



**EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**OPEN SPACE STUDY**

**OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

**DECEMBER 2016**

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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## **Glossary**

DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DPD	Development Plan Document
ENC	East Northamptonshire Council
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOG	Friends of Group (including users groups and advisory groups)
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MUGA	Multi-use Games Area
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSALG	National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
SOA	Super Output Areas
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

### PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Open Space Assessment Report prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for East Northamptonshire Council (ENC). It focuses on reporting the findings of the research, consultation, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping that underpins the study.

It forms part of a suite of reports that together make up the Open Space and Playing Pitch Study.

The Assessment Report provides detail with regard to what provision exists in East Northamptonshire, its condition, distribution and overall quality. It also considers the demand for provision based on population distribution, planned growth and consultation findings. The Strategy (to follow the assessment reports) will give direction on the future provision of accessible, high quality, sustainable provision for open spaces, sport and recreation in East Northamptonshire.

Although Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) has now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF), this assessment of open space facilities is carried out in accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide entitled 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities' published in September 2002 as it remains the only national guidance on carrying out an open space assessment.

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities. We advocate that the methodology to undertake such assessments should still be informed by best practice including the PPG17 Companion Guidance.

'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17' still reflects the Government policy objectives for open space, sport and recreation, as set out previously in PPG17. The long-term outcomes aim to deliver:

- ◀ Networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors that are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable.
- ◀ An appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision.
- ◀ Clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space and sport and recreation provision.

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## OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

This assessment covers the following open space typologies:

*Table 1.1: Open space typology definitions*

	Typology	Primary purpose
<b>Greenspaces</b>	Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Includes urban woodland and beaches, where appropriate.
	Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, MUGAs, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
	Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.
	Green corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

### 1.1 Report structure

#### *Open spaces*

This report considers the supply and demand issues for open space facilities in East Northamptonshire. Each part contains relevant typology specific data. Further description of the methodology used can be found in Part 2. The report as a whole covers the predominant issues for all open spaces originally defined in 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17'; it is structured as follows:

- ◆ Part 3: General open space summary
  - ◆ Part 4: Parks and gardens
  - ◆ Part 5: Natural and semi-natural greenspace
  - ◆ Part 6: Amenity greenspace
  - ◆ Part 7: Provision for children and young people
  - ◆ Part 8: Allotments
  - ◆ Part 9: Cemeteries/churchyards
  - ◆ Part 10: Green corridors

#### *Associated strategies*

The study sits alongside the Playing Pitch Strategy being undertaken by KKP. This is in accordance with the methodology provided in Sport England's Guidance 'Developing a Playing Pitch Strategy' for assessing supply and demand for outdoor sports facilities. The strategy is provided in a separate report.

### 1.2 National context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England. It details how these are expected to be applied to the planning system and provides a framework to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It establishes that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

Under paragraph 73 of the NPPF, it is set out that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite paragraph 74 of the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown the site to be surplus to requirements.
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.



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## PART 2: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Analysis areas

For mapping purposes and audit analysis, the following analysis areas are applied (reflecting the geographical and demographical nature of the area).

These allow more localised assessment of provision in addition to examination of open space/facility surplus and deficiencies at a more local level. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account. East Northamptonshire is therefore, broken down as follows:

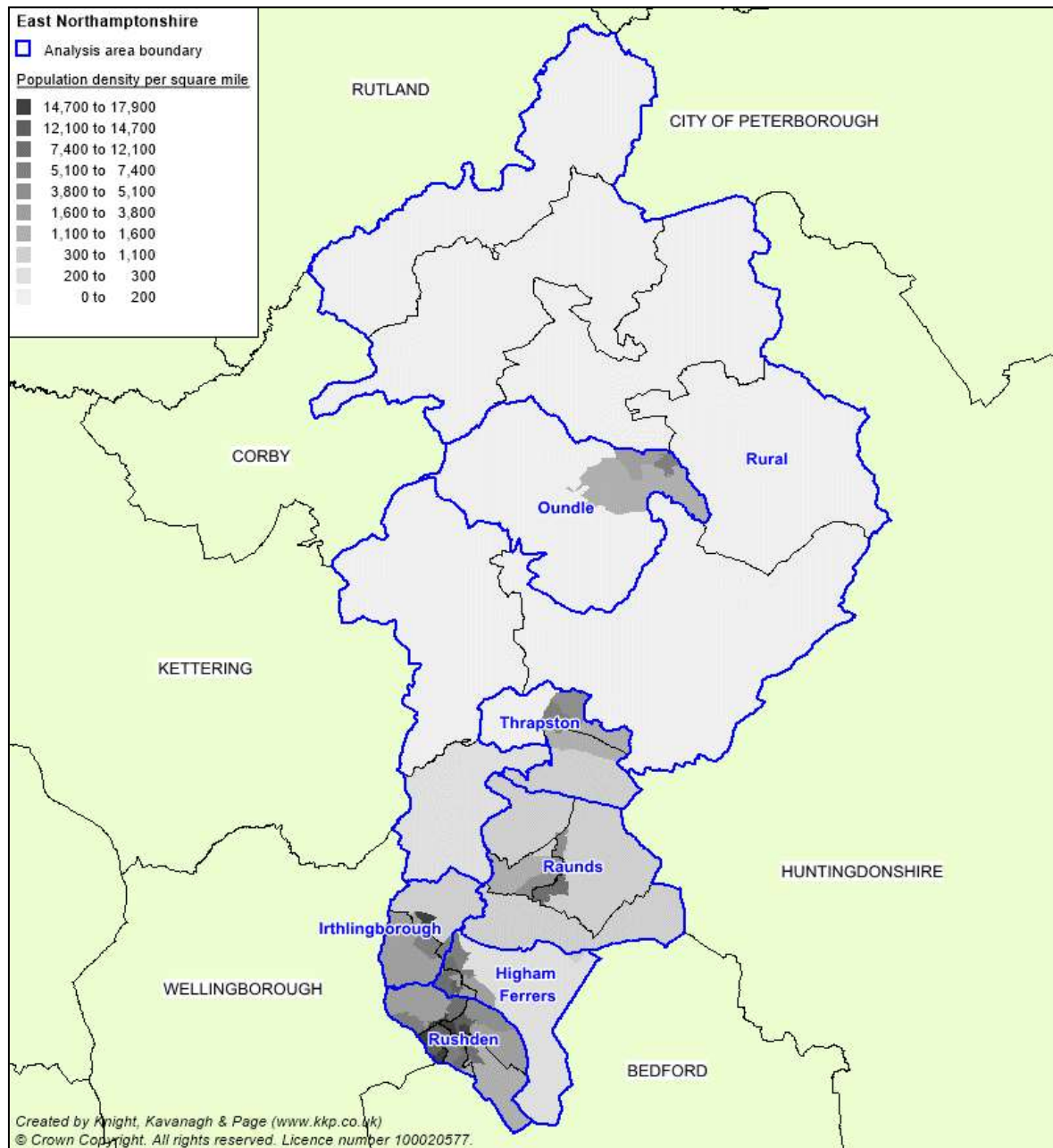
*Table 2.1: Population by analysis area*

Analysis area	Population (2014)
Higham Ferrers	8,961
Irthlingborough	8,832
Oundle	5,823
Raunds	12,304
Rushden	30,245
Rural	16,098
Thrapston	6,319
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>88,582</b>

Figure 2.1 overleaf shows the map of analysis areas with population density.

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Figure 2.1: East Northamptonshire analysis areas



### 2.2 Auditing local provision (supply)

The site audits for this study were undertaken by the KKP Field Research Team. In total, 342 open spaces (including provision for children and young people) are identified, plotted on GIS and assessed to evaluate site value and quality. Each site is classified based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of space is counted only once. The audit, and therefore the report, utilise the following typologies in accordance with guidance:

- ◀ Parks and gardens
- ◀ Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- ◀ Amenity greenspace
- ◀ Provision for children and young people
- ◀ Allotments
- ◀ Cemeteries/churchyards
- ◀ Green corridors

In accordance with best practice recommendations a size threshold of 0.2 hectares has been applied to the inclusion of some typologies within the study. This means that, in general, sites that fall below this threshold are not audited. However, some sites below the threshold (i.e. those that are identified through consultation as being of significance) are included. The list below details the threshold for each typology:

- ◀ Parks and gardens – no threshold
- ◀ Natural and semi-natural greenspace – 0.2 ha
- ◀ Amenity greenspace – 0.2 ha
- ◀ Provision for children and young people – no threshold
- ◀ Allotments – no threshold
- ◀ Cemeteries/churchyards – no threshold
- ◀ Green corridors – no threshold

A point to note, 47 sites have been identified and plotted on GIS but not assessed for various reasons. These reasons include restricted access, late inclusion/identification or issues locating sites.

#### ***Database development***

All information relating to open spaces across East Northamptonshire is collated in the project open space database (supplied as an Excel electronic file). All sites included within the audit, as identified and assessed, are included within it. The database details for each site are as follows:

##### **Data held on open spaces database (summary)**

- ◀ KKP reference number (used for mapping)
- ◀ Site name
- ◀ Ownership
- ◀ Management
- ◀ Typology
- ◀ Size (hectares)
- ◀ Site visit data

Sites are primarily identified by KKP in the audit using official site names, where possible, and/or secondly using road names and locations.

### 2.3 Quality and value

Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be unrelated. For example, a high quality space may be in an inaccessible location and, thus, be of little value; while, if a rundown (poor quality) space may be the only one in an area and thus be immensely valuable. As a result, quality and value are also treated separately in terms of scoring. Each type of open space receives separate quality and value scores. This will also allow application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus to a particular open space typology.

#### *Analysis of quality*

Data collated from site visits is initially based upon those derived from the Green Flag Award scheme (a national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales, operated by Keep Britain Tidy). This is utilised to calculate a quality score for each site visited. Scores in the database are presented as percentage figures. The quality criteria used for the open space assessments carried out are summarised in the following table.

#### **Quality criteria for open space site visit (score)**

- ◆ Physical access, e.g., public transport links, directional signposts,
- ◆ Personal security, e.g., site is overlooked, natural surveillance
- ◆ Access-social, e.g., appropriate minimum entrance widths
- ◆ Parking, e.g., availability, specific, disabled parking
- ◆ Information signage, e.g., presence of up to date site information, notice boards
- ◆ Equipment and facilities, e.g., assessment of both adequacy and maintenance of provision such as seats, benches, bins, toilets
- ◆ Location value, e.g., proximity of housing, other greenspace
- ◆ Site problems, e.g., presence of vandalism, graffiti
- ◆ Healthy, safe and secure, e.g., fencing, gates, staff on site
- ◆ Maintenance and cleanliness, e.g., condition of general landscape & features
- ◆ Groups that the site meets the needs of, e.g., elderly, young people
- ◆ Site potential

For the provision for children and young people, the criteria is also built around Green Flag and is a non-technical visual assessment of the whole site, including general equipment and surface quality/appearance but also including an assessment of, for example, bench and bin provision. This differs, for example, from an independent RoSPA review, which is a more technical assessment of equipment in terms of play and risk assessment grade.

Children's and young people play provision is scored for value as part of the audit assessment. In particular, value is recognised in terms of size of sites and the range of equipment they host. For instance, a small site with only a single piece of equipment is likely to be of a lower value than a site with several different forms of equipment designed to cater for wider age ranges.

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### Analysis of value

Using data calculated from the site visits and desk based research a value score for each site is identified. Value is defined in a Companion Guide to PPG17 in relation to the following three issues:

- ✦ Context of the site i.e. its accessibility, scarcity value and historic value.
- ✦ Level and type of use.
- ✦ The wider benefits it generates for people, biodiversity and the wider environment.

The value criteria set for audit assessment is derived as:

#### Value criteria for open space site visits (score)

- ✦ Level of use (observations only), e.g., evidence of different user types (e.g. dog walkers, joggers, children) throughout day, located near school and/or community facility
- ✦ Context of site in relation to other open spaces
- ✦ Structural and landscape benefits, e.g., well located, high quality defining the identity/ area
- ✦ Ecological benefits, e.g., supports/promotes biodiversity and wildlife habitats
- ✦ Educational benefits, e.g., provides learning opportunities on nature/historic landscapes
- ✦ Social inclusion and health benefits, e.g., promotes civic pride, community ownership and a sense of belonging; helping to promote well-being
- ✦ Cultural and heritage benefits, e.g., historic elements/links (e.g. listed building, statues) and high profile symbols of local area
- ✦ Amenity benefits and a sense of place, e.g., attractive places that are safe and well maintained; helping to create specific neighbourhoods and landmarks
- ✦ Economic benefits, e.g., enhances property values, promotes economic activity and attracts people from near and far

#### Value - non site visit criteria (score)

- ✦ Designated site such as LNR or SSSI
- ✦ Educational programme in place
- ✦ Historic site
- ✦ Listed building or historical monument on site
- ✦ Registered 'friends of' group to the site

### 2.4 Quality and value thresholds

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the results of the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The primary aim of applying a threshold is to identify sites where investment and/or improvements are required. It can also be used to set an aspirational quality standard to be achieved at some point in the future and to inform decisions around the need to further protect sites from future development (particularly when applied with its respective value score in a matrix format).

The baseline threshold for assessing quality can often be set around 66%; based on the pass rate for Green Flag criteria (site visit criteria also being based on Green Flag). This is the only national benchmark available for quality of parks and open spaces. However, the site visit criteria used for Green Flag is not appropriate for every open space typology as it is designed to represent a sufficiently high standard of site. Quality thresholds are, thus, worked out so as to better reflect average scores for each typology. Consequently, the baseline threshold for certain typologies is amended to better reflect this.

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For value, there is no national guidance on the setting of thresholds. The 20% threshold applied is derived from our experience and knowledge in assessing the perceived value of sites. Whilst 20% may initially seem low it is relative score - designed to reflect those sites that meet more than one aspect of the criteria used for assessing value (as detailed earlier). A table setting out the quality and value scores for each typology is provided overleaf.

*Table 2.2: Quality and value thresholds by typology*

Typology	Quality threshold	Value threshold
Parks and gardens	60%	20%
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	35%	20%
Amenity greenspace	40%	20%
Provision for children and young people	55%	20%
Allotments	40%	20%
Cemeteries/churchyards	40%	20%

### 2.5 Identifying local need (demand)

Consultation to identify local need for open space provision has been carried out through face-to-face meetings and survey interviews. Face to face meetings were held with the larger parish councils. In addition, a postal questionnaire was sent to all other parish councils. This helped to pick up on issues, problems and concerns relating to open space provision at a more local level, as well as identifying the attitudes and needs of the broader local community. It also allowed any local issues and aspirations to be identified.

### 2.6 Accessibility standards

Accessibility standards for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that would be travelled by the majority of users.

Guidance is offered by the Greater London Authority (GLA) (2008): 'Open Space Strategies: Best Practice Guidance' and Fields in Trust (FIT). Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard' with regard to appropriate catchment areas for authorities to adopt. These standards are used to set appropriate catchments. The following standards are recorded from the survey in relation to how far individuals are willing to travel to access different types of open space provision.

*Table 2.3: Accessibility standards to travel to open space provision*

Typology	Applied standard
Parks and gardens	15 minute walk time (1200m)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	15 minute walk time (1200m)
Amenity greenspace	5 minute walk time (400m)
Provision for children and young people	10 minute walk time (800m)
Allotments	15 minute walk time (1200m)
Cemeteries/churchyards	No standard set

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Most typologies are set as having an accessibility standard of a 15 minute walk time. However, for certain types of open space, such as amenity greenspace and provision for children and young people, shorter walk times are applied.

No standard is set for the typologies of cemeteries. It is difficult to assess such provision against catchment areas due to its nature and usage. For cemeteries, provision should be determined by demand for burial space.



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### PART 3: GENERAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY

This section describes generic trends and findings from the quality and value ratings for each typology in East Northamptonshire. It describes the generic issues that cut across more than one typology. The typology and site specific issues are covered in the relevant sections later in this report.

#### 3.1 Quality

Quality and value ratings are provided for a total of 295 sites. The methodology for assessing quality is set out in Part 2. The table below summarises the results of all the quality assessment for open spaces across East Northamptonshire.

*Table 3.1: Quality scores for all open space typologies*

Typology	Scores			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Allotments	31%	43%	67%	15	17
Amenity greenspace	21%	47%	81%	19	57
Cemeteries/ churchyards	23%	44%	60%	11	64
Provision for children and young people	35%	63%	89%	14	43
Parks and gardens	50%	68%	93%	2	8
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	13%	41%	86%	17	28
				<b>78</b>	<b>217</b>

Nearly three quarters (74%) of assessed open spaces in East Northamptonshire rate above the quality threshold set.

Proportionally more allotments (47%) and natural and semi-natural greenspace (38%) sites score below the threshold for quality compared to other typologies.

For natural and semi natural greenspace sites, this is a reflection of the number of sites for this typology without any specific ancillary features or facilities. Sites for the typology of natural and semi-natural greenspace can also tend to score low for personal security given they are often in isolated locations and not overlooked by other land uses. Often sites deliberately have very little ongoing management or maintenance in order to provide, for example, wildlife habitats. However, keeping on top of issues such as litter and dog fouling is important to maintain higher quality scores.

Although 26% of assessed sites score below the threshold, this does not mean all these sites have specific quality issues. A low quality score can merely be attributed to a lack of ancillary features and facilities. This is often the case for smaller sites.

The typologies of parks and gardens, churchyards and cemeteries and amenity greenspace score well for quality. The proportion of cemeteries and parks and gardens rated as being of a high quality is noticeable. Although both typologies do still have a number of sites that rate below the thresholds.



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Management and maintenance responsibilities of open space are undertaken by a number of organisations across East Northamptonshire including East Northamptonshire Council, housing associations, the County Council and the Wildlife Trust. However, most sites are managed by parish/town councils, with Rushden Town Council being a significant provider of open spaces in the Area.

### 3.2 Value

The methodology for assessing value is set out in Part 2 (Methodology). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for open spaces across East Northamptonshire.

*Table 3.2: Value scores for all open space typologies*

Typology	Scores			No. of sites	
	Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Allotments	25%	33%	45%	0	32
Amenity greenspace	2%	30%	66%	23	53
Cemeteries/ churchyards	21%	41%	53%	0	75
Provision for children and young people	20%	40%	64%	0	57
Parks and gardens	49%	67%	32%	0	10
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	4%	25%	56%	17	28
				<b>40</b>	<b>255</b>

The majority of sites (86%) are assessed as being of high value. A higher proportion of amenity greenspace and natural and semi natural greenspace sites score low for value. This reflects the number of sites within these typologies that lack any particular ancillary features. This can make these sites less attractive to visitors. Amenity greenspace also contains a number of smaller sized sites. However, the value these sites play in providing a visual and recreational amenity as well as a break in the built form remains important in a wider context.

All provision for parks and gardens, cemeteries, children and young people, allotments and civic spaces rate high for value reflecting their role to local communities.

A high value site is considered to be one that is well used by the local community, well maintained (with a balance for conservation), provides a safe environment and has features of interest; for example, play equipment and landscaping.

Sites that provide for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use are considered a higher value than those that offer limited functions and that are thought of as bland and unattractive.

### 3.3 Summary

#### General summary

- ◀ In total, there are 342 sites identified as open space provision in East Northamptonshire. Of these sites 295 have been assessed and given quality and value ratings. This is an equivalent of over 571 hectares across the analysis areas.
- ◀ Most typologies are set as having an accessibility standard of a five or 15 minute walk time.
- ◀ Nearly three quarters (73%) of all open spaces score high for quality. Proportionally more allotments (47%) and natural and semi-natural greenspace (38%) sites score low for quality compared to other typologies. For natural and semi natural greenspace, this is often due to sites of this type tending to lack ancillary features.
- ◀ The majority of all open spaces are assessed as being of high value. Reflecting the importance of provision; nearly all sites with the exception of 40 (for the typologies of amenity greenspace and natural and semi natural greenspaces) score high for value.

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### PART 4: PARKS AND GARDENS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The typology of parks and gardens covers urban parks, country parks and formal gardens (including designed landscapes), which provide 'accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events'.

Two country parks are identified as being within East Northamptonshire; Barnwell Country Park and Fermyn Woods Country Park. In addition to these sites, there is Kinewell Lake. This site is the largest pocket park in the county with 1.5 miles of pathways. The area is also designated as a SSSI and SPA, as well as being of international importance, due to it being a habitat to rare European Birds.

Furthermore, Stanwick Lakes is situated within the East Northamptonshire area. This is a 750-acre countryside site which offers a wide range of wildlife and biodiversity opportunities. The site is likely to be perceived by communities as contributing to the open space provision of parks.

#### 4.2 Current provision

There are 10 sites classified as parks and gardens across East Northamptonshire, an equivalent of 51.41 hectares. A site size threshold of 0.2 is applied unless a site is identified as being of significant importance within East Northamptonshire area. Any sites above this threshold were assessed. There are two sites under 0.2 hectares that are included in the audit; High street garden, Irthlingborough and St Marys Churchyard (Closed), Rushden.

Table 4.1: Distribution of parks by analysis area

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Higham Ferrers	2	2.27	0.25
Irthlingborough	1	0.09	0.01
Oundle	1	1.81	0.31
Raunds	-	-	-
Rural	2	29.91	1.85
Rushden	3	16.34	0.54
Thrapston	1	0.96	0.15
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>51.41</b>	<b>0.58</b>

Six of the seven analysis areas are identified as having provision of parks and gardens. There is no such provision in Raunds. Although the Rural Analysis Area does have provision, it is in the form of country parks which are often found in more rural settings.

The analysis area with the greatest parks provision is the Rural Analysis Area with 29.91 hectares. This is due to the area containing the two largest parks sites in East Northamptonshire; Barnwell Country Park and Fermyn Woods Country Park, both equating to over 14 hectares. This is reflected by the Rural Analysis Area also having the largest amount of provision per 1,000 population.

Rushden Analysis Area has the second highest amount of provision in terms of hectares. The majority of this is made up by Rushden Hall Park, equating to nearly 13 hectares of parks provision. The site has an important role as a form of open space within the community, with regular community events being held there. It is also a Green Flag accredited site.

As seen in Table 4.1 proportionally the Rural Analysis Area (1.85 ha per 1,000 population) has a significantly greater amount of provision per 1,000 head of population compared to the other analysis areas. This is followed by Rushden Analysis Area (0.54 ha per 1,000 population). This is predominantly due to Rushden Hall Park being classified in this area.

### **4.3 Accessibility**

An accessibility standard of a 15-minute walk time has been set across East Northamptonshire. This is based on our extensive sector knowledge as well as reflecting best practice guidelines such as Fields in Trust.

Figure 4.1 shows parks and gardens mapped against the analysis areas with these accessibility catchments.

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Figure 4.1: Parks and gardens mapped against analysis area

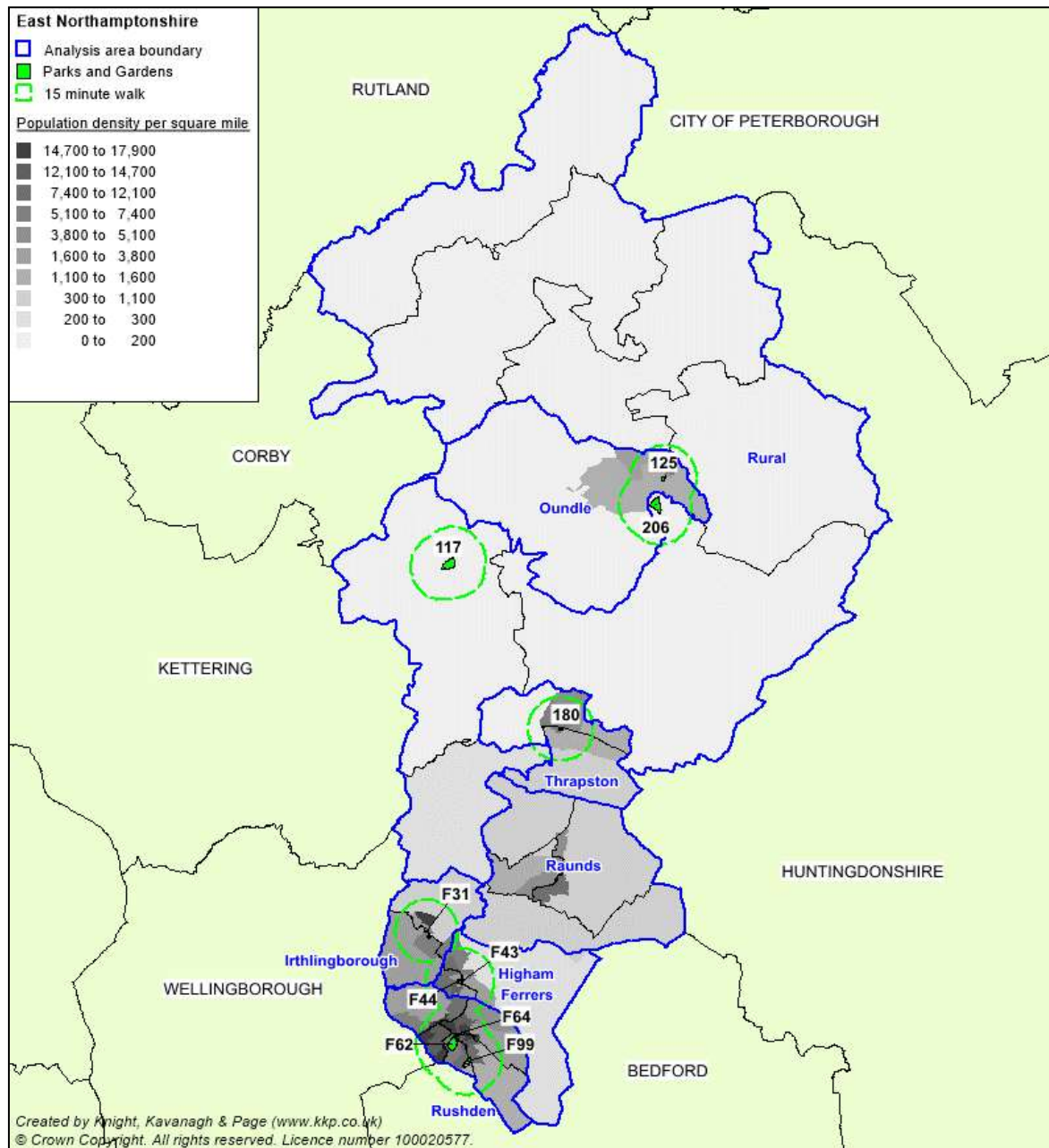


Table 4.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F43	Chichele College Gardens, Higham Ferrers	Higham Ferrers		
F44	Saffron Road/ Vine Hill Dr park, Higham Ferrers	Higham Ferrers		
F31	High street garden, Irthlingborough	Irthlingborough		
125	Corner of Milton Road and Grafton House	Oundle		
206	Barnwell Country Park, Oundle	Rural		
117	Fermyn Woods Country Park, Brigstock	Rural		
F62	Rushden Hall Park	Rushden		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F64	Skinner's Hill/High St, Rushden	Rushden		
F99	Jubilee Park, Rushden (Off Bedford Road)	Rushden		
180	Peace Memorial Park	Thrapston		

The majority of the more densely populated areas of East Northamptonshire are covered by a 15 minute walk time catchment. There is however a gap identified in parks provision in Raunds Analysis Area. Despite this, the settlement is served by other forms of open space such as amenity greenspace, which may help to offer functions and opportunities similar to parks.

Open spaces, including parks and gardens, are generally managed as part of the maintenance regime of parish and town councils. Sites receive regular maintenance visits, which include regimes such as grass cutting, weeding and general site preservation (e.g. bin emptying, bench refurbishment and visual checks).

### 4.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for parks in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 60% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 4.3: Quality ratings for parks by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <60%	High >60%
Higham Ferrers	159	58%	66%	74%	16%	1	1
Irthlingborough	159	61%	61%	61%	0%	0	1
Oundle	159	50%	50%	50%	0%	1	0
Raunds	159	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rural	159	77%	83%	89%	11%	0	2
Rushden	159	60%	72%	93%	33%	0	3
Thrapston	159	61%	61%	61%	0%	0	1
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

The majority of parks and gardens in East Northamptonshire score high for quality against the criteria, with only two sites scoring below the quality threshold; Corner of Milton Road and Grafton House and Saffron Rd/ Vine Hill Dr park, Higham Ferrers.

The three highest scoring sites in East Northamptonshire are:

- ✦ Rushden Hall Park (94%)
- ✦ Barnwell Country Park (86%)
- ✦ Fermyn Woods Country Park (77%)

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Rushden Hall Park is the highest scoring parks and gardens site in East Northamptonshire for quality, with 94%. It is noted as having a range of facilities such as equipped play provision for different age groups, a dog exercising area, walking routes and well maintained toilets. The park is also used for regular community events. Site observations highlight the attractiveness of the site and the buildings within it (including ancillary facilities), well thought out and maintained landscaping, useful signage, sufficient pathways and parking, good access for all abilities, personal security, well maintained seating areas, and conservation of natural features. The site's excellent quality is reflected in its status as a Green Flag Award accredited site.

Both Barnwell Country Park and Fermyn Woods Country Park, located in the Rural Analysis Area, score well due to a good number of ancillary facilities which are maintained to a good standard. These facilities include seats, picnic tables, bins, toilets and parking. Furthermore, the pathways on site are well maintained and suitable for disabled access. The sites are reported as having high levels of maintenance and cleanliness as well as good landscape design, making the sites more attractive for users. In addition to all of the above, these sites also score highly for conservation of natural features.

Another site worth mentioning is Chichele College Gardens (Higham Ferrers), scoring 74%. It is an English Heritage site. Five years ago it was designed to resemble a medieval Cloister Garth through both local fund raising and a National Lottery Community Spaces grant. This project is still ongoing, driven by the Higham Ferrers Tourism, Business and Community Partnership. Similarly, to the sites already mentioned, this site scores highly on attractiveness, landscape design, access (for all abilities), pathways, seating, personal security, maintenance, signage and conservation of natural features. It is also noted as providing opportunities for wildlife areas. Subsequently its high quality score is an indication towards the time and recent investment put into it by local partners.

The two sites which do not score high for quality against the threshold are Saffron Road/Vine Hill Drive Park in Higham Ferrers Analysis Area (58%) and Corner of Milton Road and Grafton House Oundle Analysis Area (50%). A point to note, Saffron Road/Vine Hill Drive Park does only score marginally (2%) under the 60% quality threshold set for parks and gardens provision.

Site observations identify no specific quality issues. These sites merely lack a wide range of ancillary facilities, such as picnic tables, lighting, parking and toilets. It is likely that scoring below the threshold is a result of their comparison to the other high quality parks provision in the area. Reclassification of sites as amenity greenspace, for example, rather than parks provision, may increase quality scores given the less formal characteristics associated with such sites.

### ***Green Flag***

The Green Flag Award scheme is licensed and managed by Keep Britain Tidy. It provides national standards for parks and greenspaces across England and Wales. Public service agreements, identified by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) highlight the importance placed on Green Flag status as an indicator of high quality. This in turn impacts upon the way parks and gardens are managed and maintained.



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A recent survey by improvement charity GreenSpace highlights that parks with a Green Flag Award provide more satisfaction to members of the public compared to those sites without it. The survey of 16,000 park users found that more than 90% of Green Flag Award park visitors were very satisfied or satisfied with their chosen site, compared to 65% of visitors to non-Green Flag parks.

There is currently one site in East Northamptonshire identified as achieving Green Flag status; Rushden Hall Park. As highlighted earlier, the site is maintained to a high standard and provides a pivotal role to the East Northamptonshire area.

### 4.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for parks in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 4.4: Value scores for parks by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	110	45%	57%	69%	24%	0	2
Irthlingborough	110	55%	55%	55%	0%	0	1
Oundle	110	35%	35%	35%	0%	0	1
Raunds	110	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rural	110	55%	59%	64%	9%	0	2
Rushden	110	41%	47%	55%	14%	0	3
Thrapston	110	50%	50%	50%	0%	0	1
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>

All parks are assessed as being of high value and are noted as having social inclusion and health benefits. For example, sports opportunities at Jubilee Park and Saffron Road/Vine Hill Drive Park.

Five sites offer educational value through providing opportunities to learn; Barnwell Country Park, Fermyn Woods Country Park, Chichele College Gardens, Rushden Hall Park, and Skinners Hill/High St. Five sites also offer excellent ecological value through offering habitats for animals, flora and fauna; Barnwell Country Park, Fermyn Woods Country Park, Chichele College Gardens, Rushden Hall Park and High Street Garden. Such benefits provide evidence as to why all park sites rate above the threshold for value.

One of the key aspects towards the value placed on parks provision is that they are able to provide opportunities for local communities and people to socialise. The ability for people to undertake a range of different activities such as walking, dog walking or taking children to the play area are generally recognised. Also the use of such sites to accommodate events is important.



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Rushden Hall Park is used to host a range of local and seasonal events. For example, Music in the Park and Firework displays. Other sites such as Saffron Road Garden (Higham Ferrers) often have events arranged throughout the year such as the Annual Chichele Garden Fair.

### 4.6 Summary

#### **Parks and gardens**

- ◆ There are ten sites classified as parks and gardens totaling 51.41 hectares.
- ◆ A gap in the 15-minute walk time catchment mapping is noted in the Raunds area. However, the settlement is served by other forms of open space such as amenity greenspace. It is unlikely that new parks provision is needed in order to meet this gap.
- ◆ The majority of provision rates above the threshold for quality. Two sites rate below the threshold; although one of these sites (Saffron Road/Vine Hill Drive Park), is only marginally below the 60% threshold. No specific quality issues are highlighted. However, both are noted as lacking ancillary features in comparison to the other high quality parks and gardens provision in the area.
- ◆ Rushden Hall Park is the highest scoring site for quality. Its quality is predominantly attributed to the range and standard of provision within the site. It is the only site with Green Flag Award status.
- ◆ All parks are assessed as being of high value, with the important social inclusion and health benefits, ecological value, educational value and sense of place sites offer being acknowledged.

## PART 5: NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE

### 5.1 Introduction

The natural and semi-natural greenspace typology includes woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. down-land, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), open running water, wastelands (including disturbed ground), and bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs, quarries, pits). These provide 'wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.'

The typology of natural and semi-natural greenspace has a relatively low quality threshold compared to other open space typologies. This is in order to reflect the characteristic of this kind of provision. For instance, many natural and semi-natural sites are intentionally without ancillary facilities in order to reduce misuse/inappropriate behaviour whilst encouraging greater flora and fauna activity.

Furthermore, Stanwick Lakes is situated within the East Northamptonshire area. This is a 750-acre countryside site which offers a wide range of wildlife and biodiversity opportunities. The site is likely to be perceived by communities as contributing to the open space provision. Due its significant size it is not included with the quantity figures.

### 5.2 Current provision

In total there are 47 natural and semi-natural greenspaces, totalling over 387 hectares of provision. Totals may not include all provision in East Northamptonshire as a site size threshold of 0.2 hectares has been applied. Guidance recommends that sites smaller than this may be of less recreational value to residents. In addition, sites which are identified as grazing land are not included.

One site; Benefield Road in Oundle has restricted access at time of site assessment. Therefore, it does not receive a quality or value score. However, it is taken into account when calculating current standards (Table 5.1).

*Table 5.1: Distribution of natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area*

Analysis area	Natural and semi-natural greenspace		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Higham Ferrers	3	11.48	1.28
Irthlingborough	5	132.31	14.98
Oundle	4	9.49	1.63
Raunds	2	35.33	2.87
Rural	25	150.21	9.33
Rushden	4	41.91	1.38
Thrapston	4	6.61	1.04
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>387.35</b>	<b>4.37</b>

Most of the provision across the study area is located in the Irthlingborough Analysis Area (132.31 hectares). Subsequently the analysis area has the greater proportion of provision per 1,000 population with 14.98 hectares. This is a significantly greater standard than other analysis areas with greater population levels such as Rushden (1.38 hectares), Raunds (2.87 hectares) and Higham Ferrers (1.28 hectares).

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The Rural Analysis Area also has a noticeable amount of provision per 1,000 population (9.33). This is predominantly due to the size of the Titchmarsh LNR (72 hectares) and Twywell Hills and Dale (54 hectares) sites.

### **Designations**

In terms of national designations, there are five publically accessible local nature reserves (LNRs) identified in East Northamptonshire:

- ✦ Wilson's Pits (Site ID: F175)
- ✦ Higham Ferrers Pits (Site ID: F174)
- ✦ Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows (Site ID: F173)
- ✦ Titchmarsh LNR (Site ID: 232)
- ✦ Kinewell Lake (Site ID: F114)

Kinewell Lake is located in the Raunds analysis area and is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA).

### **Pocket Park Scheme**

The Pocket Park Scheme is unique to Northamptonshire. In 2002, Northamptonshire County Council received beacon status for 'Improving Urban Green Spaces'. The scheme works to ensure residents have access to the countryside on their doorstep.

In total there are 80 designated pocket parks across Northamptonshire ranging in size from 0.04ha to 35ha. Out of the 80 pocket parks, 17 are situated in East Northamptonshire. Pocket parks are owned and managed by local people and offer protection and conservation for local wildlife, local heritage and the landscape of the Area.

*'The Pocket Park Scheme is easily replicable, environmentally sound, good economic value and community focussed.'*

### **Management**

Ownership and management of natural and semi-natural greenspace is generally the responsibility of organisations including Northamptonshire County Council, parish councils and other organisations such as the Wildlife Trust. However, pocket parks can be managed by local volunteers.

### **5.3 Accessibility**

Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) provides a set of benchmarks for ensuring access to places near to where people live. These standards recommend that people living in towns and cities should have:

- ✦ An accessible natural greenspace of at least two hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes walk) from home
- ✦ At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home
- ✦ One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home
- ✦ One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home
- ✦ One hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population

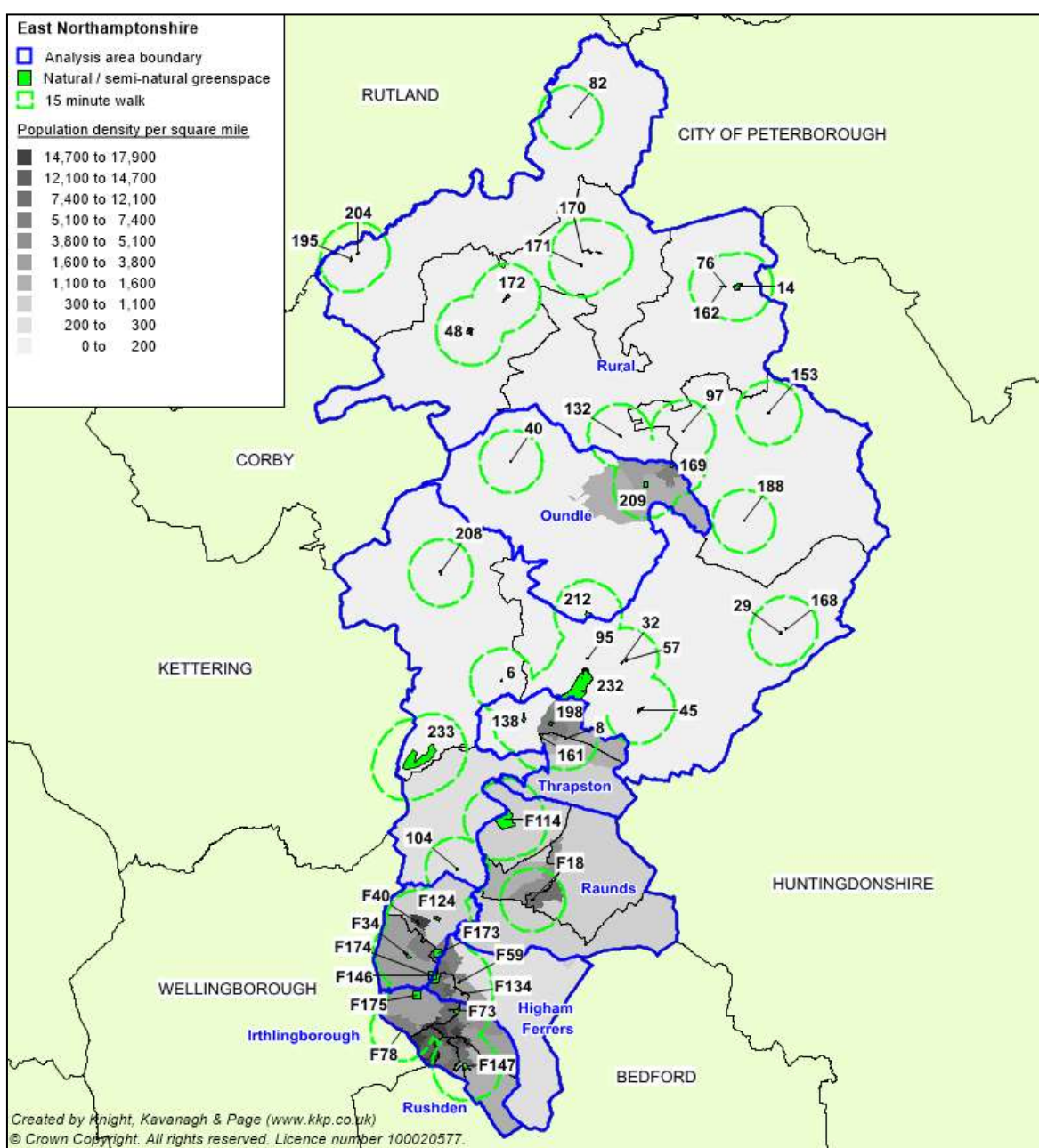
# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

This study, in order to comply with guidance uses locally informed standards. It does not focus on the ANGSt Standard as this uses a different methodology for identifying accessible natural greenspace to that advocated in guidance.

An accessibility standard of a 15-minute walk time has been set across East Northamptonshire. This is based on our extensive sector knowledge as well as reflecting best practice guidelines such as Fields in Trust.

Figure 5.1 shows the standards applied to natural and semi-natural greenspace to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 5.1: Natural and semi-natural greenspace mapped against analysis areas



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Table 5.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F59	Midland Road/Kimbolton Road	Higham Ferrers		
F134	Ferrers Art College Natural Area	Higham Ferrers		
F173	Higham Ferrers Pits	Higham Ferrers		
F174	Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows	Irthlingborough		
F34	Ringtail Close	Irthlingborough		
F40	Scharpwell Greenspace	Irthlingborough		
F124	Irthlingborough Greenspace	Irthlingborough		
F146	Wharf Road, Irthlingborough	Irthlingborough		
40	Opposite Lammas, Upper Benefield	Oundle		
169	Snipe Meadow	Oundle		
212	Church street Next to St Michael and All Saints Wardenhoe	Oundle		
F18	Cherry Walk (Raunds Pocket Park)	Raunds		
F114	Kinewell Lake	Raunds		
6	Corner of Drayton Road and Robbs lane, Lowick	Rural		
14	Corner of Station Road and Church Street, Nassington	Rural		
29	Thurning Road, Thurning	Rural		
32	Lilford road, Thorpe Waterville	Rural		
45	Saints Andrews Lane, Titchmarsh	Rural		
48	Red Lodge Road, Bulwick	Rural		
57	Lilford Road, Thorpe Waterville	Rural		
76	The Drove, Nassington	Rural		
82	The Drift, Collyweston	Rural		
95	Corner of Main Street and Thorpe Road, Aldwinckle	Rural		
97	Cotterstock Road and Church, Cotterstock	Rural		
104	Corner of Irthlingborough and Chapel Hill, Little Addington	Rural		
132	Main street, Glapthorn	Rural		
153	Between Buntings Lane and Dexter way, Warmington	Rural		
162	Between Apethorpe Road and Fern Close. Nassington	Rural		
168	Thurning Road, Thurning	Rural		
170	Willow lane, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
171	Eagle Lane, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
172	Blatherwyke lake, Blatherwyke	Rural		
188	Ferguson's Close, Polebrook	Rural		
195	Gretton Road, Harringworth	Rural		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
204	Corner of Seaton road opposite White Swan, Harringworth	Rural		
208	Barnard Way, Brigstock	Rural		
209	Benefield Road	Rural		
232	Titchmarsh, LNR, Titchmarsh	Rural		
233	Twywell Hills and Dales	Rural		
F73	Greenspace off John Clark Way	Rushden		
F78	Dingle Road	Rushden		
F147	Manor Park, Rushden	Rushden		
F175	Wilson's Pits	Rushden		
8	Land off Huntingdon Road/ Orchard Way	Thrapston		
138	Acorn Close	Thrapston		
161	Bridge street	Thrapston		
198	Meadow Lane NSN	Thrapston		

The majority of analysis areas are covered by a 15 minute walk time catchment. Those small pockets which are not covered by a catchment have low population density. The only identified gap in an area of higher population density is in the outskirts of Oundle Analysis Area. However, this gap is mostly met by Barnwell Country Park, Oundle, which despite falling into the typology of parks and gardens, does have characteristics of natural and semi-natural greenspace.

### 5.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for natural and semi-natural greenspace in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 35% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 5.3: Quality rating for natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <35%	High >35%
Higham Ferrers	117	13%	43%	68%	55%	1	2
Irthlingborough	117	18%	43%	83%	65%	3	2
Oundle	117	39%	44%	52%	13%	0	3
Raunds	117	66%	76%	86%	21%	0	2
Rural	117	22%	38%	62%	40%	8	16
Rushden	117	21%	39%	65%	44%	2	2
Thrapston	117	28%	35%	52%	23%	3	1
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>



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The Benefield Road site in Oundle does not receive a quality and value rating. The site could not be accessed during site visits. Due to its late inclusion Twywell Hills and Dales also does not receive a quality and value score.

Over half of natural and semi-natural sites (62%) in East Northamptonshire rate above the threshold applied for quality. Proportionally Oundle and Raunds analysis areas have more sites that rate above the threshold (100%) than any other analysis area. In contrast, proportionally Thrapston has the most sites score below the threshold (75%).

The lowest scoring sites for quality in East Northamptonshire are Scharpwell greenspace (Irthlingborough), Dingle Rd (Rushden) Irthlingborough NSN and Ferrers Art College Natural area. These sites score 20%, 21%, 18% and 13% respectively and are three of twelve sites which score low for both quality and value. A point to note, quality can have a direct impact on a sites value, with a low quality making it less attractive and consequently giving users less desire to visit.

Site observations report these sites as lacking general maintenance and cleanliness. This has resulted in Irthlingborough Greenspace and Scharpwell Greenspace becoming overgrown. As a result, Irthlingborough Greenspace is now inaccessible. Other specific site issues include broken glass at Ferrers Art College Natural Area and high levels of litter including household waste at Dingle Road. Furthermore, all four sites also lack features such as seats and benches, signage, parking and toilet facilities. Consequently, these sites have received a low quality score.

A lack of such features at some of these sites is understandable given they are classified as natural spaces which promote biodiversity, and therefore are more natural in their format. This is supported through observations of Scharpwell Greenspace, where conservation of natural features is recognised. However, ensuring suitable levels of maintenance and cleanliness is important and can also provide the site with more usage potential. For example, on observation of Ferrers Art College Natural area, it was suggested that this site could be linked to other pathways and open spaces in close proximity such as Greenspace off John Clark Way (Rushden).

The highest scoring sites for quality in East Northamptonshire are:

- ◀ Kinewell Lake (87%)
- ◀ Wharf Road Greenspace, Higham Ferrers (80%)
- ◀ Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows (69%)

The highest scoring sites are observed as being attractive and well maintained; offering features such as litter bins signage and pathways. They are also noted as conserving natural features such as trees, flora and fauna, as well as providing recreational opportunity for people of different ages and abilities.

Irthlingborough Lakes and Meadows is managed by the Wildlife Trust. It is one of several Trust sites that will be linked together to form the Nene Wetlands. A newly formed site, Rushden Lakes Nature Reserve, will be created. This is part of the Rushden Lakes retail development due to open in 2017. The work will carefully incorporate the new and existing sites through a network of habitats, footpaths, cycleways and waterways to create one large nature reserve.

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### 5.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for natural and semi-natural greenspace in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 5.4: Value scores for natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	110	4%	32%	51%	47%	1	2
Irthlingborough	110	9%	29%	51%	42%	2	3
Oundle	110	18%	30%	38%	20%	1	2
Raunds	110	53%	55%	56%	4%	0	2
Rural	110	7%	21%	33%	25%	9	14
Rushden	110	9%	22%	51%	42%	3	1
Thrapston	110	7%	21%	28%	21%	1	3
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>

The Benefield Road site in Oundle does not receive a quality and value rating. The site could not be accessed during site visits. Due to its late inclusion Twywell Hills and Dales also does not receive a quality and value score.

Over half (60%) of the assessed natural and semi-natural greenspaces rate above the value threshold. The highest scoring sites for value are Kinewell Lake (56%) and Cherry Walk (52%).

This demonstrates the success of the Pocket Park Scheme, with the two highest scoring natural and semi-natural greenspace being 'pocket parks'. Both sites offer health benefits and opportunities for social inclusion. For example, at Kinewell Lake, people can fish and go walking around the 1.5 miles of pathways. The sites also offer educational and ecological value as well as meeting the needs of a variety of users. In addition the high quality score achieved by Kinewell Lake reflects the sites designation as a SSSI and SPA and its status as a Local Nature Reserve.



### 5.6 Summary

#### **Natural and semi-natural greenspace summary**

- ◆ In total, there are 47 natural and semi-natural greenspaces, totalling over 387 hectares of provision.
- ◆ Accessibility standards of a 15 minute walk time have been set. No significant deficiencies are identified. Any gaps noted are in areas of low population density or are met by other forms of open space provision. New provision is unlikely to therefore be required.
- ◆ There are five nature reserves in the area. Kinewell Lake has LNR status as well as being a designated a SSSI and SPA.
- ◆ Natural greenspace sites are generally viewed as being of a good quality. This is reflected in the audit assessment with most (62%) scoring above the threshold. Kinewell Lake scores the highest for quality with 87%; a reflection of its general high level of standard.
- ◆ Seventeen sites are rated as being below the threshold for value. The lowest scoring sites for quality have issues with maintenance and cleanliness, as well as a lack of features such as signage, seating and litter bins.
- ◆ Higher scoring sites, such as Kinewell Lake and Cherry Walk Greenspace, (Raunds), provide a range of opportunities and uses. Such sites also give additional information; helping provide greater learning opportunities.
- ◆ Given the rural characteristic of the area, overall, there is thought to be a sufficient amount of natural and semi-natural greenspace provision.

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### PART 6: AMENITY GREENSPACE

#### 6.1 Introduction

The typology of amenity greenspaces is defined as sites offering 'opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. These include informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, village greens and other incidental space.'

#### 6.2 Current provision

There are a total of 77 amenity greenspaces identified in East Northamptonshire, a total of over 59 hectares. Amenity spaces are most often found in housing estates or settlement centres and function as informal recreation spaces or as open spaces along highways that provide a visual amenity. There are also a number of recreation grounds which have been classified as amenity greenspace.

*Table 6.1: Distribution of amenity greenspace sites by analysis area*

Analysis area	Amenity greenspace		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Higham Ferrers	6	3.46	0.39
Irthlingborough	11	10.33	1.16
Oundle	5	2.10	0.36
Raunds	14	6.85	0.56
Rural	16	15.13	0.94
Rushden	16	17.65	0.58
Thrapston	9	4.09	0.64
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>59.63</b>	<b>0.67</b>

Site sizes vary from the smallest incidental open space on housing estates, to the largest such as Spencer Park in Rushden at just over six hectares.

The Rushden Analysis Area currently has the most provision in terms of hectares. However, the Irthlingborough Analysis Area has the most provision per 1,000 population (1.16 hectares).

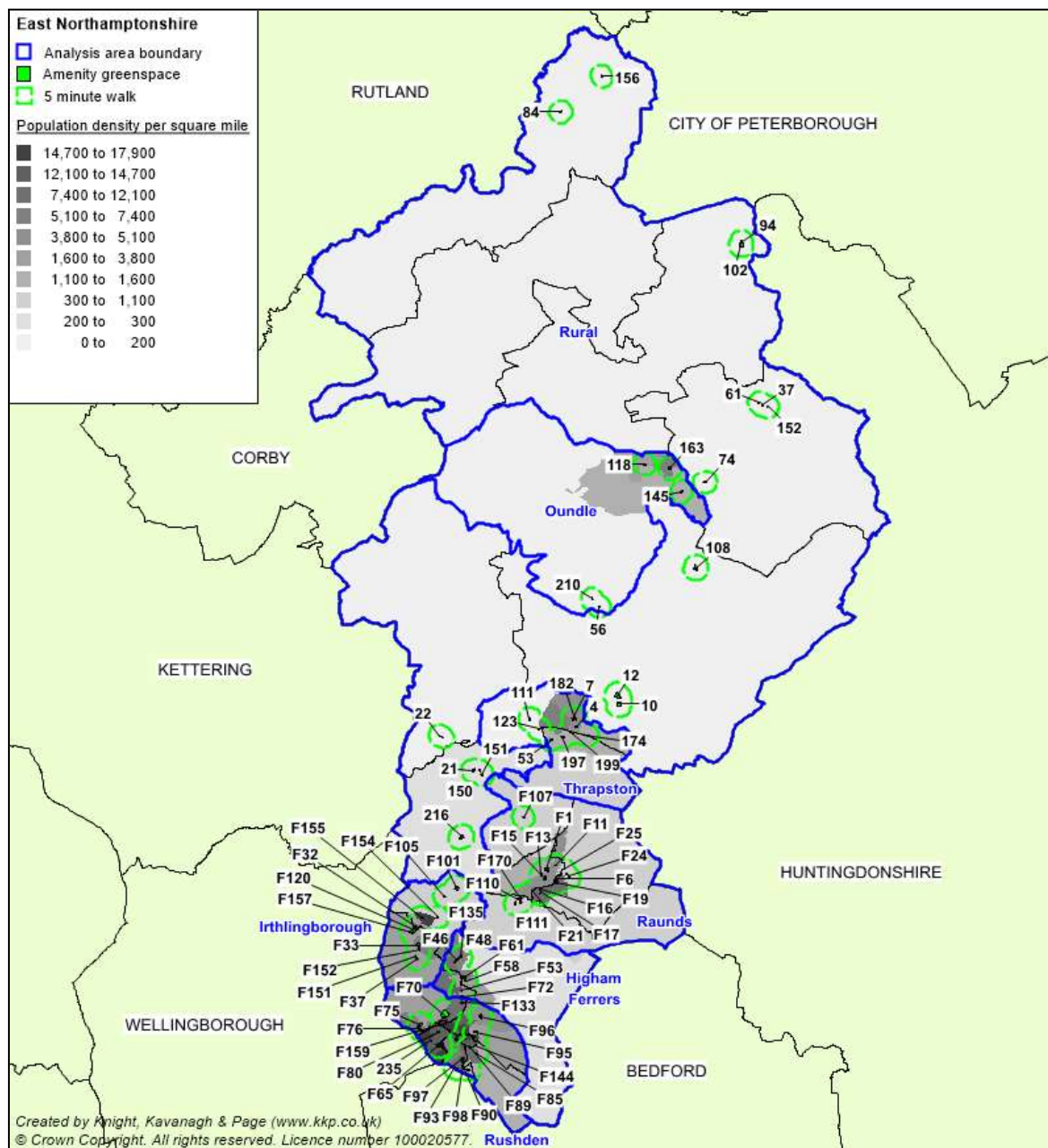
It is important to note that whilst the majority of provision is considered as being small grassed areas in and around housing or visual landscaped space, there is some variation of sites within this typology. For example recreation grounds can be included under amenity greenspace, such as Jubilee St AGS (Irthlingborough). These serve a different purpose to grassed areas in housing estates and often provide an extended range of opportunities for recreational activities compared to grass areas. In addition, these sites are often larger in size.

# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 6.3 Accessibility

An accessibility standard of a five minute walk time has been applied. This is based on our extensive sector knowledge as well as reflecting best practice guidelines such as Fields in Trust: Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play.

Figure 6.1: Amenity greenspace mapped against analysis area



# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 6.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F46	Hecham Way 1	Higham Ferrers		
F48	Hecham Way 2	Higham Ferrers		
F58	AGS off College Street (Linked to 61)	Higham Ferrers		
F61	Castle Fields	Higham Ferrers		
F72	Tollbar AGS, Higham Ferrers	Higham Ferrers		
F135	Winderere Drive AGS	Higham Ferrers		
F32	Scarborough Street	Irthlingborough		
F33	Allen Road AGS	Irthlingborough		
F37	Home Close AGS	Irthlingborough		
F101	Fettledrive Road Park	Irthlingborough		
F105	Alexander Road AGS	Irthlingborough		
F120	Queen Road AGS	Irthlingborough		
F151	AGS off Ebbw Vale Road	Irthlingborough		
F152	AGS between Allen Road and Ebbw Vale Road	Irthlingborough		
F154	Addington Road AGS	Irthlingborough		
F155	Holbush Way AGS	Irthlingborough		
F157	Jubilee St AGS	Irthlingborough		
56	Mill Lane	Oundle		
118	Hillfield Road	Oundle		
145	St Christophers Drive	Oundle		
163	New Road AGS	Oundle		
210	Corner of Wadenhoe Lane and Main Street	Oundle		
F1	Twyford Avenue	Raunds		
F6	Brook Street Park	Raunds		
F11	De Ferneus Drive AGS	Raunds		
F13	London Road AGS	Raunds		
F15	Marshalls Road AGS	Raunds		
F16	Cherry Walk AGS 1	Raunds		
F17	Cherry Walk AGS 2	Raunds		
F19	Brook Street AGS	Raunds		
F21	Saddlers Way AGS	Raunds		
F24	Keston Way AGS	Raunds		
F107	Church St AGS, Ringstead	Raunds		
F110	Manningham Road AGS, Stanwick	Raunds		
F111	Cleburne Close AGS, Stanwick	Raunds		
F170	Courtman Road AGS, Stanwick	Raunds		
10	Park Road, Titchmarsh	Rural		
12	Corner of Islington and Church Lane, Titchmarsh	Rural		
21	Eady Row, Woodford	Rural		
22	The Green, Twywell	Rural		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
37	Bevan Close, Warmington	Rural		
61	Stamford Lane opposite pub car park, Warmington	Rural		
74	Ashton Road opposite the Chequered Skipper, Ashton	Rural		
84	The Drift 3, Collyweston	Rural		
94	Between Main Street and Mill Road, Yarwell	Rural		
102	Dovecote Road, Yarwell	Rural		
108	Between Barnwell Road and Main Street, behind Barnwell Village Hall, Barnwell	Rural		
150	Corner of High Street and Whittlesea terrace, Woodford	Rural		
151	Corner of Rectory Lane and Church lane, Woodford	Rural		
152	Corner of Little Green and big Green, Warmington	Rural		
156	Between Stamford Road and New town, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
216	The Addingtons playing field, Great Addington	Rural		
235	Rose Avenue AGS	Rushden		
F65	Mallards	Rushden		
F70	Spencer Park	Rushden		
F75	Keats Way AGS	Rushden		
F76	Melloway Road AGS	Rushden		
F80	H.E. Bates Way AGS	Rushden		
F85	Ascott Road AGS	Rushden		
F89	Oak Pits Way	Rushden		
F90	Teasel Close AGS	Rushden		
F93	Jasmine Gardens AGS	Rushden		
F95	Access off Oval Crescent AGS	Rushden		
F96	Deacon Close AGS	Rushden		
F97	Clover Dr AGS	Rushden		
F98	Crocus Way AGS	Rushden		
F133	AGS off Firdale Road	Rushden		
F144	Oakpits Way AGS 1	Rushden		
4	Corner of Lancaster Drive and Windsor Drive	Thrapston		
7	Corner of Oundle Road and Springfield Avenue	Thrapston		
53	Cedar Drive	Thrapston		
111	School Lane	Thrapston		
123	Kettering Road	Thrapston		
174	Huntingdon Road	Thrapston		
182	Corner of Windsor drive and Oundle Road	Thrapston		
197	Fletcher Gardens	Thrapston		
199	Land off Huntingdon Road/ Orchard Way	Thrapston		

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Catchment mapping with a five minute walk time applied shows a reasonable level of coverage across East Northamptonshire.

In most instances areas with a greater population density have reasonable access to provision. However, some gaps are identified due to the accessibility standard set for amenity greenspace being relatively small (as provision is often deemed to be locally significant).

It is unlikely that new provision is required as gaps are served by other forms of open space provision such as natural and semi natural. Furthermore, no issues regarding a deficiency in amenity greenspace are highlighted from the consultation. Options to address identified deficiencies, if required, will be discussed further in the Strategy.

### Management

Council managed open spaces, including amenity greenspaces, are managed as part of the open spaces portfolio by East Northamptonshire Council. Sites receive regular maintenance visits which include regimes such as grass cutting, weeding and general site preservation (e.g. bin emptying, bench refurbishment and path checks).

### 6.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for amenity greenspaces in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 45% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 6.3: Quality ratings for amenity greenspaces by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <40%	High >40%
Higham Ferrers	121	46%	58%	79%	32%	0	6
Irthlingborough	121	36%	47%	62%	25%	2	9
Oundle	121	35%	42%	48%	13%	2	3
Raunds	121	32%	51%	81%	49%	3	11
Rural	121	31%	43%	57%	26%	5	11
Rushden	121	36%	51%	69%	33%	3	12
Thrapston	121	21%	41%	56%	34%	4	5
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>57</b>

Due to late inclusion, the Rose Avenue AGS does not receive a quality and value score.

Most amenity greenspace (75%) in East Northamptonshire receive a quality rating above the threshold. In particular, sites in Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough and Rushden score well, with 100%, 81% and 80% of sites in these areas scoring above the threshold respectively.



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Proportionally there are slightly more sites in Oundle (60%) and Thrapston (55%) that score low compared to other areas. Both areas contain a number of sites that are lacking in ancillary facilities and features.

Subsequently sites can be small and less attractive, with a lack of reason for people to visit. For example, Corner of Oundle Road and Springfield Avenue is described as being small patches of grass by the roadside and Cedar Drive is reported to be a grass verge with some mature trees on.

The five lowest scoring amenity greenspace sites in East Northamptonshire are:

- ◀ Huntingdon Road, Thrapston (22%)
- ◀ Cedar Drive, Thrapston (30%)
- ◀ The Drift 3, Rural, Collyweston (31%)
- ◀ Corner of Islington and Church lane, Titchmarsh (31%)

Both Cedar Drive and Huntingdon Road are observed as being highway verges and Corner of Islington and Church lane is described as informal grassland. Because of this, these sites have a lack of ancillary facilities and features such as bins, seating, signage, parking and lighting. Furthermore, Huntingdon Road in Thrapston has some specific site problems of poor cleanliness and maintenance due to overgrown shrubs. This contributes to Huntingdon Road being the lowest scoring amenity green space site within East Northamptonshire.

Further to Huntingdon Road, there are 15 other sites observed as having issues with maintenance and cleanliness:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ◀ Church Lane, Denford Churchyard 2           | ◀ Merefields Rd N/S greenspace, Irthlingborough                        |
| ◀ Land off Huntingdon Road/ Orchard Way       | ◀ Ferrers Art College Natural area in Higham Ferrers and North Rushden |
| ◀ Huntingdon Road                             | ◀ Dingle Rd AGS, Rushden   |
| ◀ Corner of the green and Lowther Street      | ◀ Spencer Rd/Hayway allotments, Rushden                                |
| ◀ Barnard Way                                 | ◀ Brook Street Cemetery Raunds   |
| ◀ Irthlingborough NSN                         | ◀ Church Street cemetery, Raunds                                       |
| ◀ Scharpwell N/S greenspace, Irthlingborough  | ◀ N/S greenspace off Bedford Road, Rushden                             |
| ◀ Fernmoor Dr N/S greenspace, Irthlingborough |  |

In addition to the sites listed above, London Road AGS, Raunds and Brook Street Park were noted to have issues relating to maintenance, as well as a specific site issue of broken glass during site observations. Despite this, Brook Street Park does score above the threshold due to having a number of ancillary facilities including seats, lighting and bins as well as being observed as having a high level of use. This could be attributed to the footpath and cycle way which runs through the site.

The highest scoring sites are Brook Street AGS (Raunds) and Castle Fields, (Higham Ferrers). The sites score 78% and 72% respectively for quality.

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This is due to the range of ancillary facilities available as well as the high standard of appearance, maintenance and landscape design of the sites. Ancillary facilities observed include bins, seating, signage and lighting. The sites are also noted to have good access and personal security. Features such as these contribute to their overall quality and help to create more opportunities and reasons for people to access them.

### 6.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for amenity greenspace in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of the value scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 6.4: Value ratings for amenity greenspace by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	100	27%	41%	58%	31%	0	6
Irthlingborough	100	11%	26%	40%	29%	3	8
Oundle	100	17%	26%	36%	19%	2	3
Raunds	100	13%	38%	68%	55%	1	13
Rural	100	7%	25%	45%	38%	7	9
Rushden	100	14%	29%	59%	45%	5	10
Thrapston	100	2%	23%	68%	66%	5	4
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>53</b>

Due to late inclusion, the Rose Avenue AGS does not receive a quality and value score.

Similar to quality, more amenity greenspaces are rated as being above the threshold for value (70%). There is a total of 23 sites (30%) that receive a low value rating of below 20%. Proportionally Thrapston (55%) has more sites below the threshold than any analysis area.

In general, all sites scoring below the threshold for value are essentially viewed as formal grassland with few or no other noticeable features. Hence their low value scores. However, they are often acknowledged as having a sense of place and providing some form of visual amenity to their locality.

It is important to keep in mind that the main role for some sites is to simply act as a grassed area, providing breaks in the urban form. Subsequently such sites are likely to score lower compared to others.

There is a total of 14 sites which score low for both quality and value. The majority of these sites are identified as being generally small in size (i.e. below 0.3 hectares). In general, a sites small size and lack of facilities are contributors to a low value score. This is due to quality often having a direct impact on value. This is evidenced by the number of sites scoring above the quality threshold (75%) being similar to the number of sites scoring above the value threshold (70%).



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As highlighted earlier, the majority of amenity greenspace sites (70%) score high for value. The highest scoring sites for value in East Northamptonshire are:

- ◀ Brook Street AGS, Raunds (68%)      ▶ Hecham Way AGS 1, Higham Ferrers (58%)
- ◀ School Lane, Thrapston (65%)      ▶ Castle Fields, Higham Ferrers (57%)

Amenity greenspaces should be recognised for their multi-purpose function, offering opportunities for a variety of leisure and recreational activities. The greater these opportunities, combined with the presence of facilities (e.g. benches, landscaping, trees), the more sites are respected and valued by the local community.

The three highest scoring sites for value are recognised for the accessible recreational opportunities they offer as well as key features and attractiveness. In particular, for sites such as Hecham Way AGS 1 (Higham Ferrers), Brook Street AGS (Raunds), added value is also provided through presence of play provision. It is also recognised that the Castle Field site hosts a number of community events such as a classic car show, funfair and circus.

Aside from structured recreational activities, amenity greenspaces can often be used for informal recreational activity such as casual play and dog walking. Many amenity greenspaces in the district have a dual function and are used as amenity resources for residents. They can also offer visual amenity and ecological value in built up areas.

### 6.6 Summary

#### **Amenity greenspace summary**

- ◀ A total of 77 amenity greenspace sites are identified in East Northamptonshire, a total of over 59 hectares of amenity space.
- ◀ The Rushden Analysis Area currently has the most provision in terms of hectares (17.5 ha). However, the Irthlingborough Analysis Area has the most provision per 1,000 population (1.16 hectares).
- ◀ The multifunctional role of amenity greenspace to local communities is recognised and as such the expectation exists for provision to be locally accessible. Therefore an accessibility of a five minute walk has been set.
- ◀ It is unlikely that new provision is required as gaps are served by other forms of open space provision such as natural and semi natural greenspace. Furthermore, no issues regarding a deficiency in amenity greenspace is highlighted from the consultation.
- ◀ Overall the quality of amenity greenspaces is positive. Most sites (75%) are rated as high for quality in the site visit audit. Only a handful of sites are identified as having any specific issues. Often a site with a quality score below the threshold is due to its size and nature and therefore it lacks any form of ancillary feature.
- ◀ In addition to the multifunctional role of sites, amenity greenspace provision is, in general, particularly valuable towards the visual aesthetics for communities. This is demonstrated by the 70% of sites rating above the threshold for value. The contribution these sites provide as a visual amenity and for wildlife habitats should not be overlooked.

### PART 7: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### 7.1 Introduction

The typology of provision for children and young people, includes areas designated primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.

Provision for children is deemed to be sites consisting of formal equipped play facilities typically associated with play areas. This is usually perceived to be for children under 12 years of age. Provision for young people can also include equipped sites that provide more robust equipment catering to older age ranges. It can include facilities such as skateparks, BMX, basketball courts, youth shelters, MUGAs and informal kick-about areas.

#### 7.2 Current provision

A total of 64 sites for provision for children and young people are identified in East Northamptonshire. This combines to create a total of over five hectares. The table below shows the distribution of provision in East Northamptonshire by area. No site size threshold has been applied and as such all provision is identified and included within the audit.

*Table 7.1: Distribution of provision for children and young people by analysis area*

Analysis area	Provision for children and young people		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Higham Ferrers	8	0.43	0.05
Irthlingborough	6	0.33	0.03
Oundle	2	0.47	0.08
Raunds	6	0.36	0.02
Rural	15	2.15	0.13
Rushden	19	1.13	0.04
Thrapston	8	0.60	0.09
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>5.50</b>	<b>0.06</b>

The Rural Analysis Area currently has the most provision for children and young people based on per 1,000 population (0.13 hectares).

The analysis areas with the least amount of provision per 1,000 population is Raunds with a current standard of 0.02 hectares per 1,000 population.

#### 7.3 Accessibility

An accessibility standard has been set across East Northamptonshire of a walk time of 10 minutes. This is based on our extensive sector knowledge as well as reflecting best practice guidelines for provision for children and young people. Figure 7.1 shows the standards applied to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

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Figure 7.1: Provision for children and young people mapped against analysis areas

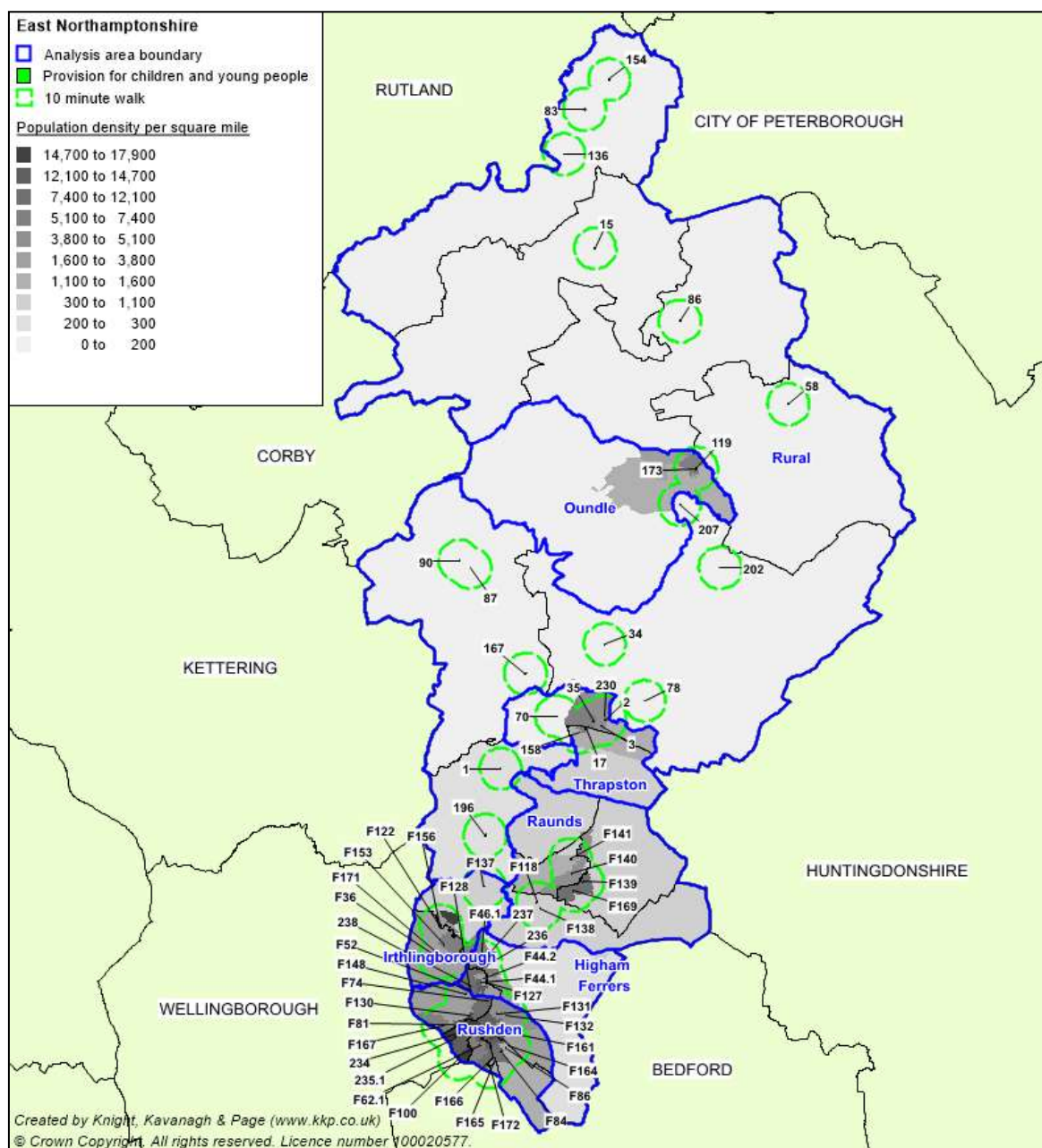


Table 7.3: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F52	Larkin Gardens Play Area	Higham Ferrers		
F127	Saffron Road Rec Play Area	Higham Ferrers		
F44.1	Saffron Road Rec MUGA	Higham Ferrers		
F44.2	Saffron Road Rec Skate Park	Higham Ferrers		
F46.1	Fitzwilliam Leys Play Area	Higham Ferrers		
236	Villa Rise Play Area	Higham Ferrers		
237	Celtic Close Play Area	Higham Ferrers		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
238	Larkin Gardens	Higham Ferrers		
F36	Home Close Play Area	Irthingborough		
F122	Musson Cl/Manton Road Play Area	Irthingborough		
F137	Fettledine Road Play Area	Irthingborough		
F153	Allen Road Play Area	Irthingborough		
F156	Old Bowls Green Skatepark	Irthingborough		
F171	Home Close Play Area 2	Irthingborough		
119	New road Play Area	Oundle		
173	New Road Play Area 2	Oundle		
F118	Needham Road Play Area, Stanwick	Raunds		
F138	Duke of Wellington Play Area, Stanwick	Raunds		
F139	Brook St Play Area	Raunds		
F140	Play Area off Marshalls Road	Raunds		
F141	Webb Road Play Area	Raunds		
F169	Play area off Weighbridge Way	Raunds		
1	Eady Row Play Area, Woodford	Rural		
136	Stamford Road Play Area, Duddington	Rural		
15	Millwood Way Play Area, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
154	St Christophers Drive Amenity, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
167	Drayton Road Play Area, Lowick	Rural		
196	Lower Street, Great Addington	Rural		
202	Church Hill, Barnwell	Rural		
207	Barnwell Country Park Play Area, Oundle	Rural		
34	Aldwinkle Church Play Area, Aldwinkle	Rural		
58	Bevan Close Play Area, Warmington	Rural		
78	Park Road Play Area, Titchmarsh	Rural		
83	The Drift 2, Collyweston	Rural		
86	Orchard Lane, Woodnewton	Rural		
87	Fermyn Woods Country Park Play Area, Brigstock	Rural		
90	Sandlands Avenue Play Area, Brigstock	Rural		
F74	St James Play Area	Rushden		
F81	Yelden Close Play Area, South Urban	Rushden		
F84	Aintree Dr Play Area 1	Rushden		
F86	Aintree Dr Play Area 2	Rushden		
F100	Sylmond Gardens Play Area, West Rushden	Rushden		
234	Pemberton Centre MUGA	Rushden		
235.1	Rose Avenue Play Area	Rushden		
F62.1	Rushden Hall Park Play Area	Rushden		
F128	Elliot Way Play Area	Rushden		
F130	Spencer Road Play Area	Rushden		
F131	Fosse Green Play Area	Rushden		
F132	Play Area off Bradfield Close	Rushden		
F148	Donne Close Play Area	Rushden		

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F161	Play area off Oval Crescent	Rushden		
F164	Birkdale Drive Play Area	Rushden		
F165	Bedford Road (Jubilee Park) Play Area 1	Rushden		
F166	Bedford Road (Jubilee Park) Play Area 2	Rushden		
F167	Masefield Drive Play Area	Rushden		
F172	Teasel Close AGS Play Area	Rushden		
F158	Furnace Drive Play Area	Thrapston		
17	Peace Memorial Park Play Area	Thrapston		
54.1	Castle Fields MUGA*	Thrapston		
2	Conway Drive Play Area	Thrapston		
230	Sissinghurst Drive Play Area	Thrapston		
3	Corner of Lancaster drive and Windsor Drive Play Area	Thrapston		
35	Charles Street Play Area	Thrapston		
70	Play Area at corner of Old Farm Lane	Thrapston		

There is generally a good spread of provision across the area. The walk time catchment covers the most densely populated areas. However, there are small gaps in provision in Oundle and Rushden which may need to be addressed through new sites or increasing the size of existing sites.

In Raunds and Glapthorn (Rural Analysis Area), there is a perceived lack of provision catering for younger age groups. During consultation with Raunds Parish Council they expressed the need for smaller sites for use of younger children. The parish council are currently looking for smaller sites to meet this need. Similarly, Barnwell Parish Council have expressed an intention to put a play area on the recreation ground.

### **Management**

Similar to other types of open space in East Northamptonshire, play areas are provided and managed by a variety of organisations such as parish/town councils and housing associations, including for example, Spire Homes, Rushden Town Council and Thrapston Town Council.

\* KKP 54.1: Castle Fields MUGA is not mapped due to late inclusion.

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### 7.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The following table summarises the results of the quality assessment for play provision for children and young people in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 55% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of the quality scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 7.4: Quality ratings for provision for children and young people by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <55%	High >55%
Higham Ferrers	97	62%	75%	89%	27%	0	4
Irthlingborough	97	40%	60%	73%	34%	2	4
Oundle	97	55%	62%	68%	13%	1	1
Raunds	97	55%	74%	82%	28%	1	5
Rural	97	37%	57%	85%	48%	7	8
Rushden	97	35%	67%	83%	48%	2	15
Thrapston	97	49%	58%	65%	15%	1	6
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>43</b>

Due to late inclusion, the Rose Avenue Play Area and Pemberton Centre MUGA sites in Rushden, the Castle Fields MUGA in Thrapston, and the Fitzwilliam Leys, Villa Rise, Celtic Close and Larkin Garden sites in Higham Ferrers do not receive a quality and value score.

Quality assessments of play sites do not include a detailed technical risk assessment of equipment.

The majority of sites are assessed as high quality (75%) against the site visit criteria. However, there is a significant spread between the highest and lowest scoring sites, particularly in the Rural Analysis Area and the Rushden Analysis Area. For instance, Church Hill, Barnwell (Rural) scores 31% compared to the Barnwell Country Park Play Area, Oundle (Rural) which scores 80%.

Church Hill, Barnwell is the lowest scoring site in East Northamptonshire. This is a result of a lack of features such as seats and benches as well as lacking boundary fencing and sufficient disabled access. In addition, the equipment and surfaces surrounding the equipment are reported as being of low quality. Another observation from site assessment is the lower levels of personal security in comparison to other sites.

Two other particularly low scoring sites are Fosse Green Play Area, Rushden (35%) and Old Bowls Green Skate Park, Irthlingborough (36%). Fosse Green Play Area, Rushden's low score is a reflection of a limited range of play equipment; as it only contains two set of swings and as such is classified as a LAP, catering for a smaller range of age groups. As well as this the site lacks important safety features of a play area such as fencing and safety barriers and the play surface is noted as being poor quality.



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A handful of sites are identified as having some specific quality issues. In particular, Fosse Green Play Area (Rushden) has issues with surface quality and Aintree Drive Play Area 2 (Rushden), Larkin Gardens Play Area (Higham Ferrers) and Old Bowls Green Skatepark (Irthlingborough) has problems with equipment quality. For example, Old Bowls Green Skatepark has a broken Arial Run and at Larkin Gardens Play Area there is damage to part of the Commando Run.

In contrast, sites in East Northamptonshire to receive particularly high scores for quality include:

- ♦ Saffron Road Rec Play Area (85%)
- ♦ Rushden Hall Park Play Area (83%)
- ♦ Barnwell Country Park Play Area (80%)
- ♦ Brook St Play Area, Raunds (79%)
- ♦ Needham Road Play Area, Stanwick (78%)

These highest scoring sites for quality are noted as having an excellent range of equipment catering for a number of age groups. They are also reported as being attractive sites which are well maintained. In addition, the equipment is in good condition as are the other features on site such as signage, benches and bins.

A point to note, a new skate park has been opened in 2016 at Bedford Road (Jubilee Park) Play Area (Rushden). A skateboard Park has also opened (February 2015) in Higham Ferrers at Saffron Road Recreation Ground.

### 7.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for children and young people in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of the value scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 7.5: Value ratings for provision for children and young people by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	55	47%	55%	64%	16%	0	4
Irthlingborough	55	42%	47%	58%	16%	0	6
Oundle	55	42%	44%	45%	4%	0	2
Raunds	55	38%	44%	45%	7%	0	6
Rural	55	20%	32%	45%	25%	0	15
Rushden	55	27%	41%	55%	27%	0	17
Thrapston	55	20%	39%	49%	29%	0	7
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>

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Due to late inclusion, the Rose Avenue Play Area and Pemberton Centre MUGA sites in Rushden, the Castle Fields MUGA in Thrapston, and the Fitzwilliam Leys, Villa Rise, Celtic Close and Larkin Garden sites in Higham Ferrers do not receive a quality and value score.

All play provision is rated as being of high value in East Northamptonshire. This demonstrates the role such provision provides in allowing children to play but also the contribution sites can offer in terms of creating aesthetically pleasing local environments, giving children and young people safe places to learn and to socialise with others.

Two sites score the highest for value; Saffron Road Rec Play Area (64%) and Allen Road Play area, Irthlingborough (58%).

It is also important to recognise the benefits that play provides in terms of healthy, active lifestyles, social inclusion and interaction between children plus its developmental and educational value. It is essential that parents, carers and members of the public are made aware of the importance of play and of children's rights to play in their local communities.

Diverse equipment to cater for a range of ages is also essential. Provision such as skate parks at Higham Ferrers Play Area as highly valued forms of play. Opportunities to further expand these types of provision, which cater towards older age ranges, should be explored and encouraged where possible.

### 7.6 Summary

#### Provision for children and young people summary

- ▶ There are 64 sites across East Northamptonshire identified as play provision. This equates to over five hectares.
- ▶ The Rushden Analysis Area currently has the most provision for children and young people (19). This is followed closely by the Rural Analysis Area (15) which has the most provision per 1,000 population (0.13 hectares).
- ▶ There is generally a good spread of provision across the area. The 10 minute walk time catchment covers the most densely populated areas. However, there are small gaps in provision in Oundle and Rushden which may need to be addressed through new sites or increasing the size of existing sites.
- ▶ The majority of play sites (75%) are assessed as being overall high quality. Although there are 14 sites which score low for quality. Often these sites are assessed as low due to general appearance, minor maintenance issues and lack in range and quality of equipment.
- ▶ All play provision is rated as being of high value from the site visit audit.



# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## PART 8: ALLOTMENTS

### 8.1 Introduction

Allotments is a typology which covers open spaces that provide opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction. This may include provision such as allotments, community gardens and city farms.

### 8.2 Current provision

There are 38 sites classified as allotments in East Northamptonshire, equating to over 32 hectares. No site size threshold has been applied to allotments and as such all provision is identified and included within the audit. However, six sites were not assessed due to restricted access at time of assessment or late inclusion. These sites therefore have no quality or value score but are included in Table 8.1 and Figure 8.3.

*Table 8.1: Distribution of allotment sites by analysis area*

Analysis area	Allotments		
	Number of sites	Size (ha)	Current standard (Ha per 1,000 population)
Higham Ferrers	1	0.40	0.04
Irthlingborough	2	3.42	0.38
Oundle	5	0.74	0.12
Raunds	2	2.06	0.16
Rural	23	12.77	0.79
Rushden	4	11.58	0.38
Thrapston	1	1.35	0.21
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32.35</b>	<b>0.36</b>

All analysis areas have allotment provision. The majority of allotment provision is located in the Rural Analysis Area, equating to over 12 hectares. Subsequently, the Rural Analysis Area currently has the most provision per 1,000 population (0.79 hectares). This is followed by Rushden Analysis Area with over 11 hectares and 0.38 hectares per 1,000 population. Despite only having 3.42 hectares of provision, Irthlingborough also has 0.38 hectares per 1,000 population.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) suggests a national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households (i.e. 20 allotments per 2,000 people based on two people per house) or one allotment per 200 people. This equates to 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population based on an average plot-size of 250 metres squared (0.025ha per plot).

Based on the current population of 88,582 people (ONS 2014 mid-term estimates) East Northamptonshire, as a whole, meets the NSALG standard. Using the suggested national standard, the minimum amount of allotment provision for East Northamptonshire is 22.14 hectares. The existing provision of 32.35 hectares therefore meets the standard.

If broken down by analysis area, all analysis areas with the exceptions of Thrapston Analysis Area, Raunds Analysis Area and Oundle Analysis area meet the NSALG standard.

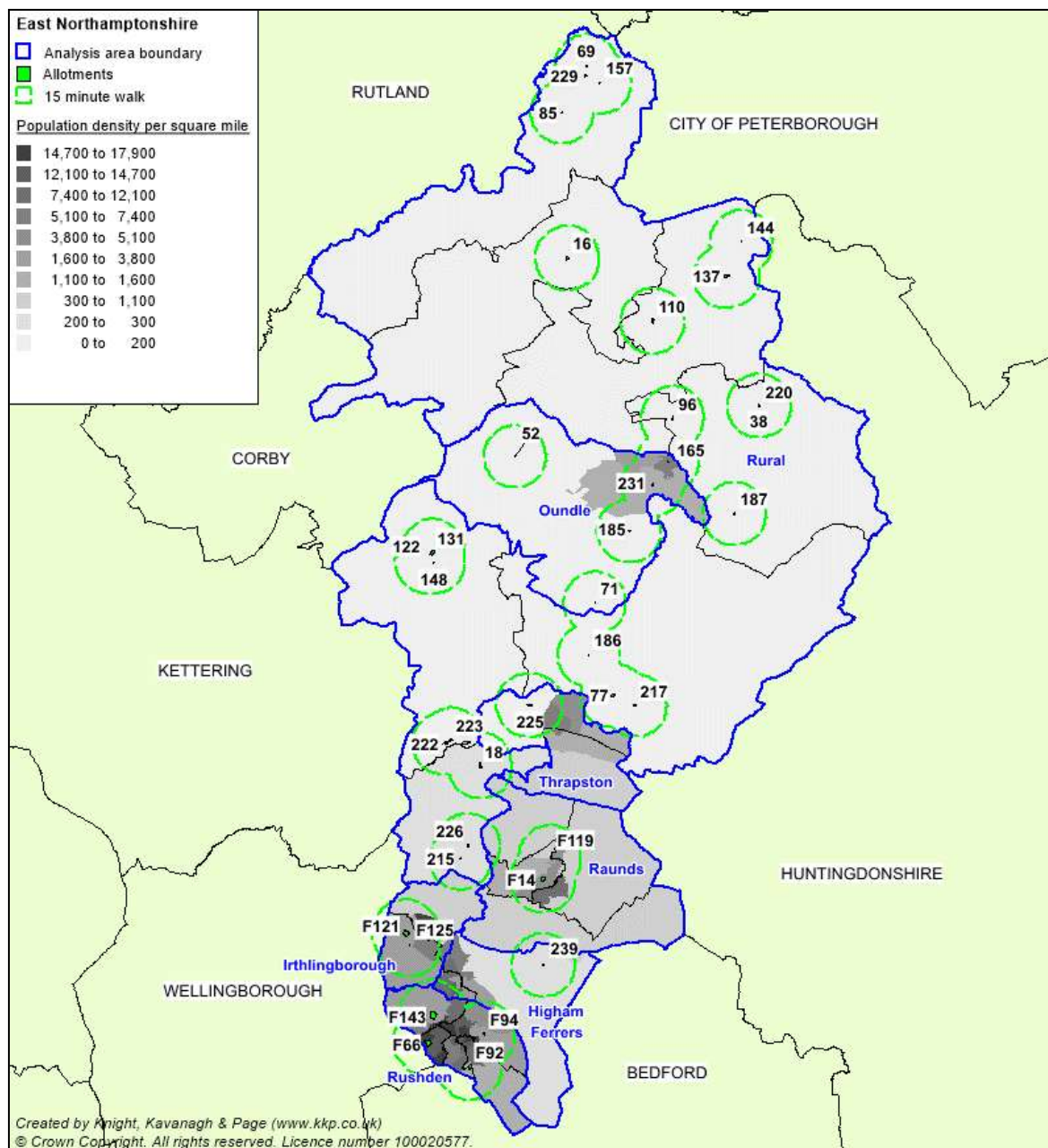
# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

## 8.3 Accessibility

An accessibility standard of a 15 minute walk time has been set across East Northamptonshire. This is based on our extensive sector knowledge as well as reflecting best practice guidelines for allotments.

Figure 8.1 shows the standards applied to allotments to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

*Figure 8.1: Allotments mapped against analysis areas*



## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 8.3: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F121	Irthlingborough Allotments	Irthlingborough		
F125	Allotments off Wellingborough Road	Irthlingborough		
239	Chelveston Allotments	Higham Ferrers		
52	Upper Benefield Allotment	Oundle		
71	Pilton Lane Allotment	Oundle		
165	Occupation Road Allotments	Oundle		
185	Corner of Hatchdoyle Lane and Stoke Doyle Lane	Oundle		
231	Benefield Road Allotments	Oundle		
F14	London Road Allotments	Raunds		
F119	Brick Kiln Road Allotments, Raunds	Raunds		
16	Orchard Lane, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
18	Newtown Street, Woodford	Rural		
38	Stamford Lane, Warmington	Rural		
69	Between West Street and Orchard Way, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
77	Corner of Islington and Church lane, Titchmarsh	Rural		
85	Collyweston Allotments, Collyweston	Rural		
96	Cotterstock road, Cotterstock	Rural		
110	Between Orchard lane and The paddock, Woodnewton	Rural		
122	St Andrews, Brigstock Allotment, Brigstock	Rural		
131	Corner of Kennel Hill and Benefield Road, Nassington	Rural		
137	Corner of Between Eastfield, Crescent and St marys Close, Nassington	Rural		
144	Yarwell Allotment, Yarwell	Rural		
148	Brigstock Allotment, Brigstock	Rural		
157	Cliffe Road Allotment, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
186	Lowick Lane Allotments, Aldwincle	Rural		
187	Kings Arms Lane, Polebrook	Rural		
215	Little Addington Churchyard, Little Addington	Rural		
217	Saint Andrews Lane, Titchmarsh	Rural		
220	Chapel Street, Warmington Allotments, Warmington	Rural		
222	Twywell Lower Street Allotments, Slipton	Rural		
223	Twywell Kettering Road Allotments, Twywell	Rural		
226	Woodford Road Allotments, Little Addington	Rural		
229	Westfields, Easton on the Hill Allotments, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
F66	Highfield Road Allotments	Rushden		
F92	Bedford Road Allotments	Rushden		
F94	Allotments off Grafton Road	Rushden		

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F143	Quorn Road Allotments	Rushden		
225	Islip Allotments	Thrapston		

Although there is no provision within the settlement of Higham Ferrers, allotments located in nearby Chelveston and Rushden (i.e. Allotments off Grafton Road) do go some way towards meeting this gap. However, given waiting lists to access plots, new provision in Higham Ferrers would help meet the identified catchment gap.

Gaps in catchment mapping can also be seen in Thrapston. This is a result of only one allotment site being situated in this analysis area. Similar, to Higham Ferrers, new provision would help meet this gap and perhaps provide some additional provision to Raunds where some gaps can also be seen in the less densely populated areas.

### ***Ownership/management***

Allotment provision in East Northamptonshire is owned and managed by a number of organisations. For example, London Road Allotments, Raunds is managed by the Allotment Society. Brick Kiln Road Allotments, Raunds is managed by the Raunds United Charities and allotment provision in Rushden is owned and maintained by Rushden and District Small Holdings Society.

### **8.4 Quality**

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for allotments in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 40% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 8.4: Quality ratings for allotments by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <40%	High >40%
Higham Ferrers	124	-	-	-	-	-	-
Irthlingborough	124	33%	33%	33%	0%	1	0
Oundle	124	31%	36%	47%	16%	4	1
Raunds	124	46%	50%	53%	8%	0	2
Rural	124	32%	42%	52%	19%	9	10
Rushden	124	36%	56%	67%	31%	1	3
Thrapston	124	53%	53%	53%	0%	0	1
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

In terms of quality, just over half of the allotments in East Northamptonshire score highly. The highest scoring site is Bedford Road Allotments in Rushden Analysis Area. The site scores 67.5% for quality and is owned and maintained by the Rushden and District Small Holdings Society. The second and third highest scoring allotment sites are also owned and maintained by the Society. These sites are:

- ✦ Quorn Road allotments, Rushden (63%)
- ✦ Highfield Road Allotments, Rushden (55%)

All three of these sites are noted as having good access, including disabled access, parking, informative signage and controls to prevent illegal use such as fencing. Furthermore, all of these sites except for Quorn Road Allotments (Rushden) are large sites.

There are 15 allotment sites across East Northamptonshire that rate below the threshold for quality. Of these sites, the ones scoring the lowest are:

- ✦ Benefield Road Allotments, Oundle (31%)
- ✦ Lowick Lane Allotments, Aldwinckle (32%)
- ✦ Pilton Lane Allotment, Oundle (33%)
- ✦ Irthlingborough Allotments (33%)

Observations from the site assessments note that these sites tend to be much smaller in size and lack ancillary features such as fencing, signage and seating. In addition, only one of these sites Pilton Lane Allotment has sufficient disabled access. Despite these sites scoring low for quality, it is worth noting that no specific quality issues are observed.

### 8.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for allotments in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 8.5: Value ratings for allotments by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	105	-	-	-	-	-	-
Irthlingborough	105	27%	27%	27%	0%	0	1
Oundle	105	30%	34%	36%	7%	0	5
Raunds	105	31%	34%	37%	6%	0	2
Rural	105	25%	33%	45%	20%	0	19
Rushden	105	25%	30%	33%	9%	0	4
Thrapston	105	35%	35%	35%	0%	0	1
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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All allotments in East Northamptonshire assessed are assessed as high value. This is a reflection of the associated social inclusion and health benefits, amenity value and the sense of place offered by such types of provision.

Waiting lists are known to exist in Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Raunds and Rushden analysis areas. In Higham Ferrers, despite a lack of provision, there is a waiting list of 60 people that want to access allotment provision in neighbouring analysis areas. This displaced demand was highlighted during consultation with Higham Ferrers Parish Council. The nearby Chelveston Allotments is open to applications from residents of Higham Ferrers. The site is identified as having the potential to provide a further 8 plots, which could help to meet some of the demand expressed in Higham Ferrers.

During consultation, Raunds Parish Council also expressed the popularity of allotment provision with a two year waiting list highlighted. This offers further evidence towards the high values scored by sites within this typology.

### 8.6 Summary

#### Allotments summary

- ▶ A total of 38 sites are classified as allotments in East Northamptonshire, equating to more than 32 hectares.
- ▶ The current provision of 32.35 hectares is above the nationally recommended amount. However, there are waiting lists within East Northamptonshire, suggesting demand for allotments is not currently being met by supply.
- ▶ Although there is no provision within Higham Ferrers, allotments located in Chelveston and Rushden (i.e. Allotments off Grafton Rd) do help to meet this gap. New provision to serve Higham Ferrers may help meet the catchment gap. Similarly, in the Thrapston Analysis Area, a catchment gap exists. Therefore, new provision would meet this catchment gap.
- ▶ More than half of allotments score high for quality. The lowest scoring sites are identified as being small and lacking in ancillary features.
- ▶ All allotments in East Northamptonshire are assessed as high value reflecting the associated social inclusion and health benefits, their amenity value and the sense of place offered by provision.
- ▶ Waiting list numbers suggest that continuing measures should be made to provide additional plots in the future.



# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

### PART 9: CEMETERIES/CHURCHYARDS

#### 9.1 Introduction

Cemeteries and churchyards include areas for quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

#### 9.2 Current provision

There are 75 sites classified as cemeteries/churchyards, equating to over 33 hectares of provision in East Northamptonshire. No site size threshold has been applied and as such all provision identified is included within the audit.

*Table 9.1: Distribution of cemeteries by analysis area*

Analysis area	Churchyards/Cemeteries	
	Number of sites	Size (ha)
Higham Ferrers	4	2.81
Irthlingborough	3	1.66
Oundle	7	3.65
Raunds	7	4.09
Rural	48	14.16
Rushden	2	5.31
Thrapston	4	1.89
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>33.60</b>

Cemeteries and churchyards can be a significant open space provider in some areas particularly in rural areas. In deed there are a large number of sites for this type of open space due to most settlements, regardless of size, containing a village church.

The largest contributor to burial provision in East Northamptonshire is Rushden Cemetery, which is 4.90 hectares in size.

Within the identified provision, there are also a number of closed churchyard sites. These are sites that are no longer able to accommodate any new burials.

#### 9.3 Accessibility

No accessibility standard is set for the typology of cemeteries and churchyards. Furthermore, there is no realistic requirement to set accessibility standards for such provision. Instead, provision should be based on burial demand.

Figure 9.1 shows cemeteries and churchyards mapped against analysis areas.

# EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 9.1: Cemetery sites mapped against analysis area

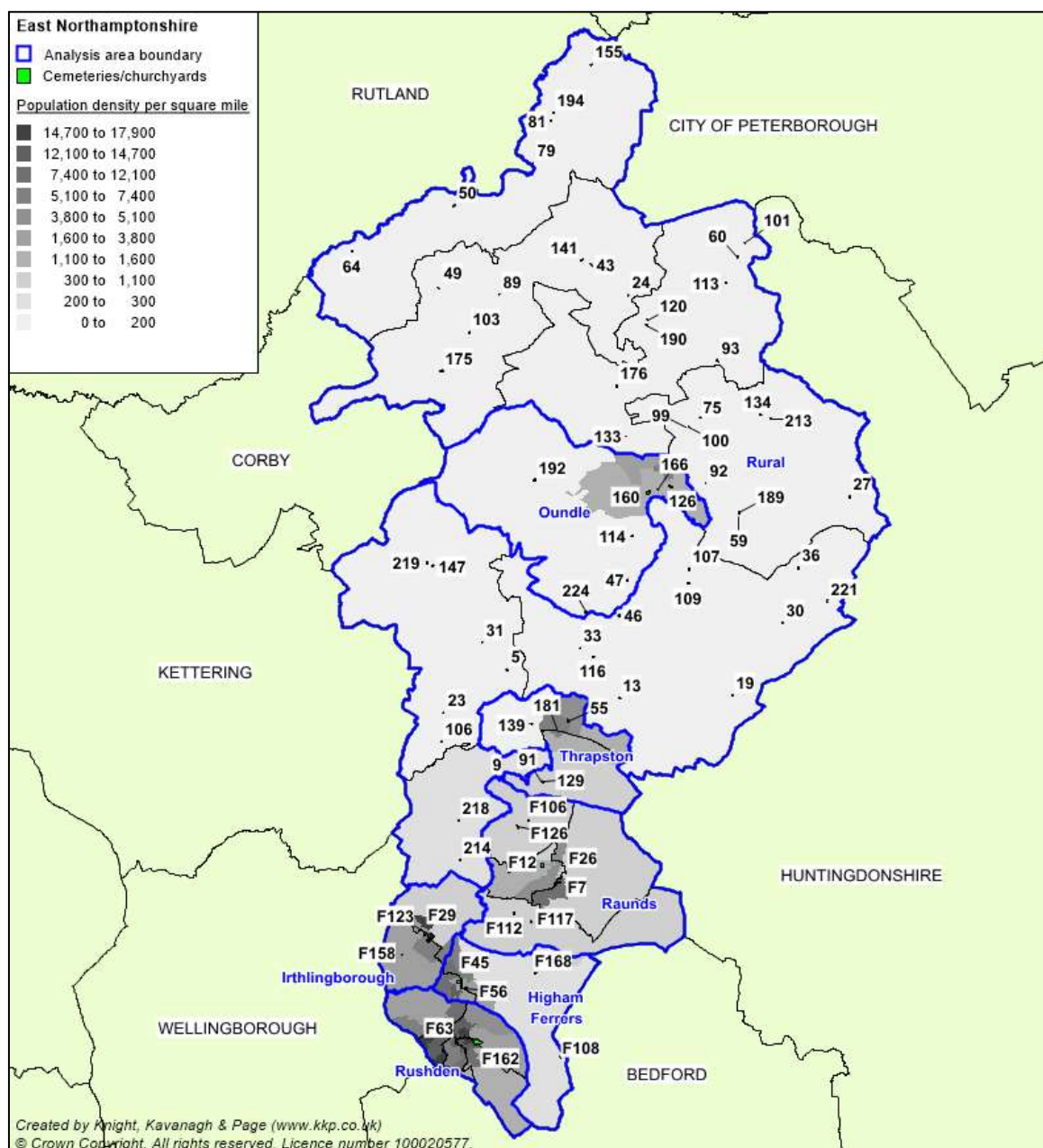


Table 9.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
F45	Higham Ferrers Cemetery	Higham Ferrers		
F56	Cemetery just off College Street	Higham Ferrers		
F108	Newton Bromswold Cemetery	Higham Ferrers		
F168	Caldecott Road Cemetery, Chelveston	Higham Ferrers		
F29	St Peters Way Cemetery	Irthlingborough		
F123	Nene View Cemetery	Irthlingborough		
F158	Irthlingborough Cemetery	Irthlingborough		



## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
47	All Saints Pilton Play Area	Oundle		
114	Church lane	Oundle		
126	St Peter's Church	Oundle		
160	Stroke Doyle Road	Oundle		
166	Stoke Hill Churchyard	Oundle		
192	Causin Way St Mary's Church	Oundle		
224	St Michael and All Saints Wardenhoe	Oundle		
F106	Church St Cemetery, Ringstead	Raunds		
F112	Church Rd cemetery, Stanwick	Raunds		
F117	Stanwick Cemetery	Raunds		
F12	London Road Cemetery, Raunds	Raunds		
F126	Station Road cemetery, Ringstead	Raunds		
F26	Church Street cemetery, Raunds	Raunds		
F7	Brook Street Cemetery Raunds	Raunds		
5	Main Road, Lowick	Rural		
9	St Mary's Woodford Churchyard, Woodford	Rural		
13	Corner of Islington and Church lane, Titchmarsh	Rural		
19	St Peter Clopton Parish Church, Clopton	Rural		
23	Slipton Churchyard, Slipton	Rural		
24	Between Main Street and bridge Street, Apethorpe	Rural		
27	St Peters Church, Lutton	Rural		
30	Thurning Churchyard, Thurning	Rural		
31	All Saints Churchyard, Sudborough	Rural		
33	St Peters, Aldwinckle	Rural		
36	Hemington Street, Hemington	Rural		
43	Between Bridge Street and Kings Cliffe Road, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
46	St John the Baptist Church, Achurch	Rural		
49	All Saints Church, Laxton	Rural		
50	Main street, Wakerley	Rural		
59	All Saints, Polebrook Churchyard, Wakerley	Rural		
60	Nassington Road, Yarwell	Rural		
64	St John the Baptist, Harringworth	Rural		
75	St Mary, Tansor	Rural		
79	St Mary, Duddington	Rural		
81	Collyweston Churchyard, Collyweston	Rural		
89	Blatherwyke Lake Churchyard, Blatherwyke	Rural		
92	Chapel of St Marys Magdalene, Ashton	Rural		

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
93	Woodnewton Road, Fotheringhay	Rural		
100	St Andrews Cotterstock Churchyard, Cotterstock	Rural		
101	Yarwell Churchyard, Yarwell	Rural		
103	Bulwick Church, Bulwick	Rural		
106	St Nicholas, Twywell	Rural		
107	St Andrews Church, Barnwell	Rural		
109	All Saints Church, Main Street, Barnwell	Rural		
113	St mary the Virgin and all Saint Church, Nassington	Rural		
116	Thorpe Road, Aldwincle	Rural		
120	Apethorpe Road, Woodnewton	Rural		
133	St Leonards Church, Glapthorn	Rural		
134	The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Warmington	Rural		
141	All Saints & St James Church, Kings Cliffe	Rural		
147	Corner of Sudburgh Road and Sandland Avenue, Brigstock	Rural		
155	All Saints Church, Easton on the Hill	Rural		
175	St Peters Church, Opposite Deene Hall, Denethorpe	Rural		
176	St Mary the Virgin, Southwick	Rural		
189	Polebrook churchyard, Polebrook	Rural		
190	St Mary, Woodnewton	Rural		
194	St Andrews, Collyweston	Rural		
213	Warmington churchyard, Warmington	Rural		
214	St Marys, Little Addington	Rural		
218	All Saints, Great Addington	Rural		
219	St Andrew's, Brigstock	Rural		
221	Luddington Churchyard, Luddington	Rural		
F63	St Mary's Church	Rushden		
F162	Rushden Cemetery	Rushden		
55	Thrapston Cemetery	Thrapston		
91	Church Lane, Denford Churchyard 2	Thrapston		
129	Church Lane, Denford Churchyard 1	Thrapston		
139	Between School and Orchard Way	Thrapston		
181	St James Church, Thrapston Churchyard	Thrapston		

In terms of provision, mapping demonstrates it is fairly evenly distributed across East Northamptonshire. Regardless, the need for additional cemetery provision should be driven by the requirement for burial demand and capacity.

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Rushden Cemetery has five years of burial capacity remaining and Rushden Parish Council is looking for future provision. Some land has been identified just outside Rushden (Rushden East), which could provide an additional 10 years of burial capacity.

Irthlingborough Analysis Area has both a churchyard and two cemeteries. Despite this, they are close to burial capacity. St Peters Way Cemetery is a fully closed churchyard and Nene View Cemetery is approximately three quarters full. However, land next to Nene View Cemetery is currently being leased to a farmer but could be turned into additional provision.

The Management and operation for the majority of sites is the responsibility of individual parishes, churches and/or the Diocese of Peterborough.

### 9.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for cemeteries in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 40% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and threshold are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 9.3: Quality ratings for cemeteries by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <40%	High >40%
Higham Ferrers	161	47%	52%	58%	11%	0	4
Irthlingborough	161	49%	51%	53%	4%	0	3
Oundle	161	41%	45%	56%	15%	0	7
Raunds	161	23%	43%	54%	30%	2	5
Rural	161	27%	43%	55%	27%	9	39
Rushden	161	59%	59%	60%	1%	0	2
Thrapston	161	46%	50%	54%	8%	0	4
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>64</b>

The majority of cemeteries and churchyards in East Northamptonshire (85%) are rated as being of above the threshold for quality.

A large proportion of the sites are noted as being well maintained and therefore have a good quality appearance. Some sites (Church Lane Cemetery, Newton Bromswold, London Road Cemetery and Nene View Cemetery) are also noted to have features such as child burial areas. In addition, several sites have a garden of remembrance.

The highest scoring sites for quality are Rushden Cemetery, Vine Hill Drive Cemetery (Higham Ferrers) and St Mary's Church (Rushden). These sites receive a quality score above the threshold of 60%, 59% and 58% respectively. This is due to them being maintained to a high level. The general access to and on site is also noted as being good. Furthermore, preservation of natural features such as trees and flora is also noted on these sites.

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

There are 11 sites which score below the threshold for quality with the lowest scoring sites being:

- ✦ Brook Street Cemetery Raunds (23%)
- ✦ Slipton Churchyard, Slipton (27%)
- ✦ Church Street cemetery, Raunds (32%)

The lowest scoring site for quality is Brook Street Cemetery (Raunds). The site receives a quality score of 23%. This is due to a low sense of security and an apparent lack of ancillary facilities such as bins and seating. This is likely to reflect their smaller size, as both sites are identified as being under 0.6 hectares. Furthermore, this site is described as having low levels of cleanliness and maintenance, making it partly unusable.

The remaining sites, which score below the threshold, are reported to have no specific quality issues. The main reason for these sites receiving a low quality score is their lack of ancillary features. However, this could be attributed to them being community churchyards, which are small in size.

### 9.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for cemeteries in East Northamptonshire. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores and threshold are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

*Table 9.4: Value ratings for cemeteries by analysis area*

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Higham Ferrers	100	42%	48%	53%	11%	0	4
Irthlingborough	100	33%	37%	42%	9%	0	3
Oundle	100	29%	41%	46%	17%	0	7
Raunds	100	21%	36%	47%	26%	0	7
Rural	100	25%	42%	47%	22%	0	48
Rushden	100	39%	44%	49%	10%	0	2
Thrapston	100	42%	46%	52%	10%	0	4
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>75</b>

All cemeteries and churchyards in East Northamptonshire score high for value. This is unsurprising as this form of provision often offers cultural and heritage value as well as providing sense of place within communities. Moreover, cemeteries and churchyards can promote biodiversity within areas.

## EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

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A number of sites also offer additional value to the local community:

- ◀ Cemetery just off College Street, Higham Ferrers (53%)
- ◀ St James Church, Thrapston Churchyard (52%)
- ◀ St Mary's Church, Rushden (49%)
- ◀ Caldecott Rd Cemetery, Chelveston (49%)

Site observation suggest Brook Street Cemetery (Raunds) is unused due to be being overgrown and run down. However, despite scoring below the threshold for quality, it may still provide a role to the community and area it serves. It scores above the threshold for value.

Cemeteries and churchyards are important natural resources, offering both recreational and conservation benefits. As well as providing burial space, cemeteries and churchyards can offer important low impact recreational benefits (e.g. wildlife watching).

### 9.6 Summary

#### **Cemeteries summary**

- ◀ There are 75 sites classified as cemeteries, equating to over 33 hectares of provision.
- ◀ As one of the main forms of provision for future burial capacity, the Rushden Cemetery site is noted as having circa five years of capacity remaining. Plans are being put in place to provide additional interment space for the future in both Rushden and Irthlingborough analysis areas.
- ◀ The need for additional cemetery provision should be driven by the requirement for burial demand and capacity.
- ◀ The majority of cemeteries and churchyards are rated as high quality. However, 11 sites score below the quality threshold. This is a reflection of the lack of ancillary facilities (e.g. benches, signage), sense of security and general maintenance observed.
- ◀ All cemeteries are assessed as high value, reflecting that generally provision has cultural/heritage value and provide a sense of place to the local community.

### PART 10: GREEN CORRIDORS

#### 10.1 Introduction

The green corridors typology includes sites that offer opportunities for walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel. Such sites also provide opportunities for wildlife migration. This may include river and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, rights of way and permissive paths.

#### 10.2 Current provision

There are 31 green corridors, equating to just over one hectare of provision, identified in East Northamptonshire.

*Table 10.1: Distribution of green corridors by analysis area*

Analysis area	Green corridors	
	Number of sites	Size (ha)
Higham Ferrers	8	0.34
Irthlingborough	5	0.21
Oundle	1	0.21
Raunds	11	0.45
Rural	1	0.23
Rushden	4	0.11
Thrapston	-	-
<b>East Northamptonshire</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1.55</b>

All analysis areas with the exception of Thrapston have green corridors provision. Most of the green corridor sites in East Northamptonshire are within the Raunds Analysis Area. There is also a high proportion on green corridor provision in the Higham Ferrers Analysis Area.

#### 10.3 Accessibility

No accessibility standard has been set for green corridors. Figure 10.1 shows green corridors mapped against analysis areas.

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Figure 10.1: Green corridors mapped against analysis areas

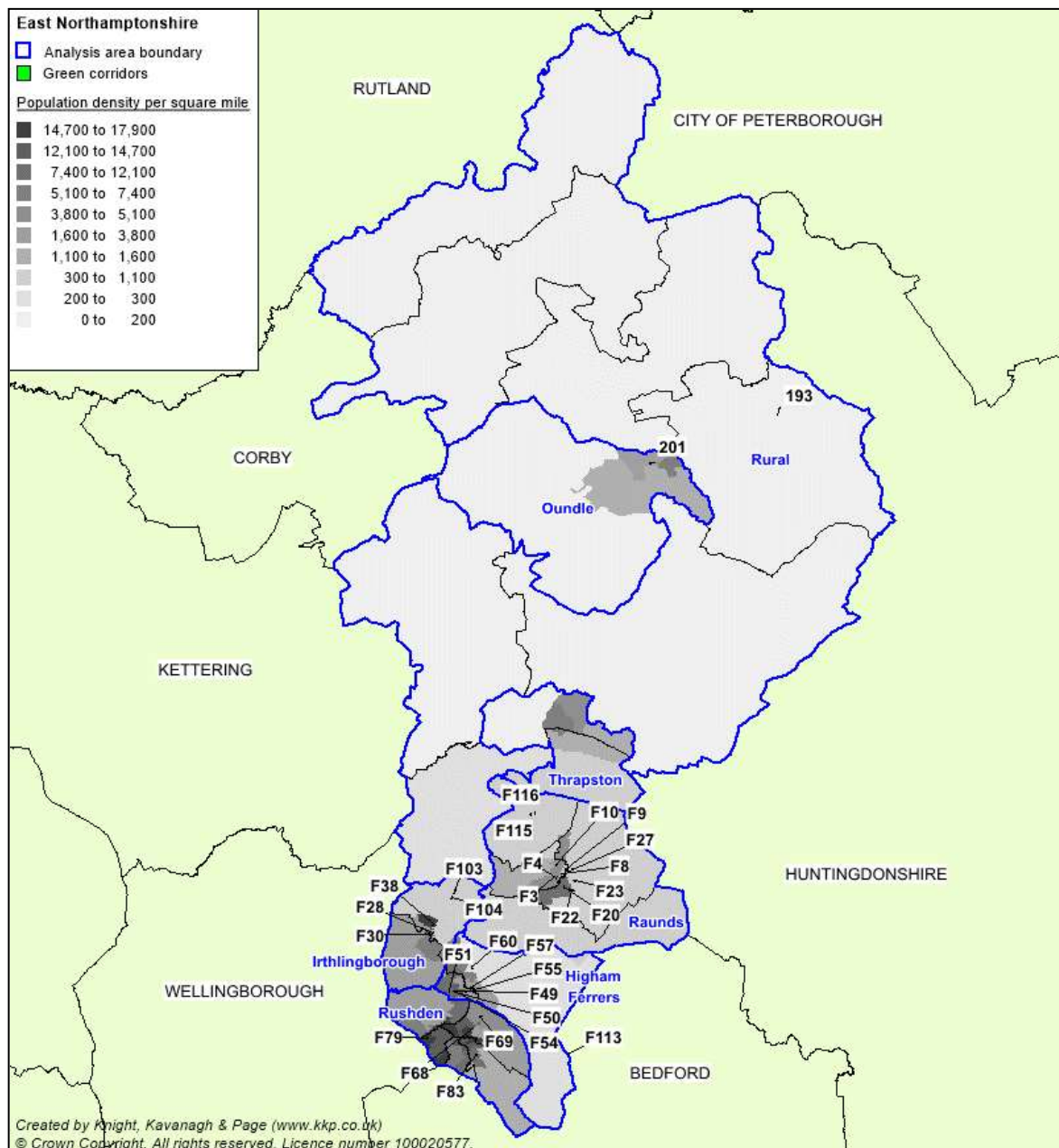


Table 10.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area
F46	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 1	Higham Ferrers
F50	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 2	Higham Ferrers
F51	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 3	Higham Ferrers
F55	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 4	Higham Ferrers
F57	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 5	Higham Ferrers
F60	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 6	Higham Ferrers
F113	Higham Ferrers Green Corridor 7	Higham Ferrers
F28	Irthlingborough Green Corridor 1	Irthlingborough



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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area
F30	Irthlingborough Green Corridor 2	Irthlingborough
F38	Irthlingborough Green Corridor 3	Irthlingborough
F103	Irthlingborough Green Corridor 4	Irthlingborough
F104	Irthlingborough Green Corridor 5	Irthlingborough
201	Oundle Green Corridor 1	Oundle
F3	Raunds Green Corridor 1	Raunds
F4	Raunds Green Corridor 2	Raunds
F8	Raunds Green Corridor 3	Raunds
F9	Raunds Green Corridor 4	Raunds
F10	Raunds Green Corridor 5	Raunds
F20	Raunds Green Corridor 6	Raunds
F22	Raunds Green Corridor 7	Raunds
F23	Raunds Green Corridor 8	Raunds
F27	Raunds Green Corridor 9	Raunds
193	Rural Green Corridor 1	Rural
F68	Rushden Green Corridors 1	Rushden
F69	Rushden Green Corridors 2	Rushden
F79	Rushden Green Corridors 3	Rushden
F83	Rushden Green Corridors 4	Rushden
F115	Other Green Corridor 1	Other
F116	Other Green Corridor 2	Other

No quality or value ratings are provided for Green corridors; as it was not deemed appropriate to assess such forms of provision against the site visit assessment criteria.

### East Northants Greenway

Aiming to provide an attractive but safe walking and cycling network through the Nene Valley, the East Northants Greenway is a project being undertaken over ten phases between 2014 and 2018. This route has links between Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough. Future phases will see the East Northants Greenway extend further along the Nene Valley, linking Irthlingborough and Stanwick Lakes to Wellingborough.

The greenway aims to help local people, local business and local land owners. This is explained further below:

*Local people* – Improving quality of life through improved health, due to more recreation opportunities, access to local countryside and the ability to commute on foot or by bike to work and school.

*Local business* – Giving local businesses more business due to easier and safer links to villages and towns. It also enables visitors to the Nene Valley to move between areas on foot.

*Local land owners* – The public sticking to designated paths rather than walking over private land and disturbing crop growth and livestock.



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It is also worth noting that as part of the Rushden Lakes development the greenway will extend from Wellingborough to Rushden. This will create a link with the aim to help accessibility for local people and local businesses.

### **Cycle Routes**

Additionally, to the East Northants Greenway there is a six mile cycle route from Stanwick Lakes to Thrapston. This route runs along the former Nene Valley railway line.

### **National Route 53**

Part of the national route runs through the area. Starting from Peterborough it will run west across the country, through Coventry and to Birmingham. Much of the route is still awaiting development.

The route is currently open between Cotterstock and Peterborough travelling past Warmington. There is a local link connecting the current route to Oundle.

### **Regional Route 71**

The area also has a regional route running from Thrapston to Irthlingborough.

### **Regional Route 74**

Runs from Brigstock towards Corby.

## **10.6 Summary**

### **Green corridor summary**

- ◀ There are 31 sites classified as green corridors in East Northamptonshire, equating to over one hectare of provision.
- ◀ East Northamptonshire also has a number of walking and cycling routes including the East Northants Greenway.

