

Amenity green space

Definition

- 6.1 Amenity Green Space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work, enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas. Amenity green space provides more of a visual amenity for older residents and a meeting place for young people.
- 6.2 The Mayor of London's Guide to the Preparation of Open Space Strategies indicates that in the London context, these sites act as small local parks (between 0.4 and 2.0 hectares in size). Sites below 0.4 in size are referred to as pocket parks. Both sizes of open space would be expected in close proximity to the house. For the purposes of analysis (and to avoid confusion with the parks and gardens section) these spaces will be referred to as amenity spaces.
- 6.3 There are a number of benefits in providing this type of open space including informal recreation value and the provision of a meeting place or/and focal point for communities. It is also important to recognise and take account of the secondary functions of amenity green space, in particular the visual benefits. Visual benefits are often particularly important in the urban area.
- 6.4 Amenity spaces can play an integral role in increasing participation in physical activity across the Borough, providing local opportunities to participate in activity and informal sport. These spaces are often particularly popular with children and young people.

Figure 6.1 – Shoulder of Mutton Green, Welling



Strategic context and consultation

- 6.5 There are a number of regional and local documents that refer to the importance of the provision of amenity green spaces within London Borough of Bexley. These key documents are set out in Table 6.1 overleaf:

Table 6.1 – Local Strategic Context – Amenity green space

Documents Reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space strategy and PPG17 Assessment
Bexley Unitary Development Plan (2004)	<p>Policy ENV19 states the Council will aim to retain all urban open space on the proposals map except where there is adequate provision of open space within the area, there is no need for additional appropriate use of the land, the land is not valued, distinctive features of the land are preserved and that there are no conflicts with other policies in the plan.</p> <p>Policy TAL6 states that in areas of open space or recreational deficiency the Council will seek to provide open space in all new residential developments and through land no longer required for use.</p> <p>Policy TAL7 states all new developments will need to provide sufficient recreational open space including informal open space and children's play space to a nationally accepted design.</p>	<p>The study will provide an overview of existing amenity spaces and the current demand for these spaces and will therefore facilitate the protection of amenity green space in areas where there is a deficiency of open space.</p> <p>The study will provide the Council with an understanding of the existing provision of open spaces in the Borough. This will allow the Council to make informed decisions when seeking developer contributions and to provide evidence based on local needs.</p>
Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper	One of the key objectives of the strategy is to protect the Borough's open space.	This study will inform the policies in the Local Development Framework, providing an evidence base for the policy and ensuring that future strategy in the Borough is in line with local needs.
Bexley Sustainable Design and Construction Guide (SPD) (Draft 2007)	<p>The SPD states that the design of new developments should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve access to open space • improve linkages between open space • ensure residential developments make a contribution for open space, amenity space and children's play space. 	<p>Application of the local accessibility standards will provide guidance as to priorities for the improvement of open spaces in the Borough.</p> <p>The study will provide evidence for the calculation of developer contributions and the provision of open space within all new residential developments, ensuring that provision is sufficient in terms of quality and quantity to meet local needs.</p>
Design for Living - Bexley's residential design guide SPD (2006)	<p>The SPD has a number of aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating mixed use – providing a range of services alongside housing eg open space • providing amenity space – the provision of outdoor amenity space is important in achieving a successful and attractive environment and communal space is viewed as an integral part of new residential development. 	<p>The study will facilitate a strategic approach to the future development of open space in the Borough providing an overview of existing amenity space and an assessment of the local demand for new provision.</p> <p>The study will identify areas deficient in amenity green space and recommend future strategy for addressing this.</p>

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Documents Reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to open space strategy and PPG17 Assessment
Erith Area Action Plan Issues and Options Paper (2007)	Two key challenges for Erith are to successfully integrate family housing into higher density development and provide appropriate open space.	The study will project the impact of growth on the demand for open space and ensure that current and future needs are taken into account as part of the redevelopment of the Erith area.

Assessing local needs - consultation

- 6.6 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues with regards the provision of amenity spaces:
- despite the lower levels of use of amenity green space for recreational purposes in comparison to some other typologies of open space, the wider benefits of these sites were recognised by local residents, particularly the contribution to the overall landscape of the urban area. The importance of the protection of amenity green space was a key theme throughout consultation
 - imbalances in local opinions were evident, with consultations highlighting varying opinions with regards both quality and quantity
 - safety concerns were expressed by a number of residents at drop in sessions where it was stated that groups of youths can detract residents from using well valued sites
 - the household survey reveals that 61% of people would **expect** to walk to amenity green spaces in London Borough of Bexley, with 76% of respondents stating a journey should take between 5-10 minutes. This highlights the expectation that these open spaces will be provided locally
 - amenity spaces were particularly valued by children and young people, who use these spaces as a meeting point and informal play as a result of their proximity to home and the free access to the site.

Assessing the current provision of amenity green space in Bexley

Quantity of provision

- 6.7 The quantity of amenity green space in London Borough of Bexley is summarised in Table 6.2 overleaf. This considers amenity spaces in all ownerships across the Borough. The majority of amenity space is owned and managed by London Borough of Bexley and the local Housing Associations.
- 6.8 It is important to consider the provision of amenity space both in isolation and in the context of other types of open space.
- 6.9 In addition to the provision of amenity spaces detailed above, there are six small parks, specifically:
- Abbey Wood Recreation Ground - Thamesmead
 - Belvedere Recreation Ground - Thamesmead
 - Hurst Road/Parkhill Road - Crayford
 - Riverside Gardens - Erith
 - Town Park – Bexleyheath.
 - West Heath Recreation Ground - Thamesmead
- 4.1 These sites total 6.12 hectares

Table 6.2 – Provision of amenity green space across London Borough of Bexley

Cluster	Current provision	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	Provision per 1000 of the current population	Scenario 1 Provision per 1000	Scenario 2a Provision per 1000	Scenario 2b Provision per 1000	Scenario 3a Provision per 1000	Scenario 3b Provision per 1000
Bexleyheath	5.71	0.44	1.64	0.18	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17
Crayford	1.51	1.51		0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
Erith	8.92	0.46	3.85	0.22	0.18	0.18	0.14	0.17	0.13
Sidcup	10.76	0.16	4.32	0.35	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.20	0.21
Thamesmead	4.9	0.55	1.43	0.12	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13
Welling	2.51	0.42	1.5	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.06
Overall	34.31	0.16	4.32	0.16	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.13

6.10 The key issues emerging from Table 6.2 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of amenity green space across the Borough include:

- in total, there are 34 hectares of amenity green space across the Borough. When considering the total quantity of hectares in each area of the Borough it can be seen that provision is significantly lower in the Crayford, Welling and Thamesmead clusters
- responses from the household survey indicate a split in opinion regarding the provision of amenity green space in Bexley. While 52% of respondents felt provision was insufficient, 34% held the opposing view, suggesting it to be sufficient – this indicates that the overall perception is that provision does not meet local needs
- similar results are portrayed within the individual clusters, with the exception of the Crayford cluster, where 50% of residents stated provision was about right. Crayford is one of the clusters where provision is actually lower – this highlights the overlap in function and in perception between parks and amenity areas of different sizes
- the greatest dissatisfaction can be found in the Erith cluster where 60% of residents felt provision was insufficient – despite this, provision of smaller amenity space is higher in Erith than in other clusters of the Borough. Like in the Crayford cluster, this highlights the issue of overlapping perceptions with other typologies – residents in the Erith cluster exhibit a greater dissatisfaction with provision of all sizes of parks than all other areas
- the greatest level of provision is located in the Sidcup cluster (10.76 ha). Surprisingly, 56% of residents in this area indicated provision was insufficient
- there is a large variety in the size of sites with sites ranging from 0.16 hectares to 4.32hectares
- 46% of residents in the Welling cluster indicated the provision of amenity green space was insufficient. This is supported by figures in Table 6.2, which show the Welling cluster has the lowest level of provision in the Borough (although provision of parks is high)

- the current provision per 1000 is expected to decrease in the future, based on all five growth scenarios. Based on Scenario one, provision per 1000 will be 0.14 ha by 2026 in comparison to 0.16 ha per 1000 at the current time.

6.11 The provision of small parks totals 0.02 hectares per 1000 population.

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 6.12 The recommended local quantity standard for amenity green space has been summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix E.
- 6.13 This local standard is based on the key findings of consultations, which indicate that there is satisfaction with the existing level of provision and that enhancing the quality is of particular importance.
- 6.14 The recommended standard of provision is set based on the existing population. Multiplication of this standard for each of the growth scenarios will enable identification of areas of potential surplus and deficiency generated by population growth and will also inform the amount of new amenity space that should be provided as the population increases.

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.16 hectares per 1000 – Amenity Spaces 0.02 hectares per 1000 population small parks	0.16 hectares per 1000 – Amenity Spaces 0.02 hectares per 1000 population small parks
Justification	
<p>Local consultation findings highlight a general satisfaction with the current provision of amenity green space. A lack of issues raised by residents during consultation further reinforces this perception.</p> <p>In consideration of the local consultation establishing a general satisfaction with the current level of provision it is recommended the standard be set at the existing level of provision. Setting the standard at this level will enable the Council to focus on the improvement of existing sites, with the aspiration of all amenity green spaces achieving the quality standard.</p>	

Quality of provision

- 6.15 The quality of existing amenity green space in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 6.3 overleaf. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 6.16 The quality scores are weighted to prioritise key features that are particularly important to the effective provision of amenity open space. Quality of amenity spaces is particularly important in light of their visual value.

Table 6.3 – Quality of amenity green space across London Borough of Bexley

Cluster	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Bexleyheath	8	33-73	59	Rochester Drive	Memorial Gardens
Crayford	1	51	51		Hurst Rec Ground
Erith	5	38-67	58	Larner Road Amenity Space	Becton Place
Sidcup	8	46-77	53	Harrow Manor Way	The Green (Manor House)
Thamesmead	5	63-71	67	Woowich Road	Leather Bottle Green
Welling	3	57-66	62	Danson Mead	Shoulder of Mutton Green
Overall	30	33-77	62	Rochester Drive	The Green (Manor House)

6.17 The key issues emerging from Table 6.3 and the consultation relating to the quality of amenity green space are:

- 45% of respondents to the household survey felt that the quality of sites was average, with 20% stating the sites were good. The most satisfied residents were those in the Crayford cluster where 33% felt that the quality of the sites was good
- misuse of small amenity spaces and incidences of vandalism were perceived to be the greatest issues by respondents to the household survey
- the landscape value of the site is as important as the recreational value
- security and safety at these sites was again the key theme of drop in and discussion sessions. Consideration was also given to the appropriateness of the provision of facilities on some larger amenity spaces
- analysis of the quality of existing sites highlights that the overall quality of sites is varied, with scores ranging from 33 to 77%. The average score is however consistent across the Borough, suggesting that all clusters contain a range of high and low quality sites.

Setting provision standards – quality

6.18 The recommended local quality vision for amenity green space has been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

6.19 As highlighted, quality of amenity areas is perceived to be particularly important to local residents.

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – Amenity Green Space	
Based on the calculated quality scores from detailed site assessments all natural and semi natural open space should aspire to achieve a quality score of 67%.	
Essential	Desirable
Clean/Litter Free	Nature Features
Flowers/Trees	Well Kept Grass
Footpaths	Dog Bins

The quality of existing sites

- 6.20 The calculation of the upper quartile quality score (67%) provides an indication of the desired level of quality at each site and enables a comparison at sites across the Borough.
- 6.21 The median score is 62% and the lower quartile score is 59%. Sites falling into the top quartile are set out in Table 6.4 overleaf. Benchmarking scores can be found in Appendix J, enabling comparisons against other types of open space. A full list of site scores can be found in the amenity green space section of Appendix I.

Table 6.4 – Selection of quality assessment results for amenity green space provision

Above upper quartile	67% +	(77%) The Green (Manor House) – Site ID 107 (73%) Memorial Gardens – Site ID 106 (72%) Hollyoak Wood Park – Site ID 78 (71%) Leather Bottle Green – Site ID 114 (71%) Abbeyhill Park – Site ID 100 (70%) Bourne Mead – Site ID 102 (70%) Holly Hill Open Space – Site ID 86 (67%) Parkway – Site ID 90 (67%) Becton Place – Site ID 91
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- 6.22 The key issues emerging from Table 6.4 and the site assessments include:
- 27% of sites scored above 67%. This therefore indicates that a substantial number of sites require improvements to meet the quality standard
 - the average score of amenity green space sites is 62% although there is a significant range in the quality of provision across the area
 - eight sites scored below the lower quartile figure of 59%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality benchmark set for this type of open space. Cleanliness and maintenance of amenity green spaces were perceived to be particularly important to residents
 - the aspiration should be for all amenity green spaces to fall within the upper quartile category and achieve the quality vision.

The quality of small local parks is good, with the scores ranging from 66% to 88%.

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 6.23 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing as opportunity for all people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 6.24 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the site visits where information and signage, transport and general accessibility issues were assessed. In light of the local nature of amenity spaces, there are few accessibility issues with regards amenity space.
- 6.25 The recommended local accessibility standard for amenity green space has therefore been summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within

Appendix H including the translation of time taken into approximate distance to be applied for the local standard.

Accessibility Standard

Recommended standard
400 metres (10 minute walk)
Justification
<p>Given the emphasis on walking rather than driving in terms of the expectations of respondents it is suggested that a walking standard is set. The expressed desire for local amenity space supports the perception that a standard based on travelling on foot is most appropriate.</p> <p>The 75% threshold level established from responses to the household survey is a 10 minute walk time, with the modal response also indicating 10 minutes as the preferred time. It is therefore recommended the local standard be set at a 10 minute walk time across the Borough. This will ensure the provision of more localised amenity areas and the application of the accessibility standard will illustrate any existing deficiencies.</p> <p>Based on calculations using NPFA criteria for distance walked, a 10 minute walk time is equivalent to approximately a 480 metre threshold. This is broadly comparable to the existing policy approach relating to amenity spaces / small parks that is based on a walking distance of up to 400 metres. In order to ensure consistency across London Boroughs and to maximise opportunities to access local provision, it is recommended that the standard is set at 400m. While consideration should be given to sites in closer proximity to the home, setting the standard at this level will ensure that the quality of open space is balanced with the quantity.</p>

Applying provision standards

- 6.26 The application of the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.
- 6.27 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.

Quantity

- 6.28 The application of the local standard for amenity space for each area is set out in Table 6.5 overleaf.

Table 6.4 – Application of quantity standard amenity green space

Cluster	Current provision balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	Scenario 1 Future balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	Scenario 2a Future balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	Scenario 2b Future balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	Scenario 3a Future balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)	Scenario 3b Future balanced against local standard (0.16 hectares per 1000 population)
Bexleyheath	0.51	0.36	0.40	0.40	0.23	0.40
Crayford	-1.74	-2.23	-2.50	-2.46	-2.78	-2.46
Erith	2.30	1.17	0.99	-0.93	0.70	-2.03
Sidcup	5.79	2.41	2.51	2.73	2.18	2.73
Thamesmead	-1.80	-1.21	-0.92	-0.92	-0.92	-1.10
Welling	-5.68	-4.64	-4.60	-4.45	-4.92	-4.45
Overall	-0.62	-4.15	-4.12	-5.63	-5.52	-6.91

Green = above the standard, Red = below the standard

- the local standard has been set at the existing level of provision to allow the Council to focus on the qualitative improvements of existing amenity green space in the Borough rather than the provision of new amenity spaces
- overall, the current provision of amenity green space is sufficient to meet the needs of residents in the Borough. However, despite this there are large shortfalls of provision located in the Welling and Thamesmead clusters. There is also a small shortfall in the Crayford cluster. In contrast, the supply of amenity green space in the Erith, Bexleyheath and Sidcup clusters is significantly above the minimum standard. This suggests an uneven distribution of this typology
- there will be an overall shortfall of provision by 2026 in all growth scenarios. If scenario one was to be agreed, there would be a shortfall of -4.15 ha. This would rise to -6.91 hectares in Scenario 3b
- based on all five growth scenarios the only clusters where there will be adequate supply by 2026 are Bexleyheath and Sidcup. While there will be shortfalls in the Crayford, Thamesmead and Welling clusters (to varying degrees depending upon the scenario) it can be seen that there is sufficient provision in the Erith cluster unless the growth across the borough is uneven and occurs largely in the Thames Gateway (Scenarios 2b and 3b).

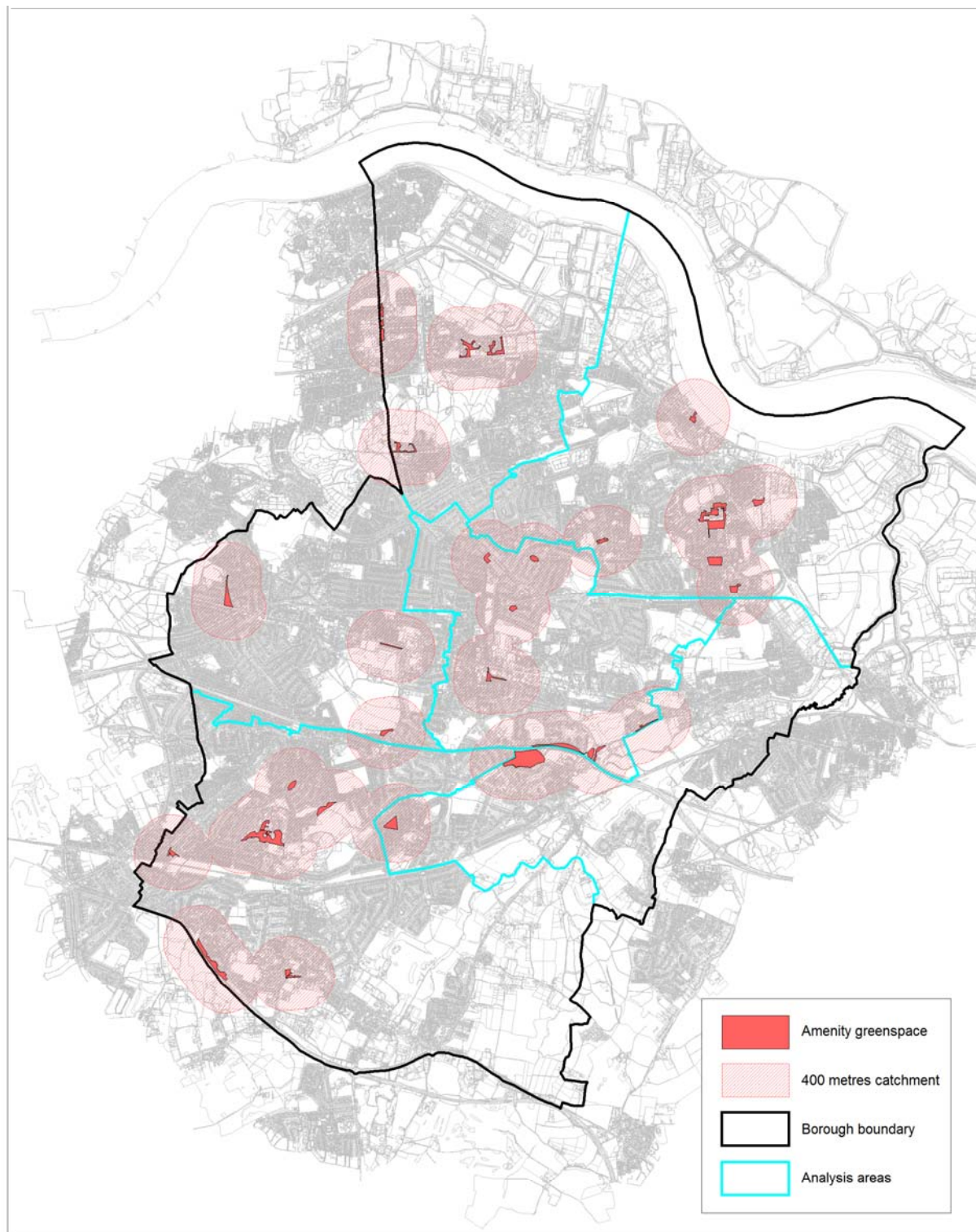
6.29 As highlighted, it is essential to consider the provision of amenity space in the context of parks and gardens. While there are shortfalls of provision of amenity space in the Thamesmead, Welling and Crayford clusters, analysis of the provision of parks highlights that the overall level of open space is sufficient to meet minimum standards in Thamesmead and Welling – this indicates that only the Crayford cluster has a real shortage of amenity space.

6.30 Although the provision of parks can to an extent negate the need for amenity space, it remains essential, given the functionality of this type of open space, to ensure that all residents have access to local amenity areas as well as larger parks and open spaces.

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

6.31 The application of the local accessibility standards amenity green space is set out in Map 6.1 overleaf. Map 6.2 illustrates the quality of amenity spaces across the Borough.

Map 6.1 – Provision of amenity green space in London Borough of Bexley

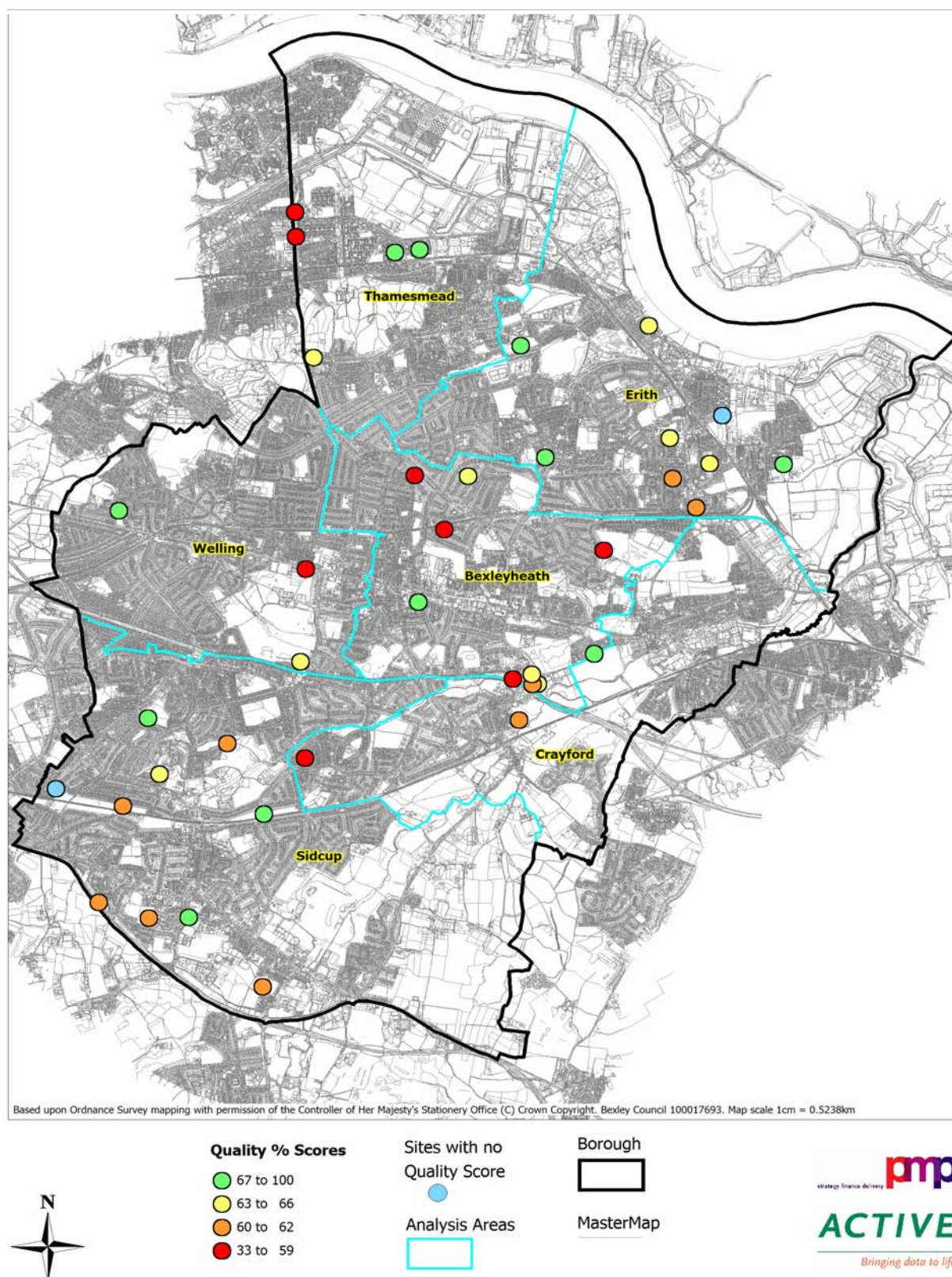


Amenity greenspace

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Map 6.2 – Quality of amenity green space in London Borough of Bexley

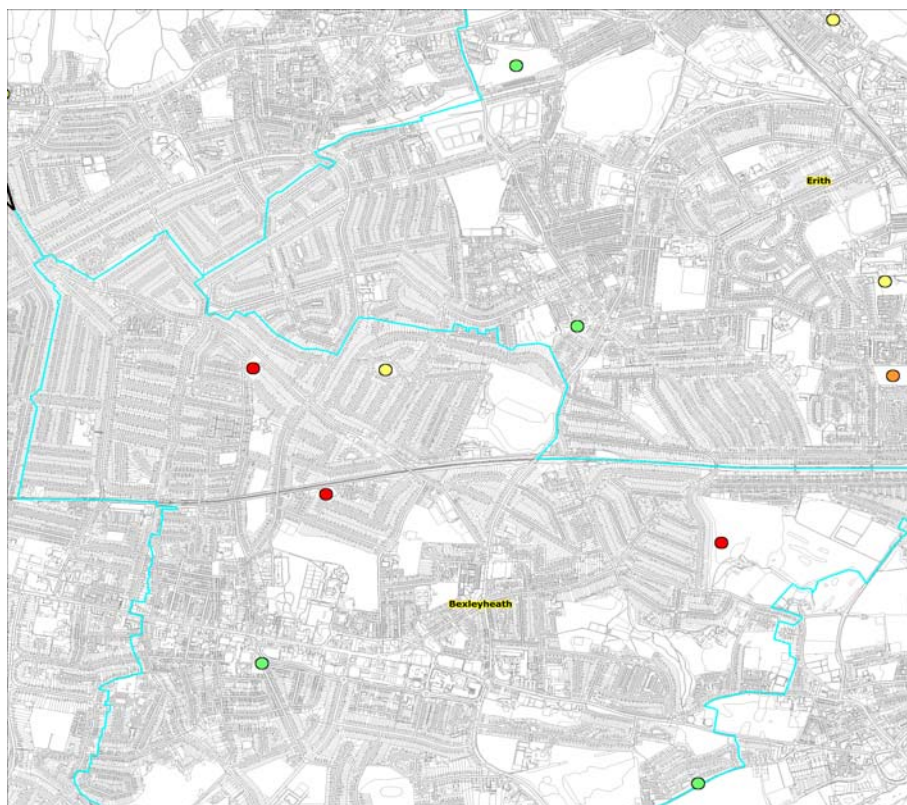


6.32 Map 6.1 illustrates an even distribution of amenity space across the Borough, although there are numerous residents outside of the recommended catchment of amenity space. Given that the analysis is based on a 400m travelling distance, the maximum distance that residents should be expected to travel, new provision should be considered in areas of deficiency

Quality

- 6.33 The key issues emerging from the quality of existing amenity green space in London Borough of Bexley (Map 6.2) are:
- the distribution of high quality scoring sites across the Borough is good
 - there is a cluster of poorer quality facilities located in the south east of the Bexleyheath cluster.
- 6.34 The current supply of amenity green space matches the recommended local standard of 0.33 hectares per 1000 population. However, accessibility mapping highlights a number of key deficiencies in the Borough that will be returned to later when considering specific priorities in each area.
- 6.35 Consultation highlights the importance of obtaining a balance between the quality and quantity of amenity space. The existing quality of amenity spaces is variable, with provision in the Bexleyheath cluster being of particularly low quality, as shown in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 – Poor quality amenity green space in Bexleyheath cluster



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- 6.36 Site assessments highlighted that increased safety, diversity of facilities and enhanced maintenance would be of particular importance if the overall quality and value of amenity spaces was to be improved.

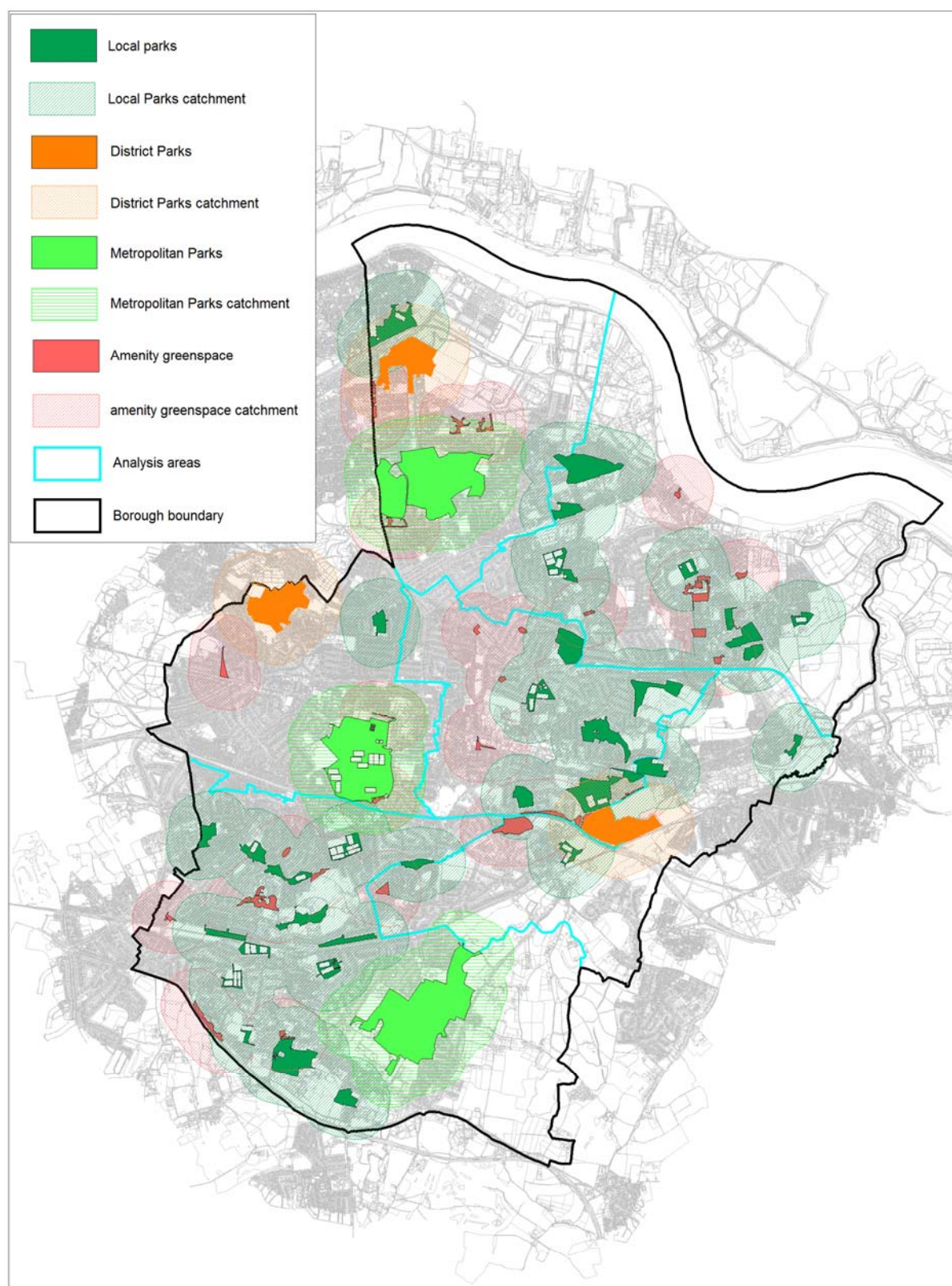
AGS1	Seek to improve the quality of amenity sites, aiming to achieve a minimum score of 67% (the score required to fall within the top quartile). Quality improvements to amenity areas are particularly important to local residents in light of the dual function of recreational and landscape values of these spaces.
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- 6.37 The breakdown of provision by clusters (Table 6.4) has revealed a requirement for further provision up to 2026 in all clusters except Sidcup and Bexleyheath, based on all five growth scenarios. Based on scenarios 1, 2a and 3a, Erith will also have adequate provision to meet future population growth. Given that accessibility to these sites is high, in most instances, qualitative improvements will be of greater benefit to the community than the provision of additional amenity sites.
- 6.38 In order to ensure the future quality of open spaces, consideration should be given to the size of sites. Smaller sites (particularly those located in proximity to larger facilities) may be of limited value to the residents and costly in terms of maintenance to the provider.
- 6.39 The most appropriate priorities for each area of the Borough are therefore discussed taking into account the relationship between quality, quantity and accessibility.
- 6.40 Map 6.1 highlights many overlapping catchments. Furthermore, while there are several large sites within the Sidcup cluster, the Bexleyheath cluster is characterised by concentrations of small sites. Only one site is above 1 ha in size.
- 6.41 Four facilities located in Bexleyheath fall within the bottom quartile in terms of the quality of provision.
- 6.42 Map 6.3 overleaf considers the interrelationship between parks and amenity green spaces.
- 6.43 As illustrated in Map 6.3 on the previous page, the majority of residents outside of the catchment of amenity spaces are within the recommended distance threshold of a park. As a higher order facility (ie one with more facilities) the presence of a local park negates the need for additional provision of amenity space for those within the catchment of the park that is recommended for amenity space (10 minutes walk time).. Given that there are some residents outside of the catchment area for provision and this is the maximum distance that residents should expect to travel, consideration should be given to new provision in areas currently devoid of amenity space.

Sidcup cluster

- 6.44 Application of the quantity standard reveals the provision of amenity green space in the Sidcup cluster is sufficient to meet current and future demand. Application of the accessibility standard further reflects this, with most residents in the area able to access an amenity green space within the recommended catchment.
- 6.45 Given the high level of provision in the Sidcup cluster (and the fact that many amenity spaces overlap with the catchment areas of local parks), sites of lower quality, particularly where they are located within an area of overlapping catchments as highlighted in Figures 6.5 and 6.6, may be of limited value to residents in their current guise. Consultation highlighted that smaller sites are also sometimes perceived to be of limited value. There may therefore be opportunities to change the use of some sites or to provide additional facilities to enhance the value of the site to local residents.

Map 6.3 – Interrelationship between parks and gardens and amenity green space



Local, district and metropolitan park
with amenity greenspace

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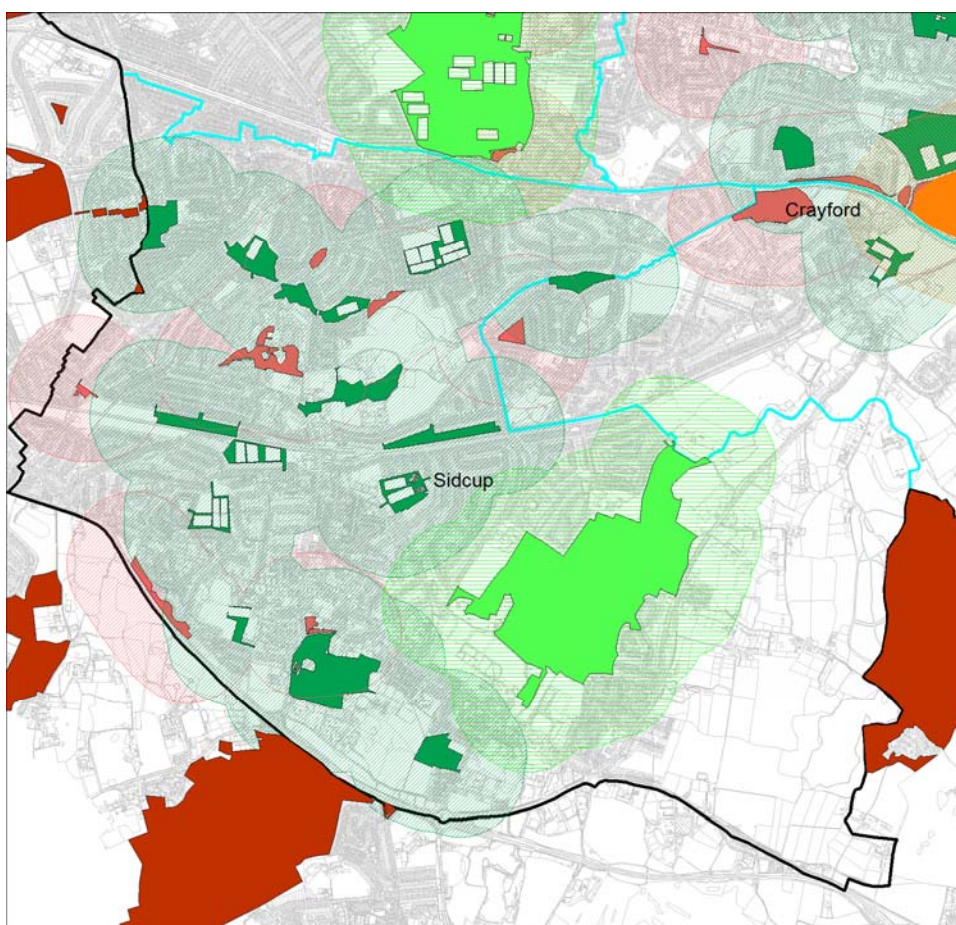
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- 6.46 Only sites with limited value to residents (ie poor quality, low accessibility and overlapping catchments) should be considered and sites should be assessed in terms of their value as other open space types prior to their loss as amenity sites.

AGS2	Consider the appropriateness of changing the use of sites in the Sidcup cluster. If it is considered to be appropriate to lose a site to development, capital received through the release of any land should be reinvested in qualitative improvements in the area.
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- 6.47 Although there is a good distribution of amenity green space, the majority of residents in Cray Meadows ward and residents located in Sidcup ward do not have access to an amenity green space. Almost all residents have access to either a park or amenity space within a 10 minute catchment area.

Figure 6.4 – Deficiency of Amenity Space in Sidcup



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- 6.48 Despite a deficiency in the provision of amenity green space in this area, analysis of the provision of parks reveals that Foots Cray Meadows is located within Cray Meadows ward – this site provides access to natural and semi natural open space as well as fulfilling the role of a park. In the absence of opportunities for new provision, linkages and access to Footscray Meadows should be maximised. The draft Public Rights of Way Access and Improvement Plan also seeks to address this issue. Local provision should still be considered for these residents. While the presence of a park does not negate the need for amenity space, it means that the shortfall is not as high a priority if there was no park either.

AGS3	Access to Foots Cray Meadows for local residents should be maximised and linkages established between local settlement areas and the access points on the site. Opportunities to provide new amenity spaces in Cray Meadows ward should be identified.
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Erith cluster

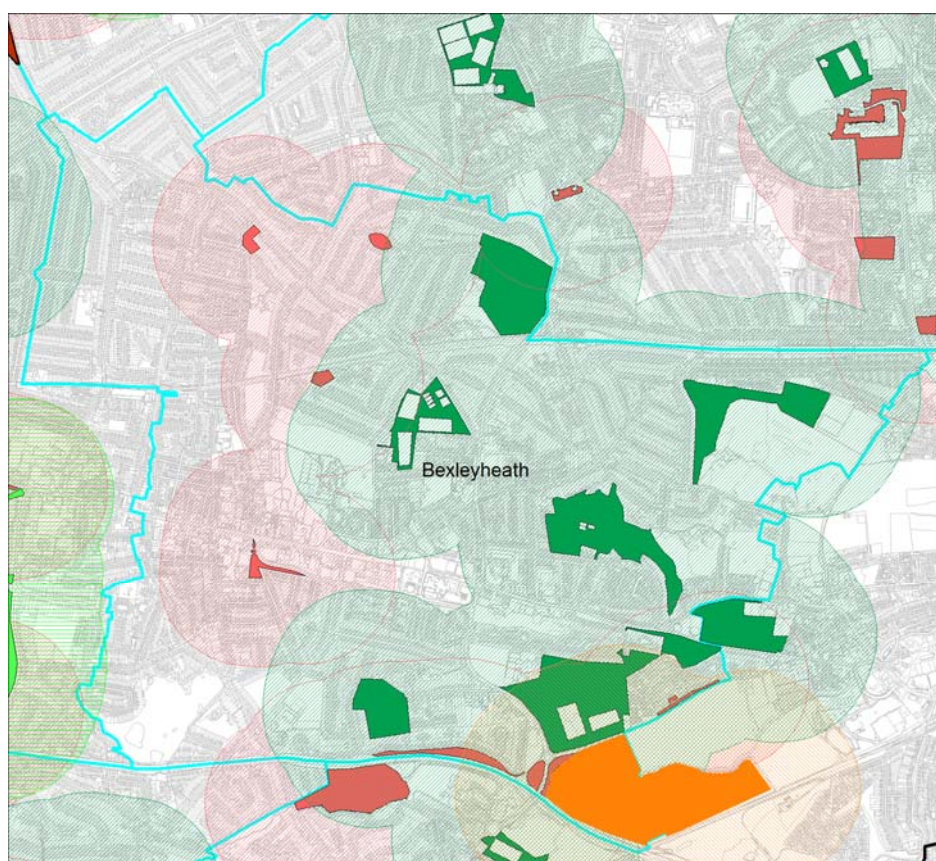
- 6.49 Application of the accessibility standard illustrates that amenity spaces are primarily distributed to the east of the Erith. Despite a good distribution of sites, a significant amount of residents in Northumberland Heath ward and some residents in Colyers ward are outside the recommended catchment for an amenity green space. The lack of amenity green space in this area is particularly important considering residents do not have access to a local park and no district or metropolitan park is located in the Erith cluster.
- 6.50 The majority of sites are located in the North End ward. A number of these sites are located in close proximity to one another, serving the same population and therefore have limited value to local residents. Only one site is located in Northumberland Heath ward and this site can only serve a small number of residents due to its small size.
- 6.51 While the majority of residents are within a 400m catchment of either a park (local, district or metropolitan) there are some residents outside of the catchment for any informal space. While the presence of a park does not negate the need for amenity space, it means that the shortfall is not as high a priority if there was no park either. Given that the 400m catchment is the maximum distance that should be expected, new provision may be required in some areas.
- 6.52 Quantity standards indicate that the current quantity of provision is sufficient to meet local needs although population growth will see shortfalls arise. Effort should focus on the enhancement of these sites, in terms of the provision of diverse facilities and maximising security and safety. The Erith Area Action Plan will provide the opportunity for the further provision of functional green space and linkages between these green spaces as the population changes.

AGS4	Enhance the network of amenity spaces in the Erith cluster through the improvement of the quality and accessibility to existing sites. Facilitate the delivery of improved open spaces through the Erith Area Action plan. Identify opportunities for new provision in areas of deficiency.
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Bexleyheath cluster

- 6.53 Analysis of amenity green space in the Bexleyheath cluster identifies that currently and in the future there is sufficient provision to meet the local standard. Application of the accessibility standard, however, illustrates that residents within the wards of Barnehurst and the west of Brampton do not have access to an amenity green space.
- 6.54 Provision is primarily located on the outskirts of the Bexleyheath cluster and the borders of the Borough. Despite the lack of local amenity space, it would appear that the majority of residents within Bexleyheath have access to larger parks within the recommended 400m catchment area although there are some residents to the far west of the area who do not.
- 6.55 The key areas of deficiency of amenity green space within the Bexleyheath Cluster is illustrated on Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5 – Deficiency of Amenity Green Space in Bexleyheath



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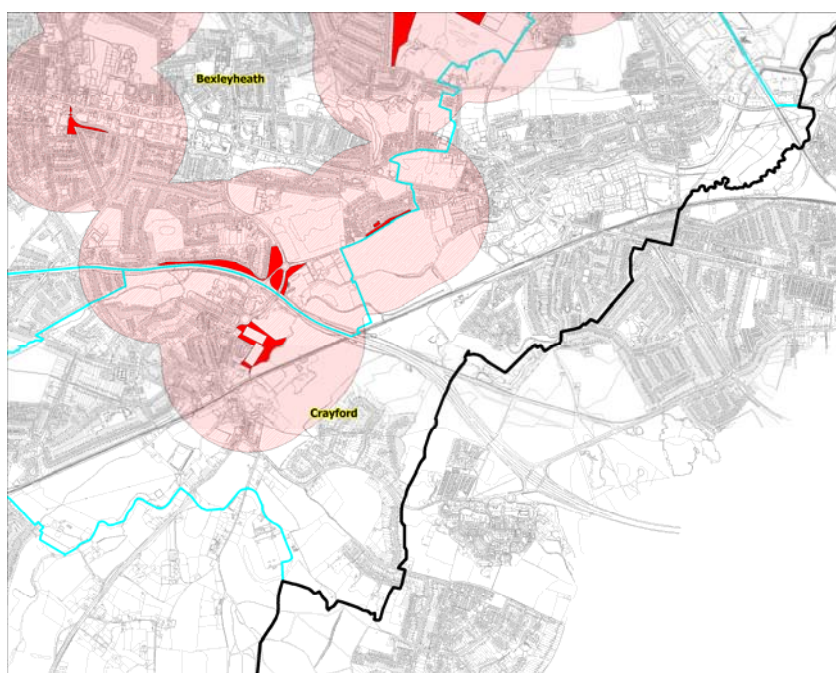
AGS5

In light of the lack of local open space in the Bexleyheath cluster, priority should be given to enhancing access to the larger open spaces in the area as well as providing linkages between existing open spaces. Address areas of deficiency should the opportunity arise.

Crayford cluster

- 6.56 Within the Crayford cluster there are quantitative shortfalls of provision and this is exacerbated by shortfalls in parks. Based on future population projections in all three growth scenarios, this deficiency will increase by 2026. Application of the accessibility standard further reflects this deficiency, with the majority of residents in the Crayford cluster unable to access an amenity green space.
- 6.57 Sites located on the borders of other clusters, such as Sidcup and Bexleyheath do serve a small amount of the population of the Crayford cluster, however these do not address key deficiencies in the Crayford ward and St Mary's. Figure 6.6 outlines shortfalls of amenity space in the Crayford area. It must be noted that Hurst Road, a small local park to some extent offsets deficiencies in this area.

Figure 6.6 – Deficiencies in Crayford cluster



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- 6.58 While consideration of the provision of parks and the role these sites play in offsetting the need for amenity space minimises the area of deficiency, there remains a segment of the Crayford ward outside of the recommended catchment. While this is perhaps not a priority in light of the proximity to the park, it is preferable that these residents have access to local open space. Despite this, residents in the north east of Crayford do not have access to a park or amenity green space and new provision should be provided.

AGS6	Provide new provision of amenity greenspace in the north east of Crayford should the opportunity arise. Should new provision not be possible, linkages between and access to existing green spaces should be maximised.
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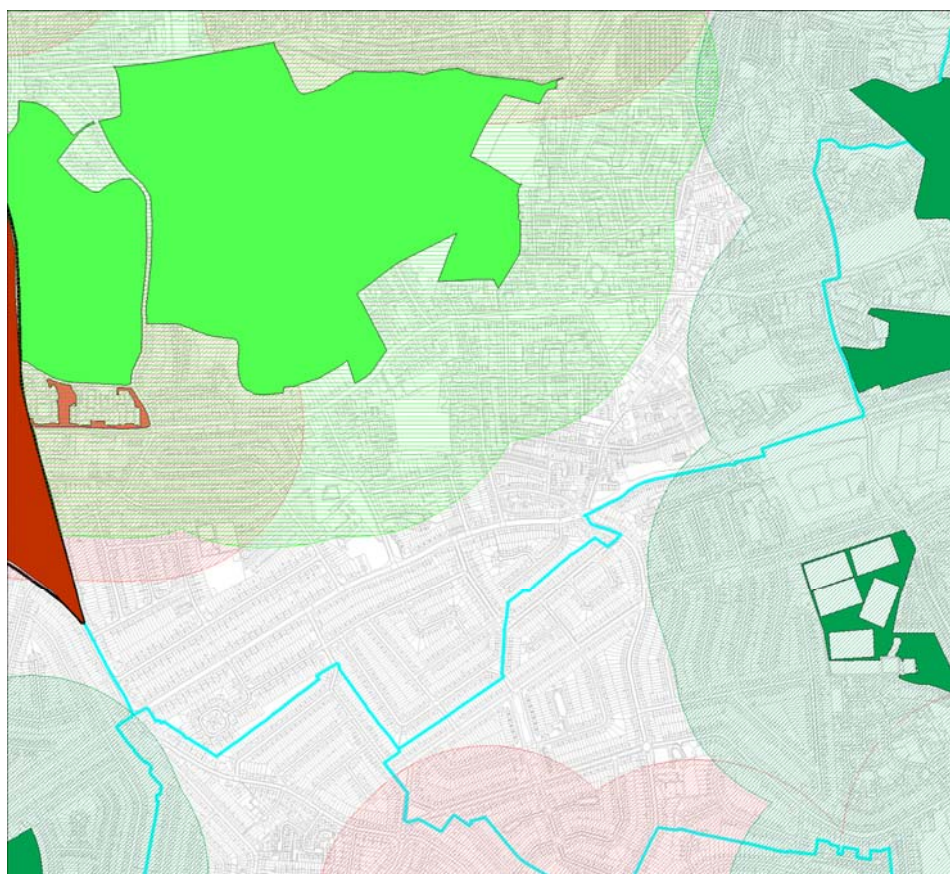
- 6.59 Other investment in the Crayford cluster should focus on improving the quality of provision.

Thamesmead cluster

- 6.60 The quantitative shortfall of amenity green space in the Thamesmead cluster is the second highest of all areas in the Borough. Application of the accessibility standard reflects this shortfall, with a large proportion of residents unable to access an amenity green space within the recommended 10 minute walk time.
- 6.61 Within the Thamesmead cluster almost all residents have access to a park within a 400m catchment. The presence of Southmere Park and Lake in the north of Thamesmead (district park) and Lesnes Abbey Woods in the south of Thamesmead (metropolitan park) negate the need for the provision of amenity green space to some extent, as they serve a large proportion of the population of the Thamesmead cluster. Combined with the current provision of amenity green space, there is a good distribution of sites serving all residents in the area. There are also three small parks which add to the provision of local open space in this area. The only area devoid of

any provision within Thamesmead is the south of the cluster. This is illustrated on figure 6.7

Figure 6.7 - Shortfalls of provision to the south of Thamesmead



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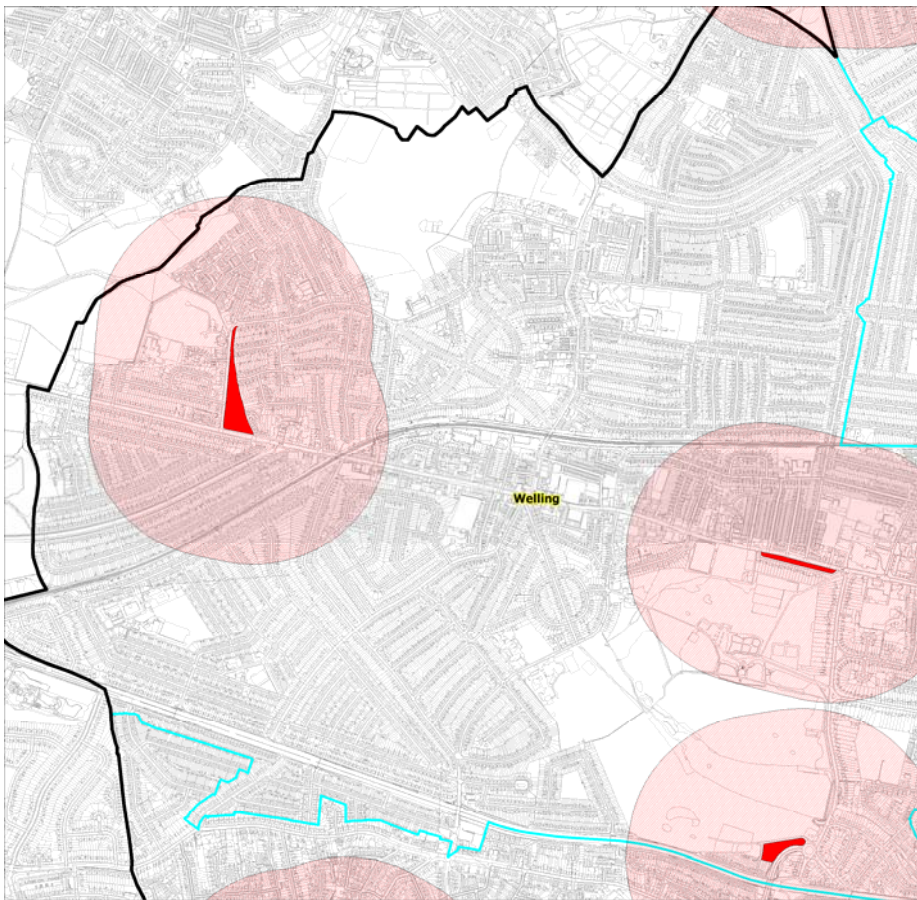
- 6.62 In consideration of the adequate provision of open space when combining parks and amenity green space, a focus on the qualitative improvement and linkages to existing open spaces in Thamesmead should be adopted.

AGS7	Use the findings of the site assessment to prioritise qualitative improvements within the Thamesmead cluster. Any improvements should take account of the quality vision. Enhancement and creation of linkages between sites should be prioritised.
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Welling cluster

- 6.63 Application of the quantity standard indicates residents in the Welling cluster have the lowest provision of amenity green space in the Borough. Accessibility mapping further illustrates this deficiency with the majority of residents in the Welling cluster are unable to access an amenity green space. Figure 6.8 illustrates this deficiency.

Figure 6.8 – Deficiencies in Welling cluster



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- 6.64 Falconwood, the Green, is located within this area of the Welling cluster and although it is considered within Section 7, facilities for young people, the amenity element of this site would offset deficiencies in this area.
- 6.65 Despite a lack of amenity green space in the cluster, Welling has a good provision of parks. Although residents in the Welling cluster do have access to Danson Park and East Wickham open space there may still be benefit from smaller and more localised provision. As highlighted, unless larger sites are located within the specified catchment for amenity green space (400m), they do not negate the need for more localised facilities. As illustrated there are a number of residents outside of the 400m catchment for provision.

Summary

- 6.66 For many residents amenity greenspace will be the most accessible form of open space provision. The value of amenity green spaces within close proximity to residents was noted through the local consultation. While amenity green space often fulfils a similar role to larger informal open spaces (eg parks and natural areas), the local nature of this type of open space is of particular importance.
- 6.67 Local consultation using a range of consultation with a broad spectrum of people highlighted the importance of the balance between quality and quantity.

- 6.68 Application of the local standards highlighted that there is an imbalance in provision, with large quantities of amenity green space in the Erith, Sidcup and Bexleyheath clusters and a more sporadic distribution elsewhere across the Borough. However, in most instances areas deficient in amenity green space have adequate provision of parks, indicating that there are good opportunities for informal recreation. Despite this, the presence of amenity space is of particular importance and residents should be within 400m of a minimum of one site.
- 6.69 While the overall direction should remain on enhancing the quality of amenity spaces (particularly with regards cleanliness and maintenance and increasing the range of facilities provided), opportunities to address the identified deficiencies should also be taken.
- 6.70 Improvement of linkages between open spaces and from settlements to existing facilities will be a future priority, particularly in areas of identified deficiency.