

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

Addendum to Open Space Strategy

June 2026



Open Space Strategy Addendum

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Open spaces are a key aspect of high-quality urban environments and fundamental to the character of an area. Regardless of ownership, attractive, accessible and well-designed open space can support and enhance the appearance of an area, creating more desirable places to live and underpin good growth. Open spaces and recreation facilities provide people with a place to relax and socialise as well as encourage healthier lifestyles by providing opportunities for sport, informal play and daily encounters with the natural environment.
- 1.2 This addendum to the Open Space Strategy (2018)¹ has been developed to integrate new guidance, standards and updated national planning context into the Council's vision and local policies for open space provision within Havant Borough. Since the original strategy was published in 2018, which comprehensively provided an assessment of the different open spaces' typology in support of the Local Plan up to 2036, significant updates have emerged both in policy and practice.
- 1.3 This addendum needs to be read in conjunction with the original Open Space Strategy. Considering new site allocations and open space standards, both in provision and protection, as well as the demographic figures, a number of the original tables and text need to be amended to reflect these changes and updates.

Background

- 1.4 In 2018, Havant Borough Council conducted a detailed qualitative and quantitative assessment of the existing open space provision and needs, which includes public parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, natural and semi-natural areas, play space, allotments, community gardens and cemeteries.
- 1.5 The study was anchored on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) supported with other national guidance documents including the Fields in Trust's *Review of Standards for Open Space* (2015) and Thorpe Report (1969) to determine the quality, quantity and accessibility standards, while excluding very small spaces of limited amenity value. The

¹ Havant Borough Council Open Space Strategy (November 2018). Available at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/media/8440/download?inline> and <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies>

methodology built on previous assessments conducted in 2006 and 2012 which provided a robust baseline reflecting identified community needs followed by recommendations.

Purpose of this paper

1.6 This document is intended to update and refine the original 2018 Open Space Strategy and inform the implementation of the emerging Local Plan Building a Better Future Plan, as well the preparation of other development plans and supplementary documents, through the key points set below:

- **Incorporating updated Guidance and Standards:** Integrating recent updates in national guidance, including revisions to the NPPF and updated technical advice from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG).
- **Reflecting Emerging Community Needs:** Addressing evolving demographic, environmental, and social priorities to ensure open spaces remain fit for purpose.
- **Enhancing Operational and Design Practices:** Updating benchmarks for quality, quantity, and accessibility of open spaces.

1.7 This document aims to support the ongoing delivery of open space provision that meets statutory national requirements but also sets a progressive standard for future planning and design schemes within Havant Borough.

Overview of previous findings

1.8 Considering the previous and current data around open space, between 2015 and 2025, and crossing between Fields in Trust (FIT) guidelines, Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework recommendation and other national policy and guidance documents, the main points to review are:

- Open spaces quality
- Open spaces typology and quantity
- Proximity and Accessibility

1.9 The table below summarises the figures relating to the 2018 Open Space Strategy's findings and standards-based recommendations for review and update in this document:

Open Space Typology	Total Number of Sites	Total Amount/Size (ha)	Population 2017	Provision (ha/1000 people)	FIT Standards	Proximity/ Catchment Areas
Public Parks and Gardens	9	433.3	123,600	3.51	0.8	710 m
Natural and semi-natural Greenspace	60	501.68	123,600	4.06	1.8	720 m
Amenity Greenspace	63	119.59	123,600	0.97	0.6	480 m
Children and Young People	51	5.09	123,600	0.04	0.25	100 m (LAPs) 400 m (LEAPs) 1000 m (NEAPs)
Allotments and Community Gardens	12	12.47	123,600	0.10	0.2	<i>Not Specified</i>

Table 1.1: Quantity, proximity and minimum standards for Open Spaces Provision by Fields in Trust (FIT) in 2018².

² Havant Borough Council Open Space Strategy (November 2018). Available at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/media/8440/download?inline> and <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies>

2. Policy Context Review

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³ generally sets out the planning policies and explains how these are expected to be incorporated and implemented within the planning system. In chapter 8 (promoting healthy and safe communities), paragraph **98** stresses the requirement of planning policies to “*guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs*”. The NPPF explicitly names “*local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship*” as examples of important community assets. This reinforces the requirement to protect and enhance existing open public spaces alongside the provision for new facilities.
- 2.2 Paragraph **103** and **104** of the NPPF highlight that Local Planning Authorities (LPA) must: **Assess** the need for open space and recreational facilities; **Determine** the quality, quantity, accessibility and opportunities for new provision; **Base planning decisions** on this assessment to ensure adequate protection and provision of suitable open space.

***103.** Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.*

***104.** Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:*

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*

³ National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024). Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

- b) *the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- c) *the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*

- 2.3 Paragraph **105** highlights the requirement to enhance public rights of way and access as well as provision of better facilities. Paragraphs **106** and **107** provide guidance on the Local Green Space designation.
- 2.4 In relation to good quality designs and liveable spaces in chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places), paragraph **131** highlights that “*the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve*”; Although not mentioning “open space” explicitly, it establishes that well-designed public realms are essential for successful places.
- 2.5 Open green spaces are also addressed in relation to biodiversity and natural environment. Paragraph **187(a)** (chapter 15) advises that “*planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils*”. This includes acknowledging the value of publicly accessible green infrastructure, such as parks and natural open spaces, in biodiversity terms.
- 2.6 Paragraph **193(a)** explains that “*when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused*”. As urban open spaces (including amenity green spaces, multi-functional corridors, and community parks) often provide biodiversity benefits, their design and management must consider their ecological value.
- 2.7 The NPPF also contains other paragraphs which implicitly refer to open spaces as a requirement in planning and their role in responding to the Social Objective in Achieving sustainable development.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 2.8 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides a series of notes about open spaces, green infrastructure and healthy communities, explains its importance in building sustainable environments and advises on how it should be integrated with other uses and strategies.

2.9 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) topic “*Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space*” reiterates and expands on the NPPF **Paragraphs 103–104** and other associated paragraphs. In particular, paragraphs **001, 002** and **003** of the PPG:

- Define “open space” which includes all open space of public value (determined by local communities or the local planning authority), and which can take many forms, such as formal sports pitches, play areas, parks, informal green space, amenity green space, allotments, community gardens, and country parks.
- State clearly that “*open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space*” and refers to **Paragraphs 7–9** (achieving sustainable development) and **188** (green infrastructure) in the NPPF.
- Require local planning authorities to *assess the need for open space and opportunities for new provision in their areas* and to have regard to the “duty to cooperate” where open space serves a wider area.
- Highlight the need to consult *Sport England* in cases where the “*development might lead to: loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility; proposals which lead to the loss of use for sport of a major body of water; creation of a major sports facility; creation of a site for one or more playing pitches; development which creates opportunities for sport; artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility and a residential development of 300 dwellings or more*”
- Additionally, paragraphs **005–009** and **013–016** contains guidance on Local Green Space designation (being a specific type of open space), explaining how local communities and local planning authorities can designate areas for special protection under the NPPF.

2.10 The NPPG also provides notes regarding associated topics, such as “health and well-being” and “green infrastructure”, which are usually discussed and assessed as part of open space studies. In particular:

- PPG on *Health safe communities* Paragraphs **001** and **003**, which contains guidance around the design, use and role of open space as “healthy places” which:
 - Consider the design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure, to be major determinants of health and wellbeing; therefore, efficient

planning should both create environments that support healthy lifestyles, and secure the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care to meet changing needs of the population.

- Align with the definition of a *healthy place* in supporting and promoting healthy behaviours and environments, reducing health inequalities across all ages, providing opportunities to improve physical and mental health and fosters community engagement; It is a place which is inclusive and promotes social interaction and adaptable for children and young people to grow and develop, and older people and those with sensory or mobility impairments.
- PPG on *Natural Environment* which provides a series of notes about Green Infrastructure: Paragraphs **004** states that green infrastructure can include a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits, including “*parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees* as well as ‘blue infrastructure’ *such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies*”. Paragraphs **006** highlights key planning goals that can be achieved through green infrastructure which includes:
 - building a strong, competitive economy through attractive, high-quality environments
 - achieving well-designed places via features like green roofs, street trees and recreational open spaces that reinforce local character
 - promoting healthy and safe communities by offering opportunities for recreation, exercise and social interaction, reducing health inequalities, air pollution and noise
 - mitigating climate change, flood risk and coastal change through carbon storage, urban cooling, shading and multifunctional sustainable drainage
 - conserving and enhancing the natural environment by reinforcing ecological connectivity, supporting biodiversity net gain and enabling community conservation work

National Design Guidance

- **National Design Guide (NDG)**

- 2.11 The National Design Guide (NDG 2021)⁴ is considered in this context as it is part of the government collection of planning practice guidance. It sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places as well as good design practices. In particular the characteristics of ‘Nature’ and ‘Public Spaces’ are highlighted as crucial contributors to the quality of life and space and relate directly to green open spaces.
- 2.12 In the ‘Nature’ section, the NDG highlights that *‘nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people’s quality of life’* therefore planning strategies, policies and design proposals should promote a network of multifunctional green open spaces that respond to the local context, biodiversity, water management, climate resilience and social needs. It recommends that open spaces are varied in type, landscapes, scale and activities; including play, recreation, food production and relaxation.
- 2.13 Similarly, the NDG emphasises in ‘Public spaces’ section that spaces between buildings including streets, squares, parks, greens and pocket parks need to be strategically located, safe, attractive and able to accommodate a wide range of activities. Therefore, it suggests a hierarchy that starts with wider strategic areas and ends with smaller local spaces, all being connected to the movement network so that people can easily stroll through or reach them.
- 2.14 At the same time, incorporating natural elements like trees, plants, and water features can significantly contribute to improving the microclimate, providing shade, and boosting biodiversity and reinforcing urban space quality. Designing for all users, including vulnerable groups, making sure that layouts are safe and adaptable and placing public spaces where they are destinations or waypoints in daily journeys would reinforce their frequent use and social value.

- **Building for a Healthy Life (BHL)**

- 2.15 BHL⁵ (2020) is a design-toolkit that combines the original “Building for Life 12” principles with a strong health and well-being focus endorsed by Homes England and NHS England. The document uses a ‘traffic light’ system to illustrate examples of good practice (green light) and poor practice (red light) and is intended to be used as a guidance document in new planning applications and retrospectively to

⁴ National Design Guide (2021).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf

⁵ Building for a Healthy Life (BHL 2020).

https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf

review completed schemes. It contains 12 considerations, of which at least five directly address open public spaces:

- **Making the most of what's there;** *in regard to provision of open spaces.* This consideration highlights the need to understand the surrounding natural context and plan at early stage for the incorporation of close and multifunctional open green spaces within new developments as well as enhance and protect existing ones.
- **Natural connections;** *In relation to accessibility to existing and new open spaces.* It ensures that open spaces and green/blue infrastructure form coherent and accessible network which connects to homes, neighbourhoods and larger natural and semi-natural areas. This consideration highlights how open space are crucial to residents' well-being (i.e. access to natura and active travel) and biodiversity (i.e. habitat connectivity).
- **Facilities and services;** *In relation to the social and functional aspects of open spaces.* The idea is to ensure appropriate management of the open public spaces and allow multifunctionality (i.e. play areas, social areas, outdoor sports) and integration of these spaces with nearby facilities (i.e. seating, shelters, play areas, water fountains).
- **Healthy Streets;** *In regard to the quality, quantity and accessibility of open spaces.* It emphasises that parks, squares and natural features should be linked to neighbourhoods through a connected and legible network, formed by streets and paths, that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport. Also, it addresses the point that these open public spaces should be located at proximity of the homes with ease of accessibility.
- **Green and Blue Infrastructure;** *In relation to the open space quality and provision requirement.* This consideration requires developments to “incorporate green and blue infrastructure, providing multifunctional open spaces (i.e. parks, play areas and urban wetlands) that promote biodiversity, manage flood risk and support physical and mental health. It encourages planners and designers to consider parks, allotments, street trees, SuDS features and green corridors as an integrated network.

Fields in Trust (FIT)

2.16 New Fields in Trust (FIT) reports have been published in 2024 to align with the growing need for developments as well as the emerging climate and well-being challenges.

- 2.17 The most recent guidance documents reflect the need for a holistic approach to creating inspiring, inclusive and multi-functional spaces and for local decision makers and industry to work together to deliver them. The 2024 report supersedes the previous edition ‘Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard’ last published in 2015.
- 2.18 In addition to the new categorisation of open spaces, the report emphasises the adoption of integrated design supporting sustainability, climate resilience and diverse community needs with flexible and context-sensitive approach balancing quantitative measures with quality and multifunctionality. Planning for open spaces should aim to serve multiple functions, such as social, cultural, recreational and ecological.

Natural England: National Green Infrastructure Framework (GI)

- 2.19 Natural England’s National Green Infrastructure Framework⁶ (NEGIF 2023) was launched in January 2023 and establishes national standards recommendations for Green Infrastructure in England. It is a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural which is *‘capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity’*.
- 2.20 The framework acts in support of the government commitment to its 25 Year Environment Plan and comprises: *15 principles of Green Infrastructure (GI); GI Mapping Database and Analysis; GI process journeys; GI Planning and design guide* (complementing the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code) and the *headline GI standards* (including GI Strategy Standards, Accessible Greenspace Standards, Urban Nature Recovery Standard, Urban Greening Factor Standard and Urban Tree Canopy Cover Standard).
- 2.21 Green Infrastructure takes many forms and can be delivered at different scales with multiple functions. The concept is closely embedded within the NPPF, thus requiring local planning authorities to set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans which aims for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.

⁶ Natural England (2023) Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

2.22 For the purpose of this addendum and in reviewing the open space standards in the Borough, reference is mainly related to the Accessible Greenspace Standards document which clarifies the quantity, quality and location of the green infrastructure required to meet local needs. More specifically, this guidance focuses on accessible natural green spaces for public access, which provide contact with nature and contributing to nature recovery networks.

Summary of previous and current guidance between 2015 and 2024:

2.23 The table (2.1) below summarises the key points addressed in the previous and current guidance as well as the main changes in terms of quality, typology, quantity, accessibility and proximity:

Aspect	2015-2018 Guidance	2024 Guidance	Key Changes
Quality	General benchmarks for maintenance, biodiversity, and use.	Strengthened focus on climate resilience, biodiversity net gain, and community value.	Greater emphasis on environmental and social sustainability
Quantity	Standardised recommended minimum provision (e.g., 2ha per 1,000 population).	Updated standards based on new research and allowing for density-based adjustments.	More nuanced, accounting for urban vs. rural needs
Typology	Defined specific categories (e.g., parks, play areas, natural/semi-natural spaces).	Some typologies retained, others merged or refined (see section 3 below).	More emphasis on multifunctional spaces with consolidation of some categories
Accessibility	Suggested walking distances (e.g., 10 min walk to local green space).	Retained proximity principles but include additional equity considerations (deprived areas prioritised).	More focus on inclusive access (disability, age-friendly design and type)
Proximity to Homes	Standards based on straight-line distance.	Recommends incorporation of network analysis (walking routes, barriers).	More practical, considering actual pedestrian access

Table 2.1: Key aspects comparison of Fields in Trust and Natural England guidance between 2015 and 2024

3. Update on the Benchmarks Standards

3.1 Reviewing the pre-2024 and current benchmark standards for open space and crossing between Fields in Trust guidelines and Natural England Green infrastructure recommendation, the main points to review in this section are:

- Open spaces quality
- Open spaces typology and quantity
- Proximity and Accessibility

Quality: Fields in Trust and Natural England's Standards

3.2 Natural England's Accessible Greenspace Standards (ANGSt)⁷ recommends that the quality of parks and green spaces should be assessed using the Green Flag Award[®] criteria as a standard as it can provide a robust framework for site management as well as planning for and delivering management enhancements in the future, as needed.

3.3 The criteria include the following which are set out in The Green Flag Award[®] Guidance Manual⁸: *A Welcoming Place; Healthy, Safe and Secure; Well Maintained and Clean; Environmental Management; Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage; Community Involvement; Marketing and Communication; and Management*. These assessment criteria can be applied across all greenspace types, including city and neighbourhood parks, country parks, nature reserves, woodlands, campuses, cemeteries and burial grounds, and botanic or historic gardens.

3.4 Reviewing the quality assessment conducted in the original Open Space Strategy (2018), in line with the Fields in Trust (FIT) Standards, it is noted that the conclusions remain valid, up to date and following the recommended national guidance. The qualitative audit is detailed in Appendix 1 of the same document⁹. The graph below summarises the open green space quality assessment:

⁷ Natural England. Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England. (January 2023). Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf>

⁸ Green Flag Award. Available at <https://www.greenflagaward.org/how-it-works/guidance-documents/>

⁹ <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies>

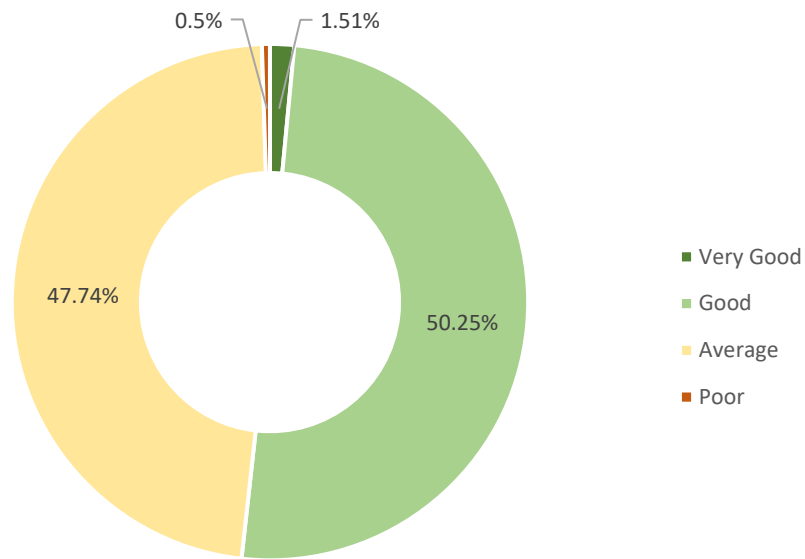


Figure 3.1: Qualitative Assessment Score Summary for Open Spaces in Havant Borough

Typology and Quantity: Fields in Trust Standards (FIT)

3.5 Although the overall typology of open spaces remains similar, the new guidance report “*Fields in Trust Standards: Creating great spaces for all*”¹⁰ expands this categorisation retaining the traditional designations like amenity greenspace, parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural open space, and sports and recreation facilities while explicitly incorporating allotments, cemeteries and provision for children and young adults in a broader typology.

3.6 This approach aims to provide adequate and sufficient open space without compromising the need for built development. The new main categories to inform the relevant policies are:

- **Open Space;** which includes parks and gardens, amenity green space, and natural and semi-natural urban green spaces.
- **Outdoor Sports;** comprising of outdoor sport pitches, courts and greens, tracks and trails
- **Play Space;** which refers to equipped designated play areas and space for informal play. The equipped designated play areas include Local Areas for Play (LAPs), Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).

¹⁰ Fields in Trust Standards: Creating great spaces for All. Available at: <https://fieldsintrust.org/content/images/FIT-Standards-2024-Accessible-version.pdf>

3.7 It is important to note that there are several forms of public open space that can be defined within a wider network of green infrastructure. The cross over with types, uses and some spaces being semi-private or private makes it challenging to define a specific and rigid typology of the open space.

3.8 In contrast with the previous guidance, the new FIT report groups the open space types in flexible and multi-functional categories. The table (3.1) below indicates the new typology and quantity guidelines based on the FIT report benchmark standards and the green space calculator¹¹:

	Open Space			Outdoor Sports and Recreation		Play Space	
Typology	Parks and Gardens	Amenity Green Space	Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Space	Outdoor Sport Pitches	Court, Green, Tracks and Trails	Equipped designated Play Areas	Informal Play
Quantity (Ha per 1000 people)	0.8	0.6	1.8	1.2	0.4	0.25	0.3
	3.2			1.6		0.55	

Table 3.1: Open Space typology and quantity standards based on Fields in Trust guidance (2024)

3.9 While some types are retained from the previous FIT guidance (2015), with consideration of changing community requirements as well as other matters such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity needs and health and well-being, there was a need to review the open spaces typology combining existing ones and creating new ones. The sub-categories/ types as grouped in the FIT guidance (2024) are defined as follows:

- **Parks and Gardens:** including urban parks and squares, county parks, regional parks, forest parks and formal gardens
- **Amenity Green Space:** referring to informal recreation spaces, communal green spaces in and around housing, village greens, urban commons, allotments and growing spaces and other incidental spaces which may include areas of hard spaces as well as green spaces

¹¹ Available at: <https://fieldsintrust.org/insights/standards/standards-calculator>

- **Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Spaces:** including woodland, scrub, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water and open access land
- **Outdoor Sport Pitches:** football, rugby, hockey and cricket pitches
- **Court and Green, Tracks and Trails:** including sports like tennis, netball, basketball, padel ball, volleyball and bowling greens. While the tracks and trails include athletic tracks, graded mountain biking trails, canoeing, open water swimming and outdoor gym trails
- **Equipped Designated Play Areas:** which includes traditional play types such as Local Area of Play (LAPs), Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAPs), Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs). The definitions are based on the age of children they are designed for, location, size and type of experience.
- **Informal Play:** for example it can include pump tracks, multi-use games areas and playful features integrated and distributed within a development

The graph below summarises the retained, combined and newly proposed open green space typologies:

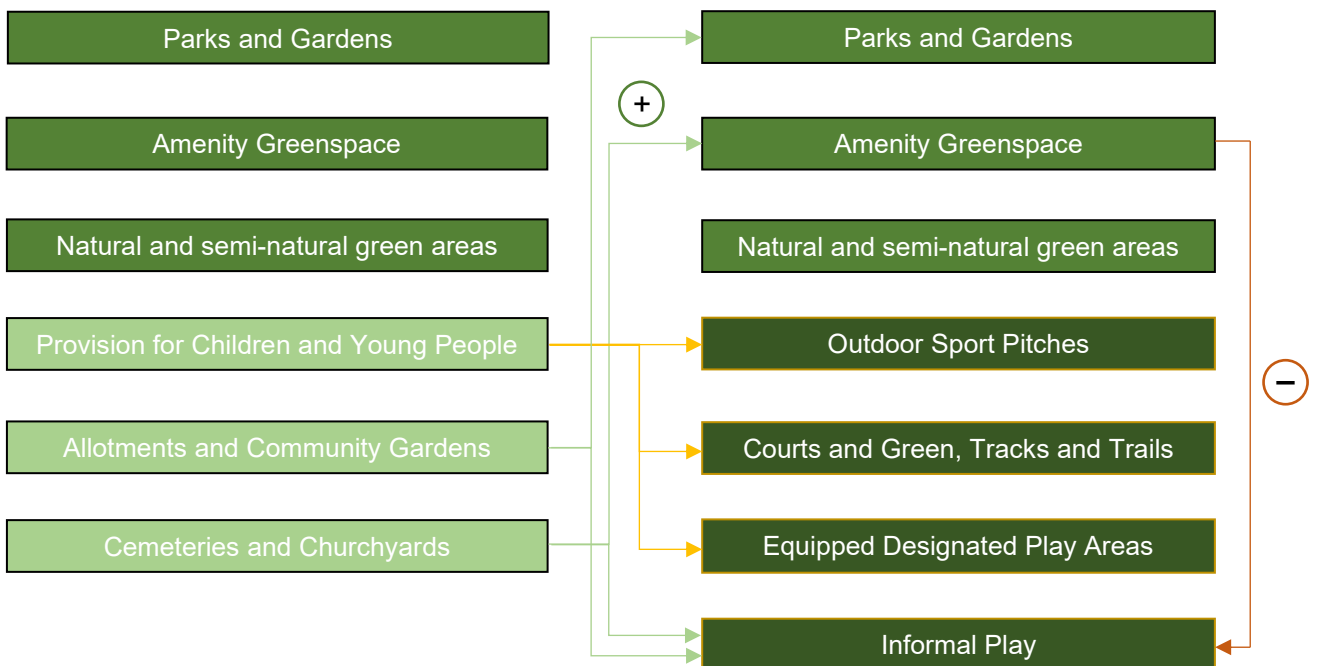





Figure 3.2: Changes to open space typology between 2015 and 2025 using Fields in Trust standards

3.10 Since 2018, a number of open spaces were created as part of S106 agreements of approved new development. The table (3.2) below indicate the typologies of these new open spaces and the development information:

<p>Development: APP/16/00774 West Selangor Avenue, Emsworth</p> <p>Type of spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children Play Area (LAP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children Play Area (LEAP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amenity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal Open Space (Habitat mitigation zone with wildlife) <p>Status: Completed</p>	
<p>Development: APP/18/00450 Forty Acres, Bedhampton</p> <p>Type of spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children Play Area (LAP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children Play Area (LEAP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amenity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allotment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal Open Space (Habitat mitigation zone with wildlife) <p>Status: Completed</p>	
<p>Development: APP/19/00007 Camp Field, Bartons Road, Havant</p> <p>Type of spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Children Play Area (LAP) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amenity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allotment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal Open Space (Accessible Open Space/ Managed grassland) <p>Status: Ongoing – Near Completion</p>	

Development:
 APP/18/01033
 Castle Avenue, Havant

Type of spaces:
 Children Play Area (LAP)
 Amenity

Status:
 Completed



Development:
 APP/19/00427
 Land at Lower Road, Havant

Type of spaces:
 Children Play Area (LAP)
 Amenity
 Allotment

Status:
 Completed



Development:
 APP/19/00768
 Land to the rear of, 15-27 Horndean Road, Emsworth

Type of spaces:
 Amenity

Status:
 Completed



Development:
 APP/20/01093
 Sinah Lane, Hayling Island

Type of spaces:

- Children Play Area (LAP)
- Amenity
- Allotment (Orchard)
- Informal Open Space

Status:
 Near Completion



Development:
 APP/20/00441
 Land west of, Hulbert Road, Havant

Type of spaces:

- Amenity
- Informal Open Space

Status:
 Ongoing



Development:
 APP/21/01071
 Land south of, Lower Road, and west of Old Manor Farm, Havant

Type of spaces:

- Children Play Area (LAP)
- Informal Open Space
- Allotment and community gardens
- Semi-natural green space

Status:
 Ongoing



<p>Development: APP/19/01226 Land west of Coldharbour Farm Road, Emsworth</p> <p>Type of spaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amenity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal Open Space</p> <p>Status: Ongoing</p>	
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Table 3.2: Approved New Developments (since 2018) with New Open Spaces in Havant Borough (2026)

3.11 Assessing the updated open space quantity (including numbers and total site areas) against current and future requirements in Havant Borough, the table (3.3) below provides a summary of the updated quantitative analysis corresponding to each type:

Typology	Category	Number of Sites	Total Sites Area (ha)	Population 2023 (most recent)	Current Provision (Ha/1000 people)	Current Requirement (ha)	Current Deficit/ Oversupply (ha)	Population 2043	Requirement by 2043 (ha)	Deficit/ Oversupply by 2043 (ha)
Open Space	Parks and Gardens	9	203.77	125,682	1.62	100.54	103.22	143,449	114.75	89.01
	Amenity Green Space	71	127.33	125,682	1.01	75.41	51.92	143,449	86.07	41.26

	Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Space	60	455.72	125,682	3.99	226.22	229.5	143,449	258.21	197.51
Play Space	Designated Equipped Play Areas	57	6.13	125,682	0.05	31.42	25.29	143,449	35.86	29.73
Other Open Space	Allotments	17	13.21	125,682	0.11	25.14	11.93	143,449	28.69	15.48



	Adequate Supply/ Oversupply
	Shortfall against FIT guideline

Table 3.3: Quantitative Analysis of Different Open Spaces in Havant (2025)

3.12 The quantitative comparative analysis shows that provision of open space, including parks and gardens, amenity green space and natural and semi-natural green spaces are currently exceeding the minimum standards recommended by Fields in Trust (FIT). It is anticipated that these minimum standards will still be met with the increasing population in Havant by 2043.

3.13 However, although new play spaces have been created through new developments, with reference to figures from the Open Space Strategy (2018) and compared to the current provision, a deficit remains in designated and equipped play areas for all ages children. With no new supply of this type of open spaces, it is expected that this deficit will increase with the growing population by 2043 highlighting the need for provision review and adequate policies.

3.14 Informal play areas are open spaces that are not specifically equipped but suitable for casual play, social interaction and recreation. These spaces are targeted to different people categories and offer opportunities for social and natural play with signage and awareness of which play spaces address which specific need. We find that these are typically incorporated within the parks, amenity green

spaces, and natural/semi-natural areas. While they don't have fixed equipment, they provide valuable opportunities for unstructured play and community interaction. However, informal play provision for girls and young women was not specifically addressed and is not visibly present within most of the sites. Available studies address principles of *safer parks*¹² which can be explored to address this provision within existing open spaces and new ones in future developments.

- 3.15 The outdoor sports and recreation category falls under a specific open space provision which is assessed and detailed in the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment report¹³.
- 3.16 In regard to allotments and food-growing community gardens, there is no updated specific guidance on the quantity provision and accessibility, although the National Allotment Society¹⁴ note that where there are long waiting lists for allotment plots; this can explain why there is a deficit in the quantity of allotment in an area. Therefore, the recommendation of **0.2 ha per 1000 population** that has been set, based on the Thorpe Report arising from the Departmental Committee of Inquiry into Allotments (1969), will remain as a standard for the provision of this type of open space. In terms of accessibility, a catchment area of **1000 metres** (10 to 15-minutes' walk) is considered appropriate crossing references to FIT standards and Natural England accessibility guidance.
- 3.17 Assessed against the FIT guidance (2024), cemeteries and churchyards are included within the broader category of open green spaces. Although they do not have a specific quantitative standards like other typologies, they are assessed according to their overall social and environmental value and contribution to the open space landscape. The total site area designated for this use is 8.81 ha.
- 3.18 In general, although there has been no major change to the open green spaces' numbers and site areas, the accessibility and walkable distance standards as well as the provision standards have changed since 2018.

Proximity and Accessibility: FIT standards and Natural England GI guidance

- 3.19 Based on the new Fields in Trust guidance¹⁵ and the green space calculator, the table (3.4) below summarises the recommended proximity and accessibility standards for each open space typology:

¹² Safer Parks Improving access for women and girls. Available at: <https://www.greenflagaward.org/media/2443/safer-parks-final-050503.pdf>

¹³ Havant Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment (2024). Available at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/media/9836/download?inline>

¹⁴ <https://thenas.org.uk/findinganallotment>

¹⁵ Fields in Trust Standards: Creating great spaces for All. Available at: <https://fieldsintrust.org/content/images/FIT-Standards-2024-Accessible-version.pdf>

Open Space			Outdoor Sports and Recreation		Play Space	
Parks and Gardens	Amenity Green Space	Natural and Semi-Natural Urban Green Space	Outdoor Sport Pitches	Court, Green, Tracks and Trails	Equipped designated Play Areas	Informal Play
Access from homes within 400m (5-10 minutes walking distance)	Access from homes within 240m (5-minutes walk)	Access from homes within 800m (10 minutes walkable distance)	Access from homes within 800m – 1km (or 10-15 minutes' walk)		Access (from every home) within 100m to local play space for <u>very young children</u> , within 400m to LEAPs for young and independent children, and within 1000m to NEAPs for older more independent children	Informal play is designated for all and should be reached safely by children and young people within a maximum of 700m
All homes should be within 200m-300m walking distance of open space with everyone having access to the full range of open space types within 1000m						

Table 3.4: Open Space accessibility and proximity standards based on Fields in Trust guidance (2024)

3.20 Unlike the FIT standards which are linked to use and walkability of open green spaces, the categories as set by Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Framework ¹⁶ are determined by their accessibility and distance via walking, cycling and public transport. These broad categories are defined below:

- **Doorstep or Local Greenspace;** which are small green areas (at least 0.5ha (Doorstep) and 2ha (local)) within immediate walking distance of homes and providing everyday access to nature and informal recreation for the residents.
- **Neighbourhood Greenspace;** referring to larger multifunctional green spaces (at least 10 ha) serving several streets or a small community for recreational and social activities.

¹⁶ Natural England. Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England. (January 2023). Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf>

- **Wider Neighbourhood Greenspace;** Extensive green open areas (at least 20 ha) supporting broader community use and providing a variety of ecological and recreational benefits beyond immediate neighbourhoods and within 2 km from homes.
- **District Greenspace;** referring to significant green spaces (at least 100 ha) serving entire towns or districts and offering various opportunities for leisure, sport, biodiversity and nature conservation.
- **Sub-regional Greenspace;** which are the largest category being of at least 500 ha. It comprises large-scale green infrastructure that supports recreation, biodiversity and landscape connectivity across multiple districts or regions. Accessible by cycling and public transport.

3.21 The table (3.5) below summarises the different open green space categories, minimum site areas, and maximum distance and walkability standards according to Natural England’s GI Accessible Greenspace Standard¹⁷:

Typology	Minimum size	Maximum distance from homes	Maximum journey (walking/ cycling)
Doorstep or Local Greenspace	0.5 ha (Doorstep) 2 ha (Local)	200 – 300 m	Under 5 min walk
Neighbourhood Greenspace	10 ha	1000 m	15 min walk
Wider Neighbourhood Greenspace	20 ha	2000 m	35 min walk
District Greenspace	100 ha	5000 m	15-20 min cycle
Sub-regional Greenspace	500 ha	10000 m	30-40 min cycle

Table 3.5: Natural England’s Accessible Greenspace Standards for urban open green space¹⁸

¹⁷ Accessible Greenspace Standard

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/AccessibleGreenspaceStandard.aspx>

¹⁸ ibid

3.22 However, taking into account the scale of Havant Borough and the generic nature of this guidance, we consider that these benchmarks would appropriately relate to the identified Destination Open Spaces¹⁹:

- Hayling Beach
- Hayling Billy Trail
- Hermitage Stream
- Hollybank Woods
- Queen’s Inclosure
- Staunton Country Park

3.23 The proximity and accessibility standards for open green spaces in Havant have then been established to reflect the generally accepted principle that people are willing to travel farther to reach sites offering a broader range of amenities; particularly larger sites as they can support more diverse facilities or be multifunctional. These standards are expressed as maximum travel distances or *catchment areas*.

3.24 Therefore, the formulation of accessibility standards is based on set guidance from multiple sources, including Natural England’s Green Infrastructure (GI) standards for *Accessible Greenspace* and the Fields in Trust standards “*Creating great spaces for all*” for open space provision. Where the maximum distance is a range, the smaller catchment area figure corresponds to denser residential areas. The proposed new standards for each typology are presented in Table 3.6 below:

Typology (FIT 2024)	Greenspace Category (Natural England 2023)	Maximum distance from homes/ Catchment Areas	Maximum journey (walking/ cycling)
Parks and Gardens	Doorstep/ Local	200 – 400 m	Walk: Up to 5 min
Amenity Space	Doorstep/Local	200 – 300 m	Walk: Up to 5 min

¹⁹ Local Green Spaces and Destination Open Spaces in Havant Borough (June 2026). Available at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-evidence-studies-and-strategies>

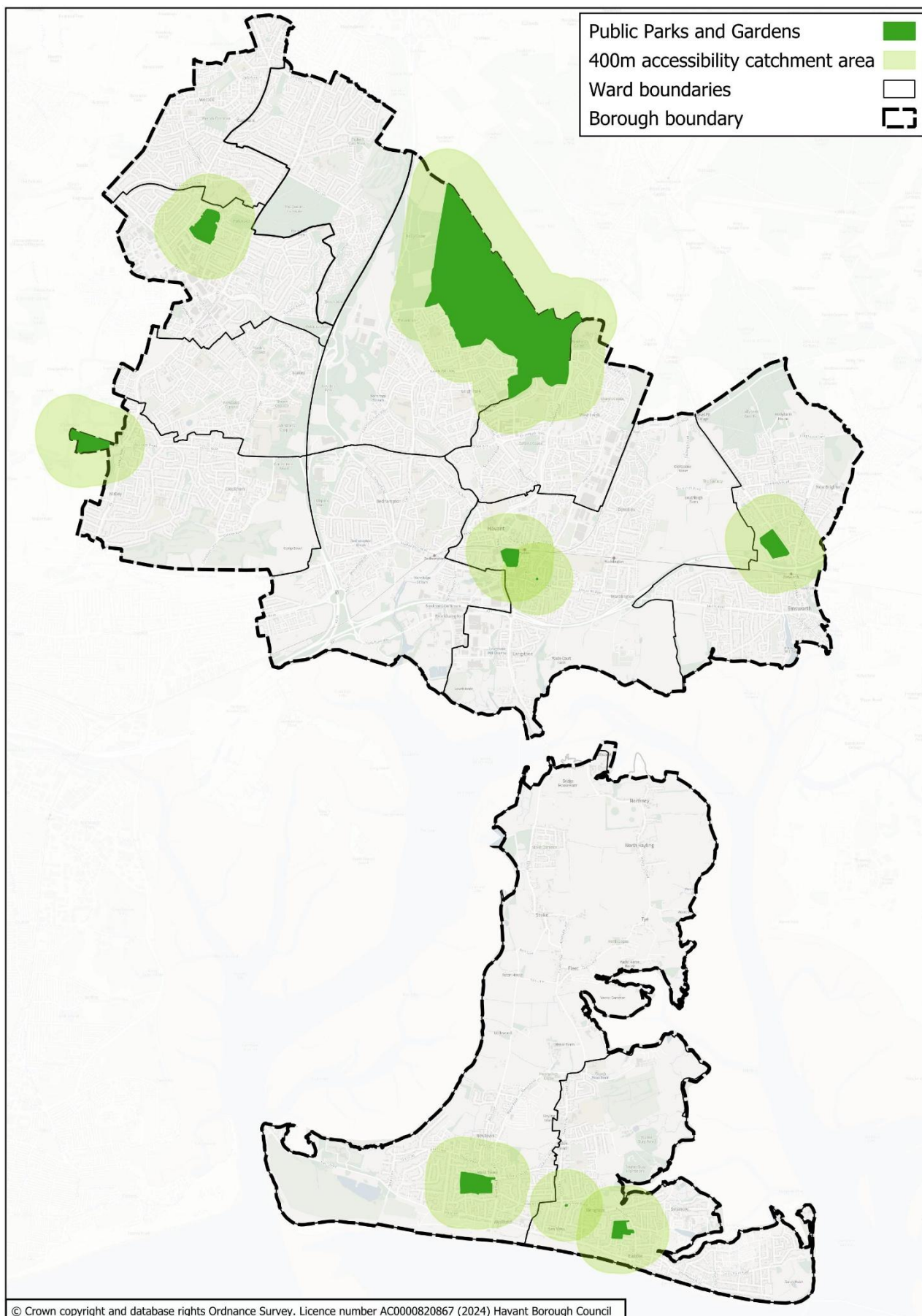
Natural and semi-natural green space	Neighbourhood	800 m	Walk: 10 to 15 min
Play Space for very young children	Doorstep	100 m	Walk: Under 5 min
Play Space for young and independent children (LEAPs)	local	400 m	Walk: 5 min
Play Space for more independent children (NEAPs)	Neighbourhood	1000 m	Walk: 15 min
Informal Play	Local/Neighbourhood	600 – 1000 m	Walk: 15 min
Outdoor Sports and Recreation	Local/Neighbourhood	800 – 1000 m	Walk: 10 to 15 min

Table 3.6: Summary of proposed accessibility and proximity standards for Havant Borough²⁰

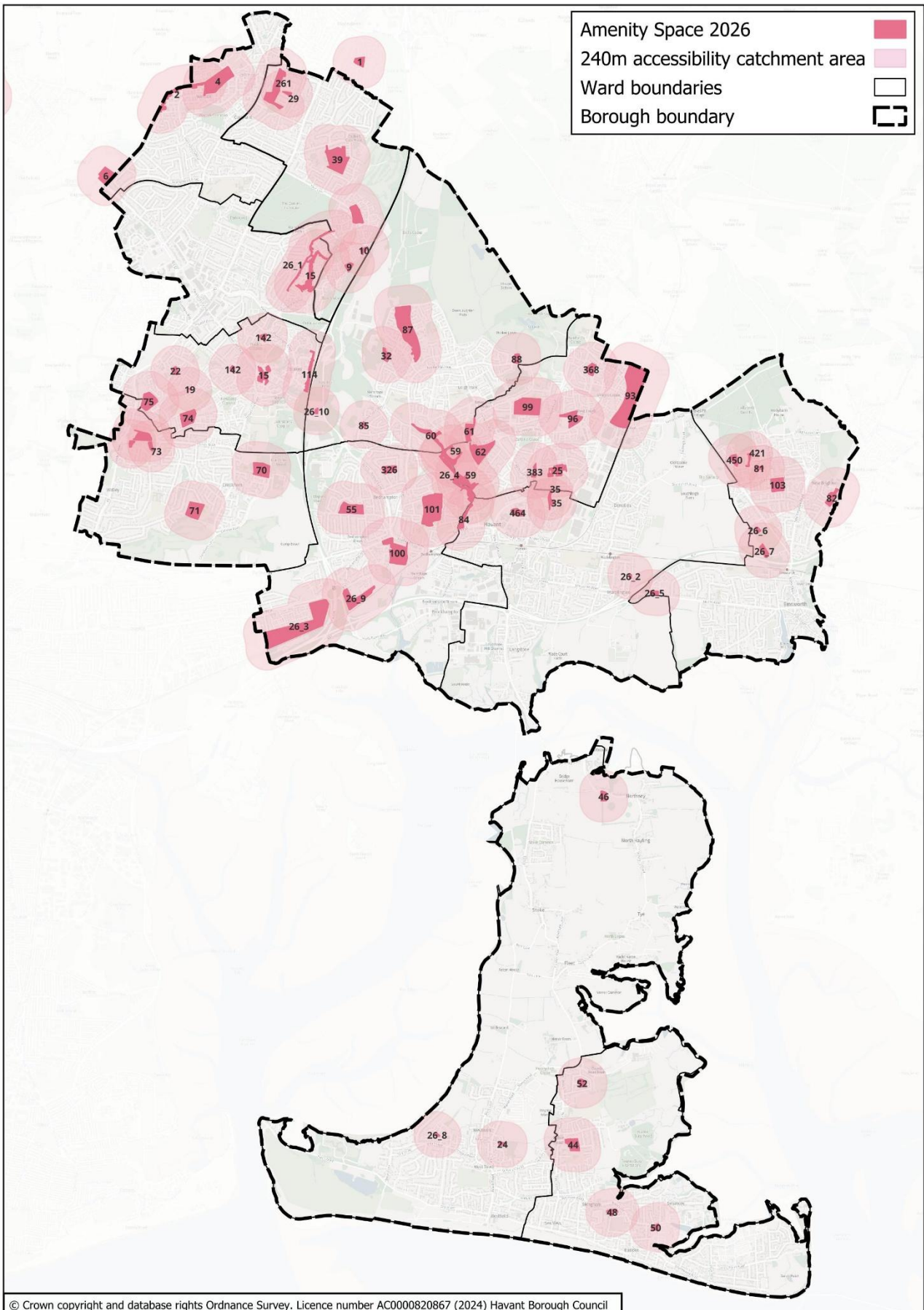
3.25 The maps below show the locations of the existing open spaces, per category, within the Borough. The recommended average catchment areas are indicated with reference to both the FIT accessibility standards and Natural England GI recommendations for accessible greenspace:

²⁰ Natural England. Green Infrastructure Framework - Principles and Standards for England. (January 2023). Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf>

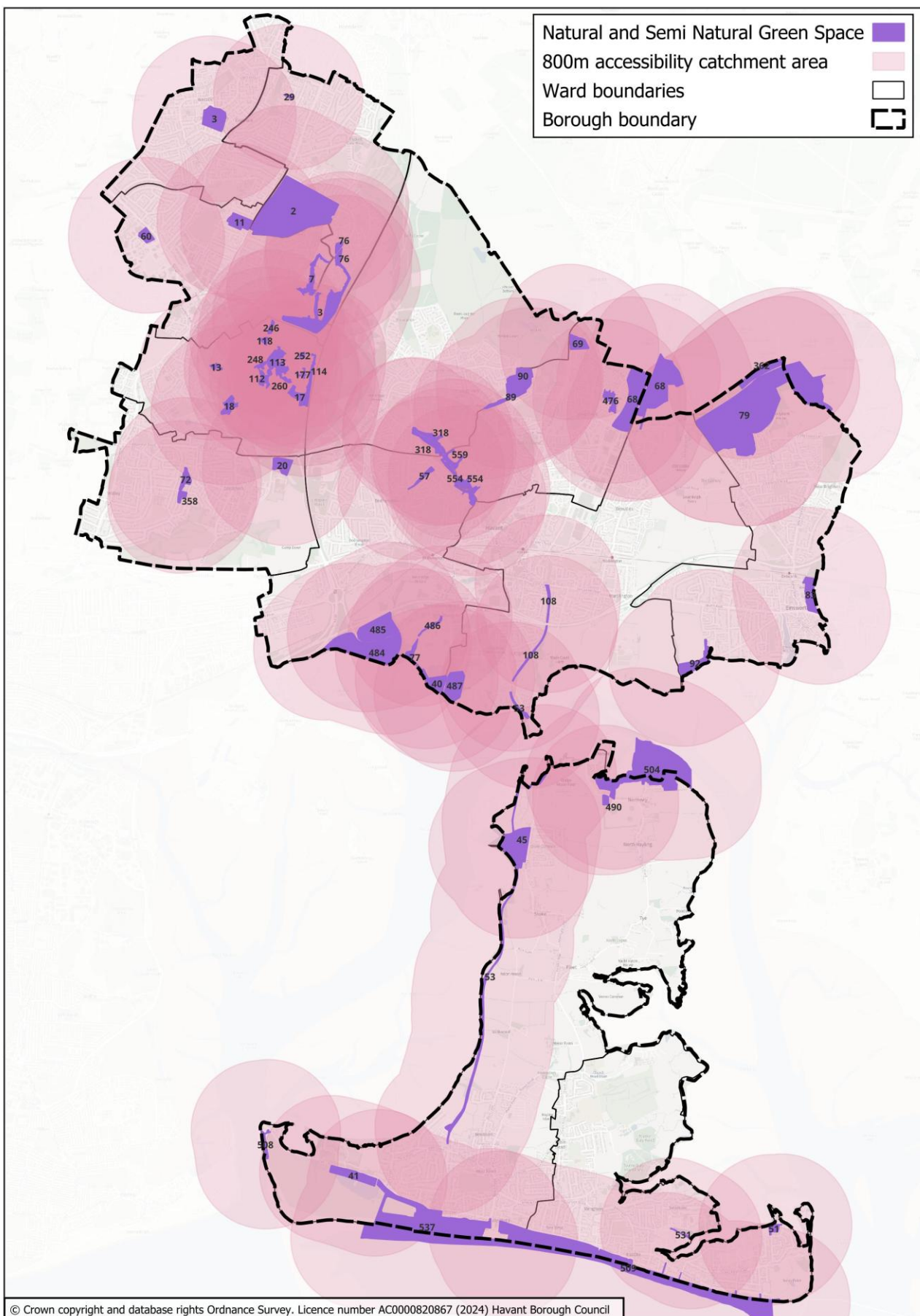
Map 3.1: Public Parks and Gardens Accessibility Catchment using Fields in Trust Standards



Map 3.2: Amenity Open Space Accessibility Catchment using Fields in Trust Standards

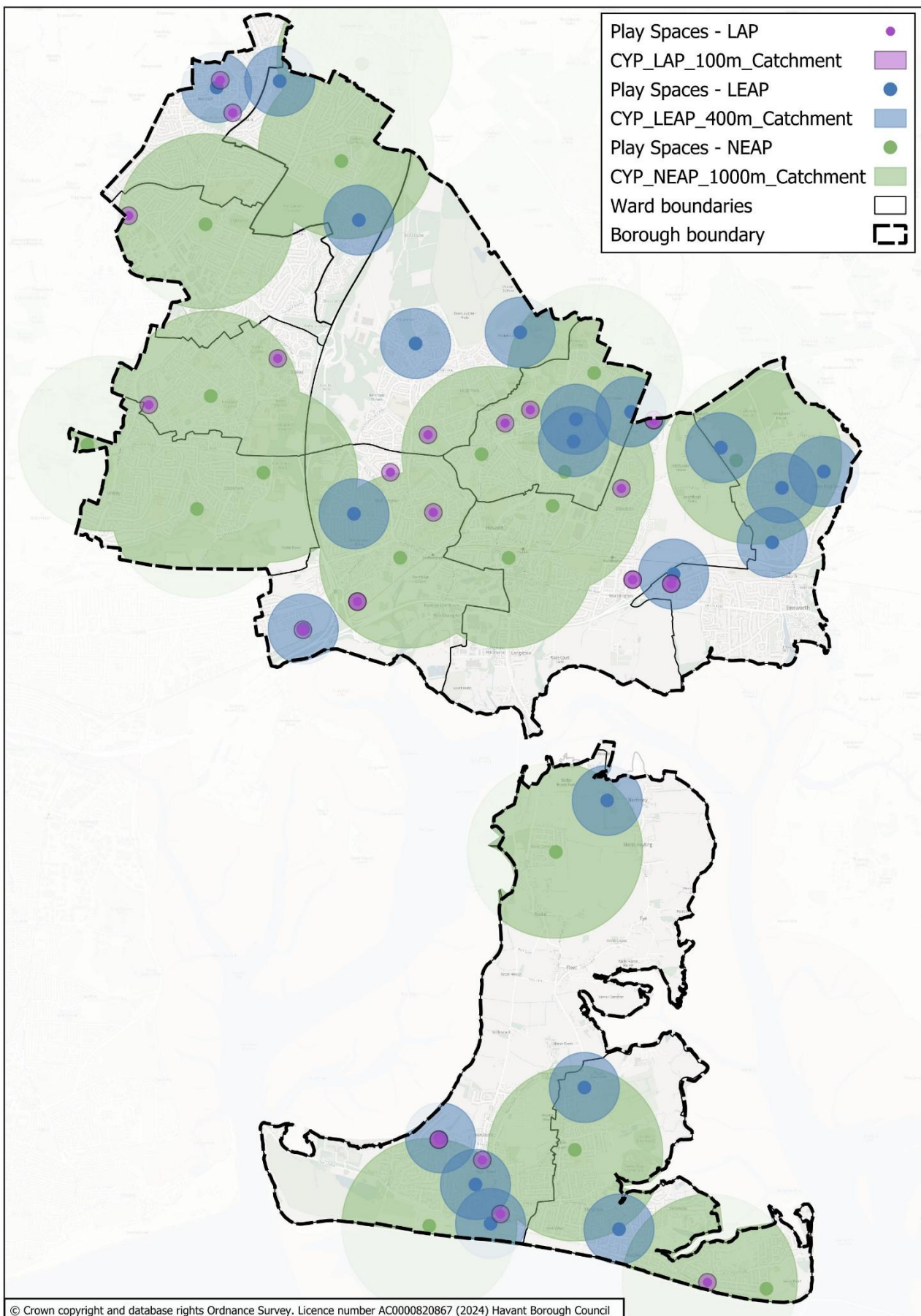


Map 3.3: Natural and Semi Natural Green Space Accessibility Catchment using Fields in Trust Standards



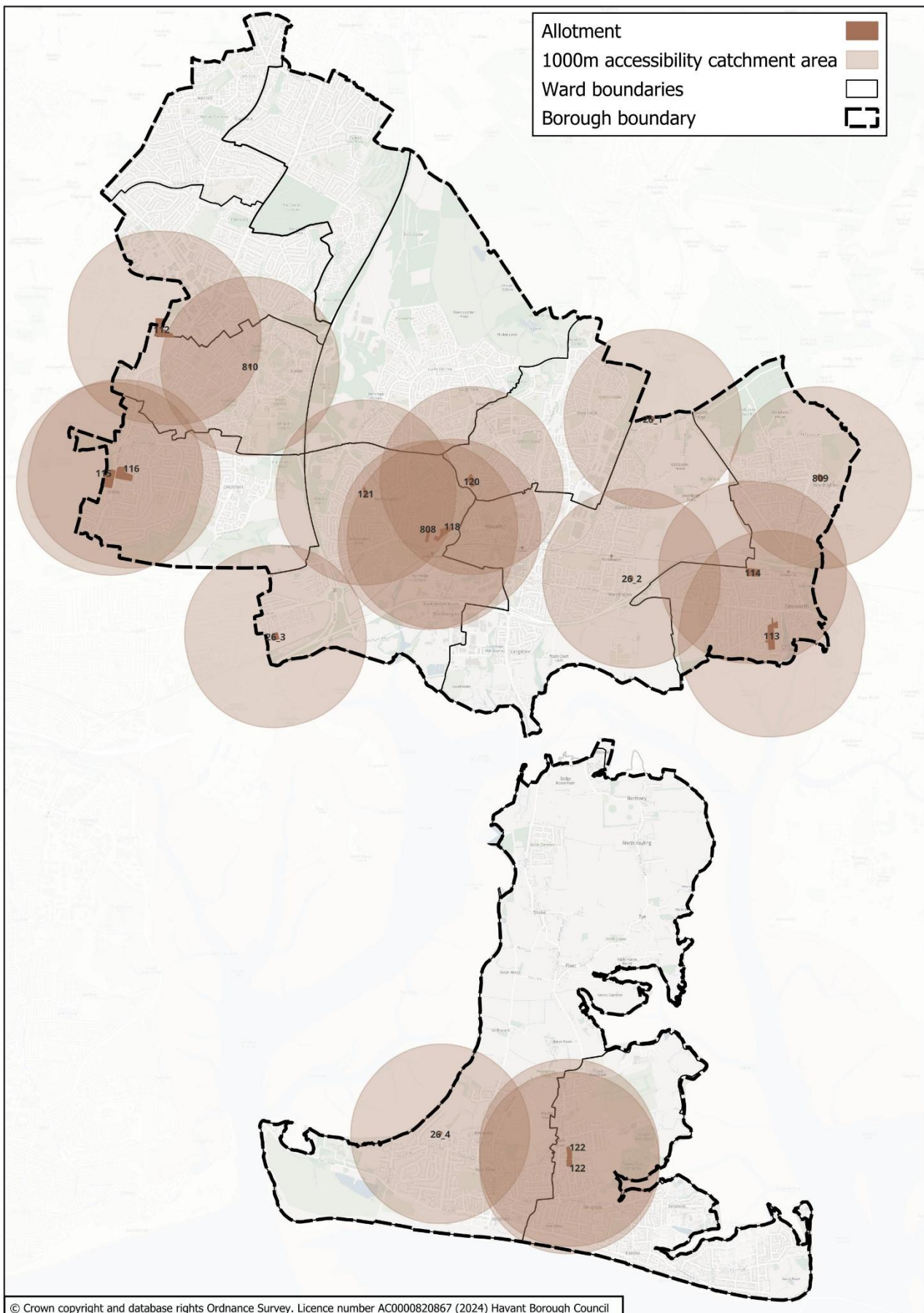
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Map 3.4: Designated Equipped Play Space Accessibility Catchment using Fields in Trust Standards



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Map 3.5: Allotments Accessibility Catchment using NE GI standards and Fields in Trust Standards



4. Quality monitoring and maintenance

4.1 Since the Open Space Strategy 2018, several new developments have resulted in additional open spaces serving the residents and wider community. Additionally, a number of existing open spaces have received refurbishment and enhancement works.

Improvements on existing open spaces

4.2 The table below summarise finished and planned works on existing open spaces within the Borough since 2018:

<p>Name: Beachlands</p> <p>Location: Hayling Island</p> <p>Nature of works: Refurbishment of skate park.</p> <p>Status: Completed.</p>	<p>Type: Play Space/ Amenity</p> 
<p>Name: Bidbury Mead Recreation Play Area</p> <p>Location: Bedhampton.</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2023</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p> 
<p>Name: Cowplain Recreation Ground</p> <p>Location: Waterlooville.</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p>

Status:
Completed in 2024



Name: Eastoke Corner Playground

Type: Play Space/ Outdoor Informal Sport

Location:
Hayling Island

Nature of works:
Full refurbishment of children’s play space.
Replacement of outdoor gym.
Replacement of MUGA.

Status:
Completed in 2023



Name: Emsworth Recreation

Type: Play Space

<p>Location: Emsworth</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2021</p>	
<p>Name: Front Lawn Recreation Ground Type: Play Space</p>	
<p>Location: Leigh Park</p> <p>Nature of works: Installation of new junior multi-unit. Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2018 and 2023</p>	
<p>Name: Hampshire Farm Type: Play Space</p>	
<p>Location: Emsworth</p> <p>Nature of works: Items of new play provision installed and play area fenced.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2018</p>	
<p>Name: Hayling Park Type: Play Space</p>	
<p>Location: Hayling Island</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2017</p>	

<p>Name: Hollybank Recreation Ground</p> <p>Location: Emsworth</p> <p>Nature of works: New central item – Boat</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2022</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p> 
<p>Name: Kings Road Play Area</p> <p>Location: Hayling Island</p> <p>Nature of works: Installation of new junior multi-unit</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2018</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p> 
<p>Name: Legion Field</p> <p>Location: Hayling Island</p> <p>Nature of works: Installation of new multi-unit and swing bay</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2018</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p>  
<p>Name: Scratchface Lane Playground</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p>

<p>Location: Bedhampton</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2025</p>	
<p>Name: Southwood Road Play Area Type: Play Space</p>	
<p>Location: Hayling Island</p> <p>Nature of works: Installation of new multi play unit Full refurbishment of children’s play space</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2022</p>	
<p>Name: Spencer’s Field Playground Type: Play Space</p>	
<p>Location: Emsworth</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2023</p>	

	
<p>Name: Springwood Playground, Springwood Avenue</p> <p>Location: Stakes, Waterlooville</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space.</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2023</p>	<p>Type: Play Space</p> 
<p>Name: Waterlooville Recreation Ground</p> <p>Location: Waterlooville</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of children’s play space. New outdoor gym</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2020 and 2024</p>	<p>Type: Play Space and Outdoor Sport</p>  

	
<p>Name: Westbrook Play Area, Cowplain</p>	<p>Type: Play Space and Outdoor Sport</p>
<p>Location: Waterlooville</p> <p>Nature of works: Resurfacing of entire play space</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2023</p>	
<p>Name: Bartons Green Recreation Ground</p>	<p>Type: Outdoor Sport</p>
<p>Location: Havant</p> <p>Nature of works: Full refurbishment of basketball court</p> <p>Status: Completed in 2025</p>	

Table 3.7: Improvement works on existing play space across Havant Borough

- 4.3 In addition to the above list, a number of play spaces and outdoor sports area are planned to receive improvement and refurbishment works in the next coming years, however works have not yet started. These spaces are:

Open space/ Location	Nature of works	Type of Open Space	Anticipated completion date
Elizabeth Road/ Stakes	Full refurbishment of children's play space.	Play Space	2026
Havant Park/ Havant	Installation of new multi play unit. Full refurbishment of children's play space.	Play Space	2028
Hayling Dirt Jumps/ Hayling Island	Full replacement of dirt jumps with cycle pump track	Outdoor Sport/ Informal Play	2026
Hooks Lane Recreation/ Bedhampton	Full refurbishment of children's play space.	Play Space	2028
Longwood Avenue/ Cowplain	Full refurbishment of children's play space	Play Space	2028
Nutwick Road/ Havant	Full refurbishment of children's play space	Play Space	2026
Old Copse Road/ Havant	Installation of toddler multi unit Full refurbishment of children's play space	Play Space	2028
Play area at Greywell Shops/ Leigh Park	Proposed refurbishment being led by Regeneration Team		TBC
Purbrook Heath/ Waterlooville	Sport pitch drainage scheme. Will improve wider open space by eliminating drainage issues.	Outdoor Sport	2027
Southwood Road/ Hayling Island	Full refurbishment of children's play space.	Play Space	2026

Table 3.8: Planned maintenance and refurbishment work in existing play space across Havant Borough

Summary

- 5.1 This addendum updates and refines the Havant Borough Open Space Strategy 2018 to support the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan, the Building a Better Future Plan. It should be read alongside the original strategy as it provides an updated position on open space provision standards, quality and accessibility in light of recent changes to national planning policy and guidance since 2018.
- 5.2 This paper reviews the current policy context and guidance update, where a greater emphasis is placed on the role of open space in supporting health and wellbeing, biodiversity, climate resilience, inclusive design, active travel and the creation of high-quality places. As such, the study overall recognises the importance of multifunctional, accessible and well-managed green infrastructure.
- 5.3 While confirming that the overall findings of the 2018 Open Space Strategy remain valid, with quality assessment continuing to align with recognised national approaches, including the Green Flag Award criteria, this addendum updates the typology of open spaces to reflect the Fields in Trust 2024 standards, grouping provision into open space, outdoor sport and recreation, and play space, while recognising the wider contribution of allotments, cemeteries and churchyards to the Borough's green infrastructure network.
- 5.4 Continued shortfalls in designated equipped play provision and allotment are identified in this study, with the deficit in play space expected to increase without further provision through development. The paper also highlights the need to consider informal play, safety, inclusivity (i.e. provision for girls and young women) within both existing spaces and new developments. However, the revised quantitative assessment demonstrates that Havant Borough has currently sufficient open spaces for its resident meeting at least the minimum requirements set by Fields in Trust for parks and gardens, amenity space, and natural and semi-natural green spaces; This position is expected to remain consistent when assessed against projected population growth to 2043
- 5.5 This paper finally establishes revised accessibility and proximity standards, drawing on both Fields in Trust (FIT) and Natural England GI guidance. These standards reflect the principle that residents should have suitable access to a range of open space types, with larger and more multifunctional spaces serving wider catchments. Furthermore, since 2018, new open spaces have been secured through new development, including Section 106 agreements, and several existing play spaces and recreation areas have been improved or are planned for refurbishment.

Appendix: Open Spaces in Havant Borough

