both sever the borough. The high speeds and traffic flows of the A406 are both intimidating and limit crossing only to designated controlled points.



Map 7: Main bus and rail routes within Brent

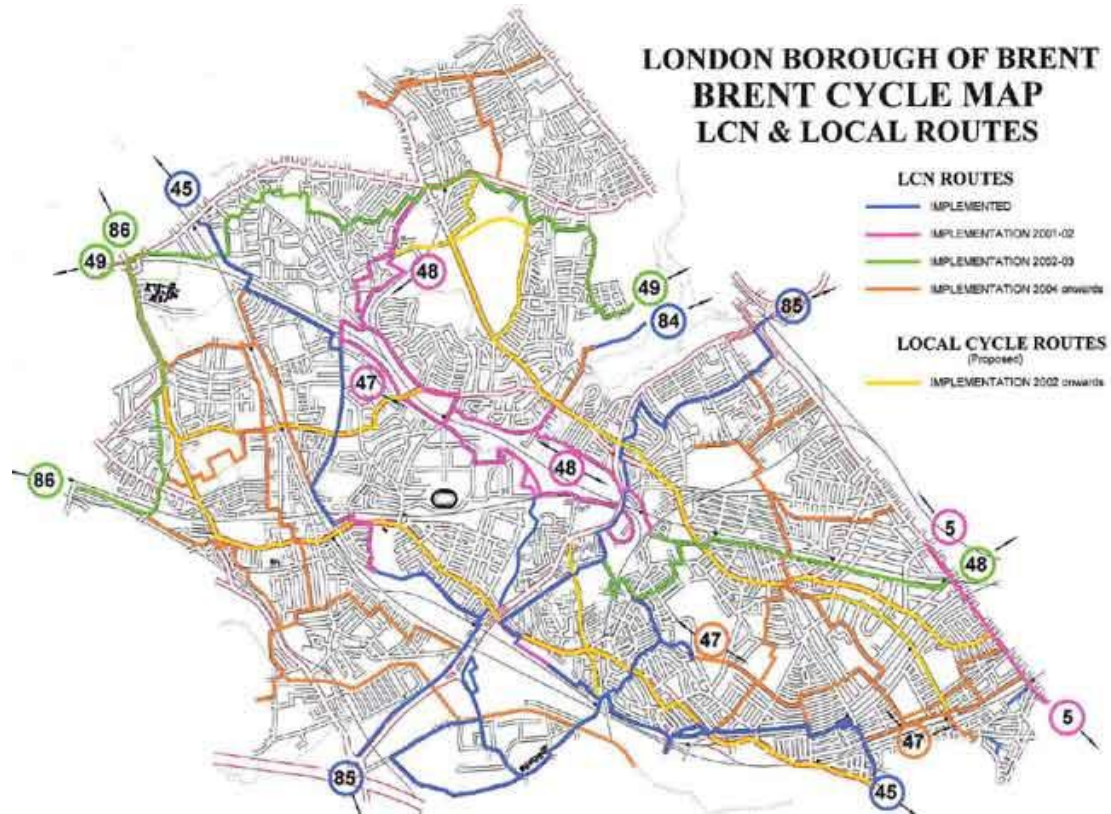
Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTAL) provides a more detailed picture of how accessible different parts of the borough are to the public transport network. The higher PTAL scores (4-6b, yellow to red) indicate areas which are within a short walking distance of one or more forms of public transport interchange. The map below shows that the areas with the highest PTAL scores are Kilburn, parts of Mapesbury, Kensal Green, Harlesden, Sudbury, Wembley Central and Tokyngton.

Map 8: Public Transport Accessibility Levels in Brent



Cycle links. There are currently 9 London Cycling Network routes that pass through the borough and these can be seen on the map below. The government's emphasis on green travel has raised cycling onto the political agenda and meant that there is increasing amounts of funding for cycling projects. We continue to improve cycle routes within the borough incorporating, where possible, parks and open spaces that are accessible after dark. Local routes can be seen on the map below.

Map 9: Cycle Routes in Brent



Crime

Brent has traditionally been a high crime area, although, in recent years significant progress has been made in reducing crime levels within our borough. Since 2003/04 (PSA 1 baseline year) the borough has achieved a 15% reduction in its British Crime Survey (BCS) offences. This is the equivalent of 3,248 fewer offences than in 2003/04.

The most deprived areas of Brent witness the most amount of crime in locations such as Stonebridge, Harlesden, Kilburn, Tokyngton and Wembley Central wards.

Implications of Borough Profile on Demand and Need for Parks

A population of this size and broad pattern of distribution across Brent – i.e. mix of dense urban environments mainly in the south of the borough and much less densely populated areas of suburban character (mainly in the north) – demands access to the full range of types or categories of open space from large Regional Parks of 400 hectares or more readily accessible by public transport, through to small areas of open space of less than 0.4 hectares within walking distance and providing natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation (sometimes with seating and play equipment) – ie. 'Pocket Parks'.

The hierarchy of different types of open spaces and the standards of provision recommended for London and adopted by Brent Council are set out in the following chapter.

Population Growth. The increase in the borough population by around 25,000 people over the ten-year period from 2007 to 2017, using GLA estimates and taking into account local housing growth forecasts will generate a demand and need for additional open space in the areas of growth. The needs for parks and open spaces in the main regeneration areas is considered in the following chapter.

Ethnic profile. Whilst parks can be seen as an important service for all members of the community, there is limited research that identifies specific needs of various equalities groups in the provision of parks and open spaces. Different ethnic groups may be seen to use parks in different ways. For example, in the US, Latino park users were found to use parks more frequently in large family groups for socialising and celebratory events, whilst Caucasian users visited parks less frequently and more likely to visit alone, and African Americans were the group most likely to engage in the use of sports facilities at the park alone (Loukaitou- Sideris 1995, cited in Marcus and Francis, 1998)³.

The Black Environment Network (BEN, 2005)⁴ has developed a series of guidelines for Green Space managers to increase the use of green spaces by ethnic groups as well as involving such groups in the creation, care and improvement of green spaces. Parks (and other green spaces) need to be clean and well maintained, and there needs to be the organisational resources and capacity to deal with issues such as safety, conflict and anti-social behavior. This includes fears of racism. Black and ethnic groups need to feel welcome and a sense of belonging can be achieved by the approach of parks staff, outreach programmes, encouraging culturally relevant events and targeted activities for different ethnic groups, events and activities that promote social cohesion, and the inclusion of features and interpretation that recognise cultural diversity. Translated materials should be used where appropriate and staff should consult to find out how specific communities prefer to be addressed and receive information. Our staff members receive training in equalities awareness and strive to adhere to the good practice guidelines and principles set out above.

Age profile. In Brent, there are more young children and a higher birth rate in the south of the borough. Parks are important in the provision of play for children and some studies show that access to green space increases children's creative play, social skills and concentration span (ODPM, 2006)⁵. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister suggests that green spaces and play areas need to be well maintained and that it is critical to involve children in the decision making process about the design and care about the spaces they use (ODPM, 2005). A report by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE, 2004)⁶ provides principles and guidance on the involvement of young people in the design, development and management of public spaces. Working together with the Council's Children and Young People's Service and our Friends groups, Brent's Parks Service adheres to these good practice principles in planning for new and upgraded play spaces.

³ Marcus, C.C. and C Francis (1998) *People Places: Design Guidelines for Urban Open Space*. John Wiley and Sons: United States

⁴ BEN (2005) *Ethnic Communities and Green Spaces. Guidance for Green Space Managers*.

⁵ ODPM (2006) *Enhancing Urban Green Space*. London: The Stationary Office.

⁶ CABE (2004) *Involving Young People in the Design and Care of Urban Spaces*

Deprivation and Car Ownership. As free to access amenities, local parks and open spaces are accessible to people of all income levels. As such, parks can be more effective in meeting the recreational needs of people with little disposable income than those types of community facilities where access charges generally apply even if highly subsidised, for example indoor sports centres and swimming pools. In Brent, we face the challenge presented by the highest concentrations of families and people on low incomes and without cars falling, for the most part, in the same areas of the borough where land available for public open space is the most scarce.

Health and Disability. Parks and green spaces can have positive impacts on both physical and mental health and well-being. For example, easily accessible recreational activities can reduce obesity and the risk of disease. Horticultural therapy projects in parks can provide benefits by increasing self-esteem and a sense of wellbeing in people with a disability, and clinical evidence suggests that exposure to a green environment reduces anxiety and stress (Tibbats, 2002)⁷.

The ODPM (2005) recommends developing access audits of sites, and identifying barriers. Barriers may be physical such as path surfaces, steps and gradients or related to information and interpretation (English Heritage, 2005)⁸. Removing barriers can involve providing extra facilities or making changes to infrastructure or information. Examples include:

- Providing appropriate and adequate seating for those with impaired mobility
- Ensuring gate handles are easy to reach and grip
- Using colour contrast to ensure entrances and exits are easy to identify for visually impaired people
- The use of paint or contrasting materials to highlight step nosings
- The provision of information in accessible formats.

Independent access audits have been carried out on most of Brent's parks and open spaces and an action plan developed to make improvements against the auditor's recommendations. The priority projects to be implemented during the life of this Strategy are shown in Chapter 5.

Gender and Fear of Crime. Fear around personal safety is a key reason why women may not use parks and open spaces. The British Crime Survey found that women feeling unsafe in their local area outnumber men by 6:1 (cited in WDS, 2007)⁹. Key issues that made women feel *unsafe* were inadequate lighting, poor sightlines, bad maintenance, lack of signage, dogs and lack of suitable toilet facilities. Factors that made women feel *safe* included the presence of '*happy smiling people*', an '*official presence*' in parks and separate areas for bicycles and dogs. Statistics show that in public places young men are the most likely group to suffer attack (WDS, 2007).

⁷ Tibbats, D. (2002) Your Parks. The benefits of parks and green space. Urban Parks Forum Ltd

⁸ English Heritage (2005) Easy Access to Historic Landscapes. English Heritage

⁹ WDS (2007) What to do about Women's Safety in Parks. Women's Design Service & Anne Thorne Architects' Partnership

Use of Parks and Open Spaces

From the 2008 and 2009 Brent Parks Survey among a sample of 10% of households, it is estimated in the order of 16 million visits are made annually to parks and open spaces in Brent.

In terms of use of all outdoor amenities for sport and physical activity – whether in parks and open spaces, or on rivers and reservoirs or in the streets – the national *Active People (AP)* survey is an excellent source of data for adults. AP is a nationwide survey of participation in sport and active recreation by over 16 year olds in each local authority area. The survey therefore allows the Council to compare itself with other authorities across the country. The first survey, AP Survey 1, conducted in 2005/2006 was based on a telephone interview with 1000 people aged 16 or over per local authority. AP Survey 2 was carried out in 2007/2008 with a smaller sample of a minimum of 500 per authority. AP Survey 3 started in October 2008 and will run to October 2009. The results of AP Surveys 1 & 2 of relevance to the Parks Strategy are summarised here. The results of AP Survey 3 and subsequent AP surveys will inform the strategy review process (see Chapter 6).

Of relevance to the Brent Parks Service, the AP surveys provide useful data on the types of outdoor sports/physical activities people are participating in as well as levels of volunteering in sport, club membership, levels of sport tuition, and satisfaction levels with local provision.

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) identifies three London authorities as Brent's 'Regional Statistical Neighbours'. These are Lambeth, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

Table 1 compares Brent's AP participation results with rates in these similar authorities together with the quantity (area) of parks and green space available, both overall and per person.

Table 1: Active People Surveys 1 & 2 results, green space and participation rates

Borough	Population	AP 1 score	AP 2 score	Total Area (m2)	Parks and Open space	% of Total area	Parks and Open Space Per person
Tower Hamlets	196,121	19.7	17.7	19,700,000	2,240,000	11.4	11.4 m2
Newham	243,737	14.5	14.7	36,100,000	7,170,000	19.87	29.4m2
Lambeth	266,170	25.6	25.0	26,730,000	2,240,000	8.39	8.4m2
Brent	263,463	18.0	19.5	43,250,000	5,220,000	12.11	19.8m2

As the table shows, Brent has a large area of parks and open spaces compared to two of its statistical neighbours Tower Hamlets and Lambeth. Despite this, Brent's overall AP Survey 1 score for regular participation (3 x 30min a week) in sport or physical activity was lower than in these boroughs. Interestingly, Brent's score for regular participation increased in the two year period to AP Survey 2 while in both Tower Hamlets and Lambeth the participation score fell. Also, Newham with more parks and open space than Brent has a lower AP score. While Brent and Newham's score are low relative to Lambeth and lower than the London average, it is important

to recognise this score relates to **all** participation in sport and physical activity including indoor activities i.e. not just park-based sports and activities.

Participation in specific Outdoor Sports and Physical Activities

The AP provides information showing the percentage of the population at national, regional and local level that had participated in a particular sport/activity within the 4 weeks preceding survey. The findings are valuable in helping to provide an indication of the demand for specific activities and so demand for specific sports facilities.

Reviewing cycling levels within Brent, against the regional statistical neighbours, shows that (as with the overall AP participation score) only Newham scored lower in AP Survey 1 although it is noted that the results are likely to be affected by the cycle commuter effect and the greater proximity of the ONS ‘near neighbour’ boroughs of Lambeth and Tower Hamlets to Central London.

Table 2: Active People Survey 1 (2005/2006) results, cycling

30min continuous cycle in 4 weeks preceding interview	
Local Authority	Percent
Lambeth	16.2
Tower Hamlets	10.9
Brent	9.2
Newham	7.1
London	10.8
National	11.1

Table three sets out AP participation findings against national and regional averages for a range of outdoor sports, jogging and walking.

Table 3: Active People Survey 1 (2005/2006) results, outdoor sports and activities participation rates

Sport type	Participation in Outdoor Sport and Activities in the last 4 weeks (%)		
	Brent	London	National
Athletics track and field based activities	0.3	0.2	0.1
Cricket	1.5	0.9	0.9
Gaelic Football	0.1	0.1	0.0
Outdoor Bowls	0.2	0.2	0.5
Outdoor Football	5.7	6.0	5.8
Rugby League and Rugby	0.3	0.7	1.0

Sport type	Participation in Outdoor Sport and Activities in the last 4 weeks (%)		
	Brent	London	National
Union			
Running and Jogging	5.4	7.1	5.1
Tennis	2.1	3	2.1
Walking	0.1	0.2	0.3

The outdoor participation rates are mixed, with participation in activities such as cricket and athletics being higher than the national and regional averages. Other sports, such as outdoor bowls and rugby have lower participation rates than the national and regional averages and the rest of the sports including tennis and football follow the trends of the national rather than regional benchmarks.

Sports Clubs

There are a variety of different sports clubs in Brent offering opportunities for adults and juniors in activities as varied as athletics to volleyball. The Sports Service website includes a free Sports Club Directory which currently has over 90 clubs registered. However it is recognised that the number of sports clubs in Brent is lower than in many other London Boroughs. This correlates with the Active People Survey 2 (2007/2008) results where only 20.6% of Brent adults are members of a club compared to over 23.6% across the West London sub-region.

Young people's Sports Participation

The Active People survey only surveys adults over the age of 16 and therefore misses a significant percentage of Brent's residents from the survey. Furthermore it is recognised that developing a healthy habit of physical activity at a young age is more likely for that person to remain physically active into adulthood and older age.

Within Brent there are two School Sports Partnerships (SSP's) introduced in 2002. These, together with the provision of an advisory teacher for PE, have had a momentous impact on both the quantity and quality of overall provision of PE in Brent. In 2003 only 24% of Brent's primary and secondary school pupils were receiving two hours quality PE. In 2007, 83% of pupils aged 5-16 years participated in at least two hours of high quality PE and out of hour's school sport in a typical week. The 2008 School Sport Survey results show that 87% of Brent pupils now receive 2 hours quality PE in the curriculum. The national PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) now sets out an ambition to offer all children at least 5 hours of sport every week by 2011 comprising at least two hours high quality PE in the curriculum (5-16 year olds) and the opportunity for at least a further three hours sport beyond the school day delivered by a range of school, community and club providers (5-19 year olds).

Aside from school sports days, 59% of pupils in Brent schools were involved in intra-school sports activities. The average number of sports provided by each Brent school during 2006/07 was 15, and the most widely available sports were football, dance, gymnastics, athletics, cricket, basketball and rounders. The biggest increases in availability of sports have been for multi-skill clubs, golf, tennis, gymnastics, basketball and fitness. On average each Brent school has links to 7 different sports

clubs and 10% of pupils in Years 1-13 have been involved in sports volunteering and leadership during the 2006/07 academic year.

While most of this activity takes place on school playing fields, a significant proportion - particularly the sports club use linking with schools – takes place in our public parks and recreation grounds.

Chapter 3 Strategic and External Influences

This chapter sets out the national, regional and local policy framework taken into account in the development of this Parks Strategy. The policy framework is summarised according to key policy areas where parks and open spaces have the greatest impact i.e. land use planning and regeneration, health and sport (including the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games) and the associated legacy plans, climate change and biodiversity, and, across all these areas, equality of opportunity. The section begins by considering the policy positions of both the Local Strategic Partnership and Brent Council as they relate to parks and open spaces.

Brent Strategic Partnership - Sustainable Community Strategy

Brent's Sustainable Community Strategy (2006-2010) produced by Brent's Local Strategic Partnership, sets out how the council and its partners will meet the needs and aspirations of Brent's residents. The strategy has three crosscutting ambitions. The borough's parks and open spaces have an identified role in prioritising efforts to achieve each of these:

A Great Place

- Committed to promoting leisure
- Improve the quality and accessibility of local parks, play areas and open spaces, encouraging greater use by all
- Facilitate opportunities for physical exercise and sport by reducing barriers to participation and promoting healthy living

A Borough of Opportunity

- Reducing health inequalities and promoting well being
- Tackle smoking and obesity, reducing the prevalence and achieving better outcomes for coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer

An Inclusive Community

- Provide services that are fully inclusive, accessible and sensitive to the unique cultural diversity of our young population
- To enable residents to lead more active lives and providing services that are sensitive to our diverse community's needs
- Improve the health and fitness of Brent's residents in order to secure a more active and independent future for everyone.

Brent Council's Corporate Strategy

Brent Council's Corporate Strategy (2006-2010) has five priorities for action:

1. Promoting quality of life and the green agenda
2. Supporting children and young people
3. Regeneration and priority neighbourhoods
4. Tackling crime and community safety
5. Achieving service excellence

Parks and open spaces clearly have a role to play within all five corporate priorities and especially the first two. The Council's commitment to parks and open spaces (and to the play areas and other amenities provided within them) is further illustrated by its close consideration of these facilities in developing new land use planning policies and in drawing up master-plans for the regeneration of priority neighbourhoods.

Land Use Planning

Local

Brent is partway through the process of producing its first *Brent Core Strategy and Proposals Document* to guide local land use and regeneration from 2009/10. These documents will form the main planks of land use policy under the new Local Development Framework (LDF) statutory process that will replace the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP) first adopted in 2004.

Of relevance to the borough's parks and open spaces, the LDF Core Strategy will include policies (similar to those in the current UDP) that serve to protect and enhance the borough's environment by ensuring all new developments will be sustainable and do not harm existing amenities. For example, the draft Core Strategy includes policies that aim to:

Preserve and enhance Brent's existing parks and open spaces

Prevent any further loss of outdoor sports pitches and playing fields

Seek new provision where deficiencies exist

Improve access opportunities to parks and open spaces for people with disabilities and other disadvantaged sectors of the community

Secure new play facilities in all major developments

Regional

The London Plan - The key strategy at London-wide level of relevance to this Parks Strategy is '*The London Plan*' – *the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy (February 2008)*. The London Plan includes a policy (3D.12) that all boroughs should produce an Open Space Strategy. It also sets out a series of standards for provision of a range of types of open space across London.

Based on local studies and parks needs assessment planning work (including a pilot survey carried out in 2008 among a sample of 10% of Brent households), the Council considers the London Plan standards the most appropriate to guide strategic provision of parks and open spaces across the borough as these are tailored to a predominantly urban environment like Brent. A key finding of the pilot survey in support of this approach is that 96% of residents walk to their local park.

The provision standards of relevance to this Strategy extracted from the London Plan are set out in table 3D.1 in the London Plan as reproduced below:

table 3D.1 London's public open space hierarchy

Open space categorisation	Size guideline	Distances from homes
Regional Parks Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 kilometres
Metropolitan Parks Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities and features at the sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 hectares	3.2 kilometres
District Parks Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of natural features providing for a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.	20 hectares	1.2 kilometres
Local Parks and Open Spaces Providing for court games, children's play, sitting-out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 hectares	400 metres
Small Open Spaces Gardens, sitting-out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Pocket Parks Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	Under 0.4ha	Less than 400 metres
Linear Open Spaces Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, canals and other waterways; paths; disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation. Often characterised by features or attractive areas which are not fully accessible to the public but contribute to the enjoyment of the space.	Variable	Wherever feasible

source GLA

In July 2008 the GLA published a report entitled '*Planning for a better London*'. This report set out the current Mayor's policy priorities and proposals for changes to the London Plan. The following proposed changes to the London Plan are of particular relevance to this Parks Strategy:

Theme - Meeting the environmental challenge: Policy - To make sure the planning system protects and enhances open spaces and does all it can to protect and promote trees and woodland

Theme - Keeping London moving: Policy - To ensure a strategic planning policy framework supportive of cycling and walking

Theme - Planning for London's diverse places: Policy - To ensure that new communities are just that (i.e. have the necessary transport, social, environmental and cultural infrastructure)

In September 2008, the Mayor and CABE Space published for consultation updated planning guidance Draft Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for the preparation of borough Open Space Strategies. This Parks Strategy for Brent follows the principles set out in this most recent guidance and in earlier national government planning guidance *Planning Policy Guidance Note 17*. In particular, the priorities for action set out in Chapter 5 of this document have been determined following an analysis of open space needs based on assessment of demand factors (e.g. resident surveys, population forecasts, new housing proposals), and of supply factors (e.g. the provision and accessibility of open spaces in relation to London Plan standards and quality audits both in-house and by an independent assessor).

Natural England Strategy for Natural Green Space in Urban Environments -

Natural England (formerly English Nature) is the statutory body that champions the conservation and enhancement of the wildlife and natural features of England. It does this in the urban environment as well as the open countryside. Among other priorities in the urban environment, Natural England has worked for a number of years to promote the provision of natural green space and, in 1996, it adopted its current Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) model.

The ANGSt model requires:

That no person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2ha in size

At least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population

At least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home

One accessible 100ha site within 5km

One accessible 500ha site within 10km

Natural England justifies these standards in the following ways supported by a range of research studies:

- Everyday contact with nature is important for wellbeing and quality of life
- Everyone should be able to enjoy this contact, in safety, without having to make any special effort or journey to do so
- Natural green space in towns and cities can play an important part in helping safeguard our national treasure of wildlife and geological features
- Accessible natural green spaces give everyone an excellent chance to learn about nature and to help protect it in practical ways
- Adequate provision of vegetated areas helps to ensure that urban areas continue to function ecologically.

Brent Council supports Natural England's view that access to natural green space is important to residents' health and wellbeing (both physical and psychological). The Council also strives to meet the ANGSt model standards where possible.

However, the first standard – i.e. no person to live more than **300m from a natural green space of at least 2ha** – is not considered a realistic target particularly in the more densely developed areas in the south of the borough. Accordingly, the Council adopts the more achievable London Plan target of **400m distance from local parks and open spaces of 2ha or more.**

Regeneration

Of particular relevance to this Parks Strategy is the *Brent Regeneration Strategy (2001-2021)* and the resulting master-plans that the Council and partners have prepared for five priority areas in the borough for major regeneration and housing growth i.e. Wembley, Park Royal, South Kilburn, Alperton and Burnt Oak/Colindale.

Integral to the master-plans for these designated growth areas are detailed infrastructure proposals for enhanced access to parks and open spaces (including play areas and sports and recreation facilities) for existing and new residents of these areas.

In some cases, the work to establish the open space needs of each area and the options available has resulted in proposals for new local parks (of 1.5 to 2 hectares), for smaller 'pocket' parks of about 0.2 to 0.4 hectares, for new play areas, multi-use games areas (MUGAs) or sports pitches.

In others, the assessment of needs and review of options has led to proposals to upgrade and enhance existing parks and open spaces that are easily accessible from the neighbourhood, for example by developing new facilities within these existing parks.

Details of these open space infrastructure proposals relating to the five growth areas are set out in Chapter 5: Identifying Priorities & Actions.

Health and Physical Activity

At national level, in November 2004, the Department of Health (DH) published the policy document '*Choosing Health: Making health choices easier*' which is concerned with the effect that lifestyle choices can have on health. The policy has a particular emphasis on reducing obesity, smoking, substance and alcohol misuse.

Specifically addressing the pressing issue of rising obesity levels, in September 2008 the DH published a cross government strategy for England entitled '*Healthy Weight Healthy Lives*'. This document highlights the importance of increasing levels of physical activity alongside improved diet, particularly in areas of relative deprivation where the incidence of obesity is greatest and where national surveys (e.g. the Active People Survey) have shown that physical activity levels are lowest.

In February 2009, DH launched new guidance for Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts '*Be Active, Be Healthy: a plan for getting the nation moving*'. This guidance sets out ideas and plans for getting two million people more active by 2012 to leave a lasting legacy from the London Olympic & Paralympic Games. Plans of particular relevance to parks services include the expansion of the Natural England initiative '*Walking the Way to Health*' and the creation of 2,102 '*Active Challenge Walking Routes*' across the country.

At the local level, among its five priorities for 2009/2010, Brent NHS Primary Care Trust has a goal to "*promote good health and prevent ill-health*" with a particular focus on those neighbourhoods (Super Output Areas) where the incidences of child obesity and adult coronary heart disease are highest and the mortality age is the lowest. Harlesden is the neighbourhood in the borough with the poorest health and lowest mortality age.

In addition to the Department of Health's plan to increase participation in physical activity, the London Mayor has also published a plan for a sports legacy from the 2012 Olympics & Paralympics. Entitled '*A Sporting Future for London*' (April 2009), this plan sets out proposals for £30 million investment (half from the Greater London Authority) in programmes to i) secure a sustained increase in participation in both sport and physical activity amongst Londoners, and ii) assist in tackling social problems including ill-health, crime, academic underachievement and lack of community cohesion.

Clearly, free-to-access, attractive and secure parks and open spaces within easy walking distance for people living in Harlesden and the other areas of poor health - and programmes such as health walks (sometimes prescribed by local GPs) and holiday activities for children - are critical to increasing physical activity levels and reducing obesity. Particularly strong opportunities for integrating health care services and health promotion activities exist where local area Health Centres are co-located with parks and/or community sports centres. The new Vale Farm Health Centre procured under the Brent LIFT (Local Improvement Finance Trust) programme and adjacent to the Vale Farm Sports Centre and parkland with outdoor sports facilities is a prime example. Through joint working between the Parks Service, the Sports Service and the PCT, Brent has developed a thriving programme of guided *Healthy Walk*. In 2009, these ran from April to September across eleven park venues.

The important role of Brent's parks and open spaces as places for people of all ages to be active for health is recognised in the Council's Draft strategy for *Sport & Physical Activity 2010 -2015*. As detailed in the following chapter, Brent's Parks Services provides facilities for football, rugby, cricket, Gaelic football, boules, tennis,

basketball, golf and bowls across around 30 park sites (although with very limited provision in the south east of the borough and recognised issues regarding the quality of pitches and changing facilities in a number of the parks, as well as issues concerning lack of changing facilities suitable for women and girls, and a low number of active clubs in most of these sports). In addition, the parks provide opportunities for informal active recreation in the form of walking, running and cycling. These include an increasing number of mapped routes and trails including cycle paths forming part of the fast-growing London Cycle Network.

The Council has also recently produced a *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy (2008 - 2021)* with the following vision:

To ensure the co-ordinated, strategic development of formal and informal facilities for sport and active recreation within Brent that meets the needs of a changing multi cultural population and provides attractive, sustainable, accessible, quality facilities that enhances the Boroughs natural and built environment. Such provision will increase opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation by all sections of the community resulting in improved health, well being and enhanced quality of life of Brent's residents.

This strategy establishes the following local standards for outdoor sports provision based on detailed assessment of need both now and to meet projected population growth to 2021, as illustrated in table 4 overleaf:

Table 4: Summary of Local Standards for Outdoor Sports Provision

Outdoor Sports Facility	Standard per 1000 population	Local Standard	Quality Standard	Access
Synthetic Turf Pitches	0.02 pitches or 0.02 ha/200sqm	1 per 50,000	Full size, floodlit STP of good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Athletics Tracks	0.02 lanes	1 lane per 50,000	Good or excellent quality	Retain existing provision and accessibility
Football Pitches	0.4 ha	1 ha of grass pitch per 2,500 population	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Gaelic football Pitches	0.03 pitches or 0.06 ha/600sqm	1 pitch per 34,000	Good or excellent quality	Located to maximise club development
Tennis Courts	0.32 courts or 0.028 ha/280 sqm	1 court per 3,000	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
MUGAs	0.13 MUGA or 150 sqm	1 MUGA per 8,000 population	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 800m or 10 minutes walk in areas of high young person population density
Bowling Greens	0.03 rinks or 90sqm	1 bowling green per 33,300	Good or excellent quality	Retain existing provision and accessibility
Rugby Pitches	New facilities at	1 pitch per	Good or excellent	Retain new provision at

Brent Parks Strategy 2010 - 2015

	Gladstone Park expected to meet demand	279,000	quality, floodlit	Gladstone Park
Cricket Pitches	0.04 pitches or 0.08ha/800 sqm	1 pitch per 27,500	Good or excellent quality	Publicly accessible within 1.6km or 20 minutes walk
Netball Courts	0.13 court or 130 sqm	1 per 7,500	Good or excellent quality, floodlit.	Provision linked to schools and sports centres.
Changing Rooms	All outdoor sports facilities with 2 or more grass pitches.	All outdoor sports facilities with 2 or more grass pitches.	Of good or excellent quality. Accommodate use at the same time by different age & genders. Provide toilet facilities. Larger pitch sites to provide enhanced facilities in the form of a pavilion.	Publicly accessible adjacent to sports pitches (2 or more pitches).

Source: *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy (2008 – 2021)*

The strategy sets out priorities for action in relation to all forms of indoor and outdoor facilities for sport including those facility types identified above, many of which are provided in the borough's parks. These facility priorities are set out in Chapter 5.

Culture

The Brent Cultural Strategy 2010-2015 sets out a vision of a range of cultural opportunities that are engaging, accessible and enriching for all local communities so that by 2015 Brent will be confident in culture as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of everyone who lives or works in the borough regardless of their individual circumstances. It has been produced by the Brent Culture Sports and Learning Forum, a sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership ('Partners for Brent').

The current Brent Cultural Strategy expired at the end of 2009. Its replacement highlights the key principles that all Brent's cultural partners and providers will need to consider in delivering the shared vision for culture in Brent.

The Culture, Sports and Learning Forum uses the following definitions of culture:

The term 'Culture' includes arts, creative employment, festivals, libraries, museums, heritage, architecture/design of the public realm, children's play, parks, tourism and other forms of leisure and recreation.

The term 'Sport' includes all forms of physical activity which through casual or organised participation, aims at improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels. 'Culture' is used to include both 'culture' and sport as defined above.

Eight headline principles have been identified and they are:

- **Enhancing Cultural Vibrancy**
- **Increase Participation**
- **Raising the Profile of Culture**
- **Encouraging Young People to Take Part**
- **Developing Public Spaces**
- **Making the Most of 2012**
- **Supporting the Cultural Economy**
- **Promoting Health and Wellbeing**

This strategy will in turn contribute to the delivery of all these principles.

Education and Childcare (including play)

The *Brent Early Years Education & Childcare Strategy (2005 – 2010)* sets out how the Council supports children (in accordance with the Corporate Strategy) through early years education and childcare.

The borough's parks and open spaces play an important education role for young children for example by:

- Providing access to appropriately resourced spaces for play, exercise and recreation
- Helping parents to ensure that their children are healthy, promoting healthy lifestyles to children and parents introducing and encouraging activities with their children
- Providing access to free informal learning opportunities, particularly in relation to personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) and physical education (PE)
- Use of parks for more formal learning opportunities e.g. as 'outdoor classrooms' (this is also an action identified in the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan see below)
- Parks and open spaces as part of Safer Routes to Schools (SRtS) in line with promotion of cycling and walking to school and the drawing up of School Travel Plans

In terms of the 0-19 age group as a whole, the Council's *Children & Young People's Plan 2006-2009* includes an objective (1e) '**To provide accessible and safe play, sport, culture and leisure**' as part of its first priority – i.e. creating the conditions in which children and young people thrive. Clearly, in addition to existing and new community sports facilities located on school sites under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme PCP), the borough's parks and the facilities provided within parks for informal play, for recreation and for organised sport make a very significant contribution to the achievement of this objective.

We are in the process of developing a new five-year Play Strategy consistent with this Parks Strategy and the overall objectives for the development and delivery of play opportunities established in the most recent Play Strategy (2003-2008) i.e.

- More children able to participate in better play provision
- Provision targeted to areas most in need
- Increased awareness of the importance and value of play
- Extended and improved quantity and quality of play opportunities

Biodiversity and Climate Change

The Council published its second *Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)* in July 2007 updating the Council's first BAP prepared in 2001. This local plan links with regional and national plans to promote biodiversity and with separate Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and Species Action Plans (SAPs).

An important development since the Council's first BAP was the introduction of the following '*Biodiversity Duty*' as part of the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)*. This duty on public authorities raises the profile and visibility of biodiversity. It clarifies existing commitments and makes biodiversity a natural and integral part of policy and decision-making.

The Biodiversity Duty

Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity

The Brent Biodiversity Action Plan is concerned not only with biodiversity in green spaces, but also with biodiversity throughout the environment including in urban areas and the built environment. Biodiversity contributes to improved environmental quality. This is not limited to species and habitats only, but includes improved air quality both locally and globally, noise reduction, green space, walking routes for local journeys, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage systems and reduction in flood risks; and direct and indirect economic benefits.

Trees and other vegetation are net absorbers of carbon during their lifetime. This has the effect of reducing atmospheric carbon and of potentially providing a carbon-neutral source of energy to substitute for the combustion of fossil fuels. Trees can also reduce winter heat loss around buildings; and provide summer shading for both buildings and people. The consequences of increasing CO₂ and other greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere and rising average temperatures (which are likely to be more pronounced in London than in rural areas due to the heat-sink effect), include increased risks of drought and flash flooding and, in terms of flora and fauna, a general northwards shift in the distribution of species.

As part of a strategy to address these issues and combat these risks, The Council has adopted an Environmental Policy, and a Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2006-2011 that includes a target to cut CO₂ emissions; and includes a tree-planting project.

The BAP sets out the importance of the following green spaces in Brent managed by the Parks Service to the achievement of these targets:

- **Parks and green spaces:** Parks and green spaces provide much of the area of publicly accessible land in the Borough and encompass much of the semi-natural habitats including grasslands, trees, woodland, hedgerows and ponds. And there is a wide range of wildlife to be seen.
- **Allotments:** There are 1,108 allotment plots in the Borough across 23 sites managed by Brent Council Parks Service, and a number of private allotments. These areas provide opportunities for relaxation and exercise; for growing food and providing seasonally changing vegetation; in reducing urban flooding and helping to store carbon dioxide; and for providing wildlife and biodiversity on the doorstep.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

Consideration of the strategic context for this Brent Parks and Open Spaces Strategy would not be complete without considering what is happening to parks and open spaces just across the borough boundaries. Locations and plans of relevance on the part of Brent's neighbouring boroughs are summarised in brief below:

Harrow: Residents on the northern fringe of Brent in Queensbury Ward are well served by parks and open spaces (e.g. Woodcock Park, Northwick Park and Preston Park) relative to those living in the more built up areas in the south of the borough. Brent residents in these areas also benefit from access to extensive areas of public open space across the borough boundary in the Harrow on the Hill and Sudbury Hill areas as well as Kenton Recreation Ground and Queensbury Park. We are not aware of any strategic plans and developments by Harrow Council that will impact on this provision in the short to medium terms.

Barnet: Similarly, those Brent residents on the north-east border with the London Borough of Barnet (Fryent Ward) have good accessibility to most types of public open space within Brent, including the Fryent Country Park. Via the A5 Edgware Road, Brent residents in these areas can also access readily Barnet's significant park and open space amenities such as Montrose Recreation Ground and the Silk Stream Park and sports grounds close to the Colindale Hospital and West Hendon Playing Fields borders Silver Jubilee Park. In addition Brent co-manages the Welsh Harp Reservoir with Barnet and is part of a best practice partnership arrangement.

Camden: London Borough of Camden has a five-year strategy in place for its parks and open spaces taking it up to 2011. For Brent residents close to the Camden borough boundary (e.g. in Mapesbury and Dollis Hill Wards), Grange Park, Fortune Green and, further to the east, Hampstead Heath are within a reasonable travel time.

Westminster: The City of Westminster Open Space Strategy (Feb 2007) is recently adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in the City of Westminster Local Development Framework and will serve as a Corporate Strategy for 10 to 15 years. The largest accessible areas of open space in Westminster for residents in the south east corner of Brent – i.e. the Kilburn and Queen's Park Wards - are Paddington Recreation Ground (with a range of recently upgraded indoor and outdoor sports facilities and a public play area) and the much smaller Randolph Gardens Open Space (designated in the City of Westminster strategy as a 'Priority Area for Additional Playspace').

Hammersmith & Fulham: In May 2008, the Council published a ten-year strategy for its parks and open spaces. Two areas of open space within this borough are very accessible to residents of Kensal Green Ward in Brent, namely Wormwood Scrubs Park (including major provision for athletics and football) and Little Wormwood Scrubs Recreation Ground. These amenities will attract some use by Brent residents although the Grand Union Canal, the railway and industrial estates act as significant physical barriers. Hammersmith and Fulham Council are committed to improving the sports facilities and other amenities in Wormwood Scrubs Park. Responsibility for Little Wormwood Scrubs has passed to Kensington and Chelsea who plan improvements to the facilities and maintenance of the park.

Ealing: Ealing Borough Council is reviewing and updating its parks and open spaces strategy. Current priorities of relevance to residents along the south-west boundary of Brent (e.g. those living in Alperton Ward) include establishing 'wildlife flagship parks' at Horsenden Hill and Brent River Park. Residents and schools in this part of Brent also benefit from good access to the Perivale Wood Local Nature Reserve.

Chapter 4: Brent Parks Today

Introduction

Current provision in Brent of public parks and open spaces, children's play areas and outdoor sports facilities in parks, and allotments is summarised in this chapter.

The existing provision is considered in relation to:

- **Quantity and Accessibility:** the number and scale of public parks and public open spaces benchmarked against London Plan standards for accessibility to people from all parts of the borough i.e. their physical distribution in relation to where people live and work and the available access and transport routes
- **Quality:** quality assessments are based on residents' own perceptions and those of an external assessor.

At the end of the chapter, issues and needs arising from this assessment of the 'supply' of Brent's parks service, considered in the context of the 'demand' set out in the earlier chapters, are summarised.

References and links are provided for those wishing to access to more detailed reports, maps and data on which this summary of needs is based.

Quantity and Accessibility of Open Spaces

Catchment Areas

Open Space catchment areas are based on '*distance from homes thresholds*' – i.e. a measure of the distance that people can reasonably be expected to travel on a regular basis to use open space from their home.

Local open space offering some form of children's play amenity should be available within easy walking distance of where people live. As detailed in the table on page 3 in Chapter 3, the GLA London Plan defines this as **400m actual walking distance** (i.e. using the available routes as opposed to 'as the crow flies'). People are generally willing to travel further to use recreation areas providing outdoor sport facilities or to larger parks. The distance from homes thresholds for these larger types of public open space offering a wider range of amenities is therefore greater (as shown in the table).

While people do not think of the parks and open spaces in their locality in terms of their type or designation - i.e. Metropolitan Park, District Park, Local Park, Small or 'Pocket' Park etc - these designations, adopted in the London Plan, are useful in helping to understand the roles of open spaces of different sizes and characteristics and in assessing the quantity and accessibility of provision of parks and open spaces in Brent and in identifying any spatial deficiencies.

For this reason, Brent Parks Service uses the public open space hierarchy or categorisation of types adopted in the London Plan (see table 3D1 in Chapter 3). The figures shown in brackets are the size guideline for each type i.e.

- Regional Parks (400 ha)
- Metropolitan Parks (60 ha)
- District Parks (20 ha)
- Local Parks and Open Spaces (2 ha)
- Small Open Spaces (under 2 ha)
- Pocket Parks (under 0.4 ha)
- Linear Open Spaces (variable)
- Allotments

Play facilities can be found in parks of all sizes from Pocket Parks to Regional Parks. Sports facilities, such as tennis courts, bowling greens and playing pitches, are generally only provided in parks and open spaces such as recreation grounds of 2 hectares or larger - designated as Local, District or Metropolitan parks - although occasionally small-scale sports facilities such as multi-use-games-areas (MUGAs) or tennis courts can be found in Small Open Spaces of under 2 hectares.

Table 5 below shows existing provision of parks and open spaces in Brent according to these categories or designations of type.

Table 5: Parks and Open Spaces in Brent by Type

GLA category	Name & Location (Metropolitan & District Parks only)	Number	Total Size (hectares)
Regional Parks	None in Brent. (Nearest are Hampstead Heath to east and Colne Valley Regional Park to the west)	0	0
Metropolitan Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fryent Country Park, Kingsbury See Map at Appendix 1	1	115
District Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gladstone Park, Dollis Hill • Northwick Park, North Wembley • Vale Farm See Map at Appendix 2	3	99
Local Parks	See map at Appendix 3	28	208
Small and Pocket Parks	See map at Appendix 4	42	26.5
Linear Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brent River Park (also a Local Park as over 2ha) 	1	16
Allotment sites	See map at Appendix 5	23	17.9

* Queens Park in Kilburn is a Local Park located within Brent managed by The Corporation of London

How We Compare

In comparison with the ten other outer London boroughs that are members of the London Parks Benchmarking Group, Brent has below the average total area of parks and open space (at approximately 450ha compared with average of 567 ha.) When the relative population sizes are considered, provision per 1,000 people in Brent falls significantly below the average (1.71 ha per 1,000 compared to 2.49 ha per 1,000).

Brent Parks Strategy 2010 - 2015

The number of allotment sites is in line with the average across the ten local authorities that provided benchmark data in 2008. However, the size of the area given over to allotments is below the average at 15.1 ha (excludes 2.8 hectares in the self managed Kenton Lane) compared to 26.8 ha.

The number of play areas in parks and the total population per play area are broadly in line with the benchmark averages for the eleven outer London boroughs where we have 2008 data. However, it would appear that, on average, the size of Brent's play areas are smaller than the average with an average of just over 5 items of kit per equipped play area compared to the average of over 11 items. These benchmark statistics are summarised in table 6 below.

Table 6: Comparisons of Parks and Open Space provision in Brent with ten other outer London boroughs

Outer London Borough	Hectares of Parks and Open Space*	Hectares per 1,000 population (2001 Census)	Allotment Sites (and total area in hectares)	Play Areas for 0-12 year olds in Parks and Open Spaces (Pop per play area)	Number of Items of Kit per Play Area
Brent	450	1.71	23 (17.9)	43 (6,127)	5.05
Barking and Dagenham	523	3.13	14 (10.93)	15 (11,133)	22.4
Bexley	523	3.02	36 (45)	29 (5,954)	19
Bromley	No data	No data	No data	65 (4,547)	9.25
Croydon	1132	3.42	6 (13)	55 (6,011)	6.67
Enfield	809	2.95	32 (46)	43 (6,362)	15.05
Havering	777	3.49	25 (no data)	45 (4,983)	No data
Merton	409	2.16	18 (43)	37 (5,108)	7.95
Newham	174	0.78	7 (10.99)	31 (7,235)	8.55
Sutton	463	2.52	36 (27.6)	26 (7,092)	9.54
Waltham Forest	251	1.15	26 (27)	56 (3,899)	8.04
Average	567	2.49	22 (26.82)	40 (6,229)	11.15

* Excluding housing estates, including allotments & cemeteries

Spatial Mapping of our Parks and Open Spaces and their Catchment Areas

Our Planning Department has carried out a spatial mapping analysis comparing this provision in Brent and close to its boundaries against the standard 'distance from homes thresholds' (i.e. catchment areas) adopted by the Council from the GLA London Plan. The results of this analysis for each type of open space is shown in the maps appended and summarised in the following table:

Table 7: Spatial Deficiencies in Public Open Space in Brent by Type

GLA category	Distance from homes threshold	Summary of locations with gaps in provision against the GLA distance from homes threshold
Regional Parks	3.2 to 8 km	There are no regional parks in the borough
Metropolitan Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 1).</i>	3.2 km	The south of the borough has poor access to Metropolitan Park provision as it is over 3.2km from Fryent Country Park
District Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 2).</i>	1.2km	Wards in the south of the borough have poor access to district level park provision. Alperton, Stonebridge, Harlesden, Kensal Green, Queen's Park, Brondesbury Park and Kilburn wards are over 1.2km from a district park. Parts of Wembley Central, Tokyngton, Willesden Green and Queensbury ward are also deficient in district park provision.
Local Parks <i>(See Map at Appendix 3).</i>	400m	There are pockets of deficiency throughout the borough. Much of the south of the borough lacks local public open space provision, with areas of deficiency in all of the following wards - Alperton, Stonebridge/Park Royal, Harlesden, Willesden Green, Kensal Green, Queen's Park, Kilburn and Brondesbury Park. Eastern areas of Mapesbury and Dollis Hill also have poor access to public open space. Central areas of Preston, Tokyngton and Wembley Central wards are also deficient in local open space. Whilst the north of the borough has the greatest provision of open space there are still areas which are not within 400m of a local or larger public open space, these include areas in east Queensbury and Fryent adjacent to the Edgware Road and west Queensbury along Honeypot Lane. There are also pockets of deficiency in Kenton, Northwick Park and Sudbury wards.
Small and Pocket Parks <i>(See Map at</i>	Less than 400m	There are pockets of the borough which have very poor local open space provision with no local parks or small/pocket park provision within 400m, these are Wembley (Tokynton

Appendix 4).		<p>ward), parts of Wembley Central, South Harlesden, South Kensal Green, North East Brondesbury Park and South Mapesbury.</p> <p>Areas of Willesden Green, Dollis Hill, North Queensbury, NE Fryent and Kenton also have poor access to smaller open spaces, although they have good access to District Parks.</p>
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A further relevant designation used by the GLA in the London Plan is ‘*areas of access to nature*’. Brent is generally well provided for in this regard. However, the London Plan identifies the more densely populated south east of the borough around Kilburn as deficient in areas of access to nature.

Open Space Needs of Projected Population Growth

Population growth is expected in five key housing growth areas, the largest being Wembley and also Alperton, Burnt Oak/Colindale, South Kilburn and Church End. The council has drawn up an Infrastructure and Investment Framework (IIF) which sets out the foreseeable infrastructure requirements that will arise from anticipated new housing and commercial development. This includes the open space needs of new population growth. The IIF sets out the main package of infrastructure measures that should be provided to create sustainable communities, however it is not to suggest that all of the items will be delivered; it may not be possible to provide everything on the IIF list and this does not preclude other items being added (the IIF will be reviewed annually or bi-annually).

To plan for the open space needs of new housing, the mayor’s public open space hierarchy has been applied. In order to ensure the overall open space provision also meets the needs of children and young people, the mayor’s Supplementary Planning Guidance has been applied. This sets out a benchmark of 10sqm of play space per child and categorises play facilities into the following categories:

Table 8: GLA Play Facility Categories

	Description	Min size	Accessibility to play space
Doorstep playable space	A place where children under 5 can play	100sqm	Within 100m
Local playable space	A place where children up to 11 can play	300sqm	Within 400m
Neighbourhood playable space	More extensive play area for children up and over to 11	500sqm	Within 400-800m
Youth Space	A place for young people aged 12 and over	200sqm	Within 800m

In addition to the 5 key areas of housing growth there are two further identified areas where the future open space needs have been assessed. These are Park Royal – a large industrial area with some limited expected housing development associated with Central Middlesex Hospital and part of the First Central site, and North Circular Road (NCR) Regeneration Area – where improvements to the environmental conditions and safety of residents directly affected by the NCR.

Summary of growth area open space requirements

Table 9: Open Space Requirements by Population Growth Areas in Brent

	Number of new homes up to 2026	Open space requirements	Play requirements
Wembley	11,500	<p>New park (min 1.2ha)</p> <p>3 x new pocket parks/local squares (min 0.4ha)</p> <p>Improved links to existing open spaces at Sherrans Farm and Chalkhill open space</p> <p>Enhanced wildlife area along Wealdstone Brook</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>5 x new neighbourhood play areas</p> <p>3 x new Multi-Use Games Areas</p>
Alperton	1,600	<p>New public open space (1ha)</p> <p>3 x new canal-side pocket parks/local squares</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>Improved play facilities at Mount Pleasant and Heather Park.</p> <p>New play facilities in new public open space</p> <p>New MUGA at One Tree Hill</p>
Burnt Oak/Colindale	2,500	<p>3 x new pocket parks (min 0.2ha)</p>	<p>Doorstep play areas within housing development</p> <p>3 x local play areas within new pocket parks</p> <p>Improved play facilities at Eton Grove</p> <p>Neighbourhood play including new MUGA at Grove Park</p>

Table 9: Open Space Requirements by Population Growth Areas in Brent – cont

	Number of new homes up to 2026	Open space requirements	Play requirements
Church End	800	New 2ha park (incorporating cemetery land)	Doorstep play areas within housing development New play facilities at Villiers Road New MUGA adjacent to St Mary's Primary School
South Kilburn	2,400	Expand South Kilburn Open Space 4 x pocket parks (0.2ha) including improvements to Cambridge Gardens	Doorstep play areas within housing development Improved play facilities at South Kilburn Open Space 4 x new local play areas within new pocket parks New MUGA in South Kilburn Open Space
Park Royal	~	New park at Coronation Gardens (2ha) 3 x new pocket parks/local squares (0.2ha)	Doorstep play areas within housing development New multi-use games area.
North Circular Road Regeneration Area	~	Green links – improve walking and cycling links between open spaces in the area New open space corridor adjacent to the NCR	Improve play facilities at Crouch End Road, Brent River Park and Sunny Crescent New MUGA in Brent River Park

Quality of Open Spaces

The value of parks and open spaces is as much about the appropriateness and quality of what they offer as it is about how easy the open space is to get to from people's homes. In assessing local deficiencies and in determining priorities for action - whether new provision or improvements to existing provision - it is therefore important to know what people think about the parks and open spaces, and people's views on how they need to be improved.

The main source of information on what Brent residents think of their parks and open spaces is the Annual Parks Survey run as one element of a comprehensive green

space performance management system contracted from the KMC Consultancy. This survey has been conducted each year since 2000 using a randomly selected sample of 10% of Brent home addresses. The response rate tends to fall within a range of 10% (in 2008) to 19% (2007) of the sample, generating between 1,000 and 2,000 responses. As a household survey, it covers people of all ages and ethnic groups and both regular parks users and non-users.

A second element of the KMC performance management system is an annual survey targeted specifically at non-users of our parks and open spaces.

In 2008, further surveys were commissioned to inform this new strategy and a major funding bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund. One survey considered play areas in parks from the viewpoint of primary age schoolchildren. Another focused on fear of crime among young people and included findings of relevance to parks.

The objectives of these consultation processes were to:

- Establish the standard of parks in the borough and whether they meet the demands/needs and expectations of communities both now and in the future
- Ascertain what are the real issues amongst stakeholders, how well used and appreciated parks and open spaces are, how accessible they are and what improvements /changes people wish to see
- To monitor the impact of service improvements on resident satisfaction levels

The main findings of these 2008 consultations are summarised as follows (the findings relate to the 2008 and 2009 Brent Parks Surveys except where stated):

Patterns of use of Brent's Parks

- Users of the Council owned Parks tend to live locally and visit regularly (31.5% at least three times a week on average)
- 15% always visit alone, whilst 35% always visit in a group – i.e. with a partner, children, other family, friends or a combination of these.
- The average number of people in a group is 3.8.
- Users visit Brent's parks primarily to *exercise, let children play or relax* (these top three responses accounting for 85% of the total). Consequently, *play facilities, access and general atmosphere* came out as highly important aspects of the service. This is consistent with the findings of the Parks Survey in previous years
- 96% of respondents walk to their local Park. This is consistent with previous years' findings and supports the case for the local target for provision of local parks in line with the London Plan target of a 400m walk distance threshold
- Queens Park (a Corporation of London owned site) and Gladstone Park were identified as the most visited Parks in Brent

What people like most about Brent's Parks

- The aspects of the service rated most highly were *staff helpfulness, cleanliness and overall maintenance*.

What concerns people most about Brent's Parks

- 83% of respondents (slightly higher than the previous year's 80%) have some concerns with safety. Concerns about '*groups of youths hanging around*'

stated by the majority of people, with '*lack of visible assistance in cases of emergency*' cited as the second 'fear inducing' factor.

- Whilst a large number of respondents still have concerns about safety the levels of satisfaction around 'secured sites' (i.e. those parks that can be closed after dark) has continued to increase.
- 95% of respondents stated that would like to see park wardens in un-staffed sites. (*Brent Parks Wardens are permanently based at seven major parks with a mobile patrol service covering all other parks in the borough. Parks Wardens patrol Roundwood Park, Barham Park, Gladstone Park, King Edwards VII Park, Roe Green Park, Preston Park and St Raphael's/Gibbons Recreation. The wardens can respond to problems raised by members of the public and their presence helps children and families using the parks and playsites feel safe and secure. There is also a 'Mobile Play Team' supported by the Big Lottery Fund that focuses on those play sites without a permanent warden.*)
- Fear of crime and poor facilities were cited as the main barriers to entry. (*Interestingly, among a sample of about a hundred young people interviewed as part of the Brent Youth Parliament's Crime & Safety Survey 10% rated the parks after dark as 'the most dangerous places in Brent' compared to 21% for 'Stonebridge'*)
- There is continuing dissatisfaction with the inadequate toilet provision in parks

What improvements people would most like to see

The most frequently cited improvements among adults were (in order of importance):

- A greater emphasis on **safety** – staffing, improved visibility across sites etc
- Infrastructure **repairs** – including paths, toilets and pavilions
- Control of **dogs** and freedom from dog fouling
- Improved, **updated facilities** e.g. sports and a variety of 'exciting' play equipment e.g. sensory gardens, paddling pools etc
- Greater **variety of facilities** especially for youths

Young children would most like to see more exciting play areas (*this finding of the Parks Survey is reinforced by the views of a sample of primary age schoolchildren in the course of a consultative workshop in 2008 to inform a successful bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund*)

Knowledge about Brent's Parks

The 2008 and 2009 Parks Surveys and previous years' surveys indicate a lack of knowledge about what sports facilities are in parks; some respondents gave satisfaction ratings for facilities that were not actually there. This finding points to a need to continue to improve information services about the Parks. The survey shows that the top three media used to find information about the parks service are (in order of preference): the Council's *website*, *the local library*, *the local paper*. More on-site marketing by means of on-site presence of staff and management, where possible, is also needed.

Summary of people's basis requirements from Parks

The findings of the annual Brent Parks Surveys show that local people visit parks and open spaces for a wide variety of reasons, depending on their life stage, their location and their preferred activities. However, in spite of the different reasons for

visiting, they share a common set of basic requirements for their parks and open spaces. (*These same basic requirements were echoed by non-users of Brent's parks in a survey conducted in April 2008 as factors that would encourage non-users to start using Brent's parks*):

- **Clean** – without litter, dog mess or graffiti
- **Safe** – preferable with a visible staff presence
- **Green** – restful, rich in wildlife
- **Varied** – with activities and events and a variety of local choices in particular children and young people's facilities
- **Welcoming** – well maintained, with good infrastructure and signage

For school age children, a national survey of 150,000 children across 145 local authorities (the Ofsted 'Tell Us' National Survey 2008) found that '*Better Parks and Play Areas*' ranked second highest in a list of '*Things that would do most to make it a better place to live?*' scoring 47% after 'Cleaner, Less Litter' (48%).

Satisfaction Ratings and Trends - Individual Parks

Resident satisfaction scores were recorded for 65 of the 90 parks and open spaces across Brent in the 2008 Parks Survey using a simple scoring system:
0-2 = v. poor 3-4 = poor, 5-6 = fair, 7- 8 = good, 9-10 = v. good

Of the 65 that were scored:

- 2 scored 9 (i.e. 3% of those scored) – Gladstone Park and Mapesbury Dell (*interestingly both are actively supported by voluntary sector groups, a consultative committee and a conservation trust respectively*)
- 18 scored 8 (28%) ranging in size from Fryent Country Park to Franklyn Road Playground (a 'pocket park' in the London Plan designations)
- 33 scored 7 (51%)
- 12 scored 6 (18%)

None of the parks and open spaces where scores were recorded scored lower than 6 out of 10.

The trend in resident satisfaction with Brent's Parks is steadily upward. For example satisfaction with Gladstone Park has increased from a rating of 5.5 (i.e. fair) in 2001 to 9 (very good) in 2008 and 2009; Mapesbury Dell's rating has increased from 4.5 (poor) in 2002 to 9 (very good) in 2008 and 2009

Further improvement is expected at other parks where recent commitments to physical infrastructure improvements have been made e.g. Gibbons Recreation Ground has already improved its rating from 4.2 (poor) in 2001 to a 2008 rating of 7.9 (good). We expect this to improve further to a 'very good' rating once the sports pavilion is built.

Satisfaction Ratings and Trends - Aspects of the Parks Service

The table below shows the actual ratings of aspects of the Parks Service awarded by residents in the 2008 Parks Survey against the annual targets set by the Council in

the 2007/08 Parks Service Plan. These aspects will continue to be monitored annually through the five-year duration of this strategy (see Chapter 6).

Table 10: Satisfaction Ratings against Targets by Service Area

Service Area	Target Resident Survey Satisfaction Rating for 2008	Actual Resident Survey Satisfaction Rating in 2008
Verges	7.6	7.7 (+0.1)
Children's play	9	8.8 (-0.2)
Grounds Maintenance	9.3	9.4 (+0.1)
Park Cleanliness	9.1	9.2 (+0.1)
Warden supervised Parks	8.8	8.9 (+0.1)
Unsupervised Parks	7	7.1 (+0.1)

As the table shows, with the exception of children's play, all service areas listed were marginally ahead of target in terms of resident satisfaction ratings in the year. It is expected that the children's play service satisfaction rating will improve markedly over the five year term of this strategy stimulated in large measure by new investment in new and upgraded play areas and ongoing revenue maintenance part-funded by the Council's successful bid to the 'Playbuilder' fund.

In addition to the Parks specific consultation, two major pieces of Council consultation, the Place Survey (PS) and the Residents Attitude Survey (RAS), have recently concluded and help to provide an understanding of what the residents of Brent feel about the area they live in and how well they feel Brent Council performs its services.

The Place Survey was developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government and replaces the previous BVPI surveys. The survey asks respondents about their views on the local area and local public services. The PS took place in Brent between October and December 2008 to a postal sample of 8,000 households.

The RAS is Brent's main way of measuring how residents view the council and its services. Brent usually conducts a RAS at least once every three or four years. The RAS is carried out by face-to-face interview with a sample of respondents. The responses are weighted so that they represent Brent's population accurately. The 2009 RAS was conducted between May and August 2009.

Although the two surveys have similar questions, the PS questions mainly focussed on attitudes toward the local area overall and how the range of local organisations work together (e.g. Council, the Police, NHS Brent), whereas the RAS is concerned solely with attitudes toward the council. The following table depicts all 21 wards and their respective age and ethnicity breakdown as well as the satisfaction with parks and open spaces. The top six ward scores for each category are highlighted in green with the lowest six in red.

Brent Parks Strategy 2010 - 2015

Ward	13 – 19 (PS)	60+ (PS)	BME (PS)	Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces	Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces (RAS)
Alperton	6.3%	8.4%	72%	62%	64%
Barn Hill	9.3%	12.4%	55%	64%	70%
Brondesbury Park	10.8%	9.8%	34%	72%	87%
Dollis Hill	9.3%	9.5%	52%	71%	79%
Dudden Hill	10.0%	9.3%	47%	78%	97%
Fryent	12.6%	10.2%	53%	79%	92%
Harlesden	10.4%	7.6%	62%	61%	83%
Kensal Green	9.2%	7.6%	47%	80%	87%
Kenton	5.5%	12.3%	57%	53%	84%
Kilburn	8.5%	8.6%	44%	65%	76%
Mapesbury	9.7%	7.8%	33%	64%	82%
Northwick Park	7.0%	10.4%	58%	69%	86%
Preston	9.2%	11.6%	58%	58%	92%
Queens Park	6.8%	8.0%	35%	78%	88%
Queensbury	9.8%	11.9%	65%	60%	83%
Stonebridge	6.0%	9.2%	67%	50%	63%
Sudbury	11.7%	9.7%	64%	71%	92%
Tokington	9.2%	10.3%	70%	69%	78%
Welsh Harp	9.2%	10.1%	54%	72%	85%
Wembley Central	9.0%	8.6%	79%	55%	81%
Willesden Green	11.2%	6.8%	45%	76%	79%
Mean	9.1%	9.5%	55%	64%	82%

Note: missing satisfaction scores denote score not in top 19 responses.

There is quite a differential between the Place and Residents Attitude Survey in wards like Wembley Central (55% -81%), Preston (58% -92% and Kenton (53% to 84%). In the Place Survey these were the worst performing wards; whilst Preston was one of the top six in the Residents Survey. The increased satisfaction (Place Survey conducted in 2008 and the Residents Survey in 2009) would coincide with the major landscape and infrastructural improvements to Preston in 2009. The other lowest performing wards namely Wembley Central, Kenton and Stonebridge.

Strategy Consultation Findings

Public consultation on the draft strategy took place from October 2009 to January 2010. The draft Strategy was available in Brent's libraries and remaining One Stop Shops. It was also available to download from the Parks Service's website and was on the Council's Consultation tracker inviting people to feedback via the online consultation questionnaire. A web link and flyers were sent to members of the Council's User Consultative Forums and the Brent Magazine ran an article on the

draft strategy. The Youth Parliament considered the draft strategy and provided detailed feedback which will inform delivery of the actions within the strategy.

Letters and/or emails were sent to the following individuals and organisations together with copies of the draft Strategy and Executive Summary asking for their comments and feedback:

- Senior Council Officers and Members
- Local Friends of Parks and Open Spaces
- All of the listed Residents Associations
Youth Parliament
- Greater London Parks Benchmarking Group
- Greenspace
- Council's User Consultative Forums which include Brava, BME, Disability and Older People's Forums
- All local Schools through the Schools Extranet

The responses from the consultation process have informed the final version of the Strategy, 200 of the 202 respondents agreed with the key themes and objectives

Children's Play Areas

Introduction

The Council is developing local standards for play provision to be incorporated in the emerging Local Development Framework. The LDF will replace the existing Unitary Development Plan in 2009/10. Specifically, the draft Core Strategy provides that "*The Council will secure new play facilities in all major developments*". Policy CP12 of the draft Core Strategy requires that the infrastructure requirements of new housing schemes are met by the time of occupation. In addition policy CP16 protects all open space (including play facilities) from inappropriate development and seeks new provision where deficiencies exist or where additional pressure is created on outdoor play provision.

The Council's spatial planning framework, currently in the form of the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2004) and emerging Local Development Framework (LDF), sets out the council's strategy to protect and enhance all open space and play areas in the borough. UDP policy OS18 – "Children's Play Areas" sets out the requirement of children's play facilities to National Playing Field Association (NPFA) Standards in residential developments over 15 units. Alongside UDP policy OS18, the council requires 10 m² of well-designed play and recreation space for every child to be accommodated in new housing developments in conformity with the London Plan adopted Supplementary Planning – "Providing for Children and Young People's Play and Informal Recreation".

Catchment Area Analysis

To inform the local play standards and our recent successful funding bid to the Government's 'Playbuilder' fund, our Planning Department, with colleagues from the Parks Service, has completed a detailed needs analysis of play areas across Brent including play provision in the borough's parks.

The needs assessment includes spatial mapping of the accessibility of the existing 43 play sites (using the London Plan 400m actual walking distance threshold). It also maps the play site locations in relation to other amenities (i.e. public open space,

schools, public toilets), and in relation to areas of child density in the population and areas of relative deprivation. The needs assessment includes a detailed audit of the condition of sites and takes into account proposed developments at the time of the audit. Note: The needs analysis has taken into consideration those children that are currently between the 5-8 but will be within the target age come the end of the funding process.

The detailed findings and map are at Appendix 6.

Table 11 below summarise the spatial needs for additional play areas in Brent by Ward assuming the 400m actual walking distance standard.

Table 11: Public Play Areas in Brent - Spatial Deficiencies by Ward

Ward	Summary of spatial deficiencies
Queensbury	Some areas more than 400m walking distance from play facilities at Eton Grove. High child population density in north of Queensbury.
Fryent	Areas in East of Fryent ward are more than 400m from play facilities at Roe Green, Church Lane, Silver Jubilee open space.
Kenton	Low child population density area
Barnhill	High child population density in Chalkhill area. Also area in north of ward which is more than 400m from Lindsay Park and has a medium child population density.
Welsh Harp	Some areas more than 400m from play facilities at Church Lane and Neasden recreation ground.
Preston	Pockets of high child population density in west of ward which are more than 400m distance from play facilities at King Edward Park and Preston Park.
Northwick Park	Small area of medium child population density more than 400m from play facilities at Northwick Park.
Sudbury	Pockets of medium child density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Butler's Green, Maybank and Barham Park
Wembley Central	Large areas of high child population density which are more than 400m from play facilities at One Tree Hill and King Edward VII Park
Alperton	Area in north of ward with high child population density and over 400m from play facilities at Mount Pleasant open space.
Stonebridge	Significantly high child population density in areas placing pressure on play facilities at Brent River Park, Gibbons Recreation Ground, Crouch Road open space.
Harlesden	Significantly high child population density in areas placing pressure on play facilities at St Mary's Road open space and other small play facilities within housing areas..
Kensal Green	Pockets of medium/high child density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Roundwood Park and Hazel Road play area.
Public Play Areas in Brent - Spatial Deficiencies by Ward -cont	
Queens Park	Areas in west of ward are more than 400m walking distance from play facilities at Queen's Park and Tiverton playground.
Kilburn	Significantly high child population In areas placing pressure on play facilities at Carlton Vale open space and Streatley Road playground.
Brondesbury Park	Area of medium child population density in south of ward more than 400m from play facilities at Tiverton playground and Brondesbury Park open space.

Willesden Green	North area of ward has high child population density and no existing play facilities.
Dudden Hill	Pockets of ward which are more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park.
Mapesbury	Pockets of medium/high child population density which are more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park and Mapesbury Dell.
Dollis Hill	Significantly high child population density north part of the ward which is more than 400m from play facilities at Gladstone Park.
Tokyngton	Medium/high child population density in south of ward which is more than 400m from play facilities at Brent River Park.

Determining Priorities for New and Upgraded Sites

To prioritise the Parks Service sites and locations for new investment in play provision, we have applied the following criteria:

Areas where there is:

- High population density of children aged 8-13 and 5-8
- High density housing/multiple occupancy
- Open space deficiency
- Proximity to accessible toilet facilities
- Accessibility for children with disabilities
- Proximity to anti-social behaviour hotspots
- Proximity to schools, Children's Centres, shopping areas & other venues where children & parents go

Further, the prioritisation of play sites take account of:

- State of repair
- Potential to add value through links to other funding streams
- Potential to add value to existing planned works already scheduled to meet identified needs
- Cost implications for long-term maintenance and sustainability

We have agreed a schedule of sites for new play site provision or upgrades to existing play areas based on assessment against the above criteria. These priority schemes are for implementation during the first three years of this five-year strategy part-funded by the Government's DCSF Playbuilder Fund. The details of the priority assessment findings are at Appendix 6.

A summary of the priority schemes is set out in the following Chapter (Chapter 5: Identifying Service Objectives and Strategic Priorities.)

Longer term projects for years four and five will be developed through the Annual Service Planning process informed by the spatial needs assessment above and the results of the annual Parks Survey in future years.

Quality

In addition to the criteria set out above, the needs assessment and selection of priority schemes is informed by the findings of the Parks Surveys from 2000 to 2008.

Consistently, these surveys have found that, among parents, concerns over '*stranger danger*' are one of the main reasons for non-use and whilst most parents would like

to see a greater variety of play spaces, safety considerations are paramount. Brent Parks Wardens are permanently based at seven major parks in the borough. Parks Wardens patrol Roundwood Park, Barham Park, Gladstone Park, King Edwards VII Park, Roe Green Park, Preston Park and St Raphael's/Gibbons Recreation. The wardens can respond to problems raised by members of the public and their presence helps children and families using the parks and play sites feel safe and secure.

As indicated earlier, children who took part in a consultative workshop in 2008 are more concerned with the quality and variety of the play experience than safety. Children want areas filled with nature, from plants, trees, flowers, and water, to animals and insects. They want different things to do, and developmentally appropriate learning environments that hold their attention for hours.

The workshop found there are some gender differences in terms of what improvements children would like to see: The boys wanted the more boisterous, exciting and adventurous play space with a strong emphasis on sport whilst girls preferred an area where they could socialise and be safe. They were also conscious about keeping fit and were interested in the Multi-Use Games Areas concept.

Younger girls (8-10 year olds) in the workshops were more conscious of having their own space i.e. they liked the idea of the older children's equipment being separate, they were particularly interested in the play house concept with different levels for different ages. Older girls (11-13) were specifically interested in an area to socialise with their friends and wanted a play space that stimulated and sustained their attention. They felt that current equipment was boring and there was a need for a café in every park site.

Overall satisfaction ratings for playgrounds in the annual Parks Surveys tend to be higher for playgrounds that offer additional facilities e.g. cafes and toilets, when compared to the small local sites without these amenities.

Sports Facilities in Parks

Introduction

The Council has recently produced a *Planning for Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy*. This strategy establishes local standards for outdoor sports facility provision in terms of quantity (e.g. pitches per 1,000 populations), quality (i.e. good or excellent) and access (e.g. publicly accessible within a 1.6km or 20 minute walk.)

These local standards have been devised from benchmarking Brent's provision with that in other similar London boroughs, a detailed audit of local supply (including consideration of accessible provision across borough boundaries), and a detailed assessment of demand factors including the size, age and sporting market profile of the population and projected population growth.

While some provision for outdoor sport is located on school sites and private sports grounds, in Brent most provision is within public parks and within open spaces designated as sports grounds.

Quantity of Pitches

The audit inspected 89 pitches; 46 pitches on 32 local authority sites (including Queens Park owned by The Corporation of London), 30 pitches on 22 education

sites, and 13 pitches on 11 private and 1 housing association sites. The audit only included pitches that were marked out and appeared to be in use, rather than 'informal' spaces able to accommodate pitch sports. The numbers and types of these pitches are shown in the table below. It is noted that, as the audit was undertaken during winter months, it is possible that some summer pitches are excluded.

Table 12: Number of pitches by each pitch type

Pitch Type	No. of LA Pitches	No. of Education Pitches	No. of Private Pitches
Football	36	26 + 2 decommissioned	8
Cricket	6	3	4
Gaelic Football	3	0	0
Rugby	2	1	1
Total	46	30	13

The majority of playing pitches in the borough are maintained by the Parks Service and are sited within our parks and open spaces. The most common type of pitch is football. Very few education sites have their own sports pitches with only 8 of Brent's 14 Secondary Schools and 5 of the 60 Primary Schools having sports pitches. There are currently 2 decommissioned football pitches at Copland Community School and Chalkhill Youth Centre. Full details of all football pitches can be seen in Appendix 7, the outdoor sports pitches audit.

Brent has a relatively low number of 'privately owned' pitches, for example by sports clubs or companies. This number may have been greater in the past as a number of sites were developed for alternative uses during the 1990s.

Quality of Pitches

The quality of pitches was also assessed using a Visual Quality Assessment (VQA) methodology based on a model advocated by Sport England. The results are shown in table 13. This shows that the **vast majority of pitches in the borough are of average, below average, or poor quality. This is an important failing to be addressed through this strategy over the next five years.**

The Council's own pitches were assessed to be in the worst condition, with 89% of pitches being average or below quality and none rated as excellent. The quality of education pitches is generally better although 21% are still rated as below average, and two fifths rated as average. None are rated as excellent. The private pitches overall ranked higher in terms of quality. However, the quality of private pitches varies, with almost a third below average. Only one pitch is rated as excellent being the cricket pitch at South Hampstead Cricket Club.

Table 13: Pitch Quality Ratings

Rating	% LA Pitches	% Education Pitches	% Private Pitches
An excellent pitch	0.0	0.0	7.7
A good pitch	10.9	36.8	38.5
An average pitch	26.1	42.1	23.1
A below average pitch	54.3	21.1	30.8
A poor pitch	8.7	0.0	0.0

From the site survey the symptoms of poor conditions in local authority sites included water-logged pitches (indicating poor drainage), poor condition of goalmouths, uneven surfacing, high proportion of weeds, damage caused by vehicles and horses being driven/ridden across the pitches, collapsed drains, golf divots and large stones and bricks observed at surface level.

Floodlighting

There are currently no floodlit grass pitches in the borough, other than ones on private pitch sites. There are decommissioned floodlights at Alperton Sports Ground and the former London Wasps rugby training ground at Vale Farm, Sudbury Avenue.

Changing Facilities

Only some of Brent's playing pitches have changing room facilities. The changing rooms that are available were also assessed in accordance with the Sport England VQA. The results are shown in the table overleaf.

Table 14: Changing Facilities Quality Ratings

Rating	No. of LA sites	No. of Education sites	No. of Private sites
Excellent	3	2	3
Good	3	3	1
Average	3	1	4
Poor	1	0	1
Very Poor	1	0	1
Total	11	7	10

A total of 11 local authority changing facilities were assessed, equating to one third of Brent sports pitches having changing rooms available for public use. Just over half are in good or excellent condition with Gladstone Park, Willesden Sports Ground and GEC Sports Ground rated the highest. Two were rated as poor; Silver Jubilee Park and Tokyngton Recreation Ground.

Seven of the 22 education facilities have changing facilities, most of which are in good condition. Two (Claremont High School and JFS) were rated as being in excellent condition.

More than three quarters of the private playing pitches have changing room facilities available, which are mainly of average condition.

Three of the facilities, at The Pavilion Stonebridge, Goals at Alperton Sports Ground and Wembley Cricket Club were rated as excellent.

Needs Analysis – supply and demand

The table below summarises the supply versus demand analysis of outdoor sports provision both at 2008 and at 2016 based on population change forecasts and known commitments for new provision. (It is noted that while, generally, population growth will have an effect in terms of increasing demand, due to new provision being planned in Brent and neighbouring boroughs net demand may not change).

Table 15: Outdoor Sports Facilities Needs Analysis – supply and demand

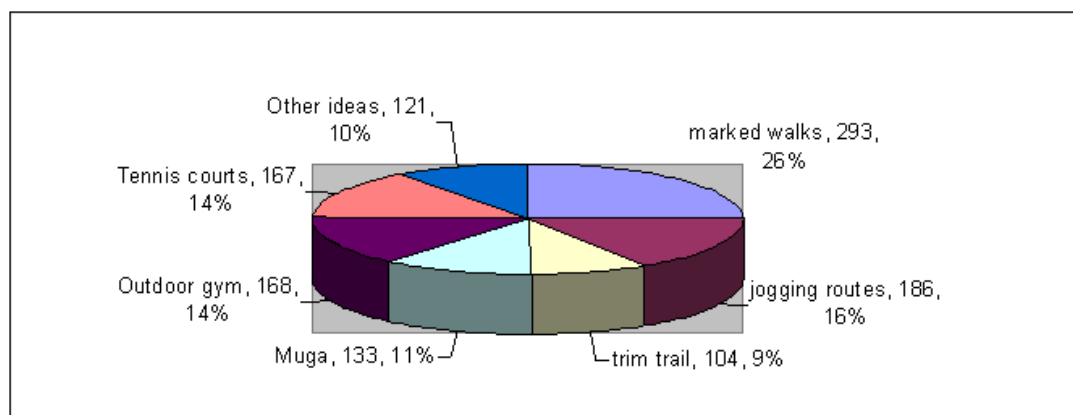
Facility Type	Brent Current Provision (2008)	Demand (2008)	Surplus +/-Deficit -	Demand (2016)	Additional provision required by 2016 based on current provision
Synthetic Turf Pitches	5	5.6	-0.6 pitches	6.1	1.1 pitches
Athletics Tracks	6 lanes	6 lanes	0	6 lanes	0
Football Pitches	70 pitches (18 adult, 47 youth, 5 mini)	120 pitches (43 adult, 52 youth, 26 mini)	-25 adult -5 youth -21 mini	147 pitches (40 adult, 77 youth, 30 mini)	22 adult 30 youth 25 mini
Gaelic Football	8 pitches	7 pitches	+1	9 pitches	1 (One additional pitch will be provided at Gladstone Park from 2009)
Rugby Pitches	2 pitches – publicly accessible	1 pitch	1 pitch	1 pitch	1
Cricket Pitches	10	10	0	11	1
Tennis Courts	74 courts	10,552 match slots which equates to 91 courts	-17 courts	11,426 match slots which equates to 99 courts	4 additional courts now and a further 4 by 2016. Plus 13 courts can be brought back into use / upgraded.
MUGAs	21	35	-14	38	17
Bowling Greens	9	9	0	9	Current provision is expected to

Facility Type	Brent Current Provision (2008)	Demand (2008)	Surplus +/-Deficit -	Demand (2016)	Additional provision required by 2016 based on current provision
					meet existing demand and into the future
Netball courts	10 (within schools, may be higher)	39	-29	44	34

Clearly, it will not be realistic to provide and maintain the number of new football pitches, netball courts and MUGA required to meet forecast levels of demand by 2016. Prioritisation for future investment will be needed based on agreed criteria linking to the available resources of clubs, schools, coaches, volunteers and our own Sports Development Team to develop programmes to ensure the new facilities provided are used for the benefit of local communities. Our new strategy for sport and physical activity in Brent for 2010 to 2015, currently at draft stage, will address these capacity building issues.

Needs Analysis – Survey findings

From the 2008 and 2009 Parks Survey, facilities in parks that would encourage residents to take part in more physical exercise were:



This demonstrates that facilities for informal and low intensity physical activities such as marked walks and jogging routes might have a greater impact on participation levels in physical activity than the provision of new pitches and courts for specific sports. Clearly, this is a further consideration in determining the allocation of available resources for sport and physical activities in our parks.

Consultation with our sports club communities on prioritising the facility investment needs is ongoing via the Brent Community Sport & Physical Activity Network (CSPAN), developed through the former Brent Sports Forum. The poor quality of many of the existing pitches and changing rooms in parks is highlighted in most discussions with club representatives as a greater barrier to development of use than a quantitative lack of provision.

Allotments

Quantity and Accessibility

Across Brent there are 22 allotment sites in the Council's ownership managed by the Parks Service with a total land area of 15.1 hectare and offering 919 plots in total. Our allotment sites range in size from just 6 plots (Vale Farm) to 120 (Dollis Hill)

As shown in table 6 earlier in this Chapter, the number of sites is in line with the average across the other outer London boroughs used as benchmarks although the total area of land allocated to these sites falls below the average for these boroughs.

The distribution of allotment sites relative to where people live is shown at Appendix 5. From this mapping work it is apparent the areas that are least well served in terms of access to allotment sites. In these areas, and where there is an identified expressed demand, we will continue to strive to identify realistic opportunities to provide new allotment plots.

Quality

The quality of our allotment sites has improved markedly since the last Parks Strategy was prepared and its key recommendation – i.e. to appoint a dedicated Allotments Officer to work with allotment holder voluntary groups and secure resources for physical improvement works – was implemented.

This improvement is reflected in the uptake of plots - 14 of 23 (61%) of allotment sites are full, most with waiting lists.

Allotment holders' views were canvassed a few years ago as part of a Best Value Service Review. At this time, allotment holders also identified the key components of a good allotment service. These were:

- Security (i.e. good gates and fencing)
- Rubbish Disposal (i.e. provision and emptying of skips)
- Toilets
- Good Communications with Council
- Well Maintained Paths
- Water Supply

The identification of these priorities contributed to the development of a robust improvement programme on five key sites. These improvements were implemented during the last Parks Strategy.

However, the latest condition survey (March 2009) identifies significant improvements needed to fencing, paths, sheds etc at the majority of our sites.

Old Kenton Lane in Kingsbury, with 180 plots has moved to self-management. The advantages of the self-management model – with a suitably motivated and appropriately constituted group of volunteers - are widely recognised. As part of our evolving development plan for our allotment sites we are committed to continuing to work with local allotment groups to build capacity and encourage more to consider self-management.

Biodiversity

Our parks and open spaces (including the allotment sites) provide a large proportion of the semi-natural and wildlife habitats in the borough. For example, the hay meadows at Fryent Country Park are amongst the best wildlife grasslands in London. In some areas of the Borough, for example around the Brent Reservoir, on Barn Hill and at Gladstone Park, there are remnants of more acid grasslands.

Fryent Country Park and our larger parks are also major providers of trees, woodland and hedgerows offering a wide range of habitats and helping to reduce carbon in the atmosphere. A small number of our parks and open spaces (for example Gladstone Park) have ponds which, along with garden ponds and streams and the much larger bodies of water at Brent Reservoir, along the River Brent and the Grand Union Canal, provide valuable wetland habitats.

We are committed to conserving and increasing these different habitats wherever possible in the borough. Our Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) includes targets for us to:

- Conserve, manage and improve the diversity of the hay meadows at Fryent Country Park
- Conserve, where possible, areas of acid grassland in the Borough
- Encourage the creation and management of small meadows in gardens, parks and other areas
- Create and maintain areas of rough grassland where practical
- Encourage hedges in parks, gardens and other area
- River Brent restoration project: Work towards achieving the restoration of the River Brent and tributaries through Brent, including continuation of the restoration work at St. Raphael's Open Space and Tokyngton Recreation Ground
- Plant trees in parks towards the achievement of targets in Brent's Tree Planting programme

Towards the successful implementation of these and other strategic actions aimed at improving the quality of the parks and to improve wildlife habitats, our Parks Service and other Council services work to a range of standards and quality management systems including:

ISO 9000 (Quality Management System) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) - including a pesticide reduction target

- **Green Flag Awards** – in 2008 we held just two Green Flag Awards for *Roundwood Park* in Harlesden (which has benefited from major renovation works and an excellent café), and for our most visited park, *Gladstone Park*. This park has seen major improvement works since 2002 part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Football Foundation, Big Lottery Fund and London Marathon Charitable Trust. In July 2009 we were awarded a further three Green Flag Awards for Barham, Preston and Mapesbury Dell
- **Green Pennant Awards** - The *Roe Green Walled Garden* in Kingsbury holds a Green Pennant Award.
- **Charter Mark 2009** – in recognition of excellence in customer service
- **Britain in Bloom/London In Bloom** - a Silver Gilt Britain in Bloom Award in 2007 and Silver Gilt in London in Bloom in 2008

- ***The Soil Association Organic Standard*** – for Fryent Country Park
- ***Beacon Status 'Improving Urban Green Space ' 2002***
- ***Horticulture Week Team of the Year Award 2007***

Summary of Issues and Needs

Issues and needs arising from the assessment of the 'supply' of Brent's parks service set out in this chapter, considered in the context of the 'demand' set out in the earlier chapters, are summarised in table 16.

Table 16: Brent Parks Service - Summary of Strategic Issues and Needs

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Spatial provision and need for more open space	Parks – Spatial deficiency in a number of areas of the borough against the 400m walking distance standard taking into account accessible parks across borough boundaries, plus new provision needed in Growth Areas	Maps at Appendices 3 & 4
	Play Areas – Spatial deficiency against Brent Local Standard in a number of areas not met by the 'Playbuilder' project roll-out of new and upgraded play areas	Map and Play Area Needs Assessment Report 2008 at Appendix 6
	Pitches - By 2016, there will be a need for 40 adult, 77 junior and 30 mini pitches to meet demand. This is almost double the existing pitch provision	Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 - 2021
	Allotments - Spatial deficiency in certain areas of the borough and unmet expressed demand (waiting lists).	Map at Appendix 5

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Quality of provision and need for improvement and/or restoration	Parks - Despite upward trend, 12 parks still have only 'fair' satisfaction ratings; Poor standard of toilets in most parks; Longstanding restoration projects in Roundwood Park (open air theatre), and Gladstone Park (Dollis Hill House)	Annual Parks Surveys 2000-2008, reports by English Heritage, Arts Council England, and feedback from local restoration trusts
	Play Areas – A number of play areas in parks are in need of improvement. 9 sites identified in recent needs assessment for major improvements in 2008/09 to improve accessibility and others in future years	Audits and Needs Assessment Report 2008
	Pitches - Poor quality of many park pitches and changing rooms	Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy, Brent CSPAN feedback
	Allotments - Quality issues at most sites	Allotment Condition Survey March 2009 Allotment groups feedback

Issue	Needs by Service Area	Evidence Sources
Safety of Parks and Play Sites in Parks	Concern among parents of ' <i>stranger danger</i> ' and need for greater mobile park warden presence and work with Safer Neighbourhood Teams at those sites without a permanent warden.	ROSPA Audit of Park Play Sites 2008 and Annual Park Surveys
Community Involvement	Good level of community involvement in parks. Need to identify local park volunteers in those locations where friends groups are not yet established and consider options for greater self-management of park service facilities e.g. allotment sites, sports facilities.	Audit Commission report in 2002 and developed further since.
Information	Need for further development of both web-based and park-based information about facilities, programmes and habitats in parks	Annual Parks Surveys 2000 - 2008
Maintenance	Need for development of 'green' horticultural maintenance specification Need to identify and secure maintenance budgets to support and sustain any new provision of parks, open spaces, play areas, sports pitches, and allotments. E.g. Playbuilder revenue budget, S106 agreements	BAP 2007 No growth in Parks Maintenance Budget in Council budget for 2009/10
Programmes	To achieve physical activity and child obesity reduction targets, need to find innovative ways to expand programme of Events, Health Walks, Cycle training etc within existing budgets and by maximising available grant aid	Active People Survey Results 1 (2005/2006) & 2 (2007/2008)
Bio Diversity	To meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme, need to undertake a survey of tree planting densities in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting Need to identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland in parks and open spaces	Brent Tree Planting Programme

Chapter 5: Identifying Service Objectives/Priorities and Themes

Introduction

This chapter summarises the main issues arising from the evidence of needs set out in the preceding chapters and identifies service objectives/priorities and strategic themes for the Brent Parks Service over the five-year period to 2015 and will support our vision for parks and open spaces'

'To provide good quality, attractive, enjoyable and accessible green space which meets the diverse needs of all Brent residents and visitors'

The strategic themes will be the subject of consultation with stakeholders before the strategy is finalised for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in support of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy for Brent.

The final chapter (which follows) sets out a draft Action Plan for the implementation of the service themes over this period. The action plan will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect external and internal changes and influences and used as the basis for annual Service Plans for the Parks Service. The Draft 5 Year Action Plan is proposed in the context of the service objectives, the resources that are already in place (or potentially available) and known delivery opportunities.

Service Objectives/Priorities

In accordance with the Sustainable Communities Strategy and our Corporate Plan, our key objectives/priorities for the Parks Service over the next five years will be to:

- Ensure that Brent retains *a diverse array of parks settings and recreation opportunities* (including play, passive recreation, sports, wildlife habitat and local cultural programmes) that satisfy *a wide range of community and ecosystem needs*
- Ensure that Brent's *natural and built heritage is protected and enhanced*
- Manage parks to ensure that they are *safe and therefore accessible to all* who want to use them
- Ensure all parks and green space (including allotments) are maintained to encourage *health, sustainability and biodiversity*
- Ensure that all parks are *maintained to a consistently high standard* and that independent assessment of performance is regularly undertaken
- Ensure mechanisms are in place to ascertain community needs, to identify barriers to use and to *increase customer satisfaction*
- Promote parks and *raise community awareness and participation*
- *Develop and train staff* who are competent and empowered to provide a quality service which reflects community needs

- *Create financial solutions* through good financial management and work to secure additional funding through collaborative processes
- Increase partnership working
- Continue to *determine existing parks use* and user patterns, *enable community parks management* and *ensure future provision represents this diverse Borough*

Strategic Themes

In line with these objectives/priorities, and in the context of available resources and the potential for new resources (e.g. developer contributions and grants), over the five-year life of this strategy, we propose to focus our efforts on the following strategic themes:

1 Improving Existing Parks and Open Spaces

In seeking to continue to improve the quality of Brent's existing parks and open spaces and user satisfaction we will concentrate on the priority public concerns i.e.

- *Safety and security.* Our main considerations on this issue will include: increasing the size and coverage of the Park Warden service, ensuring a user-friendly and proactive approach to public safety and security on the part of our Park Wardens (i.e. not a policing role); providing lighting to strategic paths and main thoroughfares in our parks; traffic calming near park access points; and working to improve visibility across sites.
- *Infrastructure repairs and landscape improvements.* We will continue to use our Asset Management Plan and Condition Survey reports (e.g. the Allotment Condition Survey Report Mar 2009) to prioritise investment in repairs to paths, pavilions, pitches, play areas, allotment sites, public toilets, and other parks infrastructure as well as in landscape improvement projects. The Asset Management Plan will also be used to inform the feasibility of long-standing improvement projects (e.g. Vale Farm Sports Ground and the Open Air Theatre in Roundwood Park.)
- *General maintenance and upkeep.* Through our contract management policies and procedures and other actions, we will continue to strive to improve general standards of parks maintenance and upkeep. In the case of proposals and opportunities for new parks and open spaces and for new amenities in parks, a sustainable maintenance plan and allocated budget will be in place as a priority before proceeding.
- *Independent Auditing.* We will increase the number of independent park audits undertaken to assess improvement priorities (through the existing KMC Green Space Performance Management system).

2 Providing New Parks and Open Spaces

We will respond to opportunities where they arise in areas where there is evidence of need to create new public open spaces. We will focus on those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the London Plan standards, and on the population Growth Areas. We will also respond

positively to opportunities to increase amenities within new and existing open spaces i.e:

- *Play Areas.* Once the roll out of the current 'Playbuilder' project (including those play areas planned for the population Growth Areas) is completed, we will identify priority locations for new play areas by applying the local standard for provision of play areas and taking into consideration the potential of better community use of play facilities on school sites and opportunities presented by the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP).
- *Sports Facilities.* We will seek to provide new football pitches, netball courts, and MUGAs in those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the Local Standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 - 2021. As part of this work, we will follow a strategic approach to ensure new sports facilities are located in areas of greatest need. As with play areas, we will take into account the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP for improved community access to pitches and courts on school sites.
- *Cycling Areas.* We will also respond to opportunities where they arise to deliver additional safe cycling areas (e.g. cycle routes in Parks) and well-signposted routes that link different areas within Brent, including consideration of cycle to school routes.
- *Allotments.* Finally, where feasible (and in those areas where provision is most limited and the nearest site has a waiting list), we will create new allotment sites or expand the capacity of existing sites.

3 Developing New Activity Programmes in Parks

We will seek out and respond to opportunities to deliver new activity programmes aimed at increasing participation in sport and physical activity, particularly by children and young people. In particular:

- We will maximise opportunities for activity programmes in our Parks resulting from the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games supported by the Mayor's Legacy Plan for 'A Sporting Future for London' (April 2009).

4 Achieving Greater Community Involvement and Working towards Inclusivity

We will continue to work in close partnership with existing parks friends groups and similar organisations, encourage more community involvement in our parks and open spaces and work to ensure that our parks are accessible to all in the borough's diverse community by:

- Facilitating the establishment of new groups at parks and open spaces where they do not already exist.
- Continuing to work with constituted sports clubs and volunteer allotment groups towards agreements for self-management of more sites.

- *Inclusive Play Areas.* Ensuring all of the new and upgraded play sites under the 'Playbuilder' programme have inclusive play areas that can be used by disabled children, cater for a wide age group and accommodate parents, guardians and carers within a socially integrated setting. As part of this commitment and supported by the Transition Team Manager, a group of children with disabilities will work with designers and will be actively involved in the design, planning and evaluation of sites.
- *Broadening the User Profile of Allotment Sites.* Continuing to work with allotment holders, schools and other local groups to attract more use of the allotment sites by those groups identified in recent monitoring as non- or low-users i.e. young people, older females, disabled people and certain Asian minority ethnic groups.

5 Maintaining and Improving Biodiversity in our Parks

Actions in this priority area will include:

- *Creating new hedges, meadows and rough grassland areas.* Continuing to protect existing valuable grasslands and habitats (informed by existing audit information and the Biodiversity Action Plan 2007) and undertake a survey to identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland in our parks and open spaces
- *Tree Planting.* Undertaking a survey of tree planting densities in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting to meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme
- *Grounds Maintenance.* Developing a 'Green' Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Specification to reduce the use of pesticides etc.
- *A Guide to Biodiversity in Brent's Parks and Open Spaces.* To inform our residents and visitors to the borough about the tree, plant and wildlife species and habitats in the parks and open spaces and to aid people's understanding of our rationale for adopting particular policies (e.g. around planting and maintenance regimes).

6 Mitigating Climate Change Impacts

We will continue to improve our approaches to environmental sustainability and seek to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change in all aspects of our work. Specific actions will include:

- *Trees.* In assessing tree densities and designing the Borough's future tree planting programmes (including the selection of tree types), we will take into consideration the importance of trees in parks in providing areas of shade for both people and habitats.
- *Shrubs and Plants.* We will take into account climate change and sustainability considerations (e.g. shade value, water conservation and floodplains, maintenance requirements) in our selection of shrubs and plants for our parks and open spaces.

- *Water Conservation and Water Management.* We will continue to consider carefully the water conservation and water management implications in all areas of our work and, in consultation with other service areas, review regularly policies and procedures in all relevant areas (e.g. planting, watering, maintenance, water collection and recycling)

7 Promoting our Parks and Open Spaces and their Value

We will continue to work to improve the promotion of our parks and open spaces, our canals and waterways, the Capital Ring and other walking routes in the borough. We will promote their value to everyone in our community as important resources for people's health and wellbeing, for sport and play, for maintaining biodiversity and for mitigating the impacts of climate change. In particular, over the period of this strategy we will:

- *Website.* Develop more information material on the Council's website about facilities, programmes and habitats in our parks and open spaces
- *Signage.* We will work to upgrade signage in parks to improve clarity and to make information more accessible to everyone in our diverse community
- *Interpretation.* We will strive to provide improved information both on our website and in the parks and open spaces themselves to help people understand points of interest relating to the history and heritage of the spaces and features within them, cultural links, wildlife, plant and tree species etc.
- *Quality Assurance.* Work to retain the ISO 900/200, ISO14001 quality assurance accreditations and the Customer Service Excellence Award (formerly Charter Mark) currently held by the Council's Parks Service
- *National and Regional Competitions.* Continue to encourage and support local groups participating in the Britain / London in Bloom award scheme
- *Accreditations.* Identify the additional resources necessary to Increase the number of sites in the borough with Green Flag / Green Pennant awards through strategically focused improvements on the identified sites

Chapter 6: Action Planning and Review

Introduction

This strategy has been produced in order that the Brent Parks Service works in a planned and co-ordinated way over the next five years. This final chapter sets out a draft 5 Year Action Plan for implementation of the strategy and details how the strategy will be reviewed, enabling the comparison of achievements against actions and recognising new opportunities and unpredicted changes that may have an impact on parks provision in Brent over this period.

Use and Satisfaction

Ultimately, the success of the strategy will be measured against the use of the Parks and Open Spaces and the Play Areas, Sports Facilities and Allotment sites within them. We will continue to monitor use and satisfaction annually through a combination of the existing KMC Performance Management System and Park Audits, the Brent Parks Survey of a random sample of 10% of householders and via feedback from stakeholder groups. These include Parks Friends groups, local environmental conservation groups and trusts, sports clubs (via the Community Sport & Physical Activity Network), the Brent Disabled Users Forum, Brent Association of Disabled People, the Brent Race Health and Social Care Forum and many others with an active interest in our parks and the service we provide to residents and visitors.

From this year we will also be conducting regular surveys of young people to monitor their levels of satisfaction with our parks and playgrounds.

Sustainable Community Strategy Outcomes and Local Area Agreement Targets

At a 'high level' the success of the strategy will be measured in the contribution the Parks Service makes to the delivery of the community outcomes sought by the Brent Local Strategic Partnership – A Great Place, A Borough of Opportunity, An Inclusive Community.

More tangibly, this success will be measured by means of the Council's overall performance against its Local Area Agreement targets to where the Parks Service has a significant role. As detailed in Chapter 1, these relate to:

- Reducing the adult mortality rate through measures such as exercise referral including health walks in parks
- Reducing obesity among primary age children
- Increasing participation in sport
- Increasing volunteering
- Reducing CO2 emissions

As a member of the London Parks Benchmarking Group, in addition to these indicators, we propose to continue to lobby the Audit Commission and the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) to develop and adopt a specific set of national performance indicators for parks services.

Service Plans

As indicated in the introduction to the previous chapter, the relevance of the objectives/priorities for the Service and the strategic themes selected for the next five years will be checked each year through the service planning process. If, as part of this annual review process, there is a need to amend any of the service objectives or strategic priorities this will be done as part of the process and formal approval sought to the change.

Specific actions and targets for each year of the strategy are set against each service objective. Progress against the targets is monitored and the number of actions 'fully met', 'partially met' or 'not met' is documented within the Service Manager's Annual Report and reviewed as part of the process of agreeing the Service Plan for the following year.

Comprehensive Review

In the final year of this strategy, a comprehensive review will be undertaken including re-engagement with stakeholders to develop a new five-year strategy.

5 Year Action Plan

The table overleaf sets out a framework for action against the service objectives and strategic priorities or themes set out in Chapter 5. As explained above, the detail of the action plan will change over the five years (as part of the annual service review process) to reflect changes both in the external environment (e.g. national and London government policy changes, new grant programmes etc), and in the internal Borough Council environment (demographic change, policy changes, budget considerations, organisational change etc).

Theme 1:- IMPROVING EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 1: Improve existing Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Safe parks accessible to all	Seek resources to expand the neighbourhood Park Warden teams and investigate joint-working arrangements with our Street Warden teams.	Parks Service and Streetcare	Funding agencies Volunteers Community Safety Team Safer Neighbourhood Team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure that local <i>traffic calming</i> measures are implemented where appropriate in relation to parks and open space access points and also to ensure that access and safety around informal play sites is considered where these exist	Parks Service	Brent Transportation TFL London Cycling Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Introduce <i>lighting to paths</i> in parks and open spaces where used as main thoroughfares or 'cut-throughs' and where appropriate in relation to impact on residents and wildlife habitats.	Parks Service	Local Area Planning Development Control Team Neighbourhood Ward Working	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Seek partnerships and develop concessions for facilities in park (for example cafes and toilets) and incorporate security function into the arrangement	Parks	Property and Asset Management Sure Start Café Operators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Investigate ways of providing well managed toilet provision in Parks and Open Spaces	Head of Parks	Property and Asset Management Sure Start Café Operators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Protect and enhance natural and built heritage	Develop a programme of <i>repairs to infrastructure and priority landscape improvements</i> in parks and open spaces as informed by the Asset Management Plan	Head of Property and Asset Management	Parks Service Sports Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England Football Foundation National Governing Bodies of Sport ProActive West London	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Implement the improvement plans to upgrade Barham Park Eton Grove, Woodcock One Tree Hill and Kenton	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Implement the recommendations of the Roundwood Theatre Feasibility Study	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management		✓	✓			
	Continue to seek funding and opportunities to improve standards of general <i>maintenance and upkeep</i> of all parks and open spaces	Head of Parks	London Parks Benchmarking Group Greenspace KMC Greenspace Performance Network Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase the number of <i>independent park audits</i> to identify and prioritise improvements	Head of Parks	KMC Consultancy London Parks Benchmarking Group Greenspace/CABE ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Improve opportunities for both formal and informal physical activity in parks and open spaces	Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England National Governing Bodies of Sport Brent NHS ProActive West London	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Encourage young people to use parks and open spaces by providing where possible the facilities and events they have suggested through consultation	Head of Parks	Sports Service Sport England National Governing Bodies of Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Raise the profile of culture by demonstrating the benefits and celebrating the cultural value of park settings and recreational opportunities for our diverse communities.	Head of Parks	Arts Council English Heritage Heritage Lottery Fund Libraries Arts and Heritage Service Friends of groups Property and Assets Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Increase partnership working	Share the information, experience, knowledge and data we hold to improve and direct the service we provide	Head of Parks	Sports Service Libraries Arts and Heritage Playbuilder Steering Group Friends of Groups Metropolitan Police Streetcare Planning CABE , ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Work in partnership to increase capacity, finances and open up new opportunities for funding in particular around the area of toilet provision	Head of Parks	Sports Service Libraries Arts and Heritage Planning Service Playbuilder Steering Group Friends of Groups Metropolitan Police Streetcare Private Sector Community Orgs Property and Asset Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 2:- PROVIDING NEW PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 2: Providing new Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Create <i>new parks and open spaces</i> in priority areas of spatial deficiency starting with the Borough's established 'Growth Areas'. examples include. Chalkhill, Stonebridge, Church End, Twyford Abbey Road	Planning and Parks	Regeneration team/ Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Review unused housing land, including school playgrounds particularly in the south of the Borough	Planning and Parks	Regeneration team/ Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to implement the 'Playbuilder' project programme including <i>new play areas</i> in 'Growth Areas'	Parks and Children & Families	DCSF and Play England Planning Service Regeneration team	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Identify priority locations for <i>new play areas</i> using the local standard for provision and consideration of community use of play facilities on school sites, including Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) sites.	Parks	Brent CYPS BSF Team Brent CYPS PCP Team Brent Children and Families Service Housing Service Play England DCSF Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of parks and recreation opportunities cont...	Provide <i>new football pitches, netball courts, and MUGAs</i> in those areas where spatial mapping and survey evidence shows a significant level of deficiency against the Local Standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy 2008 – 2021 and Sports Strategy 2010-2015 and taking into account the opportunities presented by BSF and PCP.	Head of Parks and Sports Services	Sport England Football Foundation Regeneration Team National Governing Bodies of Sport Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure new facilities comply with local standards set out in the Planning for Sport & Active Recreation Facilities Strategy	Planning Service	Parks Service Sports Service Sports Clubs Friends of Parks Leisure providers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide additional <i>safe cycling areas</i> (e.g. cycle routes in Parks) and well-signposted routes that link different areas within Brent, including consideration of cycle to school routes.	Transportation Service	Parks Service Sports Service Transport for London London Cycling Campaign DCSF - Playbuilder	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Create <i>new allotment sites or expand the capacity of existing sites</i> where feasible (prioritising areas where provision is most limited and the nearest site has a waiting list	Parks	Allotment Forum Groundwork London Allotments Network Planning Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 3: DEVELOPING NEW ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES IN PARKS

Theme 3: Developing new activity programmes in parks									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities	Proactively listen to local communities and develop activity programmes that are based on the needs of individual, families and communities	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals Team Children and Families/Playbuilder Youth Service Regeneration Team NHS Brent Friends of Parks Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Use market segmentation and social marketing information to inform the provision of services and effective marketing techniques	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals Team Youth Service Policy and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Promote parks as a place where people can walk and be physically active during their leisure time work breaks and for transport	Sports and Parks Services	NHS Brent GLA Arts and Festivals Team Sport England ProActive West London National Governing Bodies of Sport StreetGames / Street Athletics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase awareness of the opportunities available by developing and maintaining a comprehensive web-based directory of parks their facilities and events programmes	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Theme 3: Developing new activity programmes in parks									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>A diverse array of park settings and recreation opportunities cont...</i>	Maximise the opportunity presented by the Welsh Harp including increasing the sporting opportunity to the people of Brent	Sports Service	Parks Welsh Harp Sailing Association SSP's Schools Regeneration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop the annual Brent Fun Run and Walk at Fryent Country Park as a local mass participation event	Sports Service	Parks Service Community and Faith groups SSP's	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Offer activity programmes in parks that reflect the needs of Brent's diverse communities offering inclusive and specific opportunities ensuring we deliver the joint actions of the Cultural Strategy 2010-2015	Parks	Community and Faith groups SSP's Sports Service Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maximise opportunities presented by London 2012 to increase use of parks and open spaces.	Parks	Sports Service Brent Manager for London 2012 Community and Friends of Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 4: ACHIEVING GREATER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND WORKING TOWARDS INCLUSIVITY

Theme 4: Achieving greater community involvement and working towards inclusivity									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness and participation	Develop parks and open spaces through community engagement and consultation, promoting civic pride and local ownership of programmes.	Parks	Regeneration Policy and Performance BRAVA Youth Service Children and Families Arts and Festivals Sports Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Facilitate the establishment of new friends groups at parks and open spaces where they do not already exist	Parks	Sports Service Arts and Festivals BRAVA Communications Team Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue work with constituted sports clubs and volunteer allotment groups towards agreements for self-management of more sites	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Allotment Forum London Boroughs Allotment Network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Raise community awareness and participation cont...</i>	Ensure all of the new and upgraded play sites have inclusive play areas that can be used by disabled children, cater for a wide age group and accommodate parents, guardians and carers within a socially integrated setting.	Parks and Children and Families	Play England Playbuilder Steering Group includes, Planning, Sports, Transportation, Regeneration The Children's Society DCSF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Attract more use of the allotment sites by those groups identified in recent monitoring as non- or low-users for example. young people, older females, disabled people and certain minority ethnic groups	Parks	Allotment Forum Communications and Consultation BRAVA Day Options	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Work with sports clubs, Friends of parks groups, faith and community groups to improve their promotion and marketing in order to increase participation	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Community, Friends of, Faith groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Raise community awareness and participation cont...</i>	Use market segmentation and social marketing information to inform the provision of services and effective marketing techniques	Parks	Sports Service Sports Clubs Community, Friends of, Faith groups, Regeneration Youth Service, Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Develop closer relationship with local schools through initiatives like Playbuilder and Brent in Bloom	Parks	Children and Families DCSF Play England RHS Wildlife Association	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Continue to use a range of different and exciting approaches to raise awareness of the benefits of using parks and Open Spaces	Parks	Sports Service Communications Team Children and Families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 5: MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY IN OUR PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Theme 5: Maintaining and improving biodiversity in our Parks and Open Spaces									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Encourage health, sustainability and biodiversity	Continue to protect existing valuable grasslands and habitats and <i>identify opportunities for hedges, small meadows and rough grassland</i> improvement	Parks	Environmental Health UK BAP Network Volunteer Groups BRAVA RHS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Undertake a <i>survey of tree planting densities</i> in all Brent Parks and identify priority parks for tree planting to meet targets of Brent's Tree Planting Programme	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy UK BAP Network Wildlife Trust Volunteer Groups BRAVA ANGST	✓	✓				
	Develop a ' <i>Green Horticultural Grounds Maintenance Specification</i> to reduce the use of pesticides, etc	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN		✓	✓			

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Encourage health, sustainability and biodiversity cont...	Develop a <i>Guide to Biodiversity in Brent's Parks and Open Spaces</i> and Follow the guidelines set out in 'The Biodiversity Duty'	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Groundwork UK	✓	✓				
	Continue to follow Brent's Biodiversity Action Plan which links to local, regional and national targets Parks.	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Voluntary Organisations and Friends of Groundwork UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Extend natural areas where appropriate and install associated interpretative signage	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Greenspace, CABE London Parks Benchmarking Group UK BAP Network PAN Voluntary Organisations and Friends of Groundwork UK ENCAMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THEME 6: MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

Theme 6: Mitigating climate change impacts									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Satisfy a wide range of community and ecosystem needs	Parks will continue its accreditation to the ISO 14001 standard and seek to mitigate climate change through a range of associated Management Programmes.	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy ISO Accreditation Group Corporate Environmental Policy Environmental Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Parks will adopt the PAS 2050 method for measuring embodied GHG emissions of goods and services	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy Corporate Environmental Policy Environmental Health London Parks Benchmarking Group	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	In assessing tree densities and designing the Borough's future tree planting programmes (including the selection of tree types), take into consideration the importance of <i>trees in parks in providing areas of shade</i> for both people and habitats	Parks	Wildlife Trust BAP UK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partners	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Satisfy a wide range of community and ecosystem needs cont...</i>	Take into account other <i>climate change and sustainability considerations</i> (e.g. water conservation and floodplains, maintenance requirements) in selection of shrubs and plants for planting in parks and open spaces	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy BAP UK E & C Environmental Policy Pesticides Action Network (PAN)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Consider <i>water conservation and water management</i> implications in all areas of our work	Parks	Environmental Projects and Policy BAP UK E & C Environmental Policy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The PAS method for measuring embodied GHG emissions of goods and services will enable organisations, e.g. business, to effectively measure the climate change related impacts of their goods and services with a view to using this information to improve the climate change related performance of these.

THEME 7: PROMOTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES AND THEIR VALUE

Theme 7 Promoting Parks and Open Spaces and their value									
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partner	Period for Action					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Raise community awareness	Develop more <i>information material on the Council's website</i> about facilities, programmes and habitats in our parks and open spaces and ensure joint – approach to publicity where appropriate	Parks	Sports Arts and Festivals Communication and Consultation IT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Upgrade <i>park signage</i> to improve clarity and to make information more accessible to everyone in our diverse community	Parks	Groundwork UK Wildlife Trust Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Provide more and improved <i>interpretation materials on the website and in our parks</i> to help people understand points of interest relating to the history and heritage of the spaces and features within them, cultural links, wildlife, plant and tree species etc	Parks	Communications and Consultation IT Local History Society Friends of Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

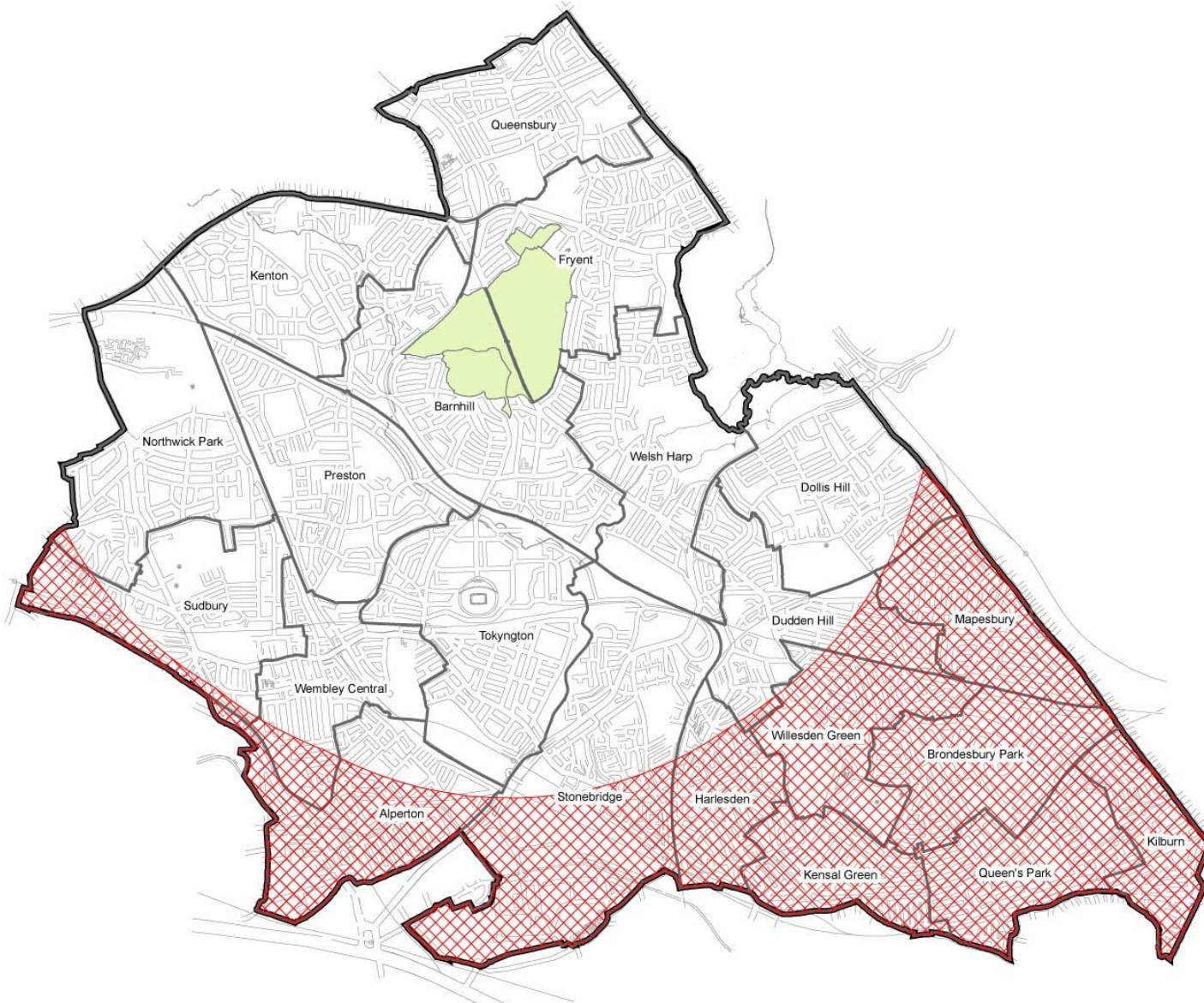
Priority/Objective	Action	Lead	Partner	Period for Action ✓					
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<i>Raise community awareness cont...</i>	Retain the <i>quality assurance accreditations</i> (ISO 900/200, ISO14001) and the Customer Service Excellence Award	Parks	Friends of Groups Volunteers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Encourage and support local groups participating in <i>Britain / London in Bloom</i>	Parks	London in Bloom RHS ENCAMS Communications and Consultation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Increase the number of sites in the borough with Green Flag / Green Pennant awards through strategically focused improvements on the identified sites	Parks	ENCAMS London Parks Benchmarking Groups Volunteers, Community and Benchmarking Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Appendix 1 Metropolitan Parks

Legend

- Metropolitan Park over 60ha
- Over 3.2km from a Metropolitan Park
- Ward boundaries
- Borough Boundary



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London Borough of Brent, 100025260, 2009.

Z:\GIS Users\Peter Lathmore\Playbuilders
March 23, 2009

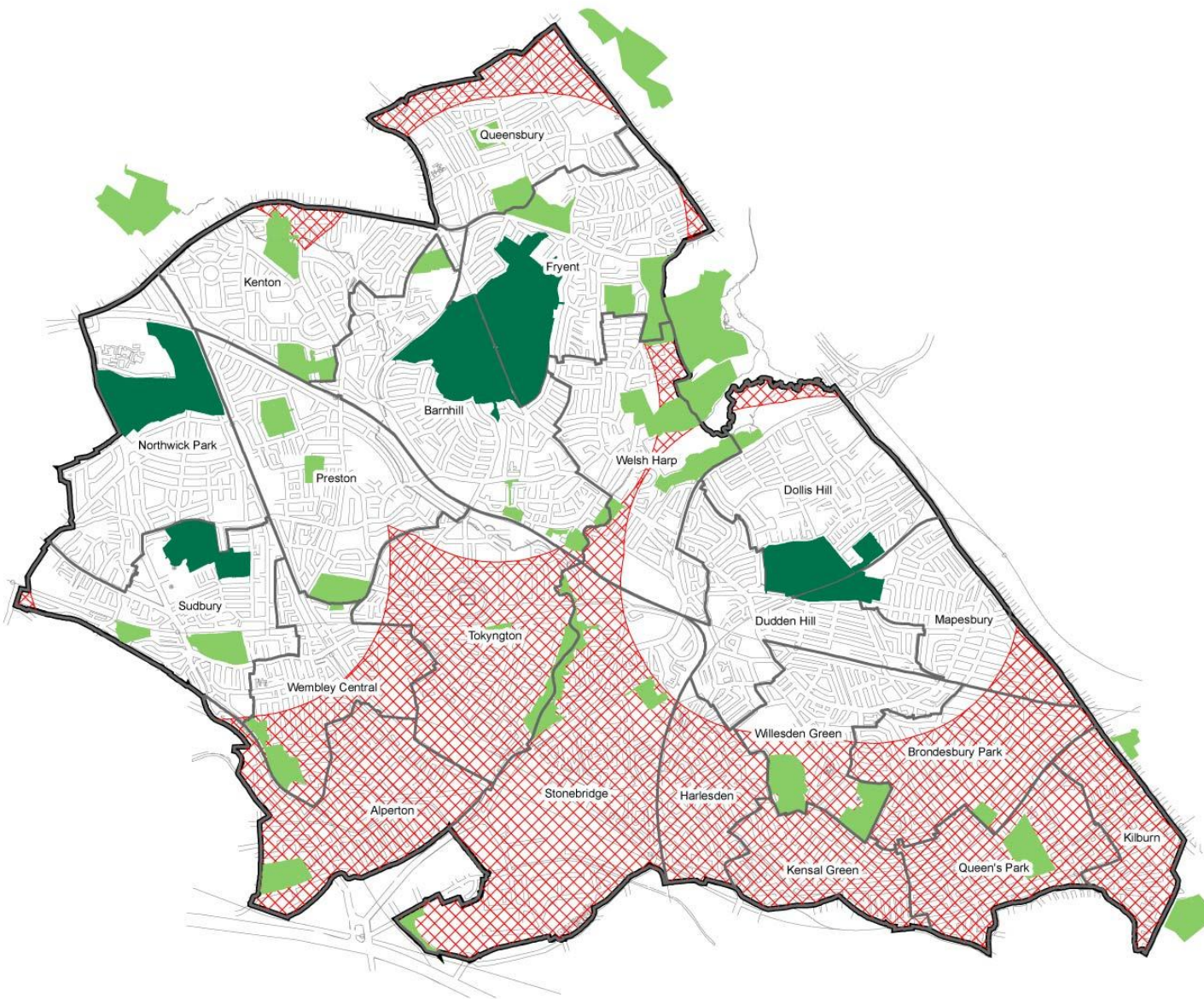
Produced by the GIS Development Team



Appendix 2 District Parks

Legend

-  District Public Open Space over 20ha
-  Local Public Open Space over 2ha
-  District Open Space Deficiency
-  Ward boundaries
-  Borough Boundary



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London Borough of Brent, 100025260, 2008.

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March 23, 2009

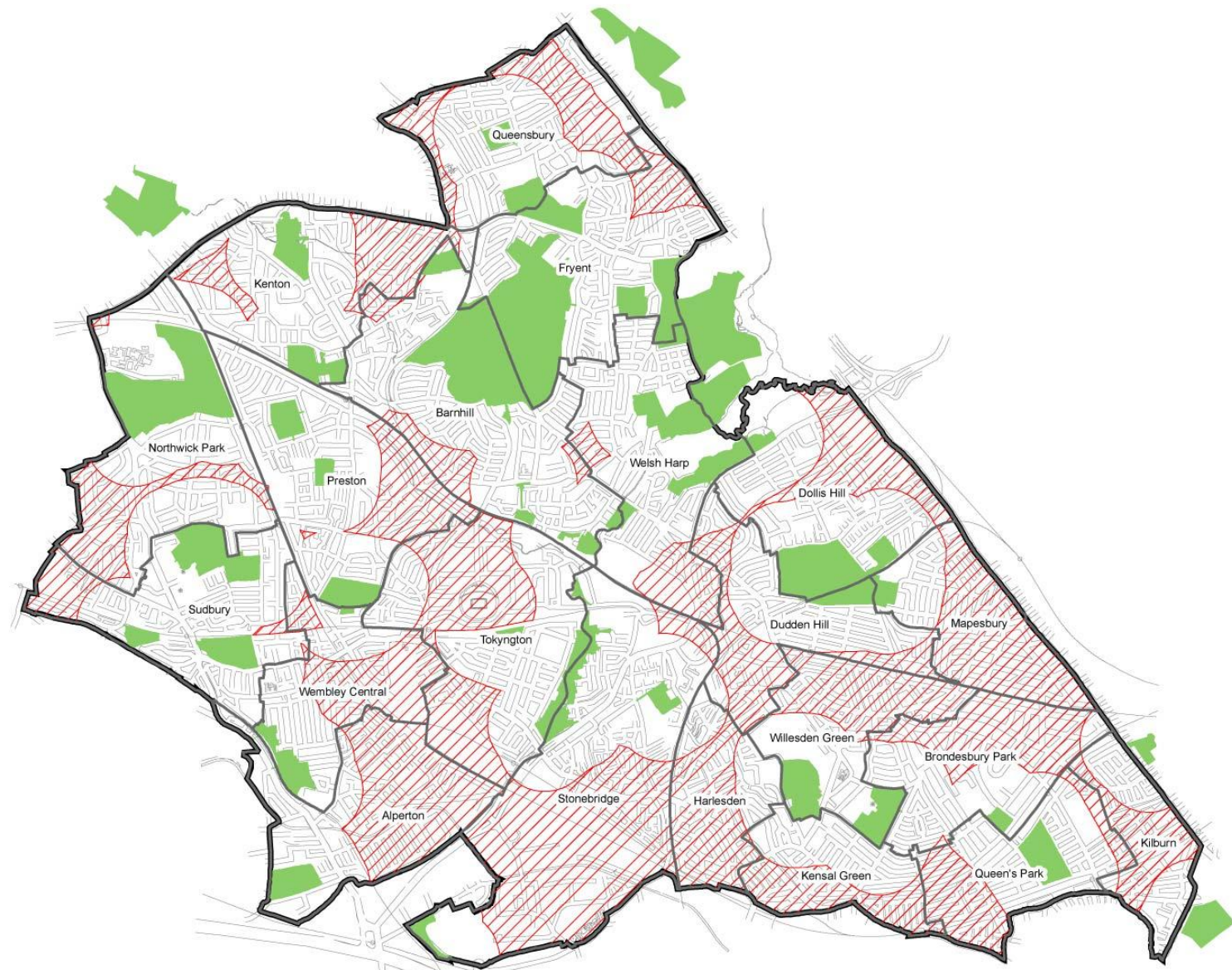
Produced by the GIS Development Team



Appendix 3 Local Parks & Local Open Space Deficiency

Legend

-  Public Open Space over 2ha
-  Open Space Deficiency
-  Borough Boundary
-  Ward boundaries



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London Borough of Brent, 100025260, 2008.

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March 23, 2009

Produced by the GIS Development Team



Appendix 4 Small Pocket Parks

Legend

- 400m catchment area
- Small Open Space & Pocket Parks
- Local Public Open Space over 2ha
- Local Open Space Deficiency
- Ward boundaries
- Borough Boundary

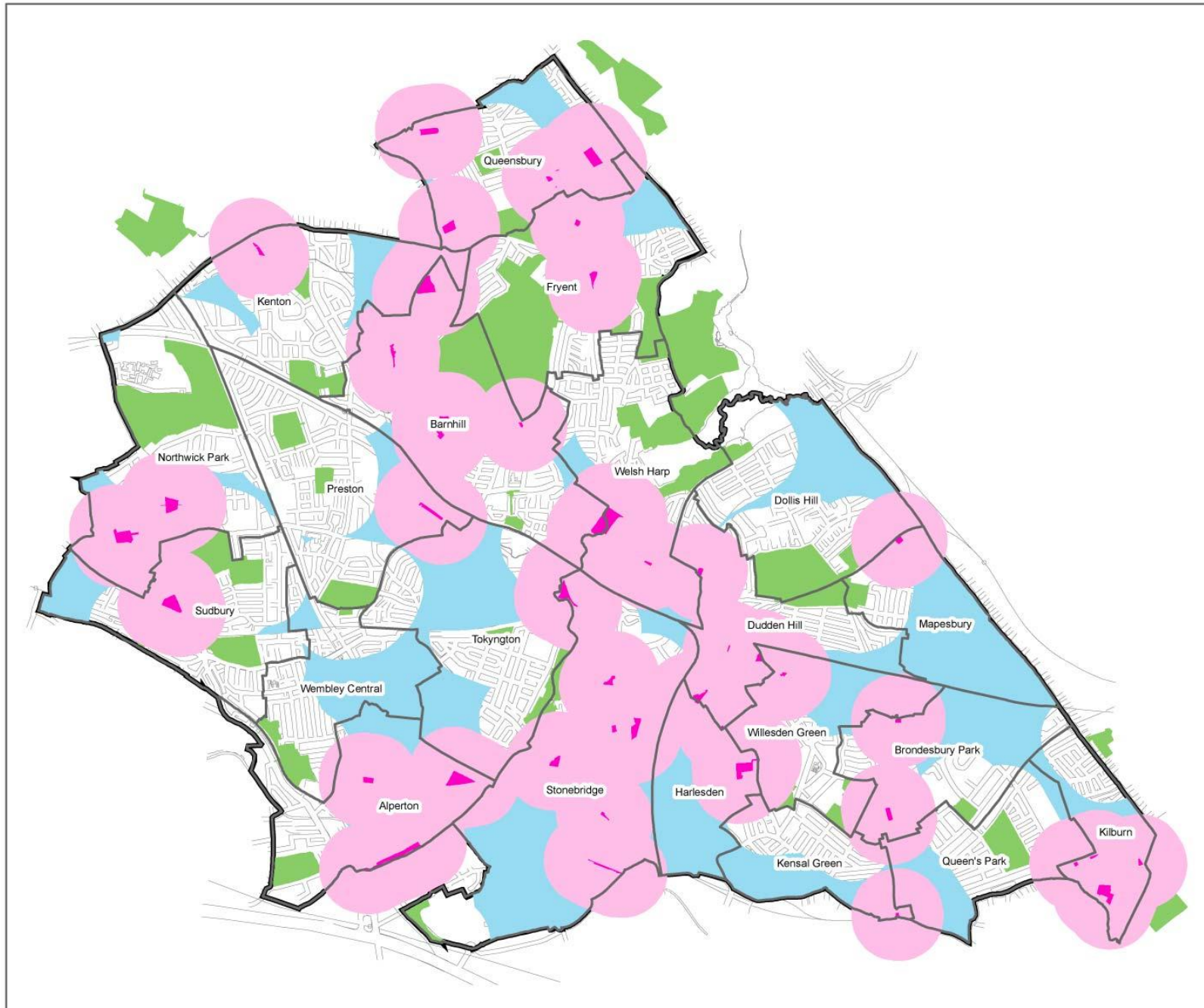


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London Borough of Brent, 10002500, 2009.

Z:GIS Users/Peter Lattimore/Playbuilders
March 23, 2009

Produced by the GIS Development Team



Appendix 5



**Brent Allotments
2009**



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London Borough of Brent, 10002590, 2008

Source: ZGIS Users
Date: January 2008

Appendix 6 – Playbuilder Needs Assessment and Findings

The identification of sites to be developed has been based on a robust needs analysis underpinned by a set of strategic principles.

The needs analysis was developed taking into account information from the Planning Department's survey of play sites and the Parks Service's information about existing sites, including the audit of the condition of sites and proposed developments which will increase and improve play provision.

The needs analysis has been further informed by GIS mapping of the local area including:

- Access – lacking play space provision v child density
- Play accessibility 400m routes
- Population data - population aged 8-13 & relative deprivation
- Play spaces and traffic calming measures
- Play spaces and location of public toilets
- Play spaces and location of schools
- Play spaces and open space deficiency
- Play spaces and working family tax credit
- Play spaces and lone parents
- Play spaces and location of children aged 8-13 with disabilities by ward
- ABS hotspots.

The principles underpinning the selection of the proposed sites were that site development should prioritise sites in areas where there is:

- *High population density of children aged 8-13*
- *High density housing/multiple occupancy*
- *Open space deficiency*
- Proximity to accessible toilet facilities
- Accessibility for children with disabilities
- Proximity to ASB hotspots
- Proximity to schools, Children's Centres, shopping areas & other venues where children & parents go

Further, the selection of sites should take account of:

- State of repair
- Sites with potential to add value through links to other funding streams
- The potential to add value to existing planned works already scheduled to meet identified needs.
- Considerations of practicalities for the 1st year spend given time constraints and scheduling year 2 & 3 spend.

The list of recommended sites was agreed as a result of mapping the proposed sites against these criteria according to needs criteria, locality criteria and site criteria

Development of play areas

In **2008-2009** we proposed to develop and improve 9 existing play spaces with a specific focus on improving accessibility. These sites are located at Carlton Vale, Franklyn Road Open Space, Grove Park, Woodcock Park, Neasden Recreation ground, One Tree Hill, Springfield Open Space, Streatley Road Open Space and Eton Grove (Our rationale for developing 9 sites in the first year was that these are the sites where we anticipate that the work would be achievable in the timescale. This also allows us to prepare for the community/third sector site proposals and the major redevelopment of 2 sites in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Over the following two years of capital grant 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 we proposed to develop 11 sites, plus a minimum of 2 community projects. Over the 3 years this will give a total of 20 sites, plus a minimum of 2 further community projects.

Based on the needs analysis the following sites have been identified:

2009-2010

Villiers Road, Mount Pleasant, Brent River Park and Kimberley Road. Villiers Road will be a major re-development project. Kimberley Rd is a Brent Housing Partnership site. We also allocated a total of £50k between two community groups, Mapesbury Dell Conservation Trust (£10k) and Gladstone Park Consultative Committee(GPCC)- (£40k)

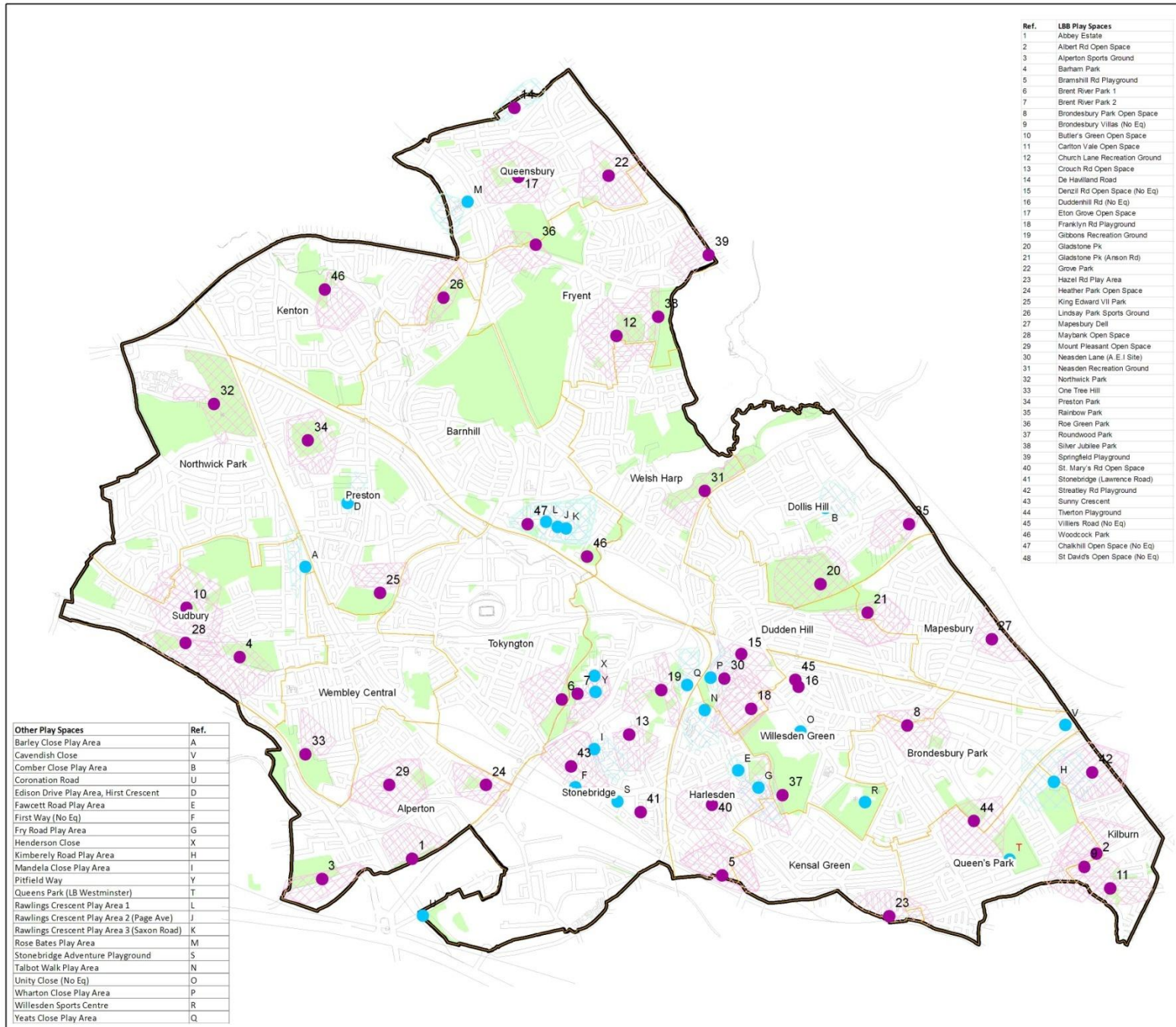
2010 - 2011

Bramshill Road, Crouch Road Open Space, Barham Park, Roundwood Park, Sunny Crescent, Hazel Road Open Space and King Edwards Park.

Bramshill Road will be a major re-development project. We also propose to allocate a further £50k in this year to support one or more community proposals.

Although Bramshill Road and Villiers Road are existing play spaces, we have identified both sites as being in need of and having the potential for major re-development which will facilitate the creative and innovative use of the sites. Both sites are in areas of high population density of 8-13 year olds and open space deficiency and so will make a real impact on children's opportunities for play.

Brent Council Parks Service is an accredited with ISO 9000/2000, ISO 14001 and will undertake a complete risk assessment on all new/improved play equipment in line with corporate standards. All new play equipment will be subject to a comprehensive, maintenance and repair programme.



Appendix 6
Brent Play Spaces
2009

- Borough Boundary
- Public Open Space
- Brent Play spaces
- Other Play spaces
- 400m catchment
- 400m catchment
- Ward Boundaries

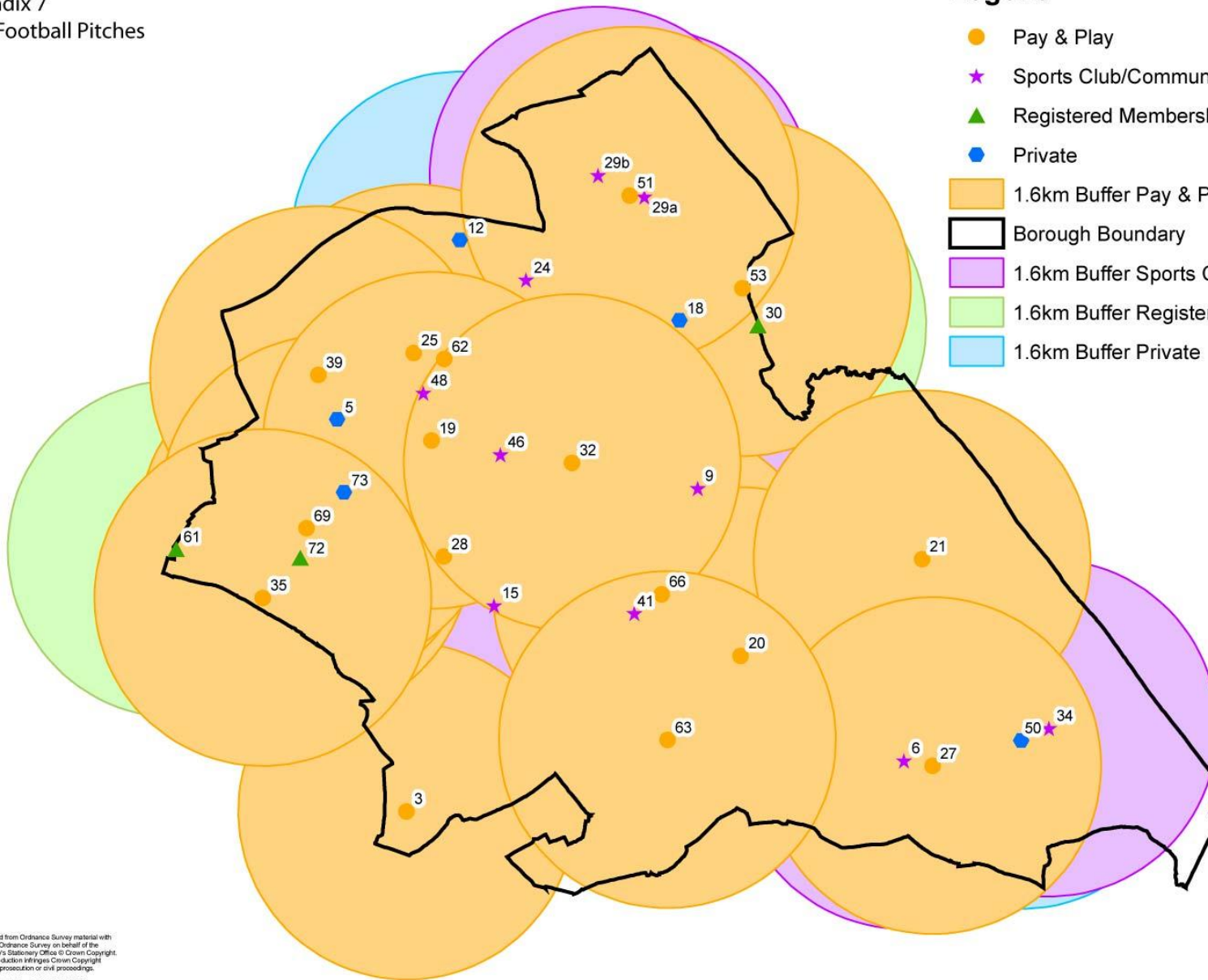


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London Borough of Brent, 100025260 2007
Source: ZGIS_Projects/Playbuilder
Date: June 2008
Produced by the GIS Development Team

Appendix 7
Brent Football Pitches

Legend

- Pay & Play
- ★ Sports Club/Community Association
- ▲ Registered Membership Use
- Private
- 1.6km Buffer Pay & Play
- ▭ Borough Boundary
- 1.6km Buffer Sports Club/Community Association
- 1.6km Buffer Registered Membership Use
- 1.6km Buffer Private



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London Borough of Brent, 100025280, 2008.
Z:\GIS Users\Joanna Rowland\Sports & Leisure - Steven Hill\football pitches\football pitches.mxd
September 16, 2009
Produced by the GIS Development Team