

**South Norfolk Council**

**GUIDELINES FOR RECREATION  
PROVISION IN NEW RESIDENTIAL  
DEVELOPMENTS**

**Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

**September 2018**



## **FOREWARD BY JOHN FULLER**

One of the duties of a Council is to ensure that infrastructure is built alongside new development of new homes and businesses. Examples of infrastructure can include new roads, flood defences and community halls and other buildings. But the Council has a duty to ensure that a full range of infrastructure, that can benefit residents of all ages, is also provided, with the aim of maximising the quality of life for residents. The provision of recreational open spaces and play facilities for younger children is one such example of the necessary social infrastructure.

Things have changed since the Council last looked at this over twenty years ago in 1994. In that time planning rules have changed and the types of development have altered too, as have the ways in which infrastructure is delivered. The use of management companies and the involvement of Town and Parish Councils has increased, giving the potential to reflect the desire for the residents of new developments to more actively influence the way in which their immediate environment is looked after and maintained. This document responds to these changes.

The SPD has been subject to a number of consultations throughout its production and the Council has responded to the comments that were received during this process.

This final adopted SPD sets clear objectives that will ensure sufficient recreational and play infrastructure is delivered as an integral part of new developments and will assure the maintenance of it so that future generations can continue to benefit from it long into the future.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1. This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out guidance for the provision, adoption and future maintenance of outdoor recreational facilities directly needed as a result of new residential development across South Norfolk. This space includes children's playspace as well as formal and informal recreational open space for older children and adults. This SPD is intended to supplement the Council's Development Management Policy DM3.15: '*Outdoor play facilities and recreational space*' and provides a tool to calculate the open space requirement a development will generate.
2. Developments proposing 15 residential units or more will be expected to provide play and recreation space and informal recreational space in accordance with the criteria set out within this SPD to meet the requirements of Policy DM3.15. The 15-unit threshold is a continuation of the Council's previous working practices. It is reasonable to expect sites delivering 15 residential units or more to accommodate on-site recreational open space provision. South Norfolk Council also considers that sites of 15 residential units or more are of sufficient scale to start impacting upon existing community facilities therefore this should be mitigated for within the proposed development.
3. The requirement for play facilities and recreational open space is separate from the provision of landscaping and other amenity spaces which form an equally important element of the design of new developments, although the dual use of land may be considered acceptable provided the land uses do not prejudice one another.
4. Larger scale facilities, including formal sports pitches, courts and greens, swimming pools and sports halls, may also be provided on-site as part of strategic scale developments; however, they are more likely to be funded (at least partly) through the pooled Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) pot and timetabled for delivery through the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan. Such facilities may also utilise funding from other organisations, such as Sport England and sports' governing bodies.
5. It is important that the provision and composition of the open spaces and recreational facilities in a settlement/ community are well related to need. It is recognised that quality open spaces and play areas have benefits in terms of health and wellbeing and supporting sustainable communities. This is acknowledged through planning policy and reflects the cross-cutting importance of effective provision. The Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020 recognises as a priority the need to enhance health and wellbeing and improve the quality of life of our communities. This is also reflected in the current Health and Wellbeing Strategy which requires that future developments should take account of health and wellbeing through public health and planning approaches.

6. Sufficient facilities should be provided in appropriate and convenient locations to cater for the normal leisure activities of local residents. It is key that new residential developments contribute towards the provision of recreational facilities, either through Section 106 obligation/ planning condition and/or more strategically through the payment of CIL. This will ensure that appropriate levels of provision are maintained within settlements and that new communities have sufficient opportunities for recreation.
7. This SPD refreshes the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) '*Recreational Open Space for Residential Areas*' which was published in 1994. It has been updated to provide standards based on current Local Plan policy, the recommended 2008 and updated 2015 Fields in Trust standards and to reflect the Council's policy on the adoption and maintenance of land. **Appendix 3** also provides guidance on design standards.
8. Whilst consistency is an important consideration in planning decisions, proposals will be assessed on the basis of their individual circumstances. The guidance and standards of this SPD should be read in this context and will be applied accordingly. Where appropriate the Council will take account of clearly evidenced viability and/or practical considerations concerning the delivery of the levels of recreational open space and playspace anticipated by this SPD, or the feasibility of the on-site delivery normally required by Policy DM3.15.
9. Historically, community assets such as open space and play areas have usually been taken on and managed by South Norfolk Council. In January 2017 a Community Assets Strategy for the Council was agreed at Cabinet. This document sets out how new open spaces, play areas and other public community assets in South Norfolk will be managed in the period up to 2021. The Community Assets Strategy should be read alongside this SPD and it will come fully into effect on the date this SPD is adopted. The Community Assets Strategy is not a statutory document, but nevertheless sets out a structured corporate approach which enables a more sustainable and progressive management regime.
10. The effect of this SPD, read in conjunction with the Community Assets Strategy, is that South Norfolk Council will no longer take on the ownership or maintenance of new recreational open space or play areas provided pursuant to planning permissions granted after the date of adoption of this SPD, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Developers will need to make robust arrangements for the adoption and long-term management and maintenance of such assets in line with the guidance in this SPD. This responsibility could be taken on by the relevant Parish/Town Council or appropriate community group, or a designated management company (see **Chapter 6** for further details). The agreed details will be specified in a legal agreement. The Council cannot dictate who ultimately adopts or maintains these assets. Whilst it is the Council's preference for these recreational open spaces to be adopted by the Parish Council or appropriate community association, the most important objective is that the availability and maintenance of the facilities are effectively and permanently secured.

11. The success of playspace and recreational areas in fulfilling their intended role will depend in practice on the engagement and commitment of everyone contributing to their management. It will therefore be important that home purchasers are made aware of the responsibility for making any ongoing financial contributions towards the maintenance of playspace and recreational areas in instances where the maintenance management role resides with a management company. This information will be obtained via the home purchasers solicitor during the conveyancing process
12. In the context of this SPD the following recreational open space definitions have been applied:

<b>South Norfolk Open Space Classifications</b>	
Recreational open space	An umbrella term used to describe all of the different components of the open space requirements within the South Norfolk area.
Children's Playspace	Equipped areas of playspace aimed at children aged up to approximately 11 years, as well as areas of informal unequipped children's playspace (play equipment is considered to be ability based rather than age specific therefore any reference to age is indicative only).
Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space	Recreation space typically aimed at ages 11 years and above which may take a number of forms and could include facilities such as formal/informal pitches and courts, kick-about areas, outdoor gyms, trim trails, skate parks, bowls greens and Multi Use Games Area (MUGAs).
Informal Recreation Space	This could include areas such as natural green space, allotments, informal recreation areas (such as grassed areas, woodland and trails) as well as wider landscaping of the site and development buffer zones. Green infrastructure requirements resulting from new development may also contribute towards the informal recreation space provision provided that the land uses do not prejudice one another and full access to the land is achievable at all times.

*Table 1: South Norfolk Open Space Classifications*

13. The standards for the provision of recreational space are applicable throughout the South Norfolk District Area, irrespective of the location of the development site. The Broads Authority will have regard to the requirements set out within this SPD for relevant applications determined by the Authority.
14. The document has been prepared using a m<sup>2</sup> (square metre) figure however a hectare (ha) conversion tool may be found in **Appendix 1**.
15. This SPD will be monitored through indicators relating to open space provision in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The SPD will be kept under review and amended as appropriate. Costings included within this SPD will be increased annually in accordance with the Retail Price Index (RPI) and applicants are advised to make these adjustments when calculating the financial liability generated by a development.



## **CHAPTER 2: POLICY CONTEXT**

### **National Policy**

1. Paragraph 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018) requires local authorities to plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. It emphasises the need for communities to have access to high quality open space, and of recreation as an important contributor to health and well-being.
2. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional guidance to support the NPPF and also contains information in relation to the provision of open space, sports and recreation.

### **Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk**

3. The strategic context for the provision of open space and play facilities in South Norfolk is set by the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (January 2014).
4. The JCS vision states that 'there will be excellent public open space, sport and recreational facilities and community centres'. Objective 9 states that 'Development must provide environmental gains through green infrastructure...' and objective 11 states that the 'accessibility of open space, the countryside, sports and recreational facilities will be improved'.
5. JCS Policy 1 requires the development of a multi-functional green network which provides opportunities for formal and informal recreation, walking and cycling, as well as encouraging and promoting biodiversity and acting to mitigate flood risk and combat the effects of climate change. Where there is no conflict with biodiversity objectives, enjoyment and use of the natural environment will be encouraged. JCS Policy 8 expects development to provide for access to green space, including formal recreation, country parks and the wider countryside.

### **South Norfolk Council Policy**

6. The South Norfolk Council Corporate Plan 2016-2020 sets out the Council's vision to "retain and improve the quality of life and prosperity of South Norfolk, for now and future generations, to make it one of the best places to live and work in the country". In part, this vision is to be achieved by enhancing the health and well-being of South Norfolk communities and enhancing the built and natural environment in our towns and villages.
7. The South Norfolk Council policy for the provision of recreational open space is contained within the Development Management Policies Document (October 2015), specifically Policy

DM3.15, 'Outdoor play facilities and recreational space', as set out in **Table 2** below.

Paragraph 3.105 of the Development Management Policies Document and the supporting notes to Policy DM3.15 refer to the use of the standards in the 1994 SPG or any subsequent/successor documents.

8. Individual site allocation policies in the Council's Site Specific Allocations and Policies document (October 2015), the Wymondham Area Action Plan (October 2015), Long Stratton Area Action Plan (May 2016), and any successor documents, will outline if there are any additional recreational requirements on allocated sites. If site specific requirements have not been identified it is expected that recreational open space provision will be in accordance with the details set out in this SPD.
9. Recreational requirements may also be contained within adopted ('made') Neighbourhood Plans, which can be found on the Council's website <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plans>.

<b>Policy DM3.15: Outdoor play facilities and recreational open space</b>
<p>New housing development will be required to provide adequate outdoor play facilities and recreational open space commensurate with the level of development proposed in order to meet the needs of the occupants.</p> <p>Development must not result in a net quantitative or qualitative loss of existing open space unless it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus of amenity space.</p>

*Table 2: Development Management Policy DM3.15*

### CHAPTER 3: LEGAL MECHANISMS FOR SECURING PROVISION

1. New recreational provision in South Norfolk will be secured/ funded in a number of ways, at both the strategic and local level. At the strategic level, outside the scope of this SPD, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income will be used to help provide sport and play provision to serve the needs for the wider South Norfolk and Greater Norwich communities. At the more local level, Section 106 agreements or planning conditions will be used to secure the elements of playspace and recreational open space necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. It is this aspect of provision which is covered by this SPD. More information about CIL, Section 106 agreements and planning conditions is given below.

#### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

2. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced by the Government to ensure that when land is developed it contributes the necessary infrastructure to support it, such as schools, public transport and leisure facilities. CIL is charged on almost all new buildings to ensure that development contributes towards the infrastructure needed to support growth in an area. Local Authorities set their own CIL charge, subject to independent examination, and the priorities for what the money is to be spent on. A portion of the CIL funds is payable to local communities for the purpose of localised spending on priority infrastructure projects. CIL funds may be used to fund the provision of sport and recreational facilities.
3. South Norfolk Council implemented a CIL from 1 May 2014 and, apart from any exceptions set out in legislation, all new residential development is liable to pay CIL. Further information about CIL (such as the Charging Schedule and the Charging Zones) can be found on the Council's website at <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/how-does-cil-affect-me>. The majority of CIL (70-80%) is pooled by the Greater Norwich authorities to fund strategic infrastructure across the area, and it is from this pot that funding bids for specific strategic infrastructure projects are made. In line with national requirements, 15% of CIL is passed to the parish council within which the development takes place, this rises to 25% in areas covered by an adopted 'made' Neighbourhood Plan. The remaining 5% of CIL is set aside to cover administrative costs. Also, Parish/ Town Council's may spend the CIL income that they receive on recreational provision for their own communities.
4. The Council's published CIL Regulation 123 list ([http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/123\\_list.pdf](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/123_list.pdf)) sets out what type of infrastructure will be funded, or part funded, through CIL. In terms of sport and play provision this includes outdoor sports pitches, courts and greens, informal recreation open space, equipped and unequipped space for children and teenagers, swimming pools and indoor sports halls, apart from any element of such provision that may be provided on-site as part of a development.

5. Where the need for additional formal sports resources are identified it will be important that such provision, as well as the associated amenities (for example, changing rooms, storage facilities and car parking areas), are provided to the Sport England quantitative and qualitative standards (see 'Natural Turf for Sport' (2011) or any successor document). In some instances, the land for such infrastructure may be provided on-site through S106 agreements with the facilities themselves being brought forward by CIL.
6. Specific schemes for green infrastructure and sport and play provision that are required to meet strategic needs are identified individually within the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP) as projects that could potentially be funded, or part funded, from CIL contributions. A number of priorities were identified through the Playing Pitch Strategy and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy that were produced for the Greater Norwich authorities in 2014. Further information on the GNIP and the Strategies can be found on the Greater Norwich Growth Board website at <http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk>.

### **Section 106 Agreements**

7. Planning obligations made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – commonly known as Section 106 obligations – are legally binding promises made by developers to local planning authorities (and other signatories, for example Parish/ Town Councils) which make a development acceptable (that would otherwise not be acceptable in planning terms). S106 obligations focus on site specific measures to mitigate the impact of individual developments. Recreational open space and play facilities are thus often secured by such obligations with trigger points specified for the provision of the infrastructure. If the S106 obligation is not complied with it is legally enforceable against the person that entered into the obligation and any subsequent landowner. The Section 106 can be enforced by injunction.
8. Section 106 agreements should only be sought where they meet the following tests:
  - Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  - Directly related to the development; and
  - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
9. From April 2015 the use of Section 106 obligations became more restricted as local planning authorities are prohibited from pooling contributions from five or more sources to fund a particular project or piece of infrastructure<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>In March 2018 the Government proposed through its consultation document 'Supporting Housing Delivery Through Developer Contributions' that this pooling restriction may be removed where there is CIL in place and that the requirement for a Regulation 123 List is also removed. The SPD will be revised to reflect these reforms if they are taken forward.

10. In terms of recreational open space and play provision, the CIL Regulation 123 List states that the type of infrastructure and other items to be funded through a Section 106 agreement (or secured through planning condition) include the on-site provision of formal open space and play space in accordance with development plan policies in force at the time, or a commuted sum to cover the off-site provision of such facilities. The provision of maintenance for such facilities and any necessary transfer of land to secure the long-term future of such facilities are also necessary.
11. CIL contributions and money secured through a Section 106 agreement (“double-dipping”) cannot be used to fund the same piece of infrastructure.

### **Planning Conditions**

12. Paragraph 54 of the NPPF (2018) states that planning obligations (i.e. Section 106 obligations) should only be used where it is not possible to address the unacceptable impacts of a development through a planning condition.
13. Planning conditions can only be imposed where they are:
- Necessary; and
  - Relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted; and
  - Enforceable; and
  - Precise; and
  - Reasonable in all other respects.
14. A condition might require additional approvals for specific aspects of the development (such as the colour of the materials) or might restrict the use of the site (for example, limiting operating hours). Some conditions are self-contained but others require the submission of further details to the Council. The wording of the condition may require these details to be approved in writing prior to commencement or occupation of the development and these conditions need to be discharged by the local planning authority. It may be possible to secure the open space and play facilities required to make a development acceptable through planning conditions. However, this may not always be practicable, for example where the process and nature of delivery may be complex and mean that the tests of precision and enforceability would not readily be met by condition. If so, a section 106 obligation will be expected.

## **CHAPTER 4: APPLICATION OF THE SOUTH NORFOLK STANDARDS**

### **Applying the standards**

1. Following adoption, this SPD will apply to all new residential developments delivering 15 units or more.
2. The guidelines will apply to all new residential development (under Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)).
3. Development proposals consisting entirely of non-institutional sheltered and retirement housing will be exempt from the requirement to provide children's playspace.
4. Development proposals that are within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) categories that are likely to be exempt from the guidelines in this SPD include those set out below. Applicants for these forms of development should contact the Development Management team at the earliest opportunity to confirm whether the development would generate a requirement for recreational open space.
  - Hotels, boarding and guest houses under Class C1: Hotels;
  - Secure residential institutions in Use Class C2A.
5. Any recreational open space requirements for these types of development will be negotiated and assessed separately through the planning application process. Further advice can be obtained from the Council's Development Management team prior to the submission of an application.
6. The artificial sub-division of larger sites in an attempt to avoid the minimum 15 residential unit threshold will not be acceptable. In the instance an application for a smaller part of a larger site is submitted, (for example, part of a Local Plan allocation), the Council will have regard to the potential recreational open space requirements for the whole site in assessing the proposals for development on any part. It is not reasonable to defer play and open space requirements necessary for early phases of development to a later phase and agreement will be sought with the developer/landowner regarding the location, timing and delivery of provision appropriate to the whole site.
7. For large sites where a masterplan or design brief is to be prepared by the Local Planning Authority, more precise calculations and diagrammatic layouts can be incorporated and the developer made aware that open space of a certain size is required.
8. For outline applications where the precise dwelling mix is unknown an assumption in accordance with the current Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (or equivalent

evidence base document) will be made. Full details of the quantity and occupancy calculations can be found in **Tables 3 and 4 and Appendix 1**. Worked examples based upon the 2017 SHMA figures are included in **Appendix 2**. Developers will be required to update the SHMA figures as appropriate to reflect the most up-to-date dwelling mix.

9. Maintenance contributions will be required for all sites, whether the recreational open space is provided on-site, at an off-site location or by off-site contributions (see later sections regarding the use of off-site provision). **Table 7** provides summary costs per 1,000 population. **Chapter 7** provides further information relating to the application of the maintenance costs and **Appendix 1** provides detailed equipment and maintenance costs.

#### **South Norfolk Council Standards**

10. South Norfolk Council expects all development to provide the stated amount of 'Children's Playspace' and 'Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space', as set out in **Table 3**, in order to meet the requirements of Policy DM3.15.
11. In addition, the Council also requires developers to provide appropriate levels of Informal Recreation Space to meet the needs of the development, unless circumstances dictate otherwise. The Council has therefore set out the standard it expects developers to comply with, based on the Fields in Trust (FiT) 2015 figure for Informal Outdoor Space.
12. **Table 3** sets out the South Norfolk Council classifications and standards.
13. The following section of the SPD will deal with each of these components in turn.

Recreational Open Space Classification	Standards - m <sup>2</sup> per 1,000 population (ha per 1,000 population)
Children's Playspace (including a minimum Activity Zone of 400m <sup>2</sup> )	6,000 m <sup>2</sup> (0.6 ha)
Older Children & Adult Recreation Space: (a) Open Space; and (b) Playing Pitches and Courts	(a) 3,000 m <sup>2</sup> (0.3 ha)
	(b) 16,000 m <sup>2</sup> (1.6 ha)
Informal Recreation Space	24,000 m <sup>2</sup> (2.4 ha)
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,000 m<sup>2</sup> (4.9ha)</b>

*Table 3: South Norfolk Classifications and Standards*

### **Children's Playspace**

14. For children's playspace, South Norfolk Council has set a standard of 6,000m<sup>2</sup> (0.6 ha) per 1,000 population. This figure blends the requirements of the previous SPG, as well as the 2008 and 2015 FiT guidance. It recognises the importance of children's playspace for children's health and wellbeing. The Council has translated this into an equivalent amount per dwelling based upon a standard occupancy multiplier, as set out in **Tables 4 and 6**.
15. In accordance with the FiT recommendations, playspaces must have a minimum activity zone of 400m<sup>2</sup>. On those smaller sites that do not naturally provide the required minimum activity zone it will be necessary for developers and the Council to agree a reduction in the provision of other recreational space to ensure this requirement is met.
16. The Council will normally expect on-site delivery of children's playspace. Age ranges are indicative, however playspaces aimed at children up to the age of 11 years are particularly important as places where children can safely play away from traffic. New housing



developments should include adequate areas of land in the right places to meet this objective.

17. In some circumstances it may be appropriate for the Council to agree the off-site delivery of children's playspaces, and commuted sums for the same where on-site delivery proves to be impractical or unreasonable (for example, the presence of an established playspace that is accessible to the proposed development site).

18. Children of different age groups and abilities require different types of play facilities and therefore two types of playspace will be sought by the Council:

- Small informal areas appropriate for low-key games, provided with one or two smaller features to encourage use by younger children, including the under-5's. Attendant adult seating and adequate fencing will also need to be provided.
- Larger areas capable of more intensive use for the under-11's. These should incorporate appropriate fixed play equipment and a suitable hard playing surface or grassed area for informal/ casual activities.

These areas should be near to one another and laid out to enable supervising adults to observe mixed-age children easily. Detailed design guidance is set out in **Appendix 3**. Developers are advised to contact the Council to agree the precise split between formal and informal children's playspace.

### **Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space**

19. Open space that caters for the recreational requirements of older children and adults will also be required on-site to meet the demands of residents of new development unless it can be clearly demonstrated and agreed that an off-site contribution or commuted sum would be a more appropriate option.

20. Fields in Trust recommends a total combined provision of 1.9 ha (19,000m<sup>2</sup>) per 1,000 population of both older children's playspace and playing pitches. Reflecting this guidance, as well as the Council's previous approach, South Norfolk Council has combined both categories to create a single classification, 'Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space', which will deliver both the requisite play space as well as the formal pitches as appropriate.

21. The Council has translated the above requirement into an equivalent m<sup>2</sup> amount per dwelling based upon a standard occupancy multiplier as set out in **Tables 4 and 6**. Further detailed information about the equipment and maintenance costs by open space type can be found in **Appendix 1**.

22. Examples of the types of appropriate facilities within this category are set out in **Table 1** of this SPD. These suggestions are not exhaustive and developers may choose to enter into discussions with the Council about additional/ alternative recreational equipment and pitch provision.
23. Developers will be expected to incorporate 'Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space' within the development site unless site-specific considerations and/or site constraints preclude on-site delivery. In such circumstances, off-site delivery and/or commuted sums will need to be agreed following the submission of robust evidence by the developer at the planning application stage to support a departure from the Council's requirement for on-site provision.

### **Informal Recreation Space**

24. Following the broad principles of the FiT guidelines, South Norfolk Council expects developers to provide appropriate levels of on-site 'Informal Recreation Space' as an essential component of the overall open space provision.
25. Informal Recreation Space is recognised as being a critical element of the overall open space provision and can play a vital role in meeting the casual recreational and amenity needs of local residents, boosting health and wellbeing and providing an important function in enhancing the biodiversity of the District.
26. The Fields in Trust recommended standard is 3.2 ha (32,000m<sup>2</sup>) of Informal Outdoor Space per 1,000 population. This figure is broken down into three separate elements including Parks and Gardens. However, in recognition of the rural character of the district, South Norfolk Council has deducted this component from the Informal Recreation Space recommendations and as such an overall figure of 2.4 ha (24,000m<sup>2</sup>) per 1,000 population is sought, as set out in **Table 3**. Although the District is predominantly rural in character much of this land is not publicly accessible. For this reason, the Council considers it to be important to retain the Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space component of this category to facilitate public access to areas of natural and semi-natural space.
27. Informal Recreation Space can take a number of different forms and may, in some instances, have a multi-purpose role within the development site. Careful planning can, for example, enable the dual function of informal recreation space for landscaping, buffering adjacent uses or the delivery of green infrastructure objectives, as well as recreational use. In these instances, it will be the developer's responsibility at the time of the planning application to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the dual use of the land does not inhibit or prejudice either function.

28. **Table 1** sets out some of the possible components of the Informal Recreation Space. As part of this provision, developers are encouraged to consider the routing of existing and proposed footpaths, trails and green infrastructure corridors and take opportunities to maximise connectivity with the open space being provided.

#### **Off-site Provision and Commuted Sums**

30. South Norfolk Council requires the on-site provision of recreational open space where practicable (in accordance with the above standards) because this is considered by the Council to be the best option to meet the needs of new communities occupying the development. This means the direct provision of a space or facility within the agreed boundary of the development site.

31. The Council recognises that on occasion the guidelines in this SPD may be difficult to adhere to, so negotiation may take place on individual sites regarding the type of space to be provided on the site, taking into account the needs of the area and the existing provision and deficiencies. This approach is supported by Paragraph 3.106 of the Development Management Policies document which allows for off-site provision in certain circumstances.

32. Off-site provision of children's playspace will only be considered where on-site provision is agreed to be unacceptable or unreasonable. Off-site provision will need to be easily accessible from the proposed development, taking into account the young age of the children using the facilities. Off-site provision may be through the delivery of a new facility or the enhancement of already established play facilities. The latter will allow the developer to contribute by way of a financial payment to upgrade or improve those facilities.

33. Financial contributions for the off-site provision of all forms of recreational open space will be based on the size of the development and calculated in accordance with the equipment costs set out in **Appendix 1**, with specific terms to be negotiated and agreed in writing by all interested parties. A commuted sum will also be required to be paid to cover the cost to establish/refurbish and maintain recreational open space for a ten-year period (for further details see section on 'Ongoing Maintenance Costs'). Detailed breakdowns of these figures are set out in **Appendix 1**.

34. For those development sites where off-site contributions are considered to be an acceptable means of securing recreational open space, developers will also be required to agree and pay the appropriate land value equivalent to the value of providing the land on-site.

35. This cost is variable, depending significantly on the precise location and situation of the proposed development and this will also be subject to change over time as the market value of land alters. For this reason, the cost will need to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. However, the cost will be calculated on an assumed cost of acquiring and laying out the

area, based on a notional agricultural land value as improved to become recreational open space of the appropriate form.

Number of Bedrooms	Occupancy per dwelling
1 bedroom	1.5
2 bedrooms	2
3 bedrooms	2.5
4 bedrooms	3
5+ bedrooms	3.5

*Table 4: South Norfolk Occupancy Multiplier*

Open Space Type	Amount (m <sup>2</sup> per 1,000 population)	(Amount (ha per 1,000 population)	Amount (m <sup>2</sup> per person)
Children's Playspace	6,000	0.6	6
Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space: (a) Open Space; and (b) Playing Pitches and Courts	(a) 3,000	0.3	3
	(b) 16,000	1.6	16
Informal Recreation Space	24,000	2.4	24

Table 5: Open Space Quantity Multiplier by Person

No. of bedrooms	Equipped Children's Playspace (m <sup>2</sup> )	Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (m <sup>2</sup> ) (a) and (b)		Informal Recreation Space (m <sup>2</sup> )
		(a)	(b)	
1 bedroom	9	4.5	24	36
2 bedrooms	12	6	32	48
3 bedrooms	15	7.5	40	60
4 bedrooms	18	9	48	72
5+ bedrooms	21	10.5	56	84

Table 6: Open Space Requirement by Dwelling Size (m<sup>2</sup>)

Open Space Classification	Amount (per 1,000 population) m <sup>2</sup>	Equipment Cost (£)	Maintenance Cost (£), per annum	Commuted 10-year Maintenance Cost (£)
Children's Playspace	6,000	118,130	15,688	156,880
Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space:				
(a) Open Space	3,000	57,780	5,036	50,360
(b) Playing Pitches and Courts	16,000	184,516	19,358	193,580
Informal Recreation Space	24,000	121,616	17,129	171,290

Table 7: Summary Equipment & Maintenance Costs (per 1,000 population)

## CHAPTER 5: MAKING A PLANNING APPLICATION AND SUBSEQUENT REVISIONS

1. The location of on-site recreational open space shall be determined as part of the overall site layout of new residential developments and consideration must be given to the guidance in this SPD. The Council welcomes and encourages early pre-application discussion, prior to the submission of any planning application. Larger development schemes would also benefit from public pre-application consultation so that the early views of residents can be obtained and taken into account when preparing the planning application.
2. Developers are encouraged to make use of the Council's chargeable pre-application advice service (<https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/do-i-need-planning-permission>) to discuss options for providing for the open space and recreational needs of their development (alongside other relevant matters such as highways or heritage assets) at an early stage and to clarify what level of detail will need to be submitted with any planning application. Developers are also encouraged to initiate discussions with the relevant Parish/ Town Council at an early opportunity, within the context of this SPD, to identify the Parish Council's potential role in the future management of the recreational open space to be delivered.
3. Establishing play and open space requirements at an early stage in the planning process is important as it can affect the overall design and layout of a proposed development scheme. Developers are required to give due consideration to the integration of the recreation and play space within the development site, as well as landscaping, buffering and green infrastructure/ecological enhancements that could be achieved on the site.
4. Where outline planning applications show an illustrative layout of the houses, they will also need to show (indicatively) where the open space will be located on the site and how this relates to the housing. Full and reserved matters planning applications will need to show the precise details of the on-site provision. In both cases, it is likely that the principle would be secured through a Section 106 agreement, although it could be through a planning condition if appropriate. Where off-site provision is accepted this would be covered in a similar way. Trigger points in the development for the delivery of recreational open space will be included in planning permissions.
5. Developers will need to provide drawings clearly showing the location of the recreational open space provision for application purposes. At the time of either full- or reserved matters applications plans will need to be submitted at a scale of 1:250 (or similar) showing the detailed layout of hard and soft works and landscaping, boundary treatments, contours, proposed drainage of the site and any other information deemed to be necessary to the project. This should include a complete list of all materials, lighting, safety surfacing and equipment. Design guidance is given in **Appendix 3**.

6. The main points of contact within the Council will be the Development Management case officer and the Technical Advisor (where appropriate), until such time as all relevant conditions of a planning consent are complied with and/or all obligations are fulfilled in accordance with any Section 106 Agreement or similar between the Council and any other party.
7. Any changes to the proposed scheme after planning permission has been granted must be agreed in writing by South Norfolk Council. Depending on the level of change, this may require an amendment or variation to the Section 106 legal agreement, or variation of the relevant planning condition. Some minor non-material amendments may be acceptable without the need for a new planning application to be made. Developers will be expected to seek advice from the Development Management case officer at the earliest opportunity regarding this. Amendments to an approved scheme post-consent may also be subject to discussion with the relevant Parish/ Town Council if they have indicated that they will be taking on the ownership and management responsibilities of the recreational open space.
8. Before any on-site works can commence by the nominated contractor, a full method statement shall be submitted to the Council along with full details of the construction. These details will need to be discussed and approved and a start date for site construction agreed, with details to include on-site information, times of construction, materials and working practices.



## CHAPTER 6: OPTIONS FOR ADOPTION

1. As explained above, the effect of this SPD, in conjunction with the Council's Community Assets Strategy, is that the Council will no longer take on the ownership or maintenance of new recreational open space or play facilities, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
2. From the adoption of this SPD there will be three main options for the adoption and maintenance of new recreational open space and play facilities within new residential developments:

- Transfer to the relevant Parish or Town Council, along with the agreed commuted sum (maintenance contribution).
- Where appropriate to the location of the development, transfer to a community association or similar body, along with the agreed commuted sum (maintenance contribution); or
- Maintenance of the recreational open space and play facilities by the developer, either directly or through the use of a management company.

(An advice note for Parish/Town Councils and community groups considering adopting recreational open space can be found at **Appendix 4.**);

3. Unlike Parish/ Town Councils, management companies are not statutory bodies and adoption by the Parish/Town Council is thus likely to provide advantages in terms of performance, increased protection against vulnerability to financial or management failure and greater accountability over the longer term. Management by a community association or similar body may also provide some of these advantages so this may be an appropriate option in some locations where the Parish/Town Council does not wish to take on the land. All developers required to provide recreational open space will therefore be expected to follow the 'hierarchy' of management:

- i. The land must be offered (with the ten-year maintenance sum) to the relevant Parish/Town Council;
- ii. If the Parish/Town Council does not wish to take on the land, it must then be offered (with the ten-year maintenance sum) to any community association or similar body in the area nominated by the Council; and
- iii. If none of the foregoing bodies wishes to take on the land the developer will either then retain it or pass it to a management company approved by the Council.

4. Where the management company route results, the ongoing costs of the management and maintenance of the recreational open space will be met by the management company. Normal practice is for the company to then recharge its costs to residents of the development

which has generated the need for the additional facilities. Initial and subsequent purchasers of such properties would normally be required to enter into an obligation to meet these charges as part of the conveyancing process and should therefore ask their conveyancer to investigate the details of how any arrangement will operate.

5. Whilst the Council can not prescribe either the structure or the detailed functions of management companies it is expected that those that are established will be effectively and efficiently run to ensure that they operate in the best interests of the local residents. Membership of a management company by local residents is encouraged as this will promote both accountability and the proactive management of the recreational open space.
6. South Norfolk Council recognises that the management and maintenance responsibility for the recreational open space may not have been agreed at the time of the planning application. In this instance, the S106 Agreement will require agreement of the management entity at an appropriate trigger point, in accordance with the Council's preferred hierarchy (as set out above).
7. It is important that residents of new housing schemes have the use of all of the facilities associated with the development following a reasonable period of occupation. Therefore, before recreational open spaces or play facilities are adopted by either the Parish/Town Council, a community association or a management company South Norfolk Council will ensure the following:
  - That the play area is operational and functional in accordance with the agreed Section 106 agreement trigger points/ planning conditions; and
  - That the play area has been issued with a post-installation inspection to the RoSPA standard of safety. (This inspection will be at the expense of the developer); and
  - That all papers required to demonstrate regulatory compliance and other outstanding issues have been completed to the satisfaction of the Council.

## CHAPTER 7: ONGOING MAINTENANCE COSTS

1. All recreational open space and play facilities within new developments must be designed with ease of long-term maintenance in mind.
2. From the adoption of this SPD, barring exceptional circumstances, South Norfolk Council will no longer take on any maintenance liabilities for such areas. As outlined in Chapter 6 above, this will fall to either the relevant Parish/Town Council, community association or designated management company.
3. If the Parish/Town Council (or community association or similar) is intending to take on the responsibility for recreational open space and play facilities within a new development then it is recommended that they make an arrangement to cover the maintenance and management costs of the recreational open space areas provided on the site for a period of ten years from the date of the adoption. This will normally be in the form of a commuted sum / maintenance contribution paid to the adopting body in advance, based on rates calculated as at April 2017, and increasing annually in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) or with actual maintenance costs if these are found to be significantly different. See **Table 7** for an overview of suggested maintenance costs. Full details of the maintenance and equipment costs breakdown are set out in **Appendix 1**<sup>2</sup>. Following the expiry of this ten-year period the longer-term management and maintenance cost will be the responsibility of the Parish/Town Council or community association.
4. If a management company is appointed/ established, then it will be for the developer and management company to arrange the funds to allow for the management and maintenance to take place. In most cases, this will take the form of an annual financial charge to those householders on the new development who will benefit from the recreational open space and play facilities.
5. Until adoption of the recreational open space, (including the children's playspace), the Council expects maintenance of the equipment and general tidiness of the area to remain the legal responsibility of the developers/ appointed maintenance contractors, unless otherwise agreed. At present the Council favours a one-year period following completion and implementation of the site. Parish/Town Councils or community groups who are taking on responsibility may wish to make an alternative agreement with developers. This responsibility does not stop adoption by a Parish/Town Council, community group or a designated management company.

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<sup>2</sup> These figures may be subject to fluctuation due to changes in the costs for these services and products, in addition to the noted RPI increases. Developers and the identified adopting bodies may choose to enter into discussions based upon the developer's schedule of costs for these items and services.

6. Irrespective of the management arrangements, the Council will expect that public access to the recreational open space and play facilities will be permanently maintained to a standard appropriate to enable them to fulfil their intended functions.

## CHAPTER 8: SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS (SuDS)

1. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) comprise a range of water management measures designed to deal with surface water in a manner that is more in keeping with the natural process of water management, rather than the conventional system of piping surface water to a watercourse. Common SuDS features include:
  - Permeable surfaces;
  - Filter strips;
  - Filter and infiltration trenches;
  - Swales;
  - Detention basins;
  - Underground storage;
  - Wetlands; and
  - Ponds.
2. For recreational open spaces containing SuDS features these must be robustly designed and have planning obligations or conditions placed on them to manage risk into the future. To avoid compromising the intended use of the recreational open space, such features should not be sited on the recreational components of open spaces unless it can be demonstrated that they will not affect the use of that space for recreation and amenity purposes.
3. Developers must demonstrate at the planning application stage that the installation of such features will not have an adverse impact on safety (open water bodies, for example). Tree pits or dry swales may be acceptable within playspaces however items such as basins should be kept separate from equipped areas of playspace. Developers are encouraged to seek relevant guidance on how to assess health and safety for SuDS in open spaces as part of the design process.<sup>3</sup>
4. SuDS features should be designed to be as low maintenance as possible. Anglian Water may opt to take on the maintenance responsibilities for at least some SuDS features in the future, so applicants are advised to ensure that Anglian Water (and other interested bodies, for example the Environment Agency or the Lead Local Flood Authority) are included in any pre-application discussions. This will provide Anglian Water with a full opportunity to comment on proposals. For further information please see Development Management Policy DM4.2: *Sustainable drainage and water management*.

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<sup>3</sup> RoSPA and CIRIA have produced specific guidance on this matter that may be of relevance to developers.

## **CHAPTER 9: ECOLOGY, BIOVIERSITY AND CONNECTIVITY**

1. Open spaces do not just contribute to the community they serve but also have wider benefits in terms of wildlife habitats and the management of ecosystems. The protection and enhancement of ecology and biodiversity is a key thread running through all the South Norfolk Local Plan documents. In assessing planning applications that provide for recreational open space and play facilities, a high priority will be given to schemes that provide good quality green spaces, enhance ecology and biodiversity and promote green infrastructure connectivity.
2. Opportunities to increase biodiversity and wildlife corridors should be maximised across all development sites and is particularly relevant to those sites contributing towards the recreational open space provision throughout the district. Careful consideration of existing local sites and facilities and their connectivity can help to alleviate pressures on existing sensitive current sites that are currently meeting recreational demands.
3. The potential for new open space to contribute to improvements to Green Infrastructure (JCS Policy 1, the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Study and Development Management Policy DM4.9) and, where practicable, public rights of way (NPPF, paragraph 98) should also be explored for every potential new area of recreational open space, and especially relating to existing and/or required new landscaping.
4. To maximise the potential benefits of recreational open space, the Council recommends that developers review the local Public Right of Way (PROW) network and consider connectivity and linkages between open space and the existing PROW network.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 – SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL MULTIPLIERS & STANDARDS (DETAILED BREAKDOWNS)

Broadly following the Fields in Trust recommendations, the following tables provide the basis of the calculations that will determine the quantitative amounts of recreational open space to be delivered on those development sites delivering in excess of the Council's threshold of 15 dwellings. Table 1 (Chapter 1) provides a detailed breakdown of the recreational open space classifications.

- M<sup>2</sup>/ Ha Conversion Table
- South Norfolk Occupancy Multiplier
- SHMA Housing Mix Multiplier Figures (2017)
- Open Space Quantity Multiplier by Person
- Open Space Requirement by Dwelling Size (m<sup>2</sup>)
- Detailed Children's Playspace Equipment Costings
- Detailed Children's Playspace Maintenance Costings
- Detailed Older Children & Adult's Recreational (a) Open Space Equipment Costings
- Detailed Older Children & Adult's Recreational (a) Open Space Maintenance Costings
- Detailed Older Children's & Adult's Recreational Playing Pitch Equipment & Maintenance Costings
- Detailed Informal Recreation Space Equipment Costings
- Detailed Informal Recreation Space Maintenance Costings

### Conversion Rates

m <sup>2</sup>	Hectare (ha)
1,000	0.1
5,000	0.5
10,000	1
15,000	1.5
20,000	2
24,000	2.4
45,000	4.5

### South Norfolk Occupancy Multiplier

Number of Bedrooms	Occupancy per dwellings
1 bedroom	1.5
2 bedrooms	2
3 bedrooms	2.5
4 bedrooms	3
5+ bedrooms	3.5



South Norfolk Housing Mix Multipliers (SHMA, 2017)

Dwelling Size	SHMA % by site
1 bedroom	4.12%
2 bedrooms	17.32%
3 bedrooms	53.91%
4 bedrooms	19.38%
5+ bedrooms	5.23%

(The above table provides an indicative breakdown of site composition for those development sites where housing numbers have not been identified. This figure is an illustrative one, based upon the 2017 SHMA figures, and developers will need to provide an updated position based upon the relevant year's published data).

Open Space Quantity Multiplier by Person

Open Space Type	Amount (m <sup>2</sup> per 1,000 population)	(Amount (ha per 1,000 population)	Amount (m <sup>2</sup> per person)
Children's Playspace (equipped and unequipped)	6,000	0.6	6
Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space: (a) Open Space; and (b) Playing Pitches and Courts	(a) 3,000	0.3	3
	(b) 16,000	1.6	16
Informal Recreation Space	24,000	2.4	24

Open Space Requirement by Dwelling Size (m<sup>2</sup>)

No. of bedrooms	Equipped Children's Playspace (m <sup>2</sup> )	Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (m <sup>2</sup> ) (a) and (b)		Informal Recreation Space (m <sup>2</sup> )
		(a)	(b)	
1 bedroom	9	4.5	24	36
2 bedrooms	12	6	32	48
3 bedrooms	15	7.5	40	60
4 bedrooms	18	9	48	72
5+ bedrooms	21	10.5	56	84

## CHILDREN'S PLAYSPACE – EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

The figures in the tables below are a blended rate of current South Norfolk Council costings and the requirements of comparable authorities. Actual costings may vary between suppliers and contractors, as well as fluctuations in unit prices, however unless otherwise agreed developers will be required to provide off-site contributions and/or commuted sums based on the details set out below.

The figures presented in the tables below are presented as illustrative costs for equipping (supplying and installing) and maintaining a 6,000m<sup>2</sup> (0.6 ha) area of children's playspace. The required playspace includes an activity zone (minimum 400m<sup>2</sup>) and is calculated in accordance with the requirements set out in this SPD. Developers will be required to adjust the overall costings to reflect the level of provision of children's playspace generated by each development. Not all items will be necessary on all sites, nor in the given quantities, and there may be additional items sought on specific sites that have not been identified in the table below. Costings included within this SPD will be increased annually in accordance with the Retail Price Index (RPI) and applicants are advised to make these adjustments when calculating the financial liability generated by a development

NOTE: The 'Equipment' cost provided in the key tables below relate to equipment suitable for younger children. Older children will require larger, more complex pieces of play equipment and the costs should be adjusted accordingly based on the multipliers set out below. The number of pieces of play equipment to be provided will be determined by the overall size of the playspace (a minimum area of 400m<sup>2</sup> is required in all instances) and advice should be sought from the Council at an early stage in the process to clarify precise requirements. These requirements will inform the overall costs of equipping and maintaining areas of children's playspace.

### Typical Equipment Costings for Children's Playspace

Equipment Type	Works/ Goods	Unit No.	Cost (£)
Younger children	Supply and install	1	6,400.00
Older children	Supply and install	1	7,100.00

### Typical Equipment Costs for Children's Playspace

Item	Works/ Goods	Cost as provided by contractor (£)	Unit	No.	Cost per play area (0.6 ha) (£)
Equipment	5x items of equipment, supply and install	32,000.00	1	1	32,000.00
Fencing	Bow top galvanised, supply and install	100.00	Lin m	90	9,000.00
Seating	DDA compliant recycled seating, supply and install	1,375.00	1	2	2,750.00
Gates	Mono-hinge gates (1x access and 1x maintenance/ access), supply and install	4,900.00	No	1	4,900.00
Bin	Supply and install	300.00	1	2	600.00
Safety surfacing (Activity zone)	Wetpour, supply and install	98.00	m <sup>2</sup>	150	14,700.00
Signage	2 informational signs, supply and install	185.00	No	2	370.00
Drainage (Activity zone)	(a) Excavate and lay new soakaway	195.00	m <sup>3</sup>	3	585.00
	(b) Excavate and lay new land drain	115.00	Lm	15	1,725.00
Tarmac path	Constructed (5% of overall area)	85.00	Lm	300	25,500.00
Landscaping costs	Clearance of the site within the activity zone & preparation of site for handover	7.80.00	m <sup>2</sup>	400	3,120.00
	Clearance of site outside the activity zone	4.00	m <sup>2</sup>	5,600	22,400.00
Post installation inspection	Supply with written report	480.00	No	1	480.00

### Typical Annual Maintenance Costings for Children's Playspace

Maintenance Works Description	Cost per m <sup>2</sup> / lm/ visit (£)	No.	Quantity/Area (where applicable)	No. visits per annum	Cost per annum (£)
Grass: Mow and strim (Activity zone)	0.20	m <sup>2</sup>	400	15	1,200.00
Buffer zone: Mow and strim	0.03	m <sup>2</sup>	5,600	15	2,520.00
Shrubs & Hedges: Cut	2.29	Lm	90	2	412.00
Litter pick: Before every cut	2.00	As required		18	36.00
Bin: Empty bins	5.30	2		52	551.00
Path: Sweep path	0.50	m <sup>2</sup>	300	18	2,700.00
Technical Maintenance: Equipment inspection, pressure wash, parts & labour	7% of overall equipment cost	As required		As required	8,269.00

The summary costs of supplying and installing children's playspace in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per Children's Playspace (per 6,000 m<sup>2</sup>): £118,130**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £118.13**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £19.68**

The summary costs of maintaining the children's playspace (per annum) in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per Children's Playspace (per 6,000 m<sup>2</sup>): £15,688**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £15.69**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £2.61**

**Ten-year commuted maintenance sum (per 6,000m<sup>2</sup>): £156,880**

## **OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULT'S RECREATION SPACE – EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE COSTS**

The tables below provide two sets of figures for the equipping and maintaining of Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space, reflecting the Council's requirement for both formal/informal pitches etc, as well as open space. The figures in the tables below are a blended rate of current South Norfolk Council costings and the requirements of comparable authorities. Actual costings may vary between suppliers and contractors, as well as fluctuations in unit prices, however unless otherwise agreed developers will be required to provide off-site contributions and/or commuted sums based on the details set out below. Costings included within this SPD will be increased annually in accordance with the Retail Price Index (RPI) and applicants are advised to make these adjustments when calculating the financial liability generated by a development

The pitch/ court figures presented below are based upon a Sport England sum for the provision of different types of formal and informal pitches and courts. These figures have been updated to reflect the South Norfolk Council requirement for 1.6ha provision per 1,000 population. They do not provide for changing rooms/ parking/ lighting etc – these may be required on certain sites but, if so, will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. The actual requirement for the provision of pitches and courts within this recreational open space classification will be dependent upon site specific matters and will also be determined, in part, by the availability of facilities within the site's locality. The figures provided below should be considered as illustrative costings and developers will be required to adjust the overall prices to reflect the actual detail of the on-site provision agreed with South Norfolk Council.

In the event a developer wishes to provide an alternative form of pitch/ court on-site or type of space not listed in the table below (for example, a skate park or trim trails) then it will be necessary to contact the Council at the earliest opportunity to ensure that appropriate costings may be obtained.

## Typical Equipping/Landscaping Costings for Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space

### (a) Open Space

Item	Works	Cost (£)	Unit Type	Provision per 3,000m <sup>2</sup> (0.3ha)	Cost per 3,000m <sup>2</sup> (0.3ha)
Site clearance	Clear site & level for planting and seeding	4.00	m <sup>2</sup>	3,000	12,000.00
Pathways (5% of overall area)	Provide & lay to tarmac (1.5x150)	85.00	Lm	150	12,750.00
Grass	Supply & lay topsoil	40.00	m <sup>3</sup>	23	920.00
Seed	Supply & cultivate seed	1.20	m <sup>2</sup>	750	900.00
Bin	Supply and install (mini plaza)	300.00	No.	2	600.00
Seating	Supply and install recycled DDA compliant seating	1375.00	No.	2	2,750.00
Fencing	Bird mouth with steel straps	41.00	Lm	675	27,675.00
Signage	Supply & install informational signs	185.00	No.	1	185.00

## Typical Maintenance Costings for Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space

### (a) Open Space

Works Description	£ per m <sup>2</sup> / Lm/ visit	Unit type	Area	No. visits per annum	£ per annum (per 3,000m <sup>2</sup> )
Grass: Mow & strim	0.03	m <sup>2</sup>	3000	15	1,350.00
Path: sweep	0.50	m <sup>2</sup>	150	6	450.00
Bin: Empty	5.30	2		52	551.00
Litter pick: Before every cut	2.00			18	36.00
Shrubs & Hedges: Cut	2.29	Lm	200	2	916.00
Technical Maintenance	3% of overall equipment costs				1,733.00

The summary costs of equipping/ laying out the open space component of Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (Open Space) in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per 3,000 m<sup>2</sup>: £57,780**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £57.78**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £19.26**

The summary costs of maintaining the open space component of Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (Open Space) (per annum) in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per 3,000m<sup>2</sup>: £5,036**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £5.04**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1.68**

**Ten-year commuted maintenance sum (per 3,000m<sup>2</sup>): £50,360**



**Typical Equipping & Maintenance Costings for Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (example pitches and courts to cover a 16,000m<sup>2</sup> area)**

**(b) Playing Pitches and Courts**

Provision	Description	Cost (£ per m <sup>2</sup> )	Percentage of 16,000m <sup>2</sup> (1.6ha)	Total area to be provided (m <sup>2</sup> )	Equipping cost per 16,000m <sup>2</sup> (£)	Percentage of maintenance cost pa (%)	Maintenance cost per annum (£)
Adult football pitch	Lay & maintain grass pitch for 12x months	9.18	62%	9,920	91,065.00	16.7	15,207.00
Run-off to adult pitch	Clear site, top soil, seed	3.11	32%	5,120	15,923.00	13	2070.00
Tennis courts x 2 (No lighting)	Fenced tarmac court (36.58x33.53)	98.00	2.6%	416	40,768.00	0.5	204.00
Bowling Green	Flat/ Crown Green (40x40)	61.12	2.9%	464	28,360.00	6.5	1843.00
MUGA/FISA	Fenced tarmac court (36.6x21.35)	105.00	0.5%	80	8,400.00	0.4	34.00

The summary costs of equipping the playing pitches component of Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total Cost per Playing Pitches and Courts (per 16,000m<sup>2</sup>): £184,516**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £184.52**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £11.53**

The summary costs of maintaining the playing pitches component of Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space (per annum) in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total Cost per Playing Pitches and Courts (per 16,000m<sup>2</sup>): £19,358**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £19.36**

**Total Cost per m<sup>2</sup>: £1.21**

**Ten-year commuted maintenance sum (per 16,000m<sup>2</sup>): £193,580**

## **INFORMAL RECREATION SPACE – EQUIPMENT AND MAINTENANCE COSTS**

The figures in the tables below are a blended rate of current South Norfolk Council costings and the requirements of comparable authorities. Actual costings may vary between suppliers and contractors, as well as due to fluctuations in unit prices however, unless otherwise agreed, developers will be required to provide off-site contributions and/or commuted sums based on the details set out below. Costings included within this SPD will be increased annually in accordance with the Retail Price Index (RPI) and applicants are advised to make these adjustments when calculating the financial liability generated by a development.

The figures presented in the tables below are presented as illustrative costs for equipping, planting and maintaining a 24,000m<sup>2</sup> (2.4ha) area of Informal Recreation Space. These costings are calculated in accordance with the requirements set out in this SPD and, in this indicative table, are assumed to comprise grassed amenity areas with landscaping. Developers will be required to adjust the overall costings to reflect the actual detail of the on-site provision agreed with South Norfolk Council. Not all items will be necessary on all sites, nor in the given quantities, and there may be additional items sought on specific sites that have not been identified in the tables below.

### Typical Equipping /Landscaping Costings for Informal Recreation Space

Item	Works	Cost (£)	Unit Type	Provision per 24,000m <sup>2</sup>	Cost per 24,000m <sup>2</sup> (£)
Site clearance	Clear site & level for planting and seeding	2.55	m <sup>2</sup>	24,000	61,200.00
Pathways	Provide & lay to tarmac (1.5x150)	85.00	m <sup>2</sup>	169	14,365.00
Grass	Supply & lay topsoil	40.00	m <sup>3</sup>	188	7,520.00
Seed	Supply & cultivate seed	1.20	m <sup>2</sup>	6,000	7,200.00
Shrub planting (10%)	Supply 2.5 shrubs per m <sup>2</sup> (in 3 ltr pots)	8.50		750	6,375.00
	Supply & lay topsoil	40.00	m <sup>3</sup>	37.5	1,500.00
	Cultivate ground & plant shrubs	5.00	m <sup>2</sup>	375	1,875.00
	Supply & install ground cover weed control membrane	1.30	m <sup>2</sup>	375	488.00
Hedging (5%)	Supply 5 plants per metre	8.00	Lm	375	3,000.00
	Cultivate & plant hedging	13.00	Lm	375	4,875.00
	Supply & install ground cover weed membrane	1.30	Lm	375	488.00
Trees	Supply native deciduous saplings	145.00	No.	15	2,175.00
	Cultivate ground & plant with 1no. stake each	40.00	No.	15	600.00
	Supply & lay ground cover weed membrane	1.30	No.	15	20.00
Bins	Supply & install mini plaza litter bin on concrete pad	300.00	No.	2	600.00
Dog bin	Supply & install dog bin on steel post	250.00	No.	1	250.00
Signage	Supply & install informational signage	185.00	No.	1	185.00
Seating	Supply & install recycled seating	1375.00	No.	2	2,750.00
Knee rail	Bird mouth with steel straps	41.00	Lm	150	6,150.00

### Typical Maintenance Costings for Informal Recreation Space

Works Description	£ per m²/ lm/ visit	Unit Type	Area (where appropriate)	No. visits per annum	£ per annum (per 24,000m²)
Grass: Mow & strim	0.03	m²	16,000	15	7,200.00
Meadow grass: Mow	0.03	m²	8,000	2	480.00
Shrubs/Hedges: Cut	2.29	Lm	800	2	3664.00
Litter pick: Before each cut	2.00		24,000	18	86.00
Bin: Empty	5.30	2		52	551.00
Path: Sweep	0.50	m²	500	6	1,500.00
Technical Maintenance	3% of equipping costs	As required		As required	3,648.00

The summary costs of equipping/ laying out the open space component of Informal Recreation Space in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per 24,000m²: £121,616**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £121.62**

**Total Cost per m²: £5.07**

The summary costs of equipping and maintaining the open space component of Informal Recreation Space (per annum) in accordance with the details set out in this SPD are as follows:

**Total cost per 24,000m²: £17,129**

**Total Cost per person (per 1,000 population): £17.13**

**Total Cost per m²: £0.71**

**Ten-year commuted maintenance sum (per 24,000m²): £171,290**

## APPENDIX 2 – SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL WORKED EXAMPLES

The following tables provide a number of illustrative worked examples (15, 51 and 150 dwellings), utilising the multiplier figures set out in Appendix 1 above, and based upon the standards set out throughout this SPD. These figures provide an indication of the quantitative amounts of recreational open space a developer would be expected to incorporate into development sites of different scales, as well as the costings for equipping and maintaining these areas.

As set out Chapter 4 (Chapter 4) these figures do not include land values due to the complexity of applying a standardised figure to all sites across the South Norfolk District. Developers will therefore need to ensure that this cost is built into their specific financial models when assessing individual site viability.

Equipment and per annum maintenance costs have been calculated by multiplying the appropriate m<sup>2</sup> figures from the above tables by the provision requirement generated by the development. As per the requirements of the SPD the site / dwelling breakdown is based upon the 2017 SHMA figures.

#### Example 15-Dwelling Site - Recreational Open Space Requirement

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (m²)	Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (m²)		Informal Recreation Space (m²)
			Open Space	Pitches	
1 bed	1	9	4.5	24	36
2 bed	2	24	12	64	96
3 bed	8	120	60	320	480
4 bed	3	54	27	144	216
5+ bed	1	21	10.5	56	84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>228<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>114</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>912</b>

#### Example 15-Dwelling Site – Equipment and Per Annum Maintenance Costs

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (£)		Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (£)				Informal Recreation Space (£)	
		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost	(a) Open Space		(b) Playing Pitches		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost
				Equipping	Maintenance	Equipping	Maintenance		
1 bed	1	7,872	1,044	2,196	192	7,010	736	4,624	648
2 bed	2								
3 bed	8								
4 bed	3								
5+ bed	1								

**TOTAL EQUIPPING COST: £21,702**

**TOTAL PER ANNUM MAINTENANCE COST: £2,620**

**TOTAL 10-YEAR COMMUTED MAINTENANCE COST: £26,200**

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<sup>4</sup> Note: Minimum Activity Zone of 400m² required

**Example 51-Dwelling Site - Recreational Open Space Requirement**

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (m²)	Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (m²)		Informal Recreation Space (m²)
			Open Space	Pitches	
1 bed	2	18	9	48	72
2 bed	9	108	54	288	432
3 bed	27	405	202.5	1080	1620
4 bed	10	180	90	480	720
5+ bed	3	63	31.5	168	252
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>774</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>2064</b>	<b>3096</b>

**Example 51-Dwelling Site – Equipment and Per Annum Maintenance Costs**

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (£)		Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (£)				Informal Recreation Space (£)	
		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost	(a) Open Space		(b) Playing Pitches		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost
				Equipping	Maintenance	Equipping	Maintenance		
1 bed	2	15,232	2,020	7,454	650	23,797	2,497	15,696	2,198
2 bed	9								
3 bed	27								
4 bed	10								
5+ bed	3								

**TOTAL EQUIPPING COST: £62,179**

**TOTAL PER ANNUM MAINTENANCE COST: £7,365**

**TOTAL 10-YEAR COMMUTED MAINTENANCE COST: £73,650**



**Example 150-Dwelling Site - Recreational Open Space Requirement**

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (m²)	Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (m²)		Informal Recreation Space (m²)
			Open Space	Pitches	
1 bed	6	54	27	144	216
2 bed	26	312	156	832	1248
3 bed	81	1215	607.5	3240	4860
4 bed	29	522	261	1392	2088
5+ bed	8	168	84	448	672
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>2271</b>	<b>1135.5</b>	<b>6056</b>	<b>9084</b>

**Example 150-Dwelling Site – Equipment and Per Annum Maintenance Costs**

Dwelling Type	Dwelling Mix	Children's Playspace (£)		Older Children & Adult's Recreation Space (£)				Informal Recreation Space (£)	
		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost	(a) Open Space		(b) Playing Pitches		Equipping Cost	Maintenance Cost
				Equipping	Maintenance	Equipping	Maintenance		
1 bed	6	44,693	5,927	21,870	1,908	69,826	7,328	46,056	6,450
2 bed	26								
3 bed	81								
4 bed	29								
5+ bed	8								

**TOTAL EQUIPPING COST: £182,445**

**TOTAL PER ANNUM MAINTENANCE COST: £21,613**

**TOTAL 10-YEAR COMMUTED MAINTENANCE COST: £216,130**

## **APPENDIX 3 – DESIGN GUIDANCE**

In order to secure good quality and functional recreational open spaces, careful consideration must be given to the design and location of all of these important spaces. This appendix gives additional guidance to developers regarding design requirements in relation to the provision of recreational open space, including specifically children's playspace, on new residential developments.

### **Location of Children's Playspace**

It is essential, where possible, to locate children's playspace centrally to the new development. Areas should be sited at least five metres from the ground floor windows of adjoining houses and the perimeter of children's playspace activity zones should be located at least 20-30 metres from any dwelling. This will be the expected minimum for all play spaces; however, the location of larger areas for older children will be subject to negotiation on a site by site basis, using the guidelines below. The locations of such play spaces, and the number of pieces of equipment to be provided, will be agreed following discussion with South Norfolk Council.

The following twelve guidelines should be adhered to where possible:

1. Best practice is for children's play areas to be located within a specified walking distance – 400 metres (about five minutes' walk) is the Fields in Trust recommendation;
2. Accessible without having to cross main roads, railway tracks or waterways;
3. Separated from areas of major vehicle movement and accessible from pedestrian routes;
4. Sited in areas which are not secluded locations or enclosed by high fencing and trees;
5. Sited on suitable land for which the purpose of the area is intended;
6. High climbing equipment should not impose on nearby dwellings;
7. Buffer zones should be incorporated to reduce the disturbance from noise to the immediate dwellings;
8. Accessible by footpaths with a firm suitable surface;
9. Overlooked from dwelling or pedestrian routes that are well used;
10. Where possible, it is not advisable to install slides south-facing;
11. The need to have regard to the setting of heritage assets and the wider historic environment or landscape; and
12. Where practicable, play space should not be located immediately adjacent to older people's accommodation, particularly any ground floor bedrooms.

Further information relating to these guidelines can be obtained from South Norfolk Council ([www.south-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk)), Fields in Trust (<http://www.fieldsintrust.org/>), and Play England (<http://www.playengland.org.uk/>).

### **Layout of Recreational Open Space**

The design and layout of recreational open space and children's playspace on new residential developments must be approved by South Norfolk Council. Oddly shaped areas of land should be avoided by being incorporated into private gardens from the outset.

Existing natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows and changes in level should be preserved in such a way as to enhance the play experience and avoid adversely impacting on the ecological value of the site. Advice should be sought from South Norfolk Council at an early stage regarding this. It will not normally be acceptable to fell healthy mature trees to facilitate layout on recreational open space. New trees should be planted where possible to enhance the provision of play and recreational spaces and native species should be chosen to attract wildlife and improve the local ecology.

Play equipment should be chosen to ensure that children benefit from a variety of different experiences. Play equipment can, for example, incorporate sliding, spinning, swinging, climbing, social interaction and imaginative play. Many pieces of modern play equipment can be multi-functional. Similar consideration should also be given to the types of equipment and facilities

provided to meet the requirements of the Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space and the varied needs of these users. Advice should be sought from South Norfolk Council at an early stage in the design process to inform details of the requirement, which will in turn influence the layout.

Appropriate consideration must also be given to creating inclusive areas of recreational open space, including children's playspaces, that can accommodate those with disabilities. Simple design solutions can positively contribute to meeting this need for example, wheelchair accessible gates, wide pathways, inclusive play equipment, sensory areas and/or quiet breakaway areas. Further guidance may be obtained online ([www.inclusiveplay.com](http://www.inclusiveplay.com) or [www.kids.org.uk](http://www.kids.org.uk)) or from the Council's Technical Advisor.

### **Land Preparation and Construction**

It is essential that the ground is properly prepared. Developers and/or their contractors will need to ensure that the land is cleared of brick rubble, sand, traces of cement and is left to stand for a period of time for excess salt (etc.) to be washed away. The land will need to be levelled a good seed (e.g. a conservation mix) used, one that is capable of withstanding intensive use and wear.

In terms of design, as a basic minimum the following requirements are important. It is expected that appropriate drainage methods will be used with full drainage schemes/reports signed off by South Norfolk Council before any works are permitted. It is expected that all sites that are provided will be drained and levelled (to running contours) with an established grass surface. Any landscaping conditions forming part of the planning consent will be additional to the above.

Where edgings are required these will be PCC (pre-cast concrete) unless otherwise agreed with South Norfolk Council.

All safety surfacing must comply with BSEN1177 guidelines relating to dimensional compliance and impact absorbency level, suitable for the relevant fall height and where possible constructed from a type 1 sub-base with a wet pour topping or any other suitable surfacing agreed with South Norfolk Council.

Where pathways are required they should be constructed from a suitable material e.g. concrete/bitumen, be a minimum 1.2 metres wide (for wheelchair accessibility) and with a suitable camber (1:40).

Drain and access manholes are not advisable on play areas, but where there are no other alternatives, all covers should be a sealed unit with screwed down fixings or a lockable cover.

### **Quality Control**

All play areas to be provided on new residential developments are to be constructed under the guidance and regulations in the South Norfolk Council 'Standards Policy Document'. All works to be carried out strictly in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other appropriate legislation. Best practice and industry legislation will apply (refer to RoSPA Play Safety).

South Norfolk Council will only permit play areas to be released for adoption if they obtain an acceptable standard following a final inspection by an independent play inspector (RoSPA).

The contractor will supply a certificate of warranty, and if the materials (safety surface) used are manufactured by others, in conjunction with the manufacturing company. All warranty documents must cover the items as laid down within the specification.

The contractor is duty bound to supply a certificate of warranty to the effect that due consideration is given to the sub-grade, formation and workmanship in laying down the safety surface. All warranties for the supplied equipment must be valid for at least a minimum twelve-month period.

Any defects arising from the works carried out will be rectified by the contractor at their expense, provided it is within the twelve-month 'Defect Correction Period', except for the wet pour safety surface, which must be guaranteed for five years.

Note: All such materials liable to deterioration or damage must be stored in such a way that they shall be in accordance with the specification at the time of use.

### **Planting**

Guidance on planting should be sought regarding maintainable species, especially with thorny ground cover, as this can be a problem when litter picking. Planting should also be carefully chosen to ensure that it is of an appropriate type to withstand children at play. Detailed advice can be provided by South Norfolk Council regarding these matters, and to ensure that those species that are chosen are the most appropriate for enhancing the local ecology and biodiversity network. This is especially relevant for the more significant areas of informal recreation space that will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of this SPD.

All soft landscaping works will be undertaken in accordance with horticultural industry standards.

### **Road Safety**

It is recommended that traffic calming measures should be installed throughout new residential developments, particularly in the vicinity of recreational areas and especially close to children's play areas. This is in addition to road signage and other measures as dictated by Norfolk County Council Highways.

Parking bays should not be positioned adjacent to children's playspaces.

Safety barriers or railings should be installed where necessary, in addition to traffic awareness signs depicting children at play.

When appropriate, appropriate spaces for bicycle and scooter parking should be provided.

### **Fencing and gates**

Fencing should be provided, where considered necessary in agreement with the Development Management case officer and the Council's Technical Advisor.

All fencing surrounding the children's playspaces should be of a suitable type, mild steel, galvanised and installed up to a height of 1.2 metres. In each playspace there must be provision for two Mono Hinge self-closing gates 1 – 1.2 metres high and a minimum of 1 metre wide, giving an opening of 971mm. These gates should be easily distinguishable (for example, of a different colour to the Bow Top fencing (Equality Act 2010)). Provision should also be made for a maintenance gate if access is required for the use of mowing or surface cleaning machinery.

Where possible all gates should open outwards from the play area to ensure the area remains dog proof.

### **Seating**

Appropriate seating should be sited in the vicinity of playspaces and playing pitches etc., fixed to the ground and where possible a minimum 1 metre distance from the perimeter of play area fencing. Consideration should also be given to installing family style picnic benches where appropriate.

Further seating may be required within the informal areas of recreational space however this will depend upon the scale of the development and the amount of recreational open space to be provided. Seating within these areas can provide a vital role in the enjoyment of these spaces, especially for those people with mobility problems or for older members of the local community.

### **Litter bins**

Within the children's playspaces litter bins are to be sited within the confines of the play area, or in an agreed location, at a distance of 2 metres from the seating and 1 metre from the fencing.

Litterbins should be constructed of a standard Durapol or Aluminium material, with a lockable/secure lid and stainless steel liner (Glasdon Mini Plaza).

### **Signage**

Until adoption of children's playspaces, a sign should be displayed at each entrance stating the following information:

- Name of play area;
- Site owner;
- Contact number for defect reporting;
- 'No dogs allowed';
- 'Children under eight years of age to be supervised'.

The postcode of the play area, together with Eastings and Northings, should be displayed on the sign to aid the response of emergency services to the playspace/playing field in the event of an incident.

Once the playspace is adopted, the adopting body will be required to erect their own signage.

### **Safety and security**

Open spaces should be designed to enhance the safety and security of users. Natural surveillance, for example, can serve to 'design out' crime. If any lighting is required/desirable this will need to be agreed at the time of the planning application but in all instances, it should be designed to minimise light pollution. Cycle and scooter parking/ stationing areas should be sited in visible areas that are also subject to natural surveillance.

## **APPENDIX 4 – ADVICE NOTE REGARDING THE ADOPTION AND MAINTENANCE OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE**

This advice note provides information for parish and town councils (or community associations) who are considering taking on the adoption and maintenance of recreational open space in their locality.

### **What is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)?**

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides additional information to assist with the interpretation and implementation of Local Plan policy. An SPD cannot set new policy. The *Guidelines for Recreation Provision in New Residential Developments* SPD supplements the Council's Development Management Policy DM 3.15 'Outdoor play facilities and recreational space'. It provides clear guidelines to developers as to the local requirements of South Norfolk Council when submitting planning applications for new housing developments and also gives information regarding the Council's approach to the adoption and maintenance of play facilities and recreational spaces.

### **What type of recreation provision is covered by the Council's 'Guidelines for Recreation Provision in New Residential Developments' SPD?**

This SPD outlines guidelines for the provision of recreational facilities directly needed as a result of new residential developments across South Norfolk, including informal recreational space, playing pitches and children's playspace. The SPD provides suggested standards for the provision of all types of on-site recreational open space required throughout the district as a result of individual development proposals. It does not include the provision of landscaping or other amenity spaces within new developments. It is also separate from the provision of new strategic recreation provision designed to serve the wider community, such as formal sports pitches, courts and greens, swimming pools and sports halls, which will be funded, or part funded, through pooled Community Infrastructure Levy income.

### **How is recreational open space (including children's playspace) delivered on new developments?**

At a local level, Section 106 agreements or planning conditions will be used to secure the elements of recreational open space, including children's playspace, necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Recreational provision can be delivered either on- or off-site as outlined in the SPD, although the Council's clear preference is for on-site provision wherever practicable. In virtually all cases, it will be for the developer to supply and install new open space and playspace, except where a financial contribution to off-site works has, exceptionally, been agreed instead.

### **What is South Norfolk Council's approach towards the adoption and maintenance of recreational open space?**

Historically community assets such as open space and play areas have, in many cases, been taken on and managed by South Norfolk Council but has now changed. A Community Assets Strategy for the Council was agreed at Cabinet in January 2017 which sets out how South Norfolk's recreational open spaces and other community assets will be managed in the period up to 2021. The Community Assets Strategy comes fully into effect on the date that this SPD is adopted.

The Community Assets Strategy makes clear that, barring exceptional circumstances, after the adoption date of this SPD the Council will accept no further transfer of infrastructure secured through a Section 106 agreement. This means that the Council will no longer take on ownership or maintenance of any type of recreational open space provided as part of planning applications determined following the adoption of this SPD.

### **What are the future options for the adoption and maintenance of recreational open space within new residential developments?**

Following the adoption of this SPD, the Council's expectation is that the developer of new residential schemes will need to make arrangements for the adoption and long- term management and maintenance of recreational open space. This responsibility will need to be taken on by either the relevant parish/town council (preferred), community association or a designated management company and this will be specified and secured through a Section 106 legal agreement at the planning application stage.

The Council will continue to plan for recreation provision on new residential developments, including type, layout, location and ensure that the area of recreational open space is operational and functional in accordance with S106 trigger points/planning conditions, has been issued with a post installation safety inspection and all legal issues have been completed before the area is transferred to either the parish/town council, community association or management company.

### **What are the potential benefits of a parish/town council taking on these areas?**

There can be considerable benefits to parish councils adopting areas of recreational open space:

- 1) The parish council will have control of such areas in perpetuity, and so can decide how best (in consultation with local residents) they are managed, operated and improved, rather than by a more "remote" district council or management company;
- 2) Parish residents may feel a greater sense of "ownership" of areas that are owned and managed by the parish council, and some may feel more amenable to volunteer time and effort to, for example, cut the grass or hedges and/or re-paint benches and fences;
- 3) There might be opportunities for parish councils to identify more easily infrastructure projects to spend any CIL income on – without community assets, it can sometimes be difficult for parish councils to identify infrastructure projects to spend what can sometimes be relatively small sums of CIL money on;
- 4) There may be opportunities for parish councils to apply for funding sources (such as the Heritage Lottery Fund) to secure improvements to open space and play space which might not be available to private management companies;
- 5) There could be economies of scale in terms of maintenance, especially if the parish council already maintains other existing cemeteries, open space areas, play areas and/or sports pitches. It may also be possible for a parish council to sub-contract some maintenance to another nearby parish council to undertake if the second parish council already has a practised maintenance operation (for example, it may own a ride-on lawnmower);
- 6) Having areas of recreational open space under parish control may be of assistance if the parish council is considering preparing a Neighbourhood Plan by way of flexible future use and maybe expansion of community resources.

### **What will happen if a parish/town council decides to take on these areas and what financial contributions will they receive?**

Before the area is transferred to the parish/town council, South Norfolk Council will ensure that the playspaces and facilities are operational and functional in accordance with the agreed S106 trigger points/planning condition, and that the relevant areas have been issued with a post installation inspection to the RoSPA standard of safety and all legal papers and outstanding issues have been completed.

The parish/town council will receive a commuted sum to cover maintenance for a 10- year period, as detailed in Chapter 7 of the SPD. After the 10-year period has ended, the parish/town council will become financially responsible for the future management and maintenance of the area in perpetuity and would need to ensure that this will be funded appropriately. In most cases, these costs are likely to be paid for through parish precepts. It will not be possible for a parish/town council to take on

maintenance for the first 10-year period and then to “hand over” the infrastructure to South Norfolk Council.

Adoption by the parish/town council will only be finalised once all concerned parties have agreed the commuted sum, maintenance contributions and agreed management plan.

Regardless of who assumes liability for the future management and maintenance the developer retains responsibility for the area for a one-year period after construction, to ensure maintenance of the equipment, that any defects are rectified and the general tidiness of the area. This does not stop adoption by parish/town council. This one-year period is recommended by South Norfolk Council, but parish/town councils may wish to negotiate their own arrangements with the developer.

**If the parish/town council take on areas of recreational open space, what are their legal obligations?**

As with any landowner owning land accessible to the public, the parish/town council would need to have Public Liability insurance in place and would need to take all reasonable endeavours to ensure that key risks are assessed and mitigated regularly (i.e. play equipment is not in a dangerous state, trees are in good health etc). Those parish/town councils which already own/manage public land are likely to be familiar with these requirements.

In addition to these general requirements, there may of course also be specific legal requirements set out in the Section 106 legal agreement.

**How to find out more information?**

For more information please contact Planning or Technical Advisor through [www.south-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk).

Helpful websites include:

- The National Association of Local Councils - <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/>
- Norfolk Association of Local Councils - <http://www.norfolkalc.gov.uk/>
- Norfolk County Council – [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)
- South Norfolk Council – [www.south-norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk)
- Anglian Water – [www.anglianwater.co.uk](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk)
- Parish Council responsibilities - <http://www.localgov.co.uk/Parish-council-responsibilities/29135>



## **APPENDIX 5 – GLOSSARY**

### **Activity zone**

An equipped area within the designated children's playspace which must measure a minimum of 400m<sup>2</sup>, as set out within this SPD.

### **Children's playspace**

A designated public space or facility that children might legitimately use for play and informal recreation. These areas will include both equipped and unequipped play areas. Children's playspace is based on ability rather than age however it would typically be expected to cater for children aged up to approximately 11 years of age.

### **Community Assets**

In terms of the South Norfolk Council Community Assets Strategy the terms refers to those assets that the Council manages which provide, in the main, public amenity value and are 'non-commercial' e.g. open space, play areas and commons but also footways, lights and other non-commercial assets.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

A financial levy on new development (as detailed in the adopted CIL Charging Schedule) to fund specific items contained with the CIL Regulation 123 list to ensure that when land is developed, it comes with the necessary infrastructure to support it, such as schools, public transport and leisure facilities. Local authorities can set their own CIL charge and the priorities for what CIL money should be spent on.

### **CIL Charging Schedule**

A document which sets out the CIL charges which will apply to different types of development within a local authority area. A charging schedule may specify a number of different **CIL Charging Zones**.

### **CIL Regulation 123 List**

A list of those items or types of infrastructure that the Council intends to fund, in whole or part, through CIL (as per regulation 123 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended)). The South Norfolk Council CIL website is at <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/community-infrastructure-levy>

### **Development Management Policies Document**

The Development Management Policies Document (adopted October 2015) is part of the South Norfolk Local Plan. It contains policies which are used to assess planning applications and guide development proposals to ensure the delivery of high quality sustainable developments across South Norfolk. See <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/development-management-policies-document>

### **Fields in Trust (FiT)**

Operating name of the National Playing Fields Association, who recommend benchmark standards for the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation, including outdoor facilities for sport and play. <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/>

### **Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB)**

Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council and the New Anglia Enterprise Partnership (LEP) work together through the Greater Norwich Growth Board to deliver homes and jobs in the Greater Norwich area. The Greater Norwich Growth Board provides strategic direction, monitoring and co-ordination of the Greater Norwich City Deal and the wider annual Growth Programme for the Greater Norwich area. <http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/>

**Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP)**

Helps to co-ordinate and manage the delivery of strategic infrastructure in the Greater Norwich area to support growth, a high quality of life and enhanced natural environment. This includes enhancements to public transport corridors to move them towards fully fledged bus rapid transit, elements of the green infrastructure network and extensions to cycle routes. See <http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/delivery/greater-norwich-infrastructure-plan/>

**Green Infrastructure (GI)**

Green spaces and interconnecting green corridors including natural green spaces colonised by plants and animals and dominated by natural processes. Green infrastructure can also comprise man-made managed green spaces, such as those used for outdoor recreation and sport including public and private open space, allotments and parks as well as their many interconnections such as footpaths, cycleways, green corridors and waterways.

**Informal Outdoor Recreation Space**

Areas of informal recreation space which may take a number of different forms including natural green space, allotments, informal recreation areas, woodland and trails. Green infrastructure may contribute to the informal recreation space required by this SPD in accordance with the details set out within this SPD.

**Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk**

The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was prepared by the three Councils of Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Council, working together with Norfolk County Council as the Greater Norwich Development Partnership. The JCS was adopted in 2011 (amendments adopted 2014). It sets out the long term vision and objectives for the Greater Norwich area to 2026, identifying broad locations for new housing and employment growth. See <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/joint-core-strategy>

**Management Company**

(Also referred as a Maintenance Company) A body established – usually by the developer of the site – to take on responsibility for the long term management and maintenance of the recreational open space, including financial responsibility. Management companies often include residents of the local development.

**National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)**

See Fields in Trust above.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), replaces nearly all of the former Planning Policy Statements and Guidance Notes and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. See [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

**Norwich Policy Area (NPA)**

Part of the District which is centred on and strongly influenced by the presences of Norwich as a centre for employment, shopping and entertainment, generally comprising the fringe and first ring of large villages around the city of Norwich, but extending to Long Stratton and Wymondham.

**Occupancy**

The number of people typically considered to be resident within a single dwelling. The number of people depends upon the number of bedrooms.

## **Older Children and Adult's Recreation Space**

Recreational space typically aimed at children aged 11 and above. This recreation space may take a number of different forms including formal/ informal playing pitches and courts, trim trails, kick-about areas, MUGAs and skate parks.

## **Planning Condition**

A planning condition can be imposed on the grant of planning permission. A planning condition can require additional approvals for specific aspects of the development (such as the colour of materials) or might restrict the use of the site (e.g. limiting opening hours). Some conditions are informative (or restrictive) only but others require the submission of further details to the Council for approval and these types of conditions need to be discharged by the local authority

## **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

## **Pre-application advice service**

South Norfolk Council offers a pre-application advice service to give information to potential applicants on the likely outcome of a planning application. For domestic enquiries this is a free service but there are a range of charged options for larger developments and more details can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/do-i-need-planning-permission>

## **Section 106 Agreement**

These relate to site specific infrastructure requirements which are negotiable and paid directly to the relevant infrastructure provider. S106 contributions are shown in the S106 legal agreement.

## **Site Specific Allocations and Policies document**

The Site Specific Allocations and Policies Document (adopted October 2015) is part of the South Norfolk Local Plan. Guided by the Joint Core Strategy it designates land across the district to deliver housing, employment, recreation, open spaces and community uses. See <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/site-specific-allocations-and-policies-document>

## **Six Acre Standard**

Guidance produced by Fields in Trust which is based on a broad recommendation of 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1,000 population.

## **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

A document which compliments and defines further details of a policy contained in a Local Plan document.

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)**

The predecessor of SPDs (see above).

## **Sustainable Drainage Systems – SuDS**

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. By mimicking natural drainage regimes, SuDS aim to reduce [surface water flooding](#), improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment. SuDS achieve this by lowering flow rates, increasing water storage capacity and reducing the transport of pollution to the water environment.