

### Provision for young people

#### Definition

- 8.1 PPG17 indicates that provision for young people, aged 12 to 18 years, should include equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters. These facilities are designed with the primary purpose of providing opportunities for play and social interaction.
- 8.2 The importance of appropriate provision for young people is gaining an increasingly high profile on the national agenda. Children and young people is one of the four building blocks of the Local Area Agreement, driven by the Bexley Partnership. The importance of ensuring appropriate provision for young people is reinforced in the Bexley children and young people's plan, which places an emphasis on positive involvement and partnership working with young people. The impact of a lack of facilities for young people both in terms of their development and social behaviour is recognised and well documented.
- 8.3 The Supplementary Planning Document to the London Plan states “ *all children and young people should be able to play within local neighbourhoods and have safe and attractive play spaces within walking distance of their homes. For older children and young people, having opportunities to enjoy and develop their own cultural and recreational pursuits is equally important*”. Localised provision for both children and young people is perceived to be particularly important in the context of the dense, highly urbanised London environment.
- 8.4 Play and informal recreation is also addressed in a number of the Mayor's crosscutting strategies. The overarching strategy is set out in Making London Better for All Children and Young People, but a number of other strategies are relevant, including the Mayor's Transport, Culture and Childcare Strategies and Walking Plan for London. Making Space for Londoners is an initiative of the LDA's design for London aiming to create or upgrade 100 public spaces in London. These strategies promote the wide ranging benefits of open space and set out the need to make London a more child-friendly city, including opportunities to make streets safer for children, the creation of new and diverse opportunities for play and the promotion of open space as a cultural resource for London.
- 8.5 It is important to re-iterate that play facilities designed for young people have been assessed separately to those for children (Section 7). Throughout this section the emphasis will be on young people (aged 12 to 18). Unlike the other typologies, the Borough wide population has not been used to develop the local quantity standards for the provision of children and young people. A separate calculation for the population of young people (aged 12 to 18) has been used and is broken down by clusters for current and future scenarios. An existing byelaw in Bexley prohibits older youths (14+) from using play facilities in parks.
- 8.6 Although this assessment of provision for young people considers only facilities specifically designed for the purpose of entertaining young people, it is recognised that other types of open space also fulfil this purpose, in particular parks, natural areas and sports facilities. This will be considered as part of the application phase of the local standards. Research indicates that location is one of the key determinants of the success of facilities for young people.

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- 8.7 Although this assessment focuses primarily on the provision of equipped facilities for young people, the value of youth clubs and schools offering extended curriculum hours should also not be underestimated.
- 8.8 Like the provision for children, facilities for young people extend far beyond specialist equipped facilities and youth shelters. It is therefore essential that the findings of this analysis and interpretation be considered in the context of the wider provision for young people. Improving opportunities for young people may include maximising the role of schools and the provision of alternative opportunities such as youth clubs as well as ensuring that all residents have appropriate access to specialised facilities. This is a key feature of the Bexley children and young people's plan which will be discussed in more detail later in this section.
- 8.9 The strategic context of the provision for young people across the Borough is discussed in more detail in Table 8.1 overleaf.

**Table 8.1 – Provision for Young People - Local Strategic Context**

Document Reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to Open Space Strategy and PPG17 Assessment
Bexley Local Area Agreement 2007 – 2010	The Local Area Agreement (LAA) identifies children and young people as one of the four key building blocks. This ensures that provision for children and young people remains a key priority of the Council.	Local consultation will identify the key issues regarding provision for children and young people. This study will support the achievement of some of the key objectives of the LAA.
Children and Youth Play Policy and Strategy	<p>The play strategy supports the development of play for all children and young people.</p> <p>The key priorities for the Borough are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>challenge current provision</li> <li>raise the profile of play</li> <li>promote a more co-ordinated approach to the provision of services</li> <li>enable a more strategic approach to the provision of play in the Borough</li> <li>contribute to enhancing protective factors and reducing risk factors associated with social exclusion.</li> </ul> <p>The primary aim of the play policy is to increase the quantity and enhance the quality of play opportunities in the Borough</p> <p>The specific objectives of the play policy of relevance to this study are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>raise the awareness of the importance of play</li> <li>ensure the involvement of children and young people in the design and delivery of the play strategy</li> <li>provide a service that is inclusive and responsive to local needs</li> <li>promote good quality play services.</li> </ul>	<p>The study will support the development of young people by targeting the correct provision of high quality, accessible facilities.</p> <p>The findings of the study are based on an assessment of local need which included specific consultation with young people and children. The study will therefore ensure that a service is provided that is inclusive and responsible to local need.</p> <p>The local quantity standard will challenge current play provision and the audit will provide an overview to promote a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to provision for young people. Good quality play facilities will be promoted through the local quality standard.</p> <p>The provision of open space provides opportunities for social interaction, therefore</p>

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Document Reviewed	Summary of key strategic drivers	Links to Open Space Strategy and PPG17 Assessment
	<p>Recommendations for action of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• strategic development of service</li><li>• enhance children and young people's participation</li><li>• access to quality play</li><li>• freedom to play and play for its own sake</li><li>• equality and inclusion</li><li>• the importance of risk and safety in play activity</li><li>• play and formal education</li><li>• monitoring, review and evaluation.</li></ul>	reducing social exclusion.
Bexley Talk Back Survey 2006 – Parks and Open Spaces	<p>36% of respondents to the survey stated they do not visit play areas for children and teenagers. Only 9% of residents indicated they visit once a week.</p> <p>The majority of respondents to the survey felt the provision of play areas for children and teenagers was not enough (29%). 27% of respondents stated provision was about right.</p> <p>The quality of play areas for children and teenager was considered to be average, with 31% of respondents neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the current quality of provision. 21% of respondents were fairly satisfied.</p> <p>The most common travel method used to access a children's play area was walking (23%). A journey time of 5 minutes was expected when accessing a play area for children and teenagers (17%). 14% of respondents expected a journey time of 10 minutes.</p>	

### Assessing local needs - consultation

- 8.10 Consultation was undertaken with local residents in order to establish need for young people. Young people were also consulted directly through the IT Young People survey in order to ensure that their viewpoint was heard. In addition, consideration was given to the key findings of consultations undertaken through the development of the Bexley Children and Young People's plan.
- 8.11 Local standards have been derived directly from the findings of consultation, ensuring that they are representative of the needs of young people in Bexley. Provision for young people was one of the overriding themes throughout consultation. Key findings included:
- analysis of responses from the household survey reveals that the majority of residents feel the quantity of facilities for young people is insufficient (70%). This dissatisfaction is the most conclusive of all typologies

- results within the clusters are consistent with the overall findings with over 63% of respondents in each area indicating that there is not enough provision for young people
- there is a general consensus that current provision is aimed at very young children and that there are no facilities to meet the needs of young people. This was raised in the household survey as well as being a recurring theme at drop in sessions. There is a strong desire for a skate park in Sidcup
- consultation indicated that the quality of facilities for young people is rated poor by 43% of household survey respondents. This is higher than for any of the other typologies and in depth analysis suggests that this may be influenced by the perception that there is insufficient provision
- like perceptions regarding the quantity of provision, dissatisfaction with the quality of provision is consistent across all of the clusters
- safety concerns surrounding existing sites are perceived to inhibit the use of many facilities for young people. Riverside Walk MUGA was highlighted as a key example of this. The overall consensus was that the lack of provision for young people was linked to vandalism and large groups congregating, intimidating local residents or visitors who may want to use both the sites for young people or adjacent sites
- 69% of respondents stated that walking would be the preferred option when travelling to this type of open space indicating that facilities are expected in close proximity to the home. Of those respondents who would expect to walk to facilities – the most commonly held expectation is that this journey should take 5-10 minutes (66%).

### Quantity of provision

- 8.12 The quantity of provision of facilities for young people in the Borough is summarised in Table 8.2 overleaf. In light of guidance outlined within the London children and Recreation SPG, provision for young people and children has been considered in terms of the number of facilities, rather than the size of facilities.

**Table 8.2 – Provision of young people’s facilities across London Borough of Bexley**

Cluster	Current provision	Provision per 1000 of 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	3	1.0691	1.1207	1.1304	1.1304	1.0937	1.1304
Crayford	4	2.3068	2.1379	1.9930	2.0131	1.8648	2.0131
Erith	4	1.0524	1.0317	1.0078	0.8117	0.9723	0.7303
Sidcup	2	0.4545	0.4788	0.4844	0.4980	0.4660	0.4980
Thamesmead	4	1.3197	1.3076	1.3741	1.3736	1.3741	1.3324
Welling	3	0.7628	0.8385	0.8441	0.8616	0.8069	0.8616
Overall	20	1.0150	1.0396	1.0404	1.0011	1.0039	0.9700

- 8.13 The key issues emerging from Table 8.2 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision for young people across the Borough include:
- numerically, provision is evenly spread across the Borough, with all areas containing at least two facilities. This concurs with the household survey which suggests that opinions are consistent across the Borough with an overwhelming majority perceiving provision to be insufficient
  - provision is lowest in the Sidcup cluster with only two facilities (Willersley Park and Parish Wood Park young people facilities). Perhaps surprisingly, satisfaction in the Sidcup cluster was higher than many other areas of the Borough according to the household survey. Despite this, 69% indicated that there were not enough facilities and a further 11% that provision was only nearly sufficient. This suggests an overall negative perception of the quantity of facilities, which was supported by the drop in session in the area where several concerns were raised regarding the need for additional facilities for young people
  - in contrast, provision is highest in the Thamesmead, Crayford and Erith clusters, each containing four facilities. Despite this higher level of provision, consultation highlights dissatisfaction with the level current of provision, this is consistent across all the clusters
  - overall, there are currently 1.01 facilities per 1000 young people. Future population projections for scenarios 1 and 2a show this will increase in the future suggesting that the overall proportion of young people in the Borough will decline. However, based on the high growth scenarios 3a and b there will be 1 facility per 1000 young people by 2026 (3a) and 0.97 facilities (3b) as these scenarios will generate a higher proportion of young people
  - the Crayford cluster currently has the greatest provision per 1000 children. Analysis of the potential implications of the future growth scenarios show that this will remain regardless of which growth scenario is implemented.

### **Setting provision standards - Quantity**

- 8.14 The Mayor's Guide to Preparing Play Strategies highlights the need to develop standards for play provision locally with an emphasis on quality and accessibility as opposed to overly prescriptive measures of mere quantity. This reflects Government policy guidance on recreation and open space (PPG17) which recognises that it is important to modify standards to reflect local need, identifying that consultation on children's play needs and consideration of the socio-economic context of an area will enable Boroughs to adapt measures accordingly.
- 8.15 The recommended local quantity standard for young people's provision has been summarised below. Full justifications for the local standards are provided within Appendices E - H. This standard is based on the results of local consultation.
- 8.16 The London SPG for provision for children and young people highlights the benefits of setting standards, specifically to:
- give clarity to developers, local authorities, housing bodies and other play providers
  - be flexible and responsive to needs and circumstances by taking into account local population characteristics, existing play provision and the needs of different age groups
  - assist in identifying needs for play provision and how this could be accommodated

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- provide guidance on how to calculate the requirement for play and open space for any development and a framework which can be easily applied to housing proposals to ensure adequate on and off-site provision is made to meet the demand created by the development
  - take into account parks and open spaces that offer good play opportunities and potential for multi-functional use even if they do not at present include formal play provision
  - encourage and make the case for more innovative approaches to play provision in terms of facilities, location, accessibility, design and management
  - address issues of accessibility to new and existing facilities and the critical issue of site location
  - provide best practice guidance on how to use resources cost effectively and secure adequate revenue streams for maintenance and upkeep including developer contributions.
- 8.17 In line with the SPG on recreational provision for children and young people, local standards take into account the number of young people in the area and the age profile of these young people. In order to produce an overall Borough wide standard, analysis has been undertaken at a Borough wide level and full details are provided in Appendix E. Specific analysis should be undertaken in the instances of new development or creation of new facilities to determine the exact requirements for both children and young people.
- 8.18 The London Plan SPG suggests that 10sqm per person should be dedicated to provision for young people (this does not focus exclusively on facilities for young people and includes amenity areas) however it provides an indication as to the level of provision that can be expected. The SPG recognises that national standards require a significantly higher level of provision than is practical or desirable.

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

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
<b>1.01 facilities per 1000 young people</b>	<b>1.15 facilities per 1000 young people</b>
Justification	
<p>Insufficient provision of young people's facilities was a key theme raised throughout consultation. The dissatisfaction with the provision of this typology was the most conclusive of all typologies. The lack of provision and lack of appropriate provision was acknowledged to have a negative effect on other typologies in the Borough, for example children's play areas.</p> <p>The local standard has been set above the existing level of provision to address the need for the increased provision of young people's facilities. Combined with the accessibility standard, this will allow the identification of any locational deficiencies in the Borough and establish priorities for increased provision.</p> <p>Although setting the standard at this level will prioritise the provision of new facilities, the Council should be aware of the requirement to enhance the quality of facilities in the Borough. This is particularly important, considering the quality of young people's facilities was considered to be poor by respondents to the household survey.</p>	

### Quality of provision

- 8.19 The quality of existing provision for young people in the Borough has been commented on through the consultation process and as part of the site assessments.
- 8.20 The key issues emerging from the consultation and site assessments relating to the quality of facilities for young people are:
- safety and maintenance concerns
  - general perception that the quality is average and in need of improvement
  - facilities not fit for purpose – age specific
  - a lack of variety
  - a lack of consultation leads to 'boring' facilities.

### Setting provision standards – quality

- 8.21 The recommended local quality vision for equipped provision for young people is been summarised overleaf. Full justification is provided in Appendix G.

### Quality Standard (Appendix G)

Recommended standards	
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:	
Essential	Desirable
Good Access	Clean/Litter Free
Range of facilities	On site security
Well laid out	Changing facilities

### Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 8.22 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing opportunities for 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.
- 8.23 Local access to provision for young people is particularly important in order to promote use of the site and the SPG for provision for young people in London highlights that location is the most important determinant of usage.
- 8.24 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the programme of site visits where information and signage, transport and general issues were assessed.
- 8.25 Consultation and analysis highlights that the key issues with regards accessibility of provision for young people include:
- consultation indicated that there is an expectation that facilities for young people will be within walking distance of their home – 69% of residents expected that facilities should be accessible on foot
  - expectations in the different geographical areas of the Borough were varied. In particular, residents in the Sidcup and Thamesmead clusters are only prepared to travel for 10 minutes whereas in the Welling cluster, there is a willingness of walking up to 19 minutes to reach a facility

- the location of facilities and proximity to the home was perceived to be a key factor influencing the use of facilities
  - access to facilities for young people was perceived to be inhibited by safety factors. In some instances, young people felt intimidated by rival groups at current facilities.
- 8.26 The London SPG sets out three suggested catchments for the provision of facilities for young people indicating that young people should expect to access a facility within 800m of their home. This may not necessarily include equipped provision but may take the form of informal play opportunities provided by parks or amenity spaces.
- 8.27 PPG17 advocates the importance of the development of local standards. A local provision standard for young people has therefore been considered. While this relates just to equipped facilities for young people, consideration will be given to wider opportunities for play provided by other open space types during the application of the standard.
- 8.28 The recommended local accessibility standard for provision for young people has been summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

### Accessibility Standard (Appendix H)

Recommended standard
<b>15 minutes walk (720 metres)</b>
Justification
<p>The majority of people stated that walking is the most preferred method of travel to a young person's facility; therefore it is recommended that a walk time standard be adopted. A walk time is considered most appropriate as these facilities are for young people who do not always have access to a motorised vehicle and consequently a walk time enables access for all ages and users. Provision of localised facilities meets the needs of young people as identified within the IT Young People survey and drop in sessions.</p> <p>The recommended standard of 15 minutes walk time is in line with the 75% threshold level. Setting a local standard at this level will highlight deficiencies in the area and allow young people's facilities to be provided in larger more strategic sites, such as parks.</p> <p>The London Mayors SPG recommends an 800 metre catchment. Setting a standard below this emphasises the councils commitment to improving the quantity of provision.</p>

### Applying provision standards

- 8.29 The application of the recommended quality, quantity 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.
- 8.30 It is essential to consider first the equipped provision for young people in isolation and then to take into account the interrelationship between equipped provision and other types of open space.



- 8.31 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 much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately. The application of these standards is set out in Table 8.3 overleaf.
- 8.32 The findings of the application of these standards should complement the principles set out in the play strategy and the Young People's plan and inform future decision-making.

**Table 8.3 – Application of quantity standard for equipped provision for young people**

Cluster	Current Provision Measured Against Local standard	Scenario 1 Future balanced against local standard (1.15 facilities per 1000 population)	Scenario 2a Future balanced against local standard (1.15 facilities per 1000 population)	Scenario 2b Future balanced against local standard (1.15 facilities per 1000 population)	Scenario 3a Future balanced against local standard (1.15 facilities per 1000 population)	Scenario 3b Future balanced against local standard (1.15 facilities per 1000 population)
Bexleyheath	-0.23	-0.08	-0.05	-0.05	-0.15	-0.05
Crayford	2.01	1.85	1.69	1.71	1.53	1.71
Erith	-0.37	-0.46	-0.56	-1.67	-0.73	-2.30
Sidcup	-3.06	-2.80	-2.75	-2.62	-2.94	-2.62
Thamesmead	0.51	0.48	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.55
Welling	-1.52	-1.11	-1.09	-1.00	-1.28	-1.00
Overall	-2.66	-2.12	-2.11	-2.98	-2.91	-3.71

Green = above the minimum standard; Red = below the minimum standard

- 8.33 The application of the local standard for quantity results in the following headline issues:
- there is an overall shortfall of provision across the Borough indicating that new facilities are required
  - based on the existing population of young people in the Borough, in quantitative terms, provision is unevenly distributed with existing shortfalls in the Bexleyheath, Erith, Welling and Sidcup clusters. Provision in the Sidcup cluster is significantly below the recommended minimum standard (and as highlighted earlier also contains the lowest amount of facilities), with an existing shortfall of 3.06 facilities. With the exception of the Welling and clusters, shortfalls in the other clusters do not exceed one facility
  - in contrast, provision exceeds the minimum standard in the Crayford and Thamesmead clusters
  - the current shortfall in provision is –2.66 facilities. Based on scenario one population projections this is set to decrease to –2.12 facilities by 2026. This is because the proportion of young people in the area would decrease
  - in light of projected increases in population, growth scenario 3b is likely to generate the greatest shortfalls in provision for young people (-3.71 facilities)

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- only the Crayford and Thamesmead clusters have sufficient provision to meet the current and future needs of young people in all growth scenarios. Additional provision would therefore be required in all other areas. This is particularly apparent in the areas that will be increase significantly in population if growth was to be focused around the Thames Gateway.

8.34 In light of the local nature of facilities for young people, consideration has been given to the application of the quantity standard at a ward level. This further highlights shortfalls and surpluses and provides specific details as to where shortfalls are located. The application of the local quantity standard by ward is set out below in Table 8.4.

**Table 8.4 – Provision of facilities for young people by ward – current population**

Ward	Population	Provision for teenagers (facilities)	Local Standard (fa/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
St Michael's	1049	0	1.15	0	1.2064	-1.20635
Sidcup	917	0	1.15	0	1.0546	-1.05455
Danson Park	895	0	1.15	0	1.0293	-1.02925
Longlands	675	0	1.15	0	0.7763	-0.77625
Thamesmead East	1056	1	1.15	0.9469697	1.2144	-0.2144
Lesnes Abbey	1049	1	1.15	0.9532888	1.2064	-0.20635
Northumberland Heath	988	1	1.15	1.0121457	1.1362	-0.1362
Falconwood & Welling	977	1	1.15	1.0235415	1.1236	-0.12355
Blackfen and Lamorbey	971	1	1.15	1.0298661	1.1167	-0.11665
Brampton	963	1	1.15	1.0384216	1.1075	-0.10745
Barnehurst	955	1	1.15	1.0471204	1.0983	-0.09825
Cray Meadows	936	1	1.15	1.0683761	1.0764	-0.0764
Belvedere	926	1	1.15	1.0799136	1.0649	-0.0649
North End	910	1	1.15	1.0989011	1.0465	-0.0465
Blendon and Penhill	901	1	1.15	1.1098779	1.0362	-0.03615
Christchurch	888	1	1.15	1.1261261	1.0212	-0.0212
St Mary's	842	1	1.15	1.1876485	0.9683	0.0317
Erith	835	1	1.15	1.1976048	0.9603	0.03975
Colyers	1068	2	1.15	1.8726592	1.2282	0.7718
East Wickham	1012	2	1.15	1.9762846	1.1638	0.8362
Crayford	892	2	1.15	2.2421525	1.0258	0.9742

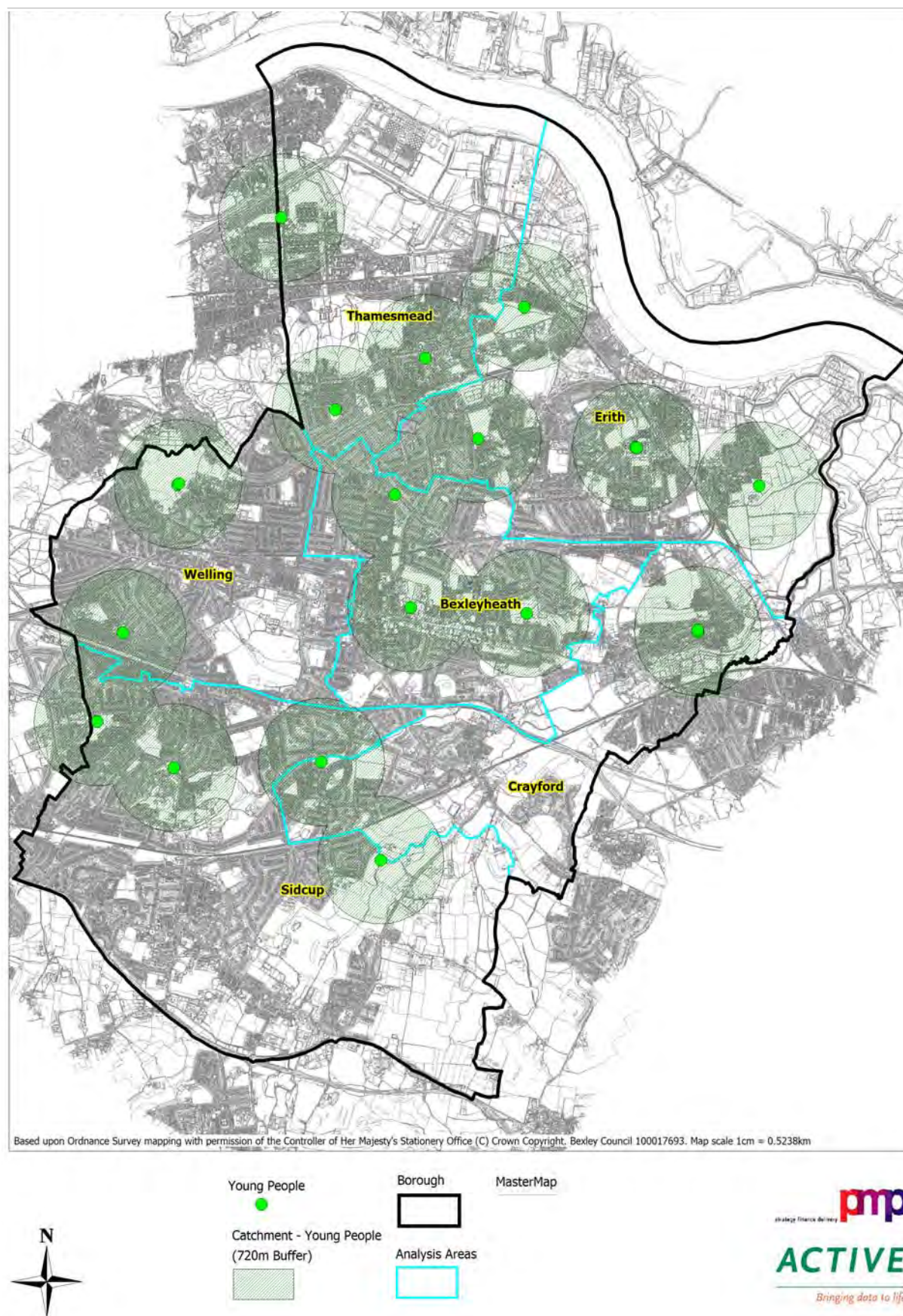
8.35 Table 8.4 illustrates that there are only 5 wards where the level of provision for young people is sufficient to meet local needs. The wards that contain the largest deficiencies per 1000 population aged between 12 and 18 are:

- St Michael's (-1.2 facilities)
- Sidcup (-1.05 facilities)
- Danson Park (-1.02 facilities)
- Longlands (-0.77 facilities).

8.36 Map 8.1 overleaf illustrates the application of the recommended 720m catchment area for young people.

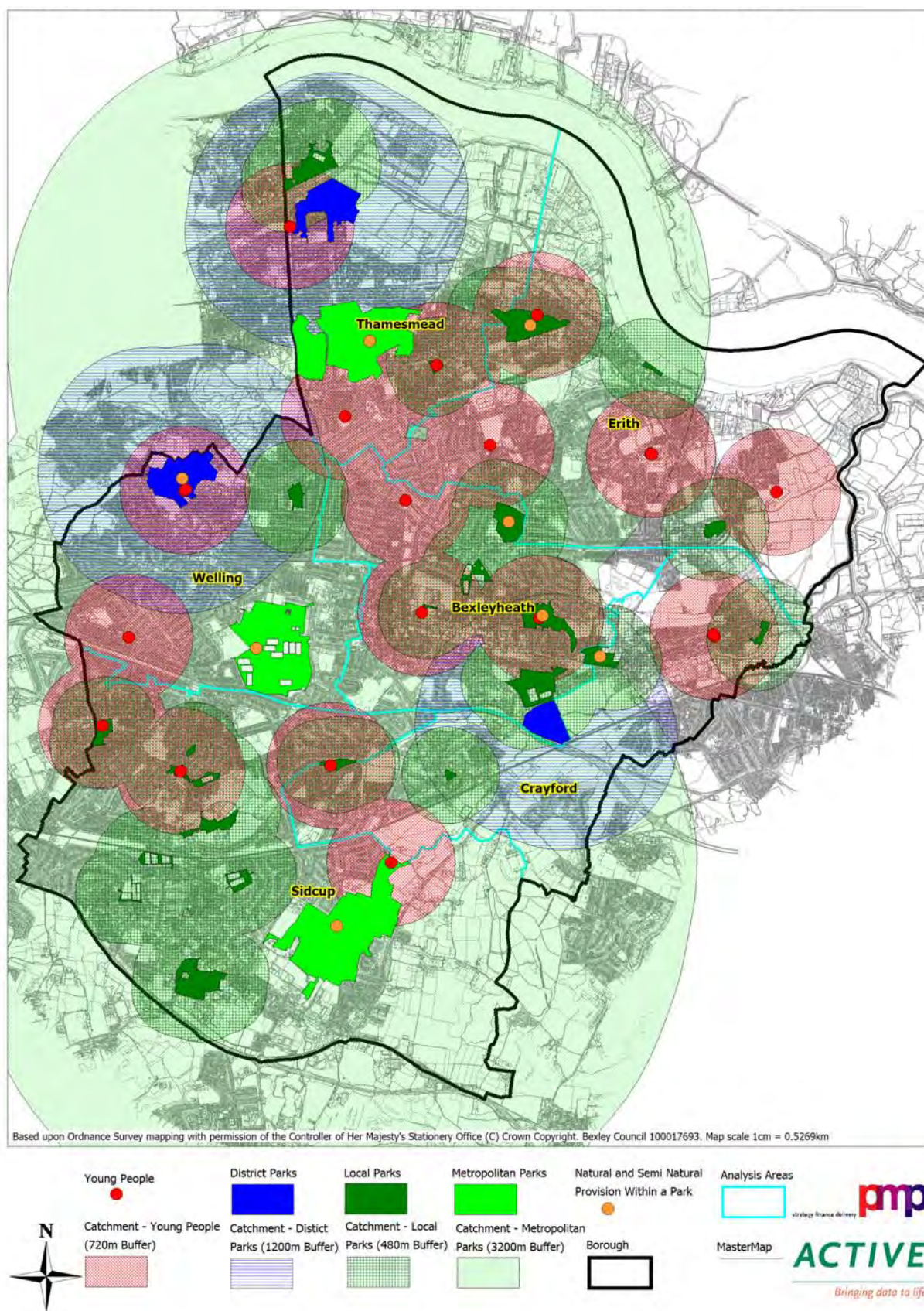
- 8.37 It can be seen that while facilities for young people are evenly distributed across the Borough, there remain many areas where residents are outside the recommended distance threshold. This echoes the findings of the consultation phase, where many residents indicated that they had insufficient local access to facilities for young people.
- 8.38 While there are clear gaps in provision, it is clear from map 8.1 that few facilities have overlapping catchments. This suggests that all facilities within the Borough are likely to be valuable to local residents.
- 8.39 While this section focuses primarily on equipped areas for young people, it is also essential to consider the role that informal open spaces (such as parks and amenity spaces) play in offsetting the need for the provision of specialist facilities. This is particularly important in Bexley as there is currently a byelaw prohibiting young people over 14 from using equipped provision in parks.
- 8.40 Areas deficient in both amenity space and formal facilities should be a particular priority for new provision. These areas will be highlighted later in this section when considering the key issues in each cluster. Research undertaken by the Council demonstrates that the specific location of facilities is also of importance to young people. While young people are willing to venture further than children to use appropriate facilities, they are unlikely to travel outside areas that they consider to be their territory. This will be of particular importance when planning the location of new facilities.
- 8.41 The provision of parks and amenity green space in relation to facilities for young people is set out overleaf in Maps 8.2 and 8.3. The importance of wider opportunities for social interaction and play is a key theme of the Bexley Young People's plan and play strategy.

**Map 8.1 – Provision of facilities for young people in London Borough of Bexley**



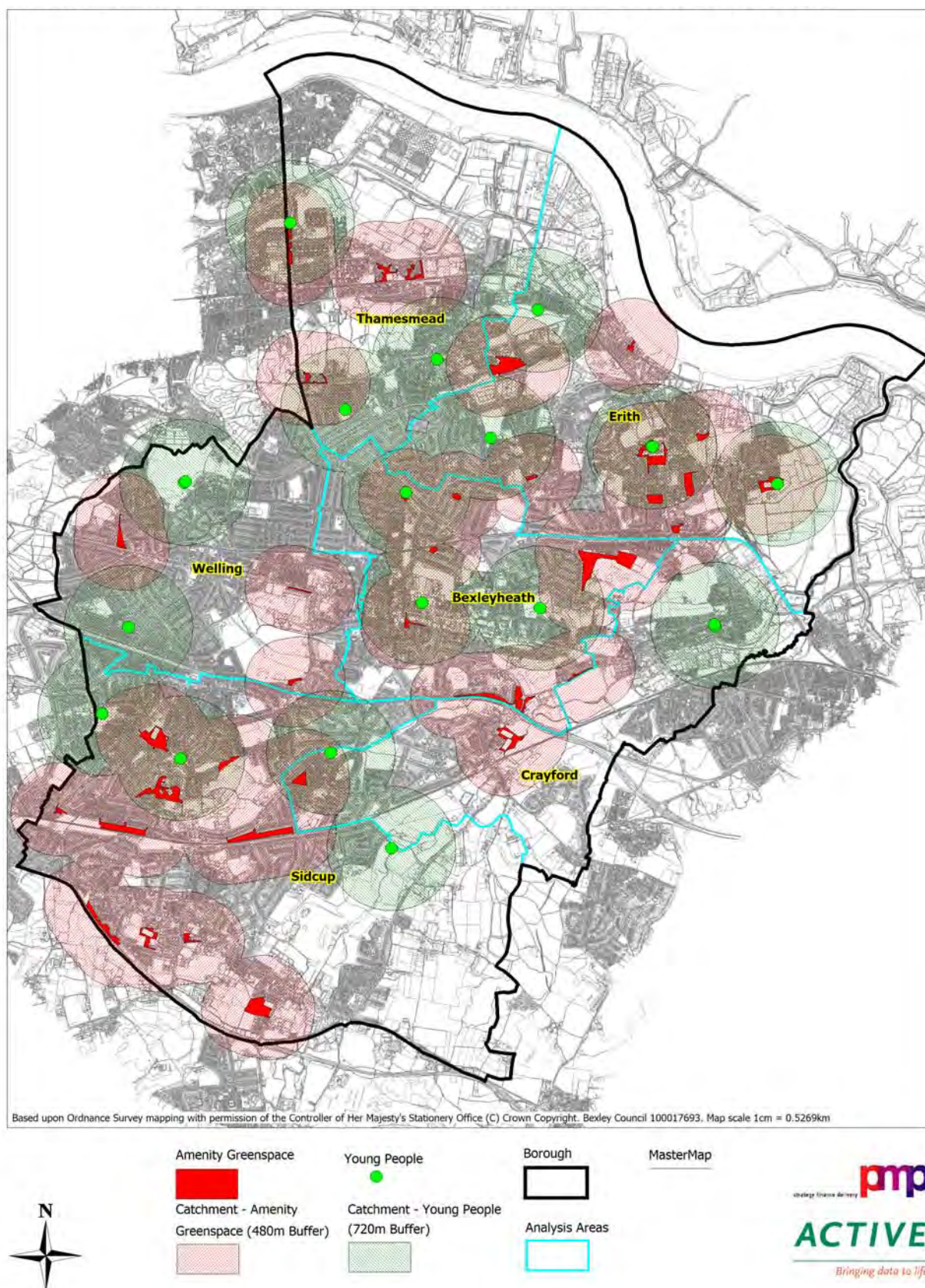


Map 8.2 – Interrelationship between parks and facilities for young people





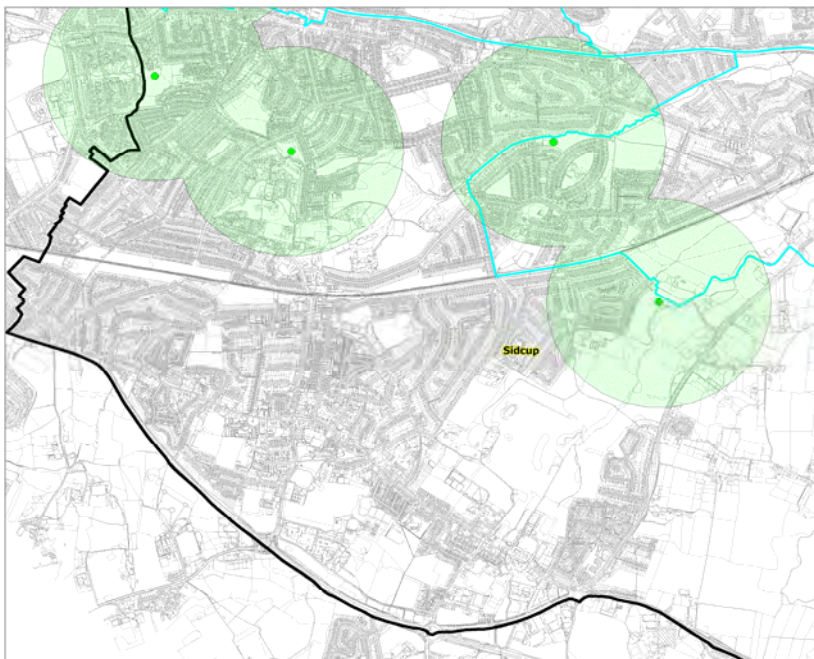
Map 8.3 – Interrelationship between amenity spaces and facilities for young people





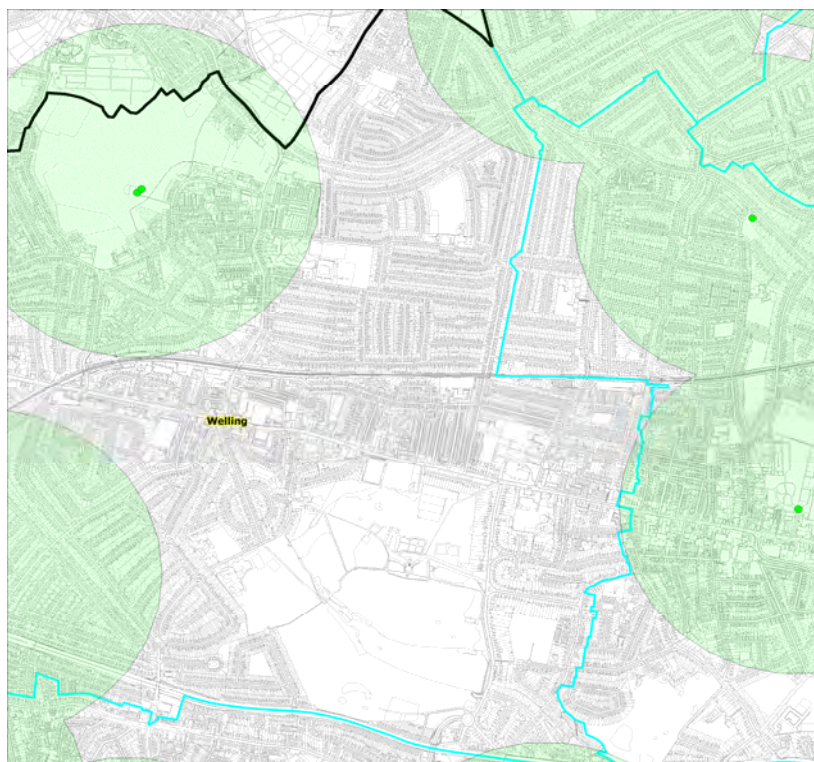
- 8.42 Map 8.1 illustrates a poor distribution of facilities for young people, with the majority of sites concentrated in the north of the Borough. Although a number of pockets of deficiency exist in the north, the key areas of deficiency are located in the south of the Sidcup cluster, east of the Welling cluster and central of the Crayford cluster. Figures 8.1 – 8.3 below highlight these deficiencies.

**Figure 8.1 – Deficiencies in the south of the Sidcup cluster**



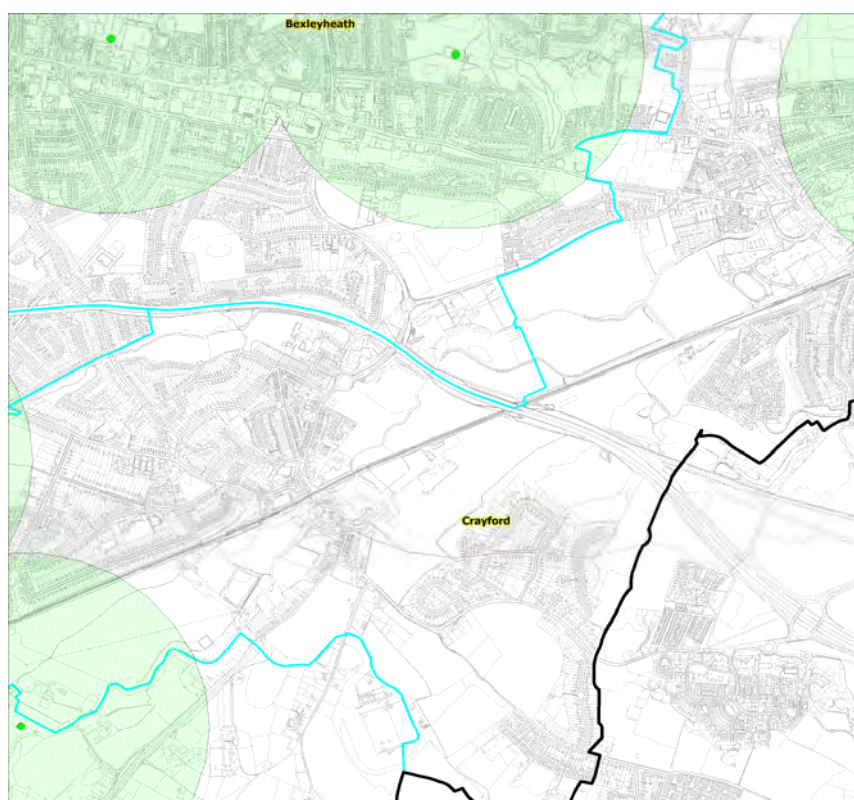
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**Figure 8.2 – Deficiencies in the east of the Welling cluster**



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**Figure 8.3 – Deficiencies in the central of the Crayford cluster**



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- 8.43 While the quantity of provision (and access to local provision) was the overriding theme of consultations, the quality of provision was also considered to be important, and many existing facilities were criticised for the lack of innovative and exciting play opportunities. Challenging existing play opportunities was a key theme of the Children and Young People's plan. Involvement of young people at an early stage, and throughout is seen as critical in the development of appropriate play provision.

<b>YP1</b>	<p>Involve young people in the future design, build and maintenance programme for facilities for young people ensuring that facilities are tailored to the needs and desires of young people in a particular area.</p> <p>Involving young people in consultation will ensure a diverse range of provision across the Borough that meets local needs.</p>
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- 8.44 In light of the consultation and site assessment findings both the quantity and quality of facilities needs to be improved. Effective management and redevelopment of existing sites alongside community involvement in new projects are key areas.

<b>YP2</b>	<p>In light of consultation findings, which highlighted that a lack of respect is a key issue for provision for young people in Bexley, consideration should be given to the involvement of young people in enhancements to facilities to generate a sense of ownership.</p>
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- 8.45 It is essential to ensure that any new facilities meet the needs of local residents and meet the local standards the Council and its partners are striving to achieve.



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Guidance on the expected quality standards should be set out within a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

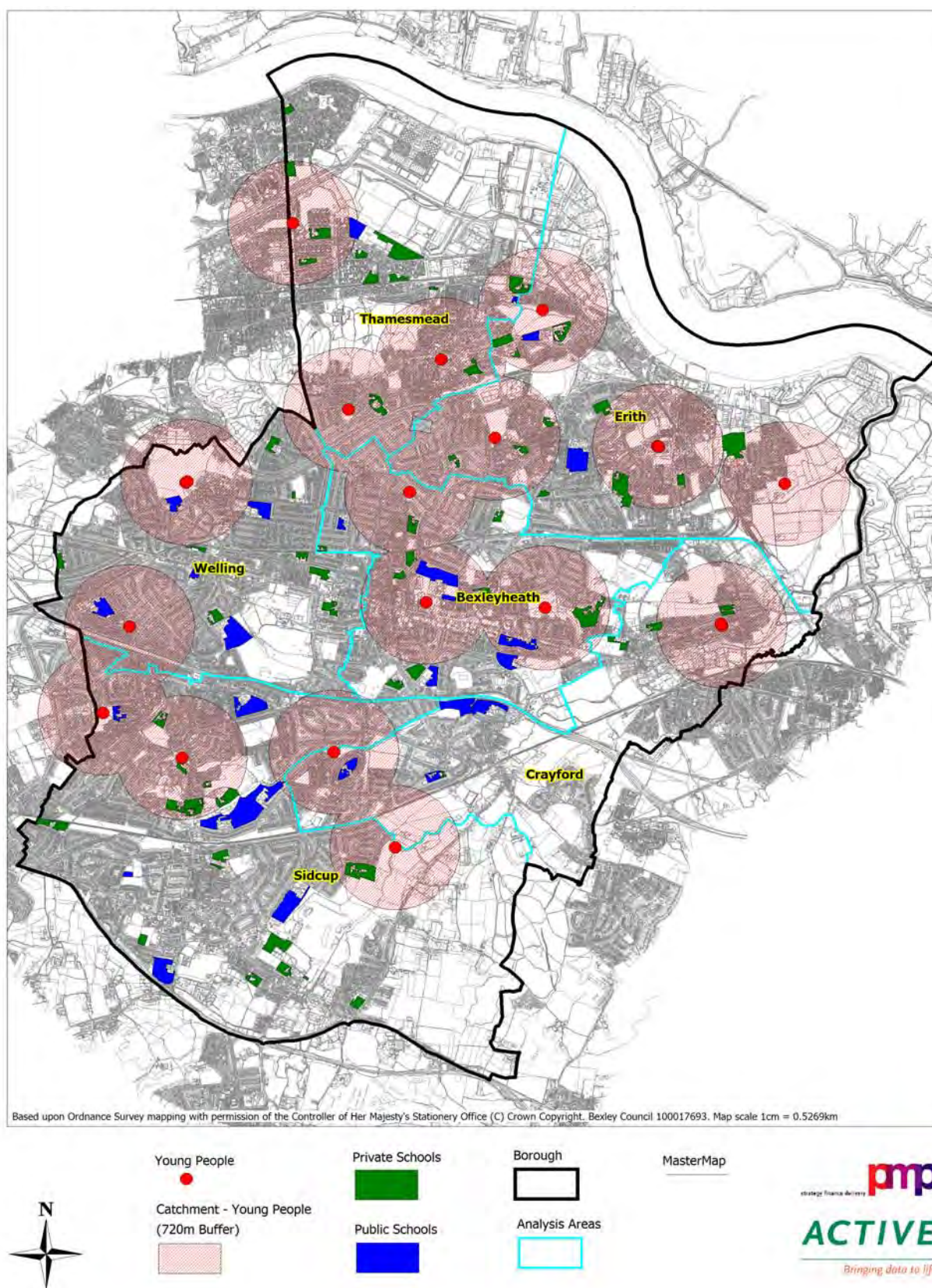
<b>YP3</b>	Any new facilities should aim to contain the quality standard features. Provision of a range of facilities and effective maintenance were perceived to be of particular importance.
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- 8.46 While analysis in this section to date has highlighted issues relating to quality, quantity and accessibility in isolation, in order to effectively identify priorities and opportunities for improvement it is essential to consider quality, quantity and accessibility issues in the context of each other.
- 8.47 In light of the localised nature of play provision, consideration has been given to priorities within each cluster. Calculations regarding the level of provision at a ward level further inform priorities. In addition to the identification of current issues, the potential implication of the five key growth scenarios is also discussed.
- 8.48 Given the overriding concerns regarding the quantity of provision for young people and the resulting shortfalls in provision illustrated in Table 8.3, new facilities will be a key element of the future delivery of facilities for young people. In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at those areas outside the distance threshold where there are sufficient people to justify new provision. Consideration should be given not just to access to equipped provision for young people, but also to the play opportunities provided by amenity spaces and parks. Only parks/amenity areas within the recommended catchment for facilities for young people (720m) would be considered to reduce the need for specialist facilities.
- 8.49 The need to provide localised facilities is further emphasised by recent research undertaken by the Council, which highlights that although young people are willing to travel further, they will not travel outside of their local territory. Consideration should be given to this issue when identifying appropriate locations for new facilities.
- 8.50 Schools provide a significant opportunity for partnership working in the delivery of provision for young people and are also central to the focus of the Bexley Children and Young People's plan. The Building Schools for the Future and extended schools programmes offer the opportunity to locate facilities that can be beneficial to the curriculum as well as meeting the needs of young people outside of school hours. Two schools in Bexley are anticipated to include new MUGAs following the refurbishment programme. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of delivering new sites in partnership with schools, to maximise usage of the facilities and ensure best possible use of resources.

<b>YP4</b>	Investigate opportunities to deliver new facilities for young people at school sites. These facilities would meet the needs of the community at the same time as providing curricular benefit, optimising the use of resources.
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- 8.51 Provision for young people is illustrated overleaf on Map 8.4 in the context of school facilities. This highlights where facilities at school sites could play a key role in addressing deficiencies. These opportunities will be discussed as part of the geographical analysis within this section.

Map 8.4 - Provision for young people in the context of school sites

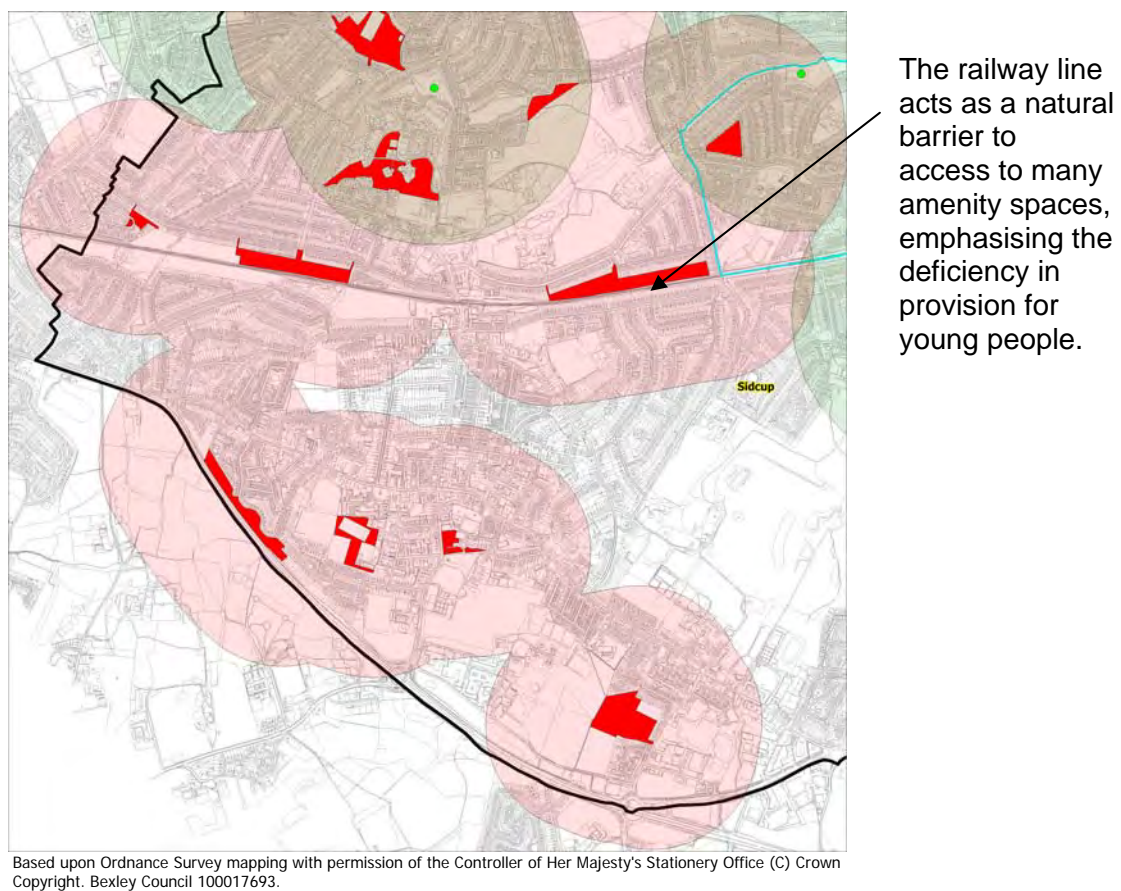




### Sidcup cluster

- 8.52 As discussed, analysis of the quantitative standards indicates that the Sidcup cluster has the greatest deficiency in existing provision for young people (3.06 facilities) across the Borough. Application of the accessibility standard reinforces this as numerous residents are outside of the recommended catchment area for facilities for young people, specifically residents in Sidcup Town and Longlands (shown in Figure 8.1).
- 8.53 When considering the provision of amenity space it can be seen that although there appears to be a good distribution, in reality there is little localised provision of the south of the railway line (which acts as a natural barrier) and there are large quantities of residents in the area with no access to facilities for young people. This is illustrated on Figure 8.4 below.

**Figure 8.4 – Amenity space in the Sidcup cluster**

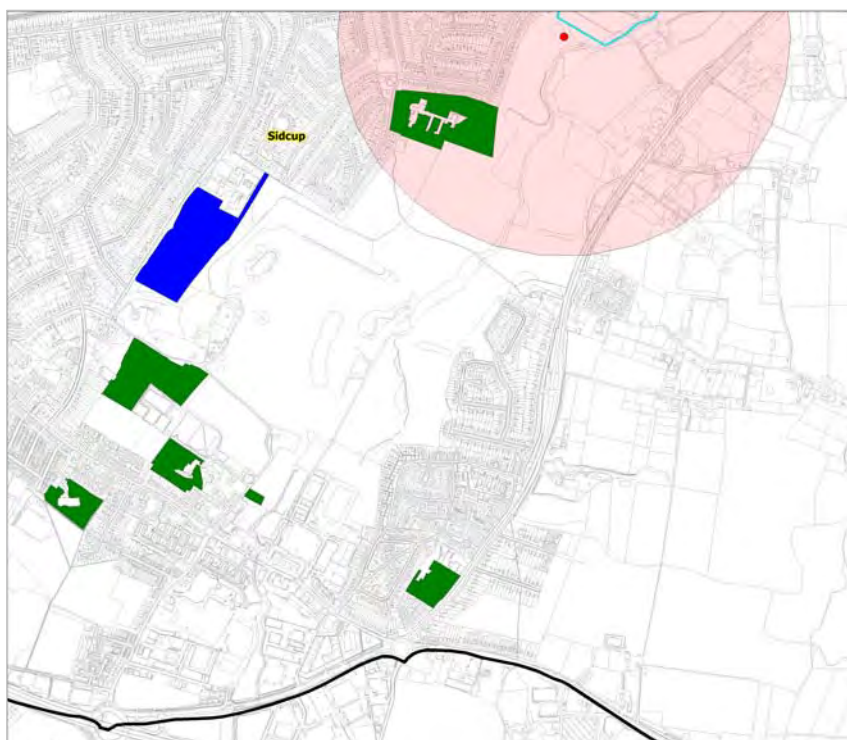


- 8.54 While access to amenity areas and parks offsets the need for specialised facilities to an extent, application of the quantity and accessibility standards emphasises the need for new provision in the area.

<b>YP5</b>	Investigate opportunities for the provision of a specialised facility for young people within the Sidcup and Longlands area of the Borough.
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- 8.55 There is also a cluster of residents in the Cray Meadows area of the Borough where there is limited access to facilities for young people. Provision of new facilities at the school site (Figure 8.5 below) would ensure better access to a specific facility for these residents. This is particularly important in light of the pockets of deprivation in this area.

**Figure 8.5 – Shortfall of specialised provision in Cray Meadows**



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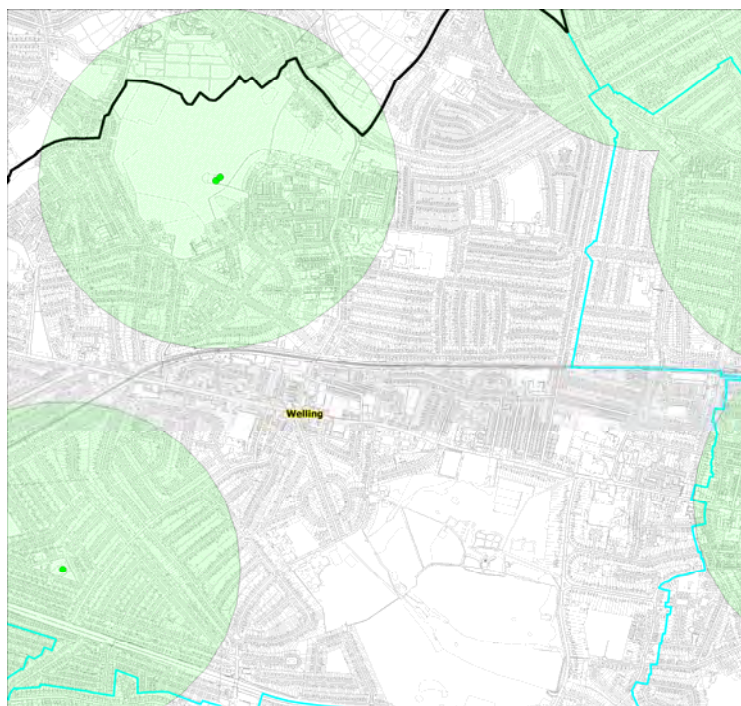
- 8.56 The importance of new provision for young people is reinforced through the application of the local standard balanced against the future growth scenarios. Across all five growth scenarios, the Sidcup cluster (where Cray Meadows is located) contains the largest shortfall of all the clusters.

<b>YP6</b>	Seize opportunities for new provision at the school site in Cray Meadows to meet local and curricular need regarding facilities for young people.
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### **Welling cluster**

- 8.57 Like the Sidcup cluster, application of the quantity standard against the current population of the Welling cluster highlights existing deficiencies of dedicated provision for young people. Again, the application of the accessibility standard supports this, illustrating that the three facilities within this area are to the west of the Welling cluster and hence there are access issues, particularly to the east. This area of deficiency is highlighted overleaf in Figure 8.6.

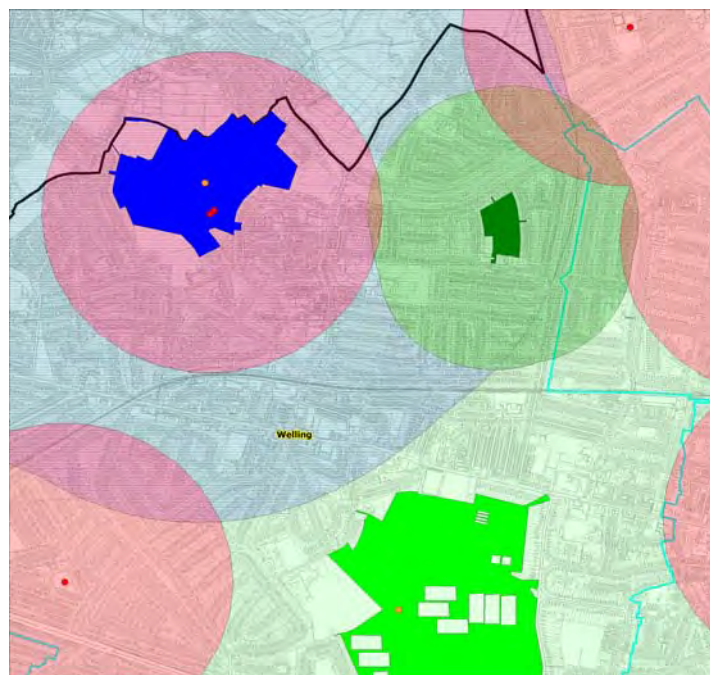
**Figure 8.6 – Area deficient of specialist facilities for young people in the Welling cluster**



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- 8.58 Despite accessibility deficiencies to specialist provision for young people, residents in this area have good access to formal/informal open space, in light of the presence of Danson Park and several smaller amenity spaces as illustrated in Figure 8.7 and 8.8 below and overleaf.

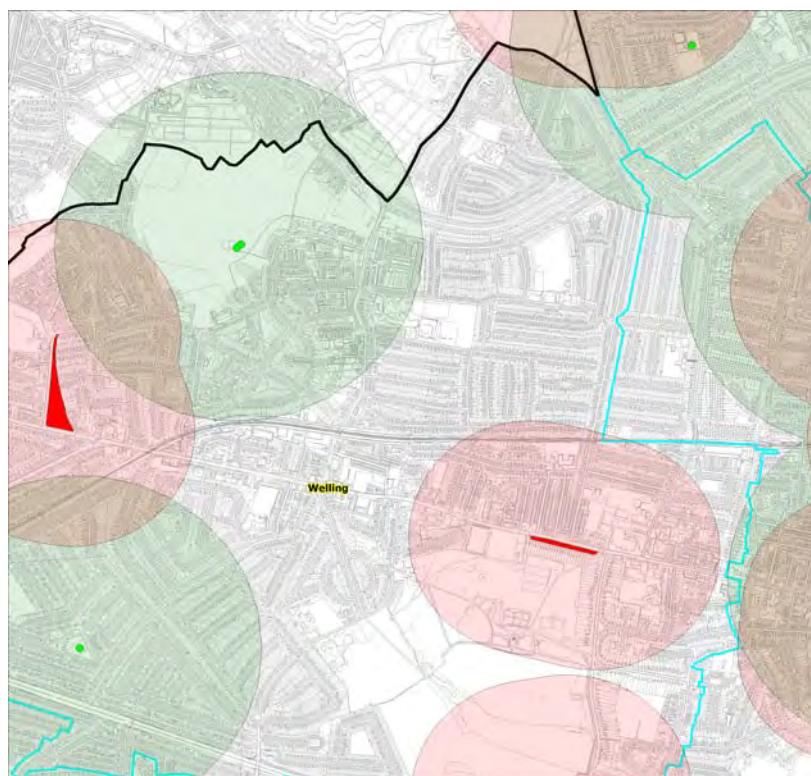
**Figure 8.7 – Area deficient of specialist facilities for young people in the context of parks**



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**Figure 8.8 – Area deficient of specialist facilities for young people in the context of amenity areas**



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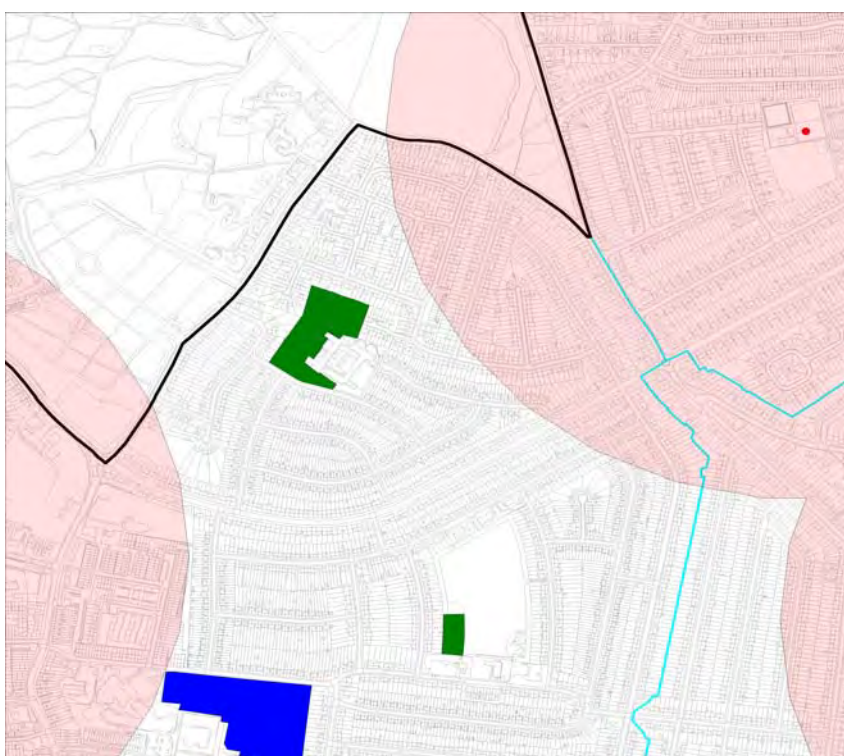
- 8.59 The presence of larger parks and amenity areas does not negate the need for specialist local facilities for young people and new provision should therefore be considered in this area. Table 8.4 further emphasises this, showing the Danson Park ward has the third largest deficiency of all wards (-1.02). There is potential for this to be located at Danson Park or in a nearby school or amenity site.

<b>YP7</b>	Investigate opportunities to provide facilities for young people in the area surrounding Danson Park.
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- 8.60 Further opportunities to provide additional facilities in the Welling cluster should be taken, particularly in the north east (St Michael's) area of the Welling cluster (Figure 8.9) in light of the current accessibility deficiencies. Moreover, the future growth scenarios all suggest that the Welling cluster will have a shortfall in provision leading to 2026 and the ward breakdown table shows St Michael's ward has the largest deficiency with -1.20 against the local standard. As can be seen, the school in this area provides an opportunity to address some of these deficiencies.

<b>YP8</b>	Investigate opportunities to provide facilities for young people in the north east (St Michaels) area of Welling.
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**Figure 8.9 – Area deficient of specialist facilities for young people in St Michael's ward**



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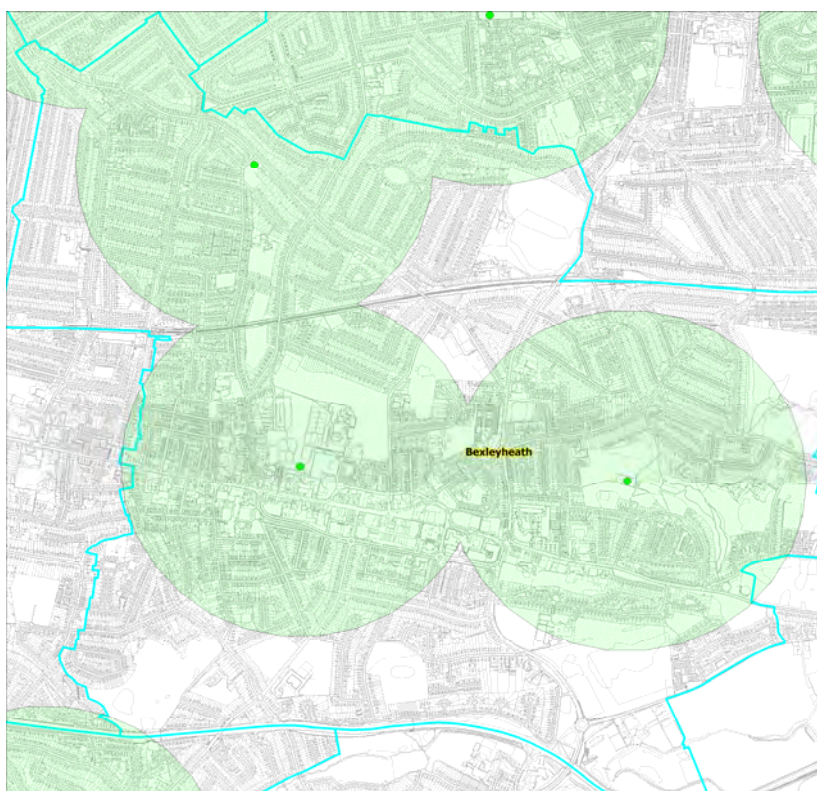
### Erith and Bexleyheath clusters

- 8.61 Application of the local quantitative standards results in smaller quantitative deficiencies in the Bexleyheath and Erith clusters (both currently less than one facility). In contrast to the Sidcup and Welling clusters, application of the accessibility standards indicates that the majority of residents in the area have access to a facility for young people. Areas where residents currently fall outside of the catchment of a dedicated facility for young people are illustrated in Figures 8.10 and 8.11 overleaf.
- 8.62 As illustrated in Figure 8.10, the number of residents outside of the appropriate catchment for a facility in the Bexleyheath cluster is currently insufficient to justify the development of an additional facility. Application of the local quantity standard against the current population and five growth scenarios further reinforces this point, with none creating a deficiency large enough to warrant a new facility. With this in mind, access to existing informal open space in this area is therefore of particular importance. Maps 8.2 and 8.3 illustrate that the majority of these residents have access to either amenity space or a park.

<b>YP9</b>	Monitor the need for new provision for young people in the Bexleyheath cluster and facilitate the delivery of existing facilities should the need and opportunity arise. Access to existing informal open space should be enhanced where possible.
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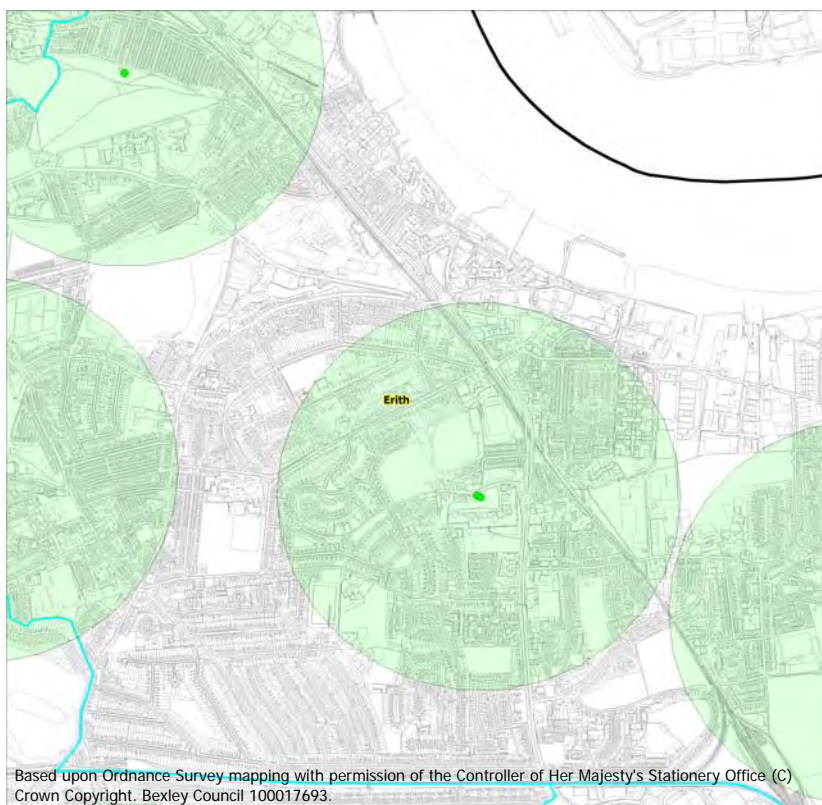


**Figure 8.10 – Area of Bexleyheath cluster deficient in provision**



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**Figure 8.11 – Area of Erith cluster deficient in provision**



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- 8.63 Although quantity standards similarly illustrate that shortfalls in the Erith cluster are insufficient to require a new facility (both now and across the five growth scenarios), consideration should be given to the characteristics of the area and in particular the levels of deprivation in the area. While the main areas of deficiency fall within Colyers and Northumberland Heath ward, there are some residents within Erith and North end wards outside of the recommended catchment. It will be essential to monitor the need for provision in these areas to ensure that all residents have access to local facilities. The Area Action Plan to be undertaken for Erith provides a key opportunity for the development of an appropriate facility within this area.

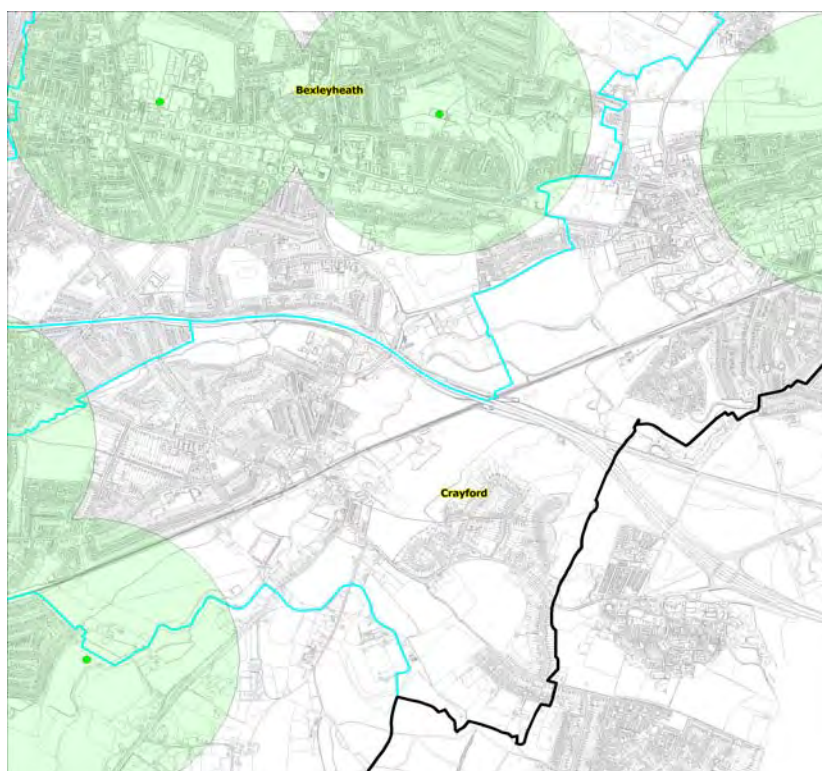
**YP10**

Consider the need for additional provision for young people within the Area Action Plan for Erith. Monitor the need for localised facilities for young people in light of the pockets of deprivation in this area of the Borough.

### Crayford cluster

- 8.64 Although application of the quantity standards indicates that provision in the Crayford and Thamesmead clusters is sufficient to meet local need, application of the local accessibility standards highlight some key areas of deficiency.
- 8.65 Although the Crayford cluster has the highest level of provision in relation to the size of the population, facilities are located at either end of the cluster. Indeed the facility in the south west of the area (St Mary's) better meets the needs of those residents on the edge of the Sidcup cluster. The location of sites therefore generates significant areas of deficiency. These are illustrated overleaf in Figure 8.12.

**Figure 8.12 – Areas of deficiency in Crayford cluster**



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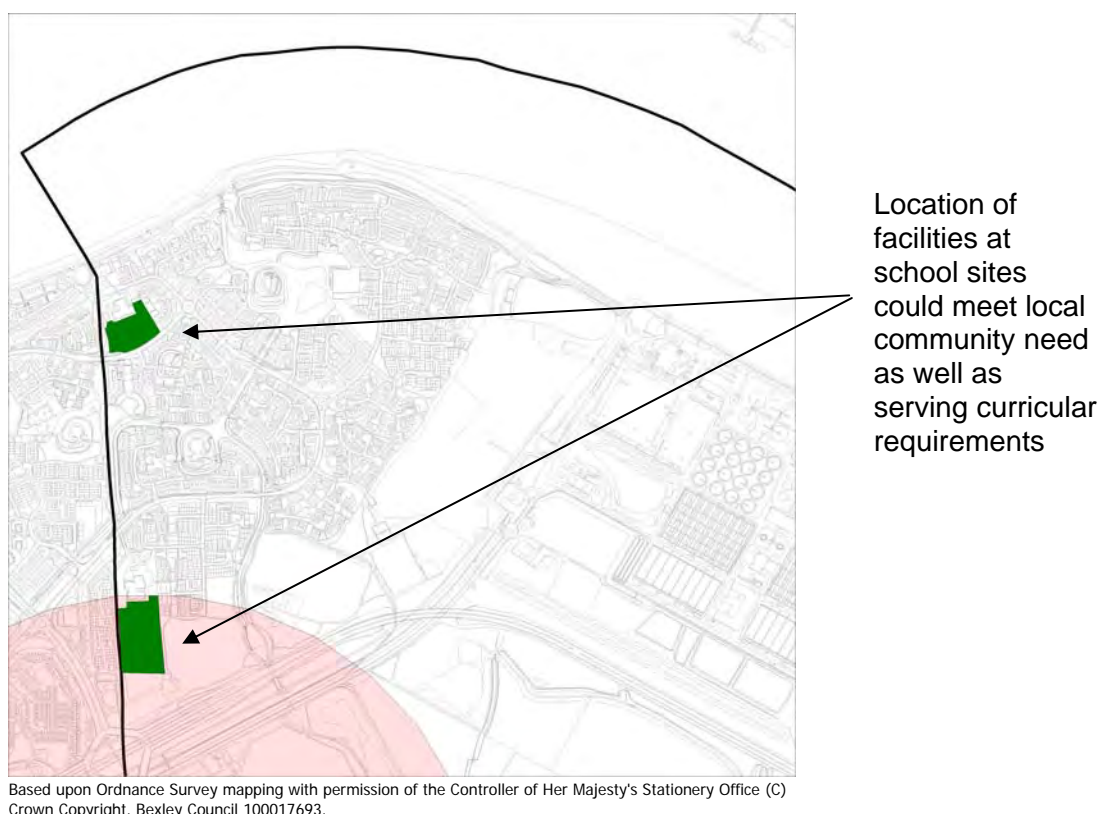
- 8.66 As illustrated above, the application of quantity standards therefore presents a misleading picture in the Crayford cluster in light of the location of existing sites. It is likely that this has also influenced resident perception of existing provision, as despite a surplus of provision (current provision and future growth scenarios all indicate sufficient provision), residents in this area were the most dissatisfied across the Borough. The need for additional provision takes on greater importance in light of the pockets of deprivation within the areas of deficiency. Access to localised facilities is particularly valuable to these residents. Furthermore, while the surrounding area contains an array of green space, access to localised amenity spaces and parks is limited. The regeneration programme underway will enhance the quality and access to localised open space.

<b>YP11</b>	Consider the need for additional provision for young people within the Crayford cluster of the Borough.
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### Thamesmead cluster

- 8.67 Like the Crayford cluster, application of the quantity standards suggests that provision in the Thamesmead cluster is currently sufficient to meet local need, this is also the case when applying the standard against the five future growth scenarios. Despite this, provision is concentrated to the south of the area and there are some deficiencies in provision, illustrated in Figure 8.13 overleaf. While much of the area of deficiency is industrial estate and therefore facilities for young people are not required, residents of the area north of the A2016 have no access to either specialised facilities for young people or informal open space.

**Figure 8.13 – Areas of accessibility deficiency in Thamesmead cluster**



<b>YP12</b>	Investigate opportunities for provision of a new facility for young people in the northern area of the Thamesmead cluster. Consider also the opportunities to provide a facility at a school site in the area to maximise the proportion of residents who have access to a facility.
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- 8.68 As highlighted both within local and regional strategy documents and also through local needs consultation, access to facilities for young people is as important as the quality and type of provision. Location of facilities (and proximity to the home) is perceived to be the single most important element for young people. Given that many young people do not have access to private transport, it will be essential to maximise safe access to existing facilities by public transport and on foot.

<b>YP13</b>	Consider public transport links in the planning and development of new facilities for young people. Include facilities for young people within easy reach of the network of footpaths and cycleways. The draft Public Rights of Way Access and Improvement Plan also seeks to address these issues.
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- 8.69 Access to new and existing facilities for young people should also be considered, in the context of the time that young people wish to use facilities. This is frequently in conflict with the times that the park or open space within which the facility is located is actually open. Evening access to facilities will be essential if facilities are to properly meet the needs of young people.
- 8.70 New facilities should be developed in conjunction with young people and local residents in order to ensure maximum satisfaction and ownership of resulting facilities. The appropriate location is of particular importance of the facility is to be well used and local residents are to be happy with what has been provided.

### Summary and recommendations

- 8.71 Equipped provision for young people was the overriding theme of consultations throughout the study with residents expressing concerns over the quantity of provision, as well as highlighting that the quality of many facilities is insufficient and that facilities are perceived to be boring and not challenging. Over 70% of residents across the Borough indicated that current levels of provision are perceived to be insufficient.
- 8.72 The Bexley Children and Young People's plan highlights the importance of addressing these issues and reinforces the need to provide a variety of opportunities for young people. Although this section considers only equipped provision for young people, it is essential that this is considered in the context of the interrelationships with other types of open space, as well as with others services for young people.
- 8.73 The recommended local standards address the issues raised through consultation, setting challenging criteria that can be used to identify priority areas. Analysis of existing facilities show sites are distributed relatively evenly across the Borough.
- 8.74 The application of the local quantity standard against the five future growth scenarios shows that the overall deficiency will remain relatively consistent. The Crayford and Thamesmead clusters will have sufficient provision across all five growth scenarios, with the remaining four clusters all containing deficiencies regardless of the growth scenario chosen.

- 8.75 Application of standards highlights particular priorities in the Sidcup cluster and despite quantitative surpluses in provision, within the Crayford cluster.
- 8.76 Access to new and existing facilities for young people should also be considered, in the context of the time that young people wish to use facilities. This is frequently in conflict with the times that the park or open space within which the facility is located is actually open. Evening access to facilities will be essential if facilities are to properly meet the needs of young people.
- 8.77 Any new facilities developed should meet the suggested quality criteria and should provide exciting play opportunities for young people. Provision at school sites provides a key opportunity to maximise resources and ensure that all residents are able to access at least one facility. New facilities should be developed in conjunction with young people and local residents in order to ensure maximum satisfaction and ownership of resulting facilities.