

Policy LHW1: Public Open Space

New housing development where there is a net increase in population will be permitted subject to:

a) the provision of open space to a standard of at least 3 hectares per 1,000 population comprising:

- outdoor sports facilities 1.0 hectares**
- parks and public gardens 0.4 hectares**
- informal recreation areas 0.8 hectares**
- provision for children and teenagers 0.6 hectares**
- allotments 0.2 hectares**

as net areas of usable open space, excluding access, parking, ancillary buildings, landscaping and safety margins;

b) the laying out and equipping of the open space to a high standard at an early stage in the development; and

c) arrangements for the long term maintenance for the open space, equipment or facility having been made.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing open spaces or other recreation facilities will only be permitted if:

d) the space or facility is not needed to meet the full range of leisure and recreational needs of the local community;

e) the proposed development is for an alternative open space, sport or recreation facility for which there is such a need as to outweigh the loss; or

f) any space or facility to be lost would be replaced by an equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality and be in a suitable location.

8.3 New residential development should not cause or exacerbate deficiencies in the provision or quality of recreational open space. The Council will seek open space provision, or contributions towards open space provision, from all new housing developments, unless they are of a type of housing unlikely to generate demand for such facilities.

8.4 The recreational needs of any new development should be met on site. The exceptions to this approach will be where the site or development is not of sufficient size in itself to make the appropriate provision feasible (e.g. for outdoor sports facilities), or where it is preferable to seek contributions towards a specific facility in the locality.

8.5 Open spaces should be provided as an integral part of the design and layout of the development. Opportunities to provide a link to existing residential areas will be encouraged. The Council will expect developers to provide for the laying out and equipping of open space to a high standard. This should be done at an early stage to enable occupants to have access to recreation opportunities locally. The future management of open space provided on site will need to be agreed with the Council to ensure that residents can enjoy the benefits of them in the long term.

8.6 Where some or all of the required open space is not provided on site the open space should be provided off-site. This can be achieved either by the supply of an alternative site or a financial contribution. This equivalent area should be conveniently located so that the population of the new housing can use it. Contributions will be used to provide new or enhance existing facilities to increase their capacity close to the new housing.

8.7 The conversion in Table 10 will be used to apply the open space standard to a proposed number of dwellings. If the type of dwellings is not known, a conversion of 2.4 persons per dwelling will be applied to give a provisional calculation of the open space requirement. This calculation will be revised once house types are known. A developer should therefore allow (in the layout) for the size of open space to be altered depending on the mix of house types which is finally proposed. The definitions of the types of public open space are contained in Annex F.

Table 10: Applying the Open Space Standard

Number of Bedrooms per Dwelling	1	2	3	4 or more
Number of Persons per Dwelling	1	2	2.5	3

8.8 The loss of existing open space, recreation or sports facilities may be permitted if there is a sufficient provision of spaces and facilities in the local area to meet the full range of types of open space or the proposal is for a type of open space with a demonstrated need. Where a need does exist, the Council will only permit the loss of spaces or facilities where an alternative can be provided that is accessible to and meets the needs of users. In these circumstances, the replacement shall be equivalent or better in terms of the size, quality and attractiveness of the provision and, for public open space, shall be provided in line with the definitions contained within Annex F.