

# BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET GREEN SPACE STUDY CONSULTATION REPORT (FINAL)

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Appendix 1 - Questionnaire Surveys

## Acknowledgments

Many individuals, groups and organisations have provided information, views and support in preparing this study. Input from these stakeholders is fundamental to the report, and provides the basis for the evidence in supporting the standards, options and recommendations in relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities. The study has been carried out by Ethos Environmental Planning in association with Leisure and the Environment.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This document contributes to the overall *Bath and North East Somerset Green Space Study* (2015). It provides consultation findings based on a review of existing consultation data and additional survey work.

## 1.1 Study Overview

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to set out policies to help enable communities to access high quality open spaces and opportunities for recreation. These policies need to be based on a thorough understanding of local needs for such facilities and opportunities available for new provision.

In view of the above, in February 2015 Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) Council commissioned Ethos Environmental Planning to review and update the existing Green Spaces Strategy so as to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

The overall aims of the study are to:

- Complete a review of relevant policy (begun by the Council).
- Undertake a Local Needs Assessment by reviewing existing information; undertaking a community needs survey; and carrying out other targeted consultation as needed.
- Reviewing and updating the audit of open spaces; including site visits to check mapping and undertake quality assessments - updating all site mapping.
- Developing local standards for green spaces; including an analysis of supply of open space by "cluster area" and an analysis of consultation data.
- Apply standards (by cluster area).
- Develop overarching green space policies and priorities for BANES.
- Providing area profiles and action plans (based upon the application of the open space standards).

## 1.2 The Consultation Report - overview

This report is made up of 2 main sections:

- Questionnaire survey findings (primary research)
- Review of existing consultation data

At the end of each section there is a short summary of the key findings. The consultation and research programme was undertaken from January to April 2015.

In summary, two questionnaire surveys were undertaken:

- A general household survey
- A children and young people survey.

In addition to the above a number of officer interviews was undertaken as well a meeting with the Bath Allotments Association. Each section provides additional detail on the consultation process relevant to that section.

The result of the primary research and consultation review will inform the content of the recommended local standards.

The findings also help the study to understand stakeholder and local people's appreciation of open space, outdoor recreation facilities, and the wider green infrastructure; and the values attached by the community to the various forms of open spaces and facilities. This appreciation will have clear implications for the way in which open space and outdoor recreation facilities are treated and designated in the BANES Local Plan.

## 2. GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

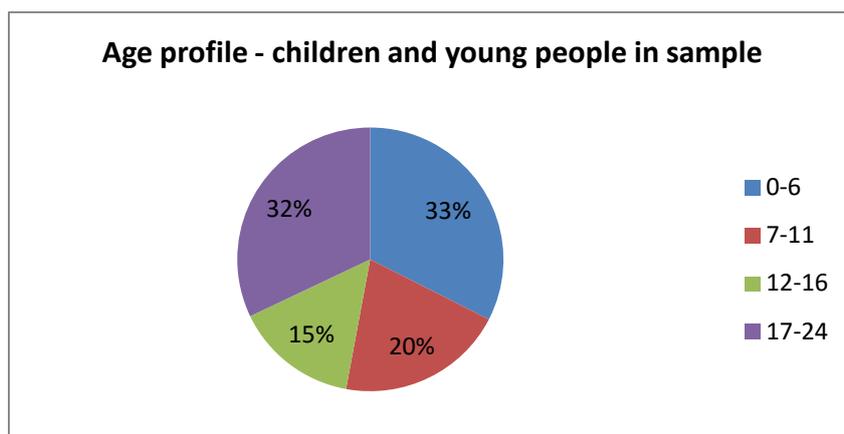
### 2.1 Introduction

The Green Space Study needs to secure a general understanding of how residents of Bath and North East Somerset currently make use of the various kinds of open space and outdoor recreation facilities; in particular whether they think there are enough of such provision; what they think of the quality of the facilities; how accessible they are; and what kind of provision they think are priorities for future development and improvement.

A postal questionnaire survey was therefore undertaken based upon a random sample of addresses from the electoral register. Respondents were asked to respond to provide a view on behalf of their household, rather than simply as individuals. 3000 surveys were distributed and 594 surveys were returned a response rate just under 20%. This is a good response rate for surveys of this kind.

The total number of people represented through the household survey was 1364 and the average household size of the households was 2.3 - slightly lower than the national average (2.4) and that of the Bath and North East Somerset as whole (2.39).

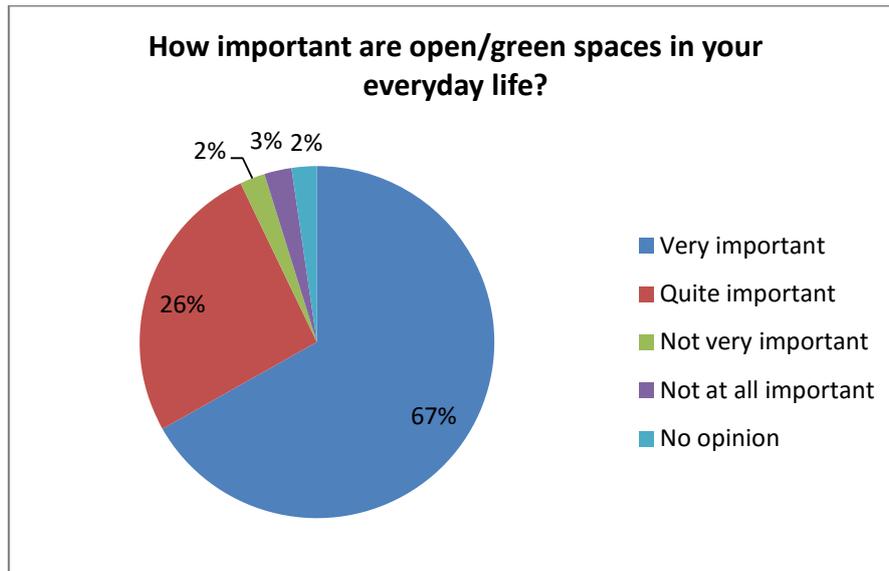
Nearly 31% of households who responded had children (representing household views on behalf of just over 285 children and young people) with ages well spread across the age range:



The full questionnaire is included in Appendix 1 and the following provides some of the key findings.

## 2.2 The importance of Green Spaces

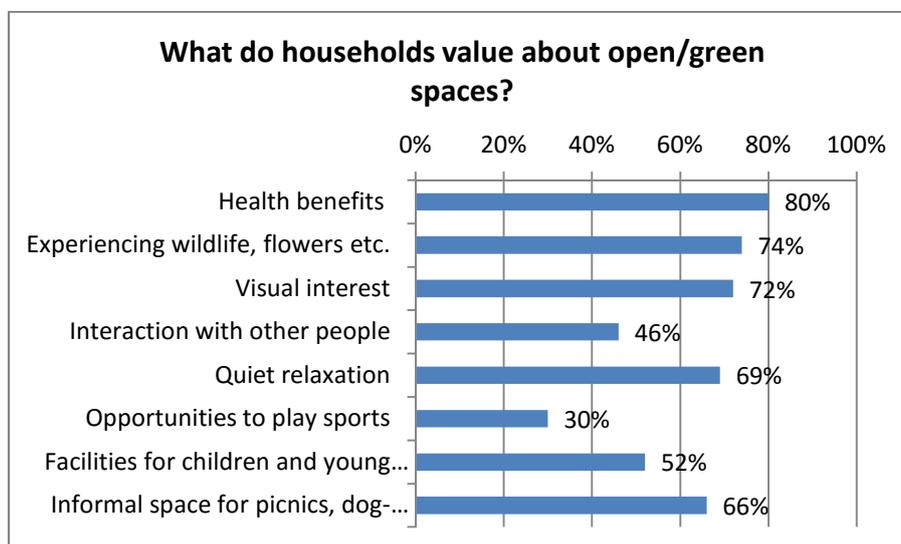
Households were asked in general terms how important green spaces were to them and what they valued about them. The charts below provide their responses



It is very clear from the responses that most local households (67%) think that open/green spaces are very important in their everyday lives (an additional 26% rate them as quite important). Only 5% think they are not important.

If households indicated that open spaces were not important to their daily life, they were given the opportunity to explain why don't make use their local green spaces; and if there is anything in particular that prevents them from doing so. Reasons provided were:

- Being disabled (3)
- Living in the country and using accessible woods, fields etc - no need (2)
- Limited time
- Cost of the parking meters at Victoria Park
- "It is a narrow path on a main road to the recreation ground - an unpleasant walk"
- Spaces fouled by dogs
- Not enough toilets
- Inadequate sign posts to indicate it's OK to walk in open space areas



It is also clear that households value open/green spaces for many reasons, with health benefits being the most commonly highlighted (80%). The next most common reason people value open and green spaces are for experiencing wildlife, flowers etc. (74%) and for their visual interest (72%).

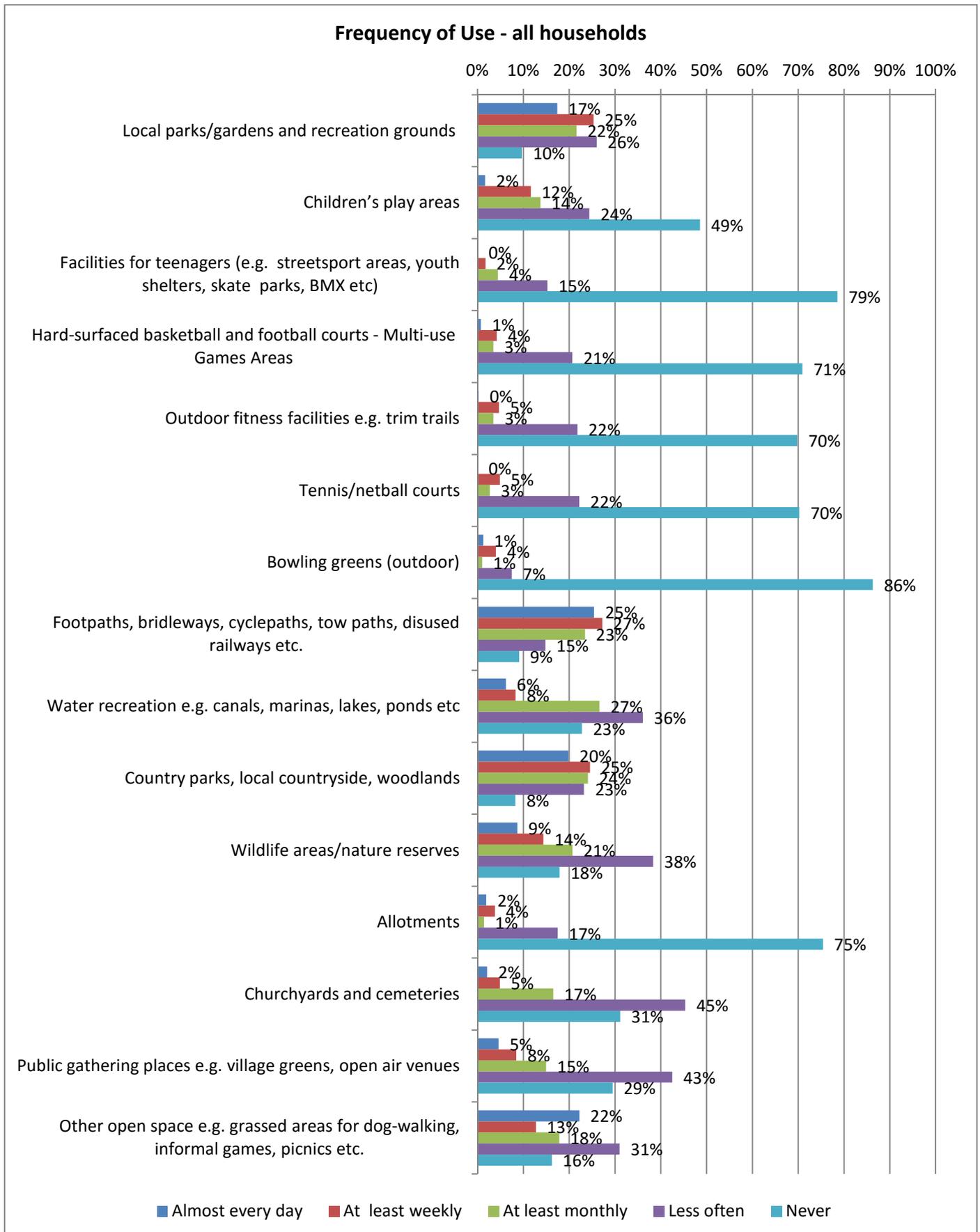
A majority of households also note the importance of open and green spaces for quiet relaxation (69%); providing space for picnic, dog walking and hobbies; and for providing play and recreational opportunities for children and young people.

Other reasons given by respondents for valuing open and green spaces were:

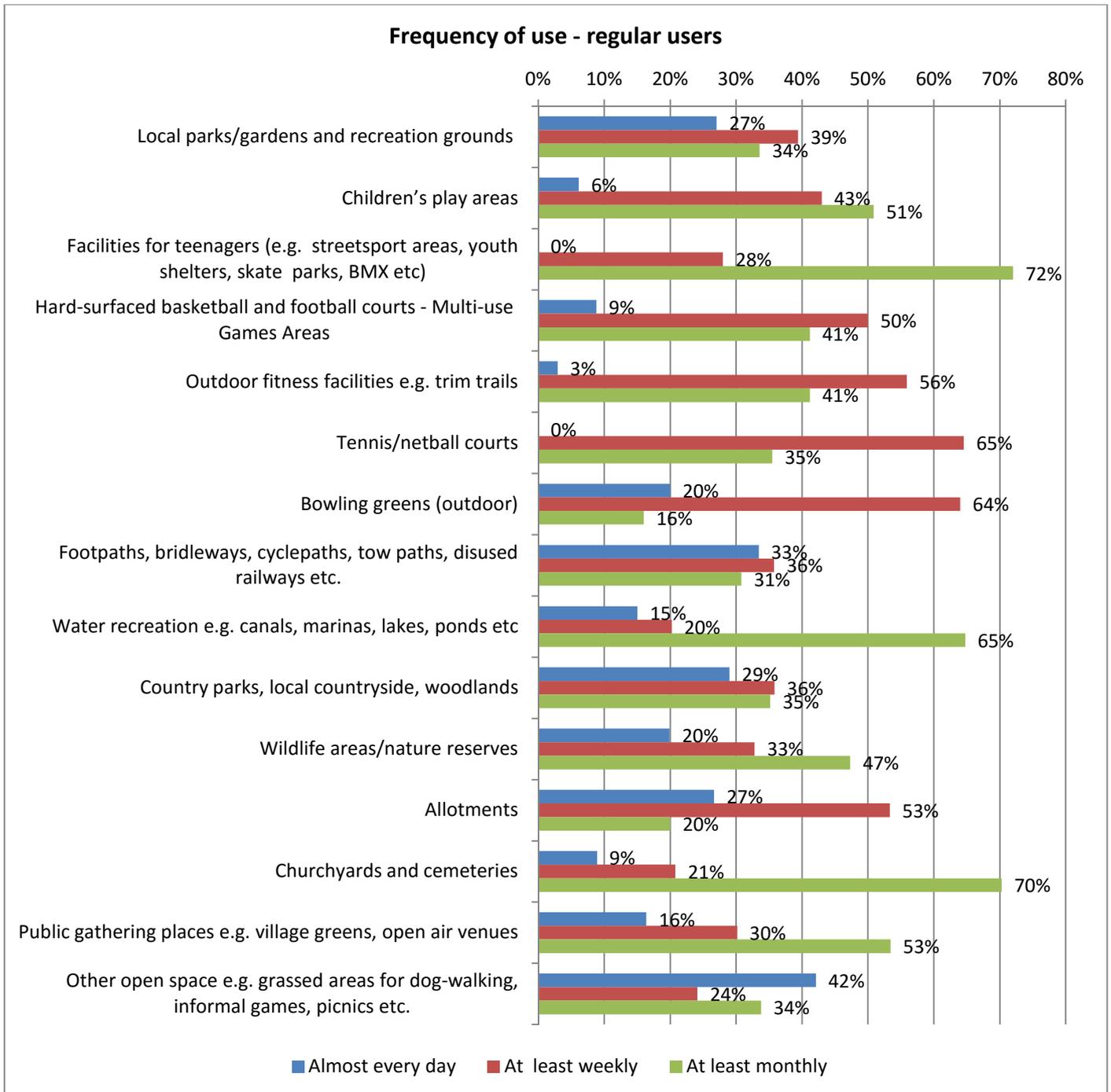
- They provide a sense of community (2)
- They are community assets (2)
- Useful for growing fruit and vegetables (2)
- Improve air quality
- Habitat provided for flora & fauna
- Opportunities for non-formal exercise
- A feeling of freedom
- The wonderful green spaces and parks we have in Bath.

### 2.3. Frequency of use of open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities

Respondents were asked to state how often they visited or used each of the following types of open space, sport and recreation facilities within study area, and the results are shown on the charts below. Observations on the findings are noted after each chart.



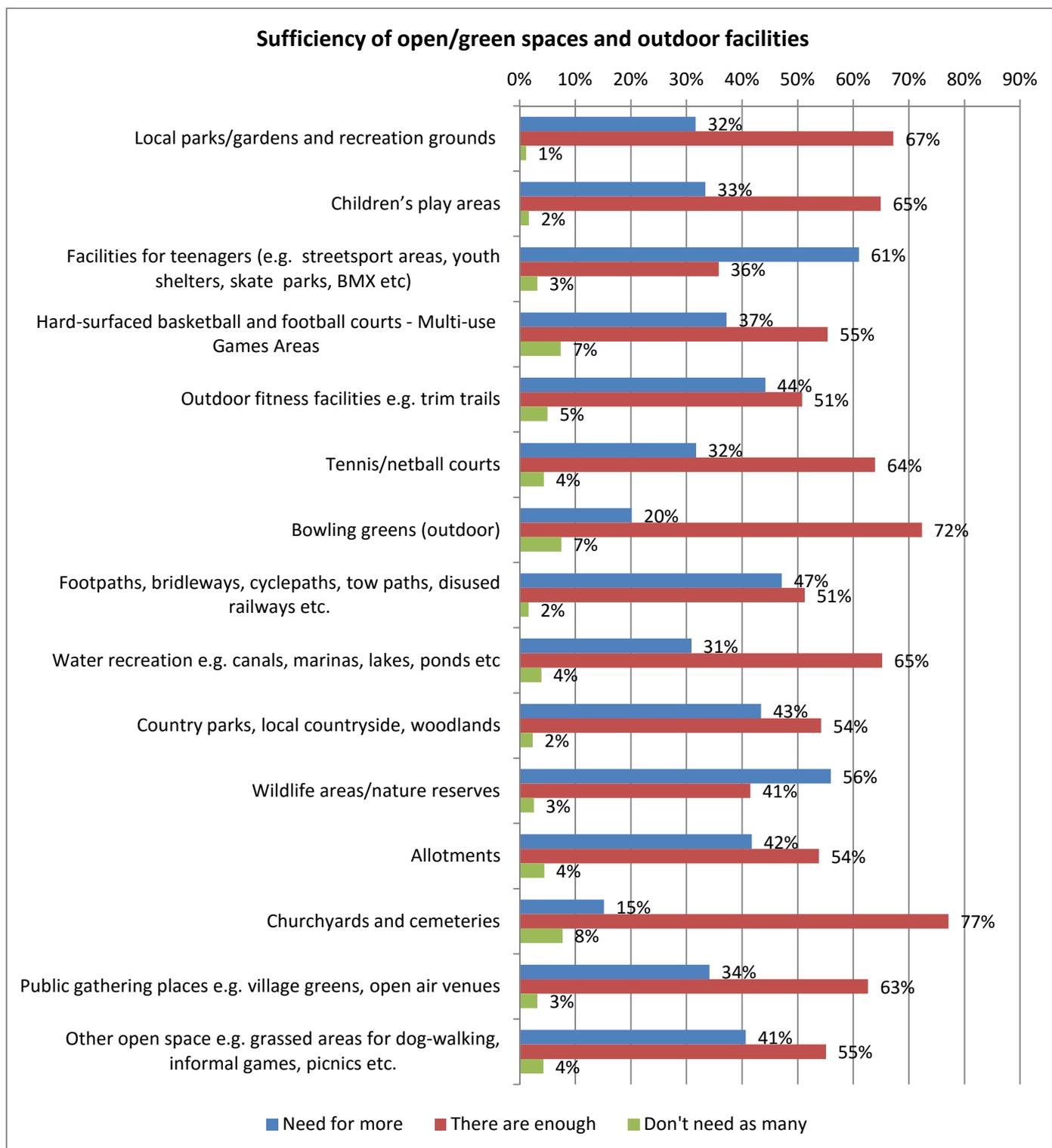
- It is B&NES's footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths that are most commonly used by all households at least monthly (75% - including 27% weekly and 25% almost daily).
- 69% of households also visit country parks, local countryside and woodlands at least monthly (including 25% weekly and 20% almost daily).
- 64% use local parks/gardens and recreation grounds at least monthly (including 25% weekly and 17% almost daily).
- Other spaces used regularly, at least monthly, by a majority of households are informal open spaces for dog walking, informal games, picnics etc; and areas for water recreation - riversides, lakes etc.
- Play areas are also fairly frequently used but with fewer households (28%) using them on a regular basis (at least monthly).



- 80% of allotment users visit them at least weekly (of which 27% visit almost daily).
- At least 64% of tennis and bowls players use their facilities at least weekly (of which 20% of bowlers play nearly daily).
- 49% of play area users visit them at least weekly (of which 6% visit almost daily).

## 2.4 Quantity of open space and outdoor recreation facilities

Residents were asked if they needed more, the same or fewer of different types of open space and recreational facilities. Findings are illustrated in the chart below and will influence the “quantity” component of local standards as appropriate (this will be explained further in the 3 main reports).

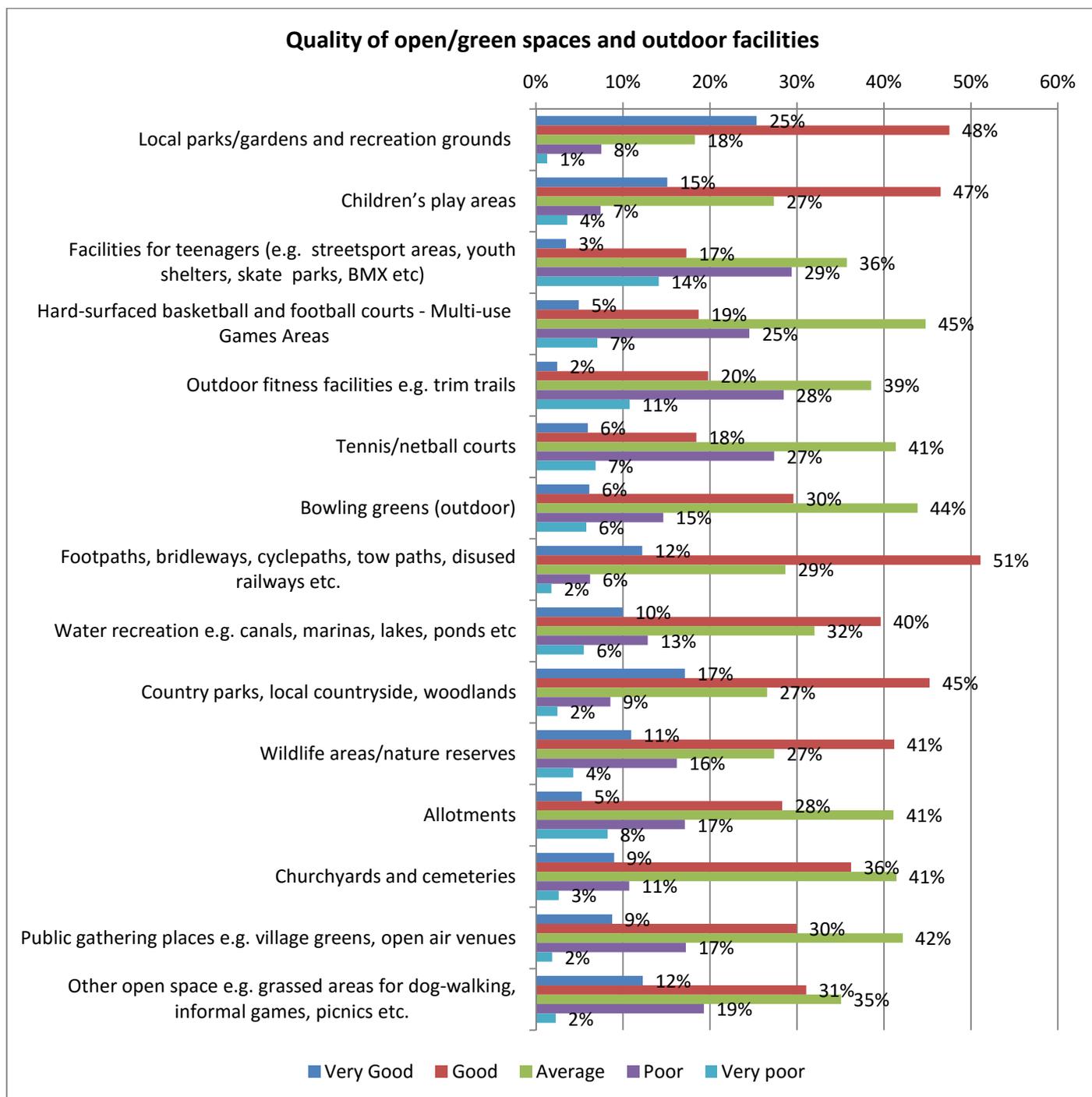


- For most kinds of open space/outdoor recreation facilities a majority of households think there are enough of such spaces.
- The most commonly identified shortfall was for provision of teenage facilities where 61% thought there was insufficient currently.

- 56% or more of households thought there was a need for more wildlife areas/nature reserves.
- In addition, a significant minority (over 40%) also thought there were insufficient outdoor fitness facilities e.g. trim trails; footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths; country parks and accessible countryside/woodlands; allotments; and informal open space.

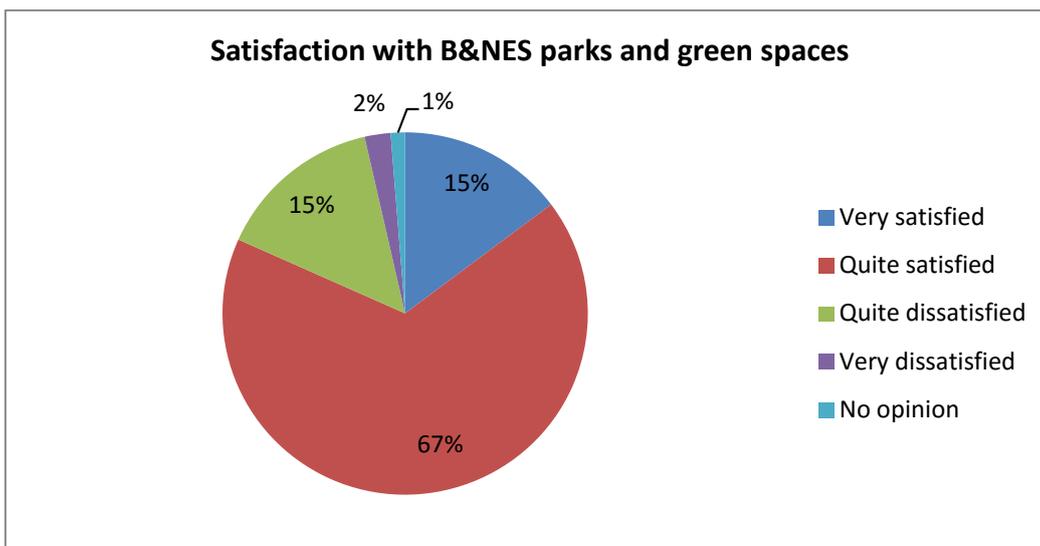
## 2.5 Quality of open space, sport and recreation facilities

Residents were asked if they needed more, the same or fewer of different types of open space and recreational facilities. Findings are illustrated in the chart below and will influence the “quantity” component of local standards as appropriate (this will be explained further in the 3 main reports).



- All facilities are rated average or better by a majority of households.
- Over 30% thought that in general the quality of teenage facilities, MUGAs, outdoor fitness facilities and tennis courts was poor or very poor.
- The high quality of parks and recreation grounds stands out notably, being viewed by around 73% of respondents as very good or good. Other kinds of open spaces where quality is widely thought to be good/very good by at least 60% of households are children's play areas; footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths; and country parks and accessible countryside/ woodlands.

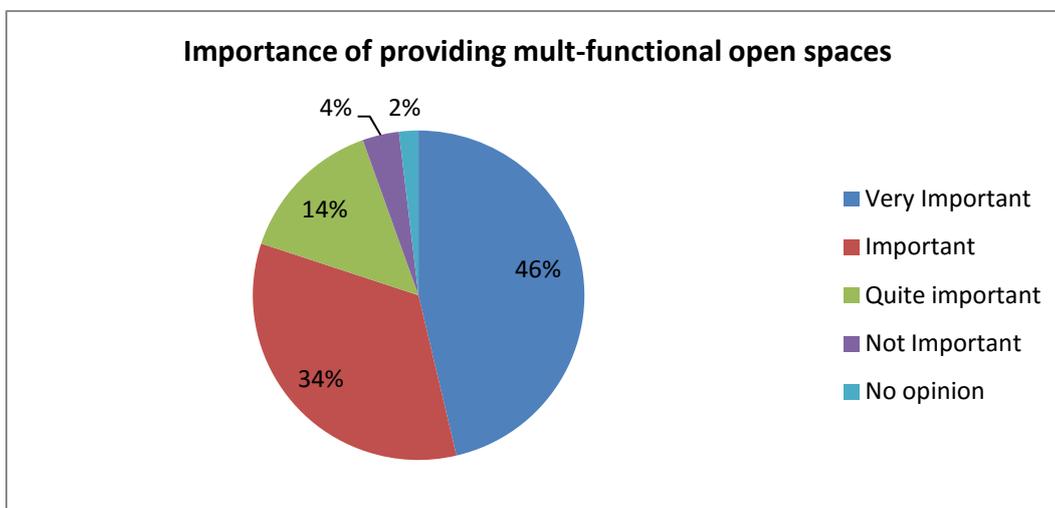
Households were asked about how satisfied they were, in general, about BANES Council parks and green spaces.



82% of households reported that in general they were quite (67%) or very (15%) satisfied with BANES Council parks and green spaces.

17% said that they were quite (15%) or very (2%) dissatisfied with the Councils parks and green spaces.

Households were also asked how important they thought it was that open spaces should be multi-functional<sup>1</sup> as regards use

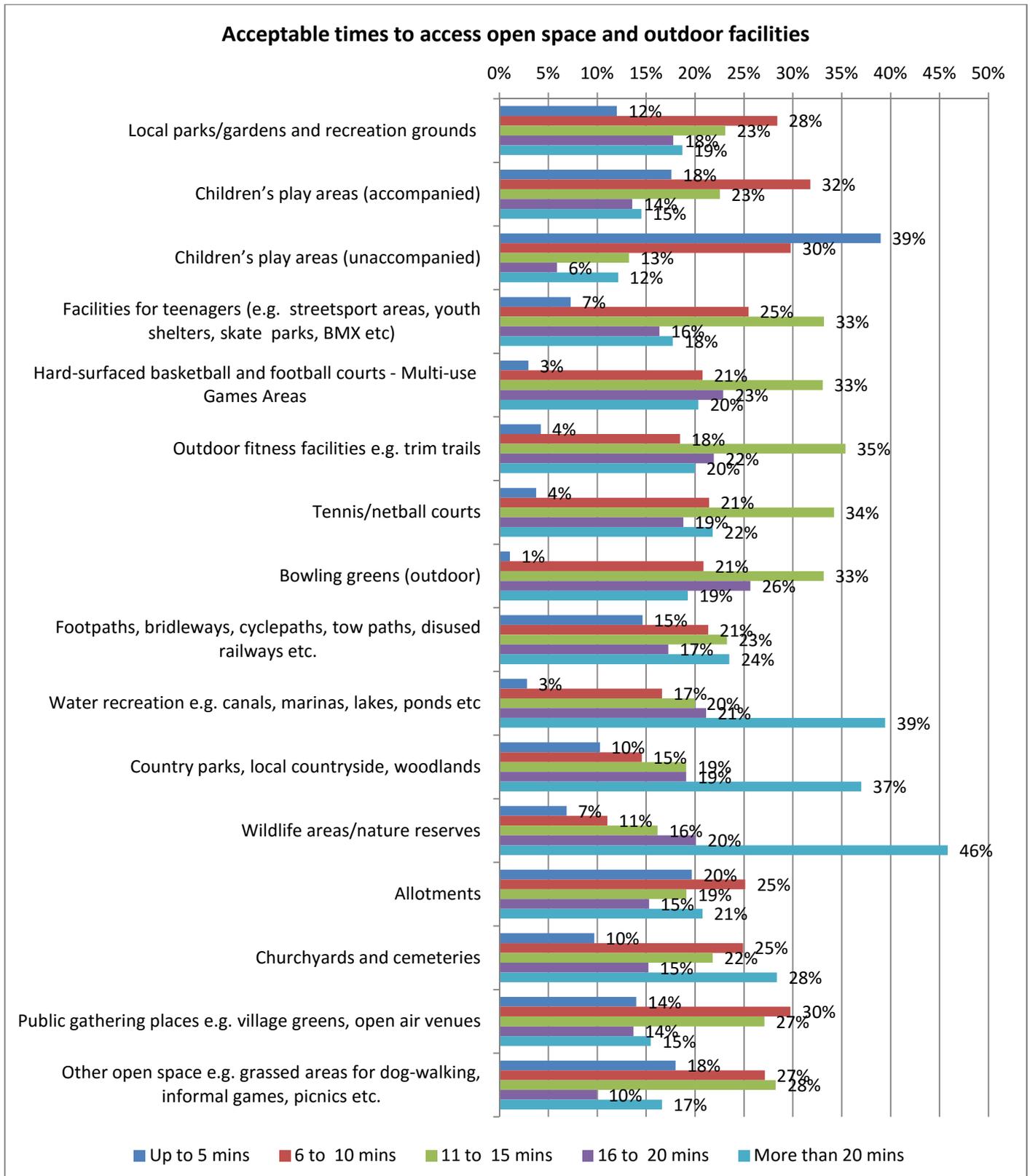


<sup>1</sup> Green spaces can fulfil more than one function at the same time. They can provide opportunities for healthy activity, play and recreation whilst at the same time supporting wildlife and natural drainage solutions.

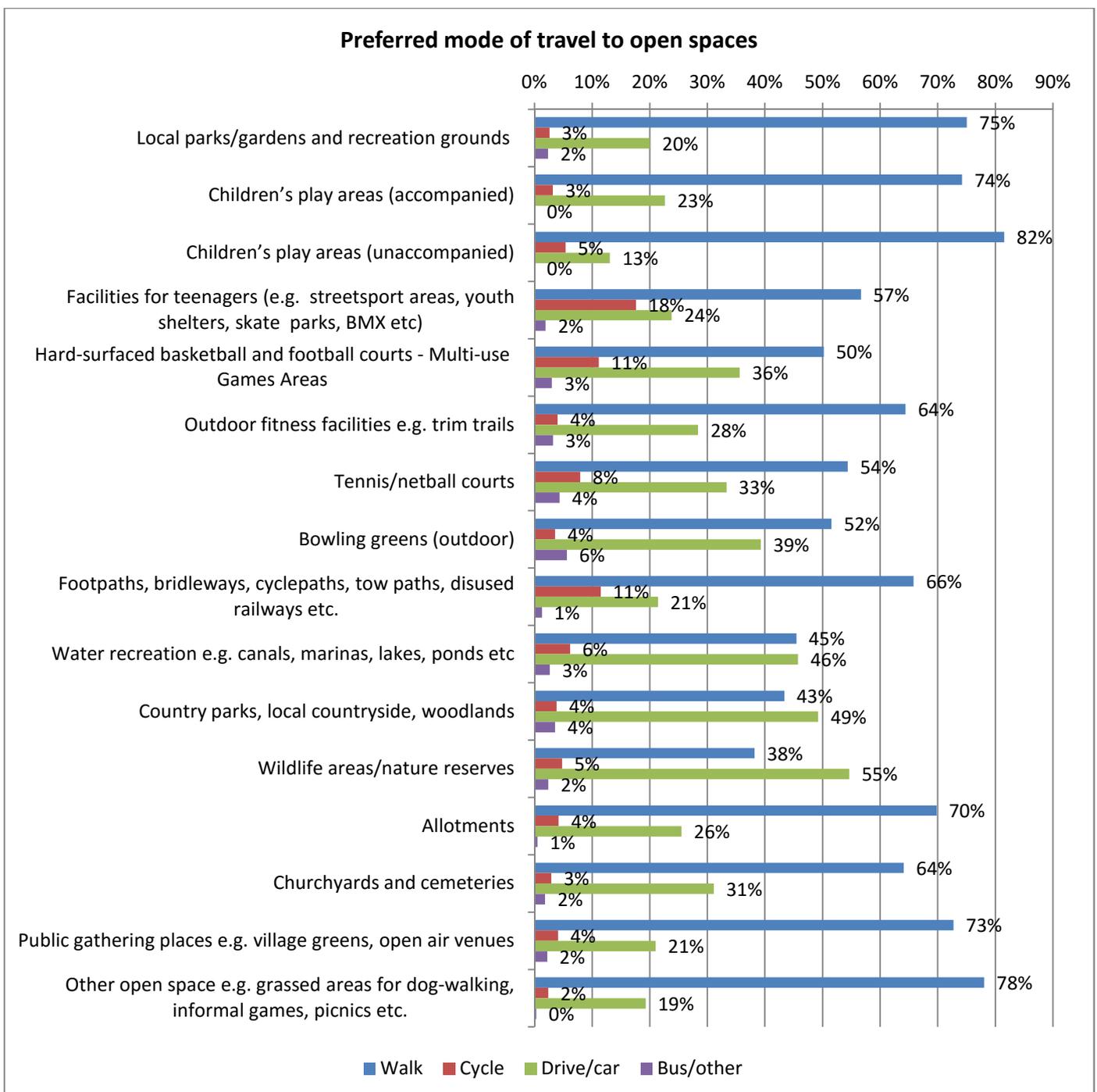
## 2.6 Access Issues (Geographical)

An important component of this study is to develop and recommend a series of local standards of provision for different types of open space, sport and recreation opportunity. The following provides a means to gauge people's willingness to travel to use different types of opportunity (which might be by car, foot, bike, public transport etc). Where appropriate, these results will feed into the determination of the "access" element of local standards.

In looking at the travel times in the first set of charts below it should be noted that these do not specify the mode of preferred travel (this is covered by the next set of charts).



- 63% of households would not expect to travel more than 15 minutes to access a local park or recreation ground (of which 40% would not wish to travel more than 10 minutes).
- 69% would not expect children (unaccompanied) to travel more than 10 minutes to access a local play area (of which 39% thought it should take less than 5 minutes).
- 65% would not expect teenagers to travel more than 15 minutes to access outdoor youth facilities (of which 32% would not wish to travel more than 10 minutes).
- 46% of households would travel more than 20 minutes to visit a wildlife area/nature reserve and an additional 20% would travel between 16 and 20 minutes.
- 39% of households would travel more than 20 minutes to visit a water recreation site and an additional 21% would travel between 16 and 20 minutes.
- 37% of households would travel more than 20 minutes to visit a country park and accessible countryside/woodland; and 19% would travel between 16 and 20 minutes.
- 64% of households would not expect to travel more than 15 minutes to access an allotment (of which 45% would not wish to travel more than 10 minutes).
- 73% of households would not expect to travel more than 15 minutes to access informal open space (of which 45% would not wish to travel more than 10 minutes).



- Walking is the normal modes of travel to access most public open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities, most notably (70%+) for parks and recreation grounds; play areas; informal green spaces; and village greens.
- For teenage facilities 75% would normally either walk or cycle (17% suggest cycling as the preferred transport mode). Similarly for access to MUGAs (50% walking and 11% cycling).
- Households are more likely than not to drive to wildlife areas/nature reserves; and county parks and accessible countryside/woodlands. This suggests that car parking facilities should be considered at such sites.
- In some cases it is not clear which is the norm, for example, areas for water recreation; country parks and accessible countryside/woodland.
- For some open spaces providing facilities for bicycles is particularly important to consider, for example, facilities for teenagers; MUGAs; footpaths, bridleways and cyclepaths; and tennis courts.
- Siting facilities with public transport in mind is also a consideration for access to some facilities more than others, such as tennis courts and bowling greens.

It is not of course surprising that in broad terms walking is the predominant mode of travel to facilities such as local parks, children's play areas, recreation grounds, and other informal recreation areas. In contrast, motorised transport is more common for larger or less numerous green spaces such as wildlife areas/nature reserves; and county parks and accessible countryside/woodlands; which may be some distance removed from many potential users. It is however of importance when it comes to drawing up the access element of local standards in terms of whether access thresholds should primarily be provided in terms of walking, cycling or drive times.

The main implications for deriving access standards are that, in general, walk times would be more appropriate for:

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Parks/gardens/recreation grounds | • Allotments          |
| • Play areas for children          | • Rights of way       |
| • Teenage facilities               | • Informal open space |
| • Village greens                   |                       |

Based on the above drive times may, in general, be more appropriate for: wildlife areas/nature reserves; and county parks and accessible countryside/woodlands.

### ***Importance of Footpath/cycle access***

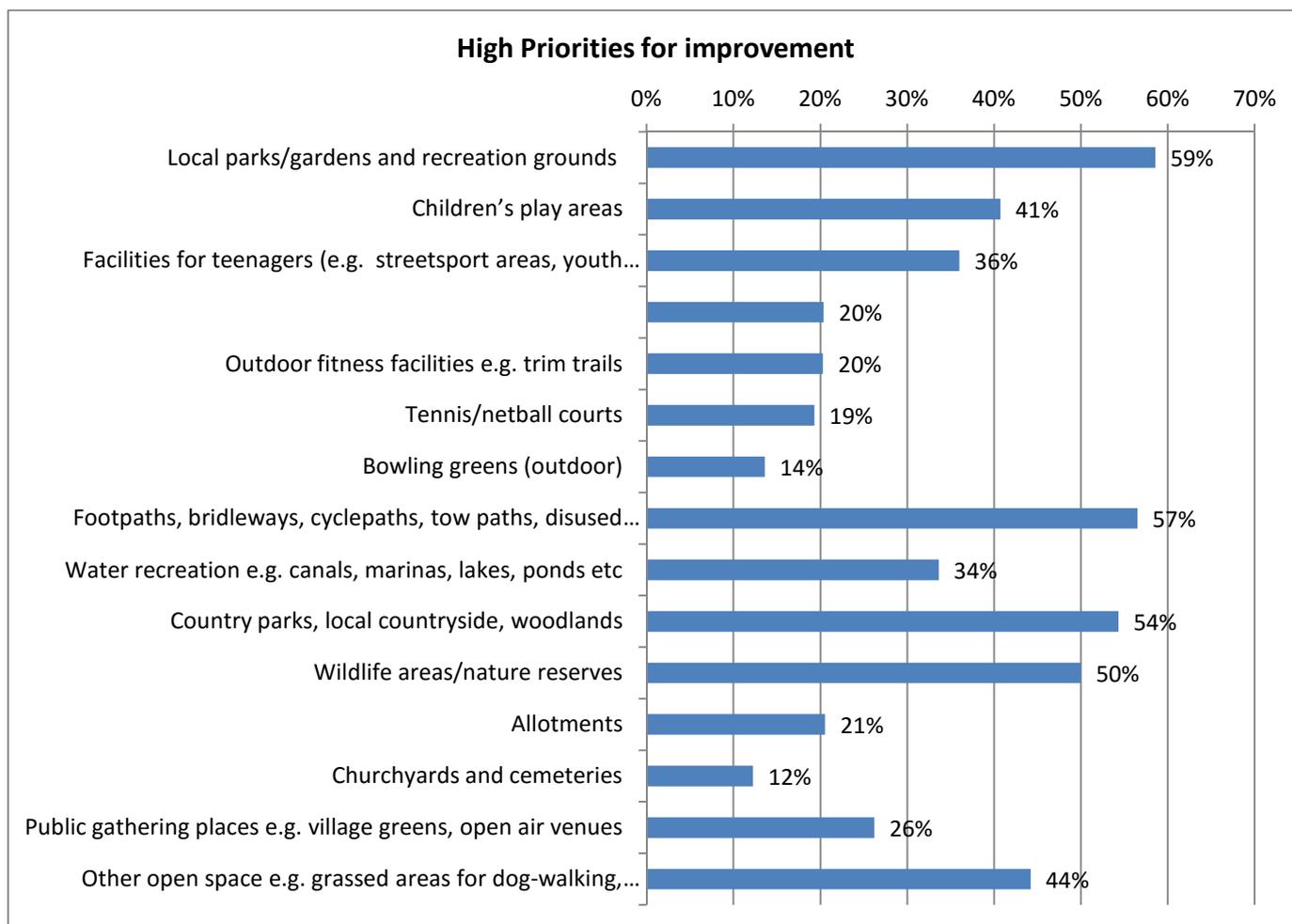
- 77% of residents confirmed that they would be prepared to walk/cycle further if the quality of the route was improved
- 79% said that if the quality of the route was improved they would make the journey more often.

This is a significant finding in terms of illustrating the potential benefit of ensuring good foot and cycle path access to open space facilities.

The detailed findings from this section will be further discussed when drawing up the access elements of relevant standards for different kinds of open space elsewhere in the study.

## 2.7 Key Issues and priorities for improvement

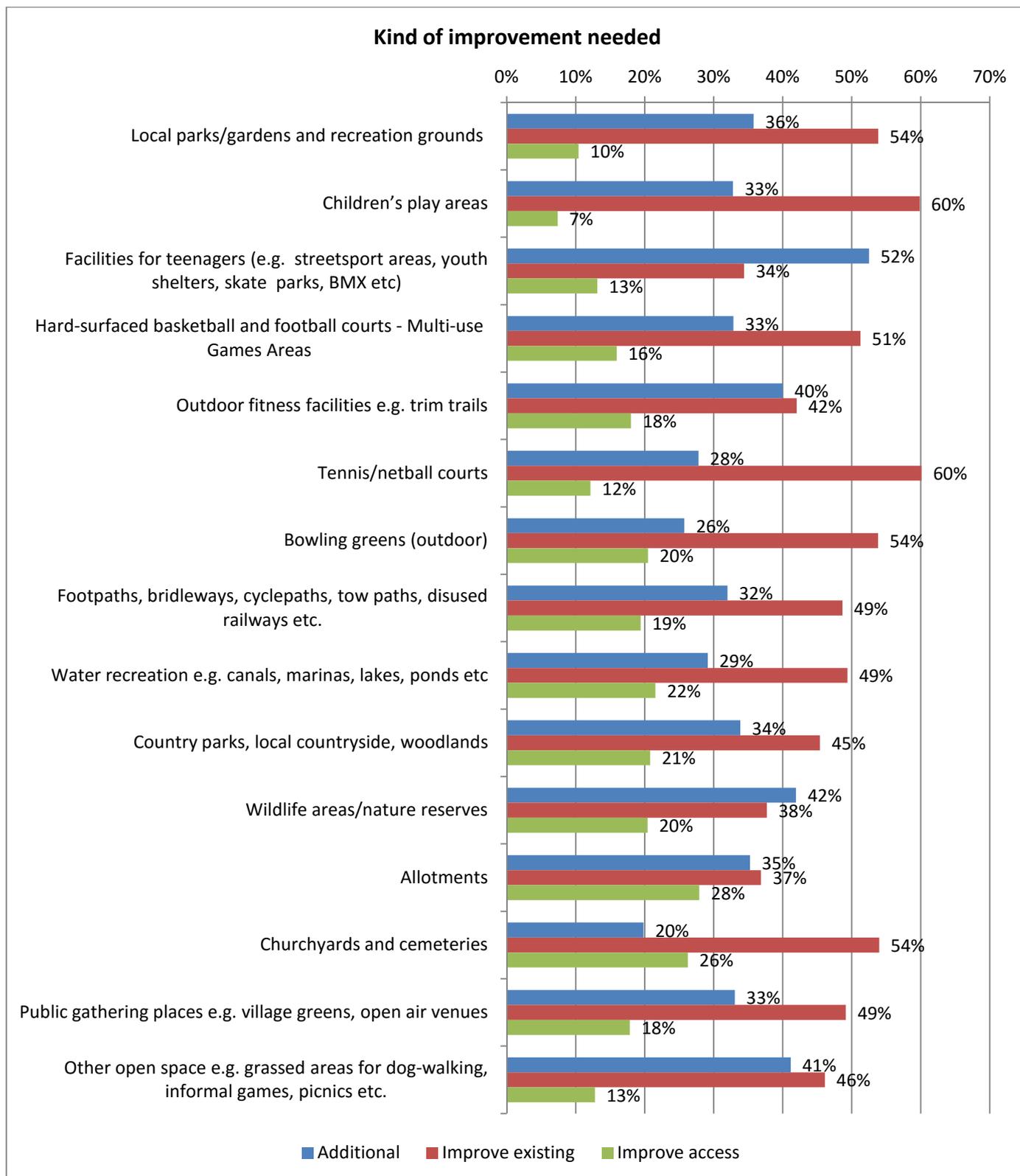
Households were also asked what their priorities for improvement in provision were. Findings are illustrated on the table below. Respondents were asked to rate the need for new or improved facilities by indicating priorities at three levels - high, medium or low.



- The category highlighted by the largest number of households as a high priority for potential improvement/new provision was for improvements to parks and recreation grounds (59%)
- Following this the most commonly identified high priority categories were footpaths, bridleways and cyclepaths (57%); country parks and accessible countryside/woodland (54%); and wildlife areas/nature reserves (50%).
- Other notable high priorities for improvement highlighted by significant numbers were play areas (41%); facilities for teenagers (36%); areas for water recreation (34%); and informal open spaces for games, picnics etc.

## Kind of Improvement Needed

Associated questions asked households to indicate whether the kind of priority need was primarily for more facilities, improved quality of existing, or improved access. In relation to the priorities noted above these findings are shown in the chart below:



- For youth facilities a majority of households (52%) suggest that the primary general need for facility improvements is to provide additional facilities.
- In relation to wildlife areas/nature reserves more households suggest a need for additional facilities (42%) than for improvements at existing sites (38%).

- For other categories the most commonly identified need is to improve the quality of existing facilities, most notably for parks and recreation grounds; children's play areas; tennis courts; bowling greens; and churchyards/cemeteries.
- For some categories it is not clear whether the primary need is for more facilities or to improve what exists. For example, allotments (35% suggest more are needed compared to 37% suggesting improvements to existing); and informal open spaces (41% additional and 46% improvements).
- Improvements to access is significant aspect in relation to some categories, for example, allotments; churchyards and cemeteries; country parks and countryside/woodland; wildlife areas/nature reserves; areas for water recreation; footpaths, bridleways and cyclepaths; and bowling greens (around 20%).

## 2.8 Other Comments

The survey also provided an opportunity for households to highlight any specific issues they would like to raise; or to make other comments:

### *Protecting open space*

- It is essential open spaces are retained
- Don't build on the open space, keep it.
- BANES should not be building houses on greenbelt in the South Stoke area, this will drastically reduce availability and access to open space.
- I don't want unspoilt countryside turned into a theme park, like Rainbow Woods.
- Its important in the Midsomer Norton area that we keep green spaces, enough building has taken place already.
- New housing developments should include as much open space as possible, ideally not built on green belt land.
- Far too many green spaces being built on which cannot be replaced
- My main concern is the preservation of open spaces. They are important.
- Just enjoy open spaces we have, not to be taken away

### *General issues and comments*

- There is a need for more green spaces,
- Not enough disabled access - not a lot of provisions for people in wheelchairs or walking problems.
- Use of green spaces for health benefits is compromised by traffic flows and related pollution
- Anti-social behaviour a concern.
- The more facilities for the community the better for life; for young and old
- The Council should run more outdoor classes.
- Facilities in Peasedown St John are lacking. No bowling greens, no swimming facilities and no gyms. Need more for retired people.
- Westfield has no more open spaces and is a concrete jungle.

### *Parks, gardens and allotments*

- I'd prefer to see wild plantings and all year shrubs planted in the Bath parks.
- Alice Park - bad idea to charge 20p for the toilets. Need more allotments.
- I visit Alexandra Park daily for a walk. I am not pleased to see the toilets are now chargeable (20p) including disabled.
- 2 of the litter bins in Hedgemoor Park were removed last year and not replaced yet.
- There is unused space underneath Camden Crescent which borders Hedgemoor Rd - this could be a useful space for allotments
- Very happy with Peasedown's new play park in Beaconfield. Good park for all ages
- Great parks in Peasedown St John; and a future skatepark.

### *Outdoor Sports*

- More tennis courts and badminton courts needed for the growing number of retirees.
- Need for more tennis courts.
- Need some public tennis courts in the Bloomfield area please. Too far to walk to Alice Park and too dangerous to cycle. The ones in Sydney Gardens are a great idea but need upkeep.

- There are not enough basketball/football or covered tennis courts for young people. An outdoor swimming pool or lake would be great in the summer.

### ***Play and Youth***

- Within Bath I believe there are a lot of open spaces available to adults and children, however at no point have I seen any facilities attractive/interesting to teenagers
- There is a shortage of facilities for teenagers and we think they should be partly supervised.
- I am disappointed with the local children's play area, there is no equipment.
- Outdoor space for young children should be a priority
- We lack a children's play area and tennis courts
- Children's play area needs a new slide.
- Although we have mobility problems we value open space highly as part of the provision for the community, especially children
- Encouraging young people to use outdoor facilities should be a priority provision for the future; and we hope our responses reflect this.
- Need more wildlife areas for children.
- Young people in the area on the whole are not very well served by provision for activities at the present time
- Bishop Sutton has very poor provision of children's play areas.
- Need more outdoor play areas
- Children's play areas need improving
- The playground in Batheaston needs improvement.

### ***Paths and rights of way***

- Need footpaths with are level and maintained.
- I would like to see footpaths created along the B roads between villages, e.g. Marksbury - Farmborough - Tinsbury
- Cycle routes need improvement - level and linked
- We have a cyclepath but it is locked up so children are unable to use it after school or weekends
- Need more safe cycle routes around Bath and Banes. Public footpaths need to be kept clean by farmers.
- The Greenway Path which is at the front of our house is in extremely poor condition, only parts are tarmaced. I was told by local councillor that is not on BANES list to finish it properly.
- Need more cycle paths and/or cycling lanes on the road
- Gates and accesses need to be improved and hard standing provided discreetly at access points. Better sign posting is also needed.

### ***Natural green space, countryside, water recreation***

- Need more open access to the countryside
- Wildlife, flora and fauna is important in every open space, even nesting boxes on hard court fencing
- Improve the riverside.
- The river area of Bath is an opportunity for much redevelopment.
- I am a fisherman, and can no longer fish in a large part of the river because of fences being erected due to drownings.

## ***Maintenance and management***

- The area around here is not put to good use. Its very untidy and unloved. The children's play area was added but wrong equipment put in
- Quite satisfied with our open spaces and would not want them spoilt by improvements - as long as they are maintained properly.
- The area around Kelston Rd is disgusting. It is never cleaned. Also the green area near Tingel Close needs sorting out.
- Tidying up existing facilities and keeping them tidy is important.
- The children's park and cycle path in Radstock often floods and freezes in cold weather.
- It is wonderful to have all these outdoor facilities but they need to be well maintained, not dumping grounds.
- Grass needs to be kept clean and tidy. Litter is a problem in open spaces.
- Open spaces often become untidy, vandalised or misused - they will need supervision if they are to survive.
- I do a lot of walking in and around Radstock, Westfield and Midsomer Norton. Facilities are generally good but are spoilt by the disgraceful amount of litter - needs clearing regularly.
- Far too many dogs - dog mess is a problem in parks and open spaces. Stricter rules regarding dog mess must be enforced.
- Dogs should be banned from most places and have designated areas.
- Need more dog waste bins and emptied more regularly.
- Control of dogs by owners would be my priority.
- Don't allow dogs in any public open space.

## ***Access - rural***

- Most of our village facilities have been taken away. Footpaths have overgrown. No shop or bus. Very difficult to walk around the village.
- Have to catch the bus everywhere, bus timetable is useless.
- Little attention is given to rural areas of B&NES. Bath has the only facilities and there are no buses to get there

## ***Other observations and comments***

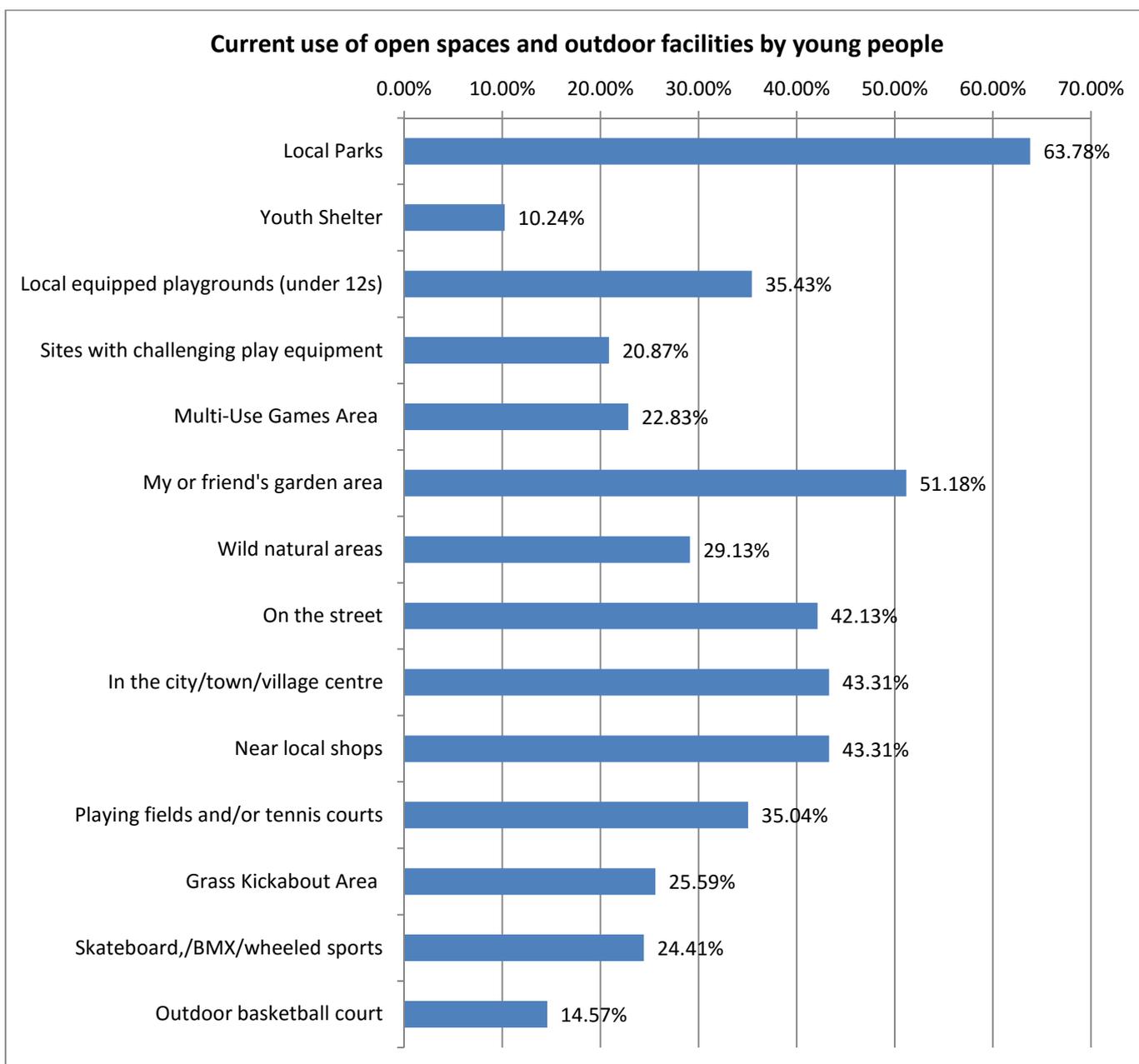
- Outside spaces are generally wonderful.
- We generally enjoy using various parks and green spaces - always room for improvement though.
- Bath is blessed with many open spaces, much of which are well accessed.
- Mostly our open spaces are good.
- BANES does a decent job with the open spaces it provides, however the duck pond in Victoria Park needs maintaining better.
- We are very fortunate in having countryside all around the city.
- We are fortunate in Combe Down in having excellent outdoor facilities all within walking distance. Well done the Council for protecting these for all of us.
- The facilities are excellent and any attempt to improve them could quite easily become counter productive i.e. traffic increase, increase in pollution, changing natural environment.

### 3. YOUTH SURVEY

An online survey was set up in liaison with the Bath and North East Somerset Youth Parliament in February 2015 for one month. This was promoted by the Youth Parliament and 269 responses were received from young people from 12 to 21 years old. The main findings are provided below.

#### 3.1 Current use of open spaces and play/youth facilities

The kinds of open spaces and outdoor facilities young people currently use is shown in the chart below:



Other kinds of outdoor open spaces used by young people include fields, countryside and woods; cemeteries/graveyards; school playgrounds; and cycle tracks.

- Local parks are the most commonly used kind of open space (nearly 64%).
- Most children and young people also use their own and their friends outdoor garden space to meet, play and hang out.

- A high proportion of children and young people (over 40%) play and hang out "on the street", in their city/town/village and near local shops - indicating the wider importance of planning for a child friendly "public realm".
- Following the above, the most common areas of open space currently used are local equipped playgrounds (35%); playing fields and courts (35%); and wild, natural areas (29%).

## 3.2 Quantity, Quality and Access

The survey asked young people whether there were enough play areas and youth facilities, what they thought in general about the quality of current play/youth facilities and about access to such provision. The key findings are noted below:

### *Quantity*

- 77% of young people agreed that there are enough play areas for younger children in their local area.
- A small majority (52%) thought that there was a need for more outdoor youth facilities and spaces for young people (13+) to meet in their local area.

This suggests that while a large majority of children and young people (77%) tended to be fairly happy about the level of provision for younger children, most young people thought there were not enough facilities for teenagers.

### *Quality*

- 64% of young people agreed that play areas for younger children are well maintained and of good quality
- A small majority (51%) thought that youth facilities and spaces for young people to meet are *not* similarly well maintained or of good quality.

Similarly, while a clear majority (64%) thought that the current quality of play areas for younger children was satisfactory, a majority were not happy with the overall quality of outdoor youth provision.

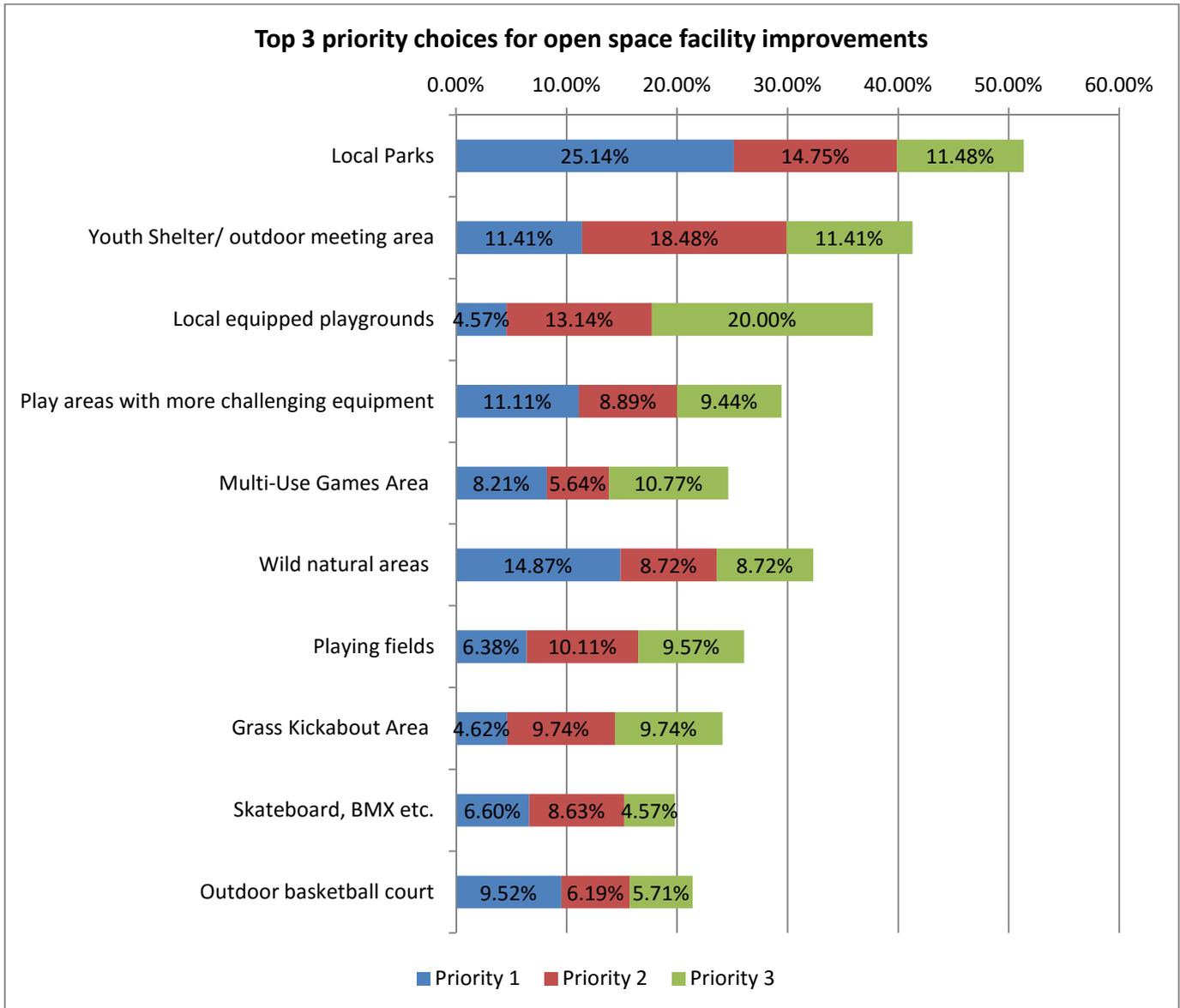
### *Access*

- 81% of young people said that they would be prepared to walk further than normal to somewhere that had more to do and was more interesting.
- 72% of young people thought that it is more important to keep and improve their nearest open space facility/area than have a new more exciting area further away.

In very broad terms, these access findings suggest the need for providing and maintaining easy access to some kind of open spaces near to homes where children and young people can play and hang out; along with a strategic provision of facilities that are seen as more of a "destination" - to which young people are prepared to travel further.

### 3.3 Priorities for improvement

The survey asked young people to prioritise the kinds of open spaces and outdoor facility provision that they would most like to see improved by ranking all the different kinds of open space provision in priority order. The chart below shows the top 3 priority choices.



Some observations on the most commonly chosen top three priorities are noted below:

- Over 50% of young people highlighted improvements to parks as being one of their top 3 priorities (of which just over 25% chose it as their top priority).
- Over 40% chose provision of youth shelters and outdoor seated areas as one of their top 3 priorities (including 30% for whom it was priority 1 or 2).
- Local equipped play areas was chosen by nearly 38% as one of their top 3 though it was top priority for only around 5% of those).
- Improved provision of wild natural areas was the next most commonly prioritised kind of open space provision with over 32% highlighting it as one of their top 3 priorities. For nearly 15% of those it was their top priority.

### ***Other priorities and future consultation***

A number of young people suggested other priorities that should be considered:

- Improved access to local fields, countryside, and woodlands
- Better provision of seating with bins nearby
- More advanced and challenging equipment in local parks for older children - teen activity areas.
- Places where younger kids can hang out without the older kids.
- Parkour provision
- Water park features
- More cycle tracks
- More land and open space near where young people live.

Finally, 81% confirmed that they would like to have a say in how new open space facilities for young people should be built and how existing spaces can be improved.

### 3.4 Other Comments

There was an opportunity at the end of survey for young people to make additional comments. Examples of these are noted below

- I think you should do better 'Hang Outs' for teenagers as we need something more adventurous at our age.
- I don't particularly play many sports outside of school so places where I hang out such as the city centre are my priority.
- Get more and better play equipment; and food sources - hot meals at parks
- Make a parkour area for teenagers.
- Make my local skateboard/bmx centre better!!
- We need more shelter for the skate park.
- I would like a cycle track nearer to where I live.
- We need a basketball court in Clutton.
- If there could be an indoor sports hall set up with cricket needs inside and basket ball hoops etc that would be great for winter.
- I like football, get more pitches!
- The Radstock park is broken and the whole thing is rotting and its becoming a park where only 15 year olds go and 3 year olds. It needs to be improved.
- Everything that is built for our use is always wrecked. I would like more stuff to do in my area and more facilities to use but they just get ruined.
- You need to keep public places tidy and safe for younger children
- There is a need to look at providing better lighting in some areas because they are not very safe.
- I think this is a good idea of a survey
- I like it that you are trying to help us

## 4. REVIEW OF EXISTING CONSULTATION AND RESEARCH

### 4.1 Introduction

Council Officers provided a range of consultation and research data that was completed prior to this study. The main source categories as reported in this document are noted below:

- "Voicebox" household surveys
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) data
- Strategy Documents
- Other sources

All the data provided was reviewed to identify consultation and research findings of relevance to the Green Spaces Study.

### 4.2 "Voicebox" household surveys

3 surveys were highlighted as being of potential relevance i.e.

- Sport and Active Lifestyles
- Leisure Time
- Environmental Services

#### *Sport and Active Lifestyles (2011)*

The report of this survey investigated the attitudes and preferences of respondents regarding Sport and Active Lifestyles themes and activities. It covered questions on exercise taken to maintain a healthy lifestyle, preferred forms of activity, venues for physical activity and barriers to physical activity.

Some of the key findings of relevance were:

- Recreational walking has a higher percentage (48%) of respondents regularly participating compared to all other forms of physical activity.
- Cycling, running, swimming, sport, exercise classes, gym and other regular recreational activities have the next highest levels of participation; though less than half of the percentage of respondents as those taking part in recreational walking.
- Out of the 18% of those regularly taking part in recreational sport, respondents participated in Golf, Tennis, Badminton, Bowls, Football, Cricket, and Rugby.
- Running and sport are the most common forms of challenge / competition participation amongst respondents with 5% of residents regularly participating in each. The lowest type of competition is cycling, with only 1% of respondents regularly participating.
- Activity initiatives that respondents would most like to see are running groups (14%) and beginner sports classes (14%). Amongst other opportunities specified by respondents, dance was the most popular followed by more/better cycle paths/routes, badminton and a bowls centre. The least popular option was cycle loan schemes with only 3% of respondents wanting to see this available.
- Use of facilities: Bath Sports and Leisure Centre is used by the highest number of respondents (30%). Other commonly used facilities include: cycle paths, Alice/Victoria Park tennis, local places to walk, Longwell Green, Victoria Park, and golf clubs.
- Barriers to participation: overall, 42% of respondents believe that time is a reason for them not taking part in physical activity, followed by 33% citing cost as a reason. Only 3% of respondents thought of other reasons why they didn't take part; the most common

other answers include ill health (mainly chronic diseases), timing of classes or activities, injury, laziness, cost of travel/parking and too busy being a carer.

### ***Leisure Time(2014)***

This survey was focused on use of leisure time very broadly and had little of direct relevance to the open spaces study. Two findings of interest were:

- Other than socialising and leisure activity at home; and going out with friends and family; physical leisure activities and visiting parks and gardens were the two most common forms of leisure activity undertaken regularly (at least once a month).
- The 3 most common factors respondents were looking for in relation to participating in leisure activities (i.e. influenced them a lot) were fun (50%); relaxation/comfort (39%); and being outdoors (36%).

### ***Environmental Services (2013)***

This survey was also very broad with little of direct relevance to the Green Spaces Study. The purpose of the survey was to provide an insight into the local community and to capture resident's views on their local area and the council's Environmental Services (including Parks and Open Spaces).

Findings of relevance included:

- 68% of respondents were satisfied with parks and open spaces; 25% of respondents rating this service as very good and 43% of respondents rating it as good.
- 73% agreed that staff working in Parks and Open Spaces services are polite, courteous and treat all of their customers fairly.

### 4.3 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

JSNAs are assessments of the current and future health and social care needs of the local community - these are needs that could be met by the local authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups, or the NHS. JSNAs are produced by health and wellbeing boards and are unique to each local area. The policy intention is for health and wellbeing boards to also consider wider factors that impact on their communities' health and wellbeing, and local assets that can help to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities

#### 4.3.1 Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces

The JSNA notes that:

Bath and North East Somerset benefits from a unique and in places, outstanding natural environment; where this is linked with good public access and recreational opportunities it provides invaluable assets for developing and supporting healthy, happy and vibrant local communities.

The Council values the natural environment very highly and is committed through Council Vision and Values and the Draft Core Strategy to maintaining and improving it. The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides a framework to work with partners and the community to make the most of the benefits that the natural environment can and should be providing for people, places and nature within and beyond the district.

The JSNA fully recognises the key role that green spaces play in promoting better health. It notes that:

- Studies demonstrate that there are positive links between health and wellbeing and levels of contact with natural and green spaces.
- The Government's health white paper indicates that the availability of green and open spaces, influence the health and wellbeing of the local population.
- Parks and green spaces can contribute to all aspects of health and well-being including increasing levels of physical activity. Studies suggest that being outside in a green space can promote mental well-being, relieve stress, overcome isolation, improve social cohesion and alleviate physical problems so that fewer working days are lost to ill health.
- Urban vegetation and green space helps to reduce pollution and the build-up of the particulates that can aggravate respiratory diseases such as asthma and bronchitis. However, there has also been research that indicates that green space can contribute to stress reduction and the alleviation of depression and dementia.
- Similarly, green travel, including foot, cycle, horse and boat, can promote healthier lifestyles. Improving recreational links within urban areas and with surrounding landscapes, can encourage access to natural spaces, facilitate active lifestyles and help address health inequalities.

Some relevant issues identified and observations in the JSNA are that:

- The Council manages and maintains 50 hectares of formal parkland as well as 200 hectares of public open space, and highway verges. Included within this are parks, recreation grounds and public open spaces, floral displays, allotments, trees, woodland and parks and open spaces events.
- The council looks after 10 formal parks.
- The Council manages a large number of sports pitches including 124 football pitches, 42 cricket pitches and 62 Rugby pitches (some of which are in poor condition/in need of more)

- The ROWIP (Rights of Way Improvement Plan) research identified the need for high quality walking and cycling routes connecting housing to schools, shops, employment, recreation and sports facilities.
- There are 24 allotments in Bath city. There is generally a waiting list of 1-4 years. There are also an additional 25 allotments outside Bath which are not managed by Bath and North East Somerset Council. The council is promoting more local use of allotments (trying to match residents with the sites nearest their home address) in order to reduce the carbon footprint.
- The principle areas of countryside within Bath and North East Somerset where there is public access are: Breach Hill Common, Chew Valley; Knowle Hill, Chew Valley; Burlledge Hill, Bishop Sutton; Northfield, Radstock; Bristol Road, Radstock; Southfield, Radstock; Waterside, Radstock; North of Engine Wood, Southstoke; Little Solsbury, Batheaston; and Bannerdown Common, North of Bath.
- The Combe Down Stone Mine complex and Monkton Farleigh mines, which includes Brown's Folly, are of international importance, designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).
- A number of sites in rural Bath and North East Somerset have been defined as being of national and international importance for biodiversity, including: Chew Valley Lake; Blagdon Lake; Cleaves Wood; Lone Dole Wood; Harptree Court; and Monkswood Valley.
- The South West Biodiversity Partnership identifies 11 Strategic Nature Areas either fully or partially within Bath and North East Somerset.

#### **4.3.2 Children and Young People - Play and Play Areas**

The JSNA notes the following "key facts"

- In a recent study of children's well-being in 25 European countries, the UK was ranked 21st.
- Play in childhood can improve happiness, cognitive ability, physical health and mental health
- Satisfaction with play areas in B&NES is amongst the highest in the south west.

#### ***Issues and observations***

- There are numerous playgrounds & play areas in B&NES, 47 of which the Council is responsible for maintaining.
- Over recent decades, there has been a notable decrease in children's Physical Activity, and loss of social mobility, with outdoor play replaced to a significant extent by the television and computer, and an increase in the number of young people being driven to school and other places.

The JSNA notes recurring themes identified by children in Bath and North East Somerset as being:

- Children and young people want safe places to play and hang out and things to do
- Getting around the area can be a problem for children and young people
- Drugs and crime are also a concern
- Looking after the environment is important to children and young people
- Children feel that they should be involved in choices and decisions around the use of parks and play areas.
- The fear of crime, stranger danger and traffic were highlighted by parents as reasons for their reluctance to encourage their children to go out and play.
- How parents/ carers see areas in terms of safety crucially affects the restrictions parents/ carers put on their children's movements. The reputation of parks can greatly

influence parents taking children to parks. There was evidence that Play Rangers give a feeling of safety in the areas where they were based.

- Children and parents would also like more safe places outside the home - there may be a question around how to challenge parental perception of 'safe places' as there are many safe places for children outside of the home.

Evidence indicated that Bath and North East Somerset's Play Pathfinder Programme both directly and through the work of the Play Rangers has improved equalities amongst children by:

- Providing wide spread opportunities for children and parents to feel safe in a local open space which has consequences for their physical fitness and opportunities to play outside.
- Improving emotional health and well-being and increasing social, communication and life skills of children from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Helping children to feel safe from bullying and discrimination through support and care for each other.
- Giving parents/ carers opportunities to meet others in similar situations helping them develop social networks and reduce their isolation.
- Helping children and young people socialise and make new friends, building bridges across social divides and increases sense of belonging/social cohesion

### ***Physical Activity***

A survey carried out by the University of Bath (2011) indicates that parents have a significant effect on young people's physical activity levels. Barriers identified included:

- Fears of parenting skills being judged, not knowing other parents or workers attending play sessions.
- Cost
- Lack of awareness of services
- Parents tended to react badly to the receipt of information that their child was overweight. This appeared to stem from the perception that having an overweight child was equated with being a bad parent. From this survey a number of recommendations were made.

### ***Healthy Weight***

- The obesity prevalence for reception year children (4-5 years old) in Bath and North east Somerset is almost 11%. This is greater than the national rate of 9.5%.
- The prevalence of obesity in Bath and North East Somerset in year 6 (11-12 year olds) is around 14%. This is lower than the national rate of 19%.
- The most deprived quintile has a notably higher percentage of obese or overweight children compared with other quintiles for year 6; and between the most deprived and least deprived quintile for reception year.

### ***Other relevant JSNA research findings:***

- 23% of pedestrian accidents involve children and 13% of cycling accidents involve children.
- Satisfaction with the safety of children cycling to school and road safety education is slightly below national average for both children cycling and walking to school and with respect to road safety training/education

## 4.4 Town and Parish Councils - Neighbourhood Plans and Green Space Designation

### Neighbourhood Plans

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans. Parish Councils can use new neighbourhood planning powers to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. These are described as 'neighbourhood development plans.'

The planning authority continues to produce development plans that set the strategic context within which neighbourhood development plans sit.

Neighbourhood Plans also have to meet a number of conditions before they can be put to a community referendum and legally come into force. These conditions are to ensure plans are legally compliant and take account of wider policy considerations (e.g. national policy). The conditions are:

- they must have regard to national planning policy
- they must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. such as in a core strategy)
- they must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.

Proposed neighbourhood development plans or orders need to gain the approval of a majority of voters of the neighbourhood to come into force. If proposals pass the referendum, the local planning authority is under a legal duty to bring them into force.

For this study 4 neighbourhood Plans were provided for review in relation to Open/Green space issues:

- Clutton Neighbourhood Plan (Draft)
- Englishcombe Neighbourhood Plan
- Freshford Neighbourhood Plan
- Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan (Draft)

#### 1. Clutton Neighbourhood Plan - 2015-35 (Draft)

Relevant aspects of the plan are quoted below:

##### *Open Space Assets of Community Value*

Clutton Parish Council agreed to register the following as Assets of Community Value as defined by the Localism Act 2011:

- Clutton Village Hall,
- The Leisure Area,
- Clutton Allotments,
- The Village car park,
- The Recreation Ground Venus Lane,
- The Village Green,
- Clutton Social Club.

### ***Policy CNP13 OPEN SPACE***

The areas designated as open space are listed below:

- The allotments
- The Village Green
- The playing field and playground behind the Village Hall
- The playground at Burchill Close
- The Leisure area
- The football ground

New development will not normally be supported if it results in the loss of open space, and development on areas of open space will only be supported if that development protects and enhances the use and community value of that open space.

A development proposal which would result in the loss of open space may be acceptable if it includes the provision of an alternative open space facility of similar size, accessibility and quality to that which has been lost.

### ***Policy CNP14 LOCAL GREEN SPACE***

The following areas are designated as Local Green Space:

- Long Lands
- The Avenue
- Gastons

Development on these designated areas will not be permitted unless it preserves and enhances the existing use and community values

### ***Policy CNP15 LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY***

Any new development must have regard to protecting and enhancing local wildlife and biodiversity.

### ***Policy CNP17 PROTECTION OF ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE***

Development proposals that will enhance the viability and community value of registered Assets of Community Value will be supported. Development proposals that would result in either the loss of the asset or in significant harm to the community value and use of an asset will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the asset, or the ongoing delivery of the community value of the asset, is no longer economically viable typically because the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least a year for that and any other suitable employment or service trade uses and no interest in acquisition has been expressed.

### ***Ongoing Work and Aspirations***

The Football Club is keen to encourage the wider use of its facilities by the village community. It is an aspiration that these facilities will remain under their current management - the football ground owned and managed by Clutton Football Club, the Allotments and the playing field owned and managed by Clutton Parish Council, Burchill's Playground owned and managed by B&NES and the Leisure Area owned by B&NES but managed under a lease by Clutton Parish Council.

The Cabin is a timber framed building which was erected in 1978 when it was obtained second hand. It is in need of constant maintenance and refurbishment. It is difficult to maintain the temperature needed for pre-school children and heating is a major expense.

There are various projects that have been put forward that would make the leisure area more widely usable over the next fifteen years:

- The Scouts (this term includes Beavers, Cubs and Explorer Scouts) would like to relocate their premises to the left hand side of the railway line. As the current building is in bad condition it would probably need to be replaced with a new building which would be no bigger than the present building. This building work would be self-funded by Scouts.
- The track should be re-surfaced and a line of tarmac laid to allow for ease of access for push chairs, wheel chairs etc. This would also allow small children to ride their bikes along the track.
- The Youth Club would like to increase their opening hours and cater for older age groups.
- The Youth Club would like to build an all-weather pitch for football and tennis. This work would be self-funded by Youth Club, with grants from the Lottery UK.
- The Playgroup would like to have a separate building for their sole use and locate it in the area on the right of the leisure area, before the fenced area of Youth Club. This area is currently leased to others by B&NES. This building would be self-funded by the Playgroup.
- A fire shelter could be built on the grassed area on the other side of the Cabin which could be used by the Scouts and others who use the Leisure area.
- A boules court to be built.
- A skate board area to be constructed.

Although there is support for all the projects listed above, all the people who responded to our questionnaire said they wanted the quiet rural countryside to be left un-landscaped and natural. In order to maximise the use of the land available and the scope and sustainability of the development the user groups will seek advice from planning specialists and put forward a plan to the Parish Council.

## 2. Englishcombe Neighbourhood Plan

Relevant aspects of the plan are quoted below:

### *Village Open Space assets*

- In 2010 the parish Council began to manage the Millstream field as a parish resource. Currently, the site enjoys a circular walk, commemorative trees planted by residents of the parish, a wildlife pond, areas of meadow and woodland.
- Footpaths and bridleways represent one of the prized assets; residents of surrounding parishes often come into our parish to experience our countryside and excellent footpaths. As such every effort should be made to both maintain and improve them, with clear signage and gated access.

### *Plan consultation and parish survey - some relevant findings*

- Non-motorised road users including cyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers and horse riders are all underprovided for.

- Green Spaces, Green Lanes and footpaths were all highlighted as "What people liked about the Parish".

Suggested projects to enhance the environment Were:

- Improve footpath and byways (75% of survey respondents)
- More open spaces (35% of survey respondents)

Resident Survey Comments

- There are a lot of children in the village but without a play space, it is difficult for them to meet and get to know one another.
- We want swings and a slide for the children and a wooden fort and some living willow play structures
- Stop motorbikes using the byways
- There should be a push chair and wheelchair accessible entrance to Millstream

### ***Policy and Aspirations***

We will support recreational activities, where appropriate, both for the parish and for local and wider communities.

Our aspiration is to make best efforts using available resources to maintain present (and potential) parish assets suitable for a variety of uses.

### ***Policy FSA 1***

We will support the development of an appropriate Parish facility in Englishcombe Village to meet the social, recreational and cultural needs of the community.

## **3. Freshford Neighbourhood Plan**

Relevant aspects of the plan are quoted below:

### ***Context***

- Key neighbourhood open space facilities are: Freshford Playing Field; the Cemetery (Freshford); The Tynning Village Green (Freshford); King George Vth Play Park (Limpley Stoke); and Brown's Field (Hinton Charterhouse).
- Football and tennis are provided at Brown's Field which is owned by a sport-focused trust. These sporting facilities are used by children and adults from the community, although this land is located across the parish boundary in Hinton Charterhouse.
- Many visitors come to the area to walk and engage with the attractive and tranquil landscape and this helps support the local economy.
- There is a range of different habitats capable of supporting rich biodiversity but some of these are suffering from neglect and lack of appropriate management. These include hedgerows, grasslands and ancient woodlands.
- The steep relief of the villages results in few locations within the community which are flat enough for recreational activity.

## ***Plan Objectives***

- To work with local farmers and landowners to manage the natural environment, maximising its amenity value and contribution to biodiversity, and preventing its deterioration as a result of neglect or improper management.
- To design facilities and services for residents and visitors, meeting their needs without damaging the attractive natural environment.

## ***Policy objectives***

- to designate for special protection local green spaces in Freshford and Limpley Stoke;
- to guard that land from any development;
- to prevent coalescence of the two villages;
- to acknowledge its beauty, historic significance, richness of wildlife and importance for play and recreation;
- to recognise that the footpaths criss-crossing the land are essential pedestrian routes which bring the community together and provide access to local facilities.

## ***Local Green Space Policy Rationale***

The Local Green Space is the green land separating Limpley Stoke from Freshford and is needed to prevent agglomeration between the settlement areas. Parts are steeply contoured and unsuitable for development, much of it is criss-crossed with local footpaths and used by walkers and by local farmers for grazing, which adds to the rural character of the community. An important part is covered by the medieval settlement of Woodwick which is an ancient site, important to the history of the areas and worthy of preserving. The space is bounded by ancient hedgerows which are ecologically rich and provide a natural limit to the size of the Local Green Space.

## ***Open Space assets and facilities***

- Brown's Field (also known as Brown's Park), where the local football and tennis clubs are located, lies just across the border in Hinton Charterhouse. The Queen Elizabeth playing field is located behind Freshford Village Memorial Hall while the Limpley Stoke play ground is within the King George V play park.
- The Tynning in Freshford and the King George V play park in Limpley Stoke are the green lungs in the heart of both villages, are used for play and leisure and for community get-togethers and contribute to the green infrastructure and biodiversity of both communities.
- The five acres of land known as the Tynning rest at the heart of the village and in 1970 were registered as a village green. The War Memorial is sited at the boundary of the Tynning, close to the cemetery. This green space is in part in common use and has special value as a connecting green link between the two settlements of the Freshford village centre and Sharpstone. It is embraced by the revised Freshford and Sharpstone Conservation Area (2007). The land was in private ownership until the 14th March 2014 when Freshford Parish Council purchased it on behalf of the community.
- The King George V play park is on Woods Hill in Limpley Stoke. It was created in 1936 as a recreation and playing field, to be preserved in perpetuity as a memorial to King George V. It is managed by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council whose members act as trustees for the charity. The facilities include play equipment, a boules pitch, a cruck shelter and community barbeque. The upper field in the park has poor access and car parking is limited. These factors limit the use of the play park by local parents and children.
- There is a disused and overgrown plot of greenfield land in Middle Stoke which is adjacent to the telephone exchange and the King George V play park. This land is

privately owned and for over 10 years the Limpley Stoke Parish Council has been attempting its acquisition in order to enhance the green space in the centre of the village and improve access to the play park for local parents and children. This idea is approved of by 70% of residents (source: questionnaire responses in Appendix D5).

- The Queen Elizabeth playing field, with the other land in which the Hall sits, was gifted to the Freshford Memorial Red Triangle Club (now The Freshford Village Memorial Hall charity) by local resident Hilda Alexandrina Thurstan in July 1950, and includes the enclosed childrens' playground and the playing field.
- In addition to the network of local footpaths a number of long distance walking routes including the Macmillan Way, The Cotswold Way and the Kennet and Avon Walk pass through or close to the NP area.

### ***Specific proposals***

- Work with Natural England to review the management of the wooded, south eastern slope of The Tynning and plan cut throughs to create valley views from the top of The Tynning.
- Review damaged, species-poor hedgerows in public areas (e.g. at the foot of The Tynning by Freshford Lane and near the War Memorial) and investigate whether their biodiversity and amenity could be improved.
- Design and develop an ecological reserve in the unused land in Middle Stoke.
- Improve access to the area by designing and building new footpaths along key movement axes which are in keeping with the rural setting and minimise the disruption to existing agricultural land use and local fauna.

### ***Other ongoing work and actions***

- To register the King George V playing field in Limpley Stoke as a Village Green under the Commons Act 2006.
- Manage and maintain the Tynning in a manner consistent with its village green status and its biodiversity and on behalf of the whole community.
- Improve the land in front of the Freshford War Memorial so that it respects more appropriately the dignity of the site (see page 20).
- Continue to explore with the landowner the acquisition of the disused land in Middle Stoke by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council in order to improve access to the King George V play park.
- Continue to maintain and improve the play ground facilities in both villages to improve the health and well being of children and teenagers.
- Support the trustees at Brown's Field and Hinton Charterhouse Parish Council in the raising of finance and the construction of a new clubhouse and encourage the use of the existing land and buildings for more sporting and recreational activities for residents of all ages.
- Improve the existing footpath across Church Fields (Stoke Church Tynning) from St Mary's Church to the community shop to enhance the safety and amenity of pedestrians walking to and from St Mary's Church to the community shop, Freshford Village Memorial Hall and playing field. New buggy-friendly access gates will be added but the path will remain unfenced and some limited landscaping will use local and natural materials in keeping with the existing meadow land.

### ***Specific policy plans and aspirations***

- To promote the development and/or the redevelopment of the Memorial Hall complex as integral to the health and vitality of the community. The landowners of Galleries Field have agreed in principle to release a strip of land as an additional grassed play area to be incorporated within the village hub.

- To safeguard key facilities and assets from any adverse proposal which would result in their loss.
- The playgrounds in Freshford and Limpley Stoke are important sources of play and recreation by the children in the community and they will continue to be improved and upgraded by the respective Parish Councils.
- It was also recommended that a study is undertaken on the feasibility of developing the unused land and buildings in Brown's Field for increased sports and recreational facilities for the children, teenage and adult residents of Freshford, Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse

#### 4. Stowey Sutton Neighbourhood Plan (Draft)

Relevant aspects of the plan are quoted below:

##### *Survey findings - open spaces*

- The survey of the parish showed nearly all respondents consider the parish to be a comfortable and safe place to live with basic recreational and community facilities.
- However, the playground facilities are quite limited and the problem of anti-social behaviour from young people (as evidenced by local police reports) in the vicinity of the Village Hall and bus shelter affects Bishop Sutton on a regular cycle.
- Improvements in recreational facilities including existing play areas are needed including more recreation space and leisure facilities with facilities for older children and teenagers.
- More recent housing development in the parish has small gardens with insufficient space for growing fruit and vegetables such that there is a significant demand for allotments within the parish.

##### *Plan policies*

###### *Community and Recreational Action Policy SSCR01 Recreation Ground*

The Neighbourhood Plan will promote greater use of the recreation ground and play areas within the parish, improving facilities to meet the needs of users of all age groups, including access to toilet facilities at the recreation ground when the village hall is closed. To be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

###### *Community and Recreational Action Policy SSCR02 Allotments*

Where the individual garden size of any development of five or more houses is smaller than the footprint of the actual building, excluding any hard surfaced parking, the Neighbourhood Plan will require specific contributions for the provision of allotments for community use. To be promoted using funding from CIL and grants where available.

###### *Road and Transport Action Policy SSRT05 Cycle and Walk for Recreation*

The Neighbourhood Plan supports provision of safe and accessible walking and cycling facilities for leisure purposes. For example the leisure opportunities already available at Chew Valley Lake need to be optimised by the provision of a safe cycle and footpath route that provides improved access to the lake, whilst avoiding any detrimental impacts on the special nature of the designated Special Protection Areas and Special Area of Conservation. Reference policy SSRT03.

## Local Green Space designation

B&NES Council undertook extensive consultation with town and parish councils in 2014 in relation to the Local Green Space Designation process. Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. Local Green Spaces may be designated where those spaces are demonstrably special to the local community, whether in a village or in a neighbourhood in a town or city.

The town and parish councils were invited to propose sites for Local Green Space Designation and were provided with advice and guidance on the criteria need for sites to be thus designated.

The table below summarises the local green spaces that were put forward for designation based on information supplied by the spatial planning team:

<p><b>Bathampton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miller Walk open space</li> <li>• Westminster Road open space</li> <li>• Catherine Way (Elmhurst) Allotments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Batheaston</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allotments - behind properties in Catherine Way (Elmhurst)</li> <li>• London Rd East (Land between the main road and the river Avon)</li> <li>• Recreational Facilities, (including Childrens Playground), Coalpit Road, Batheaston</li> <li>• London Rd East (Land surrounding the Car Wash /Car Sales site)</li> <li>• Batheaston Gardens, Stambridge, Batheaston (Adjacent to Batheaston Car Park)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Camerton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red Hill, Camerton</li> <li>• Camerton Community Hall Recreation Area</li> <li>• Coke Oven Copse</li> <li>• Overdale Green Area</li> </ul>
<p><b>Charlombe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larkhall Allotments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Claverton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No applications for Green Space designation supplied. The parish adopted a Conservation Plan in 2007.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clutton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Playing Fields</li> <li>• The Allotments</li> <li>• Clutton Football Club</li> <li>• The Leisure area</li> <li>• The playground in Burchill Close</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comton Dando</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burnett Green</li> <li>• Millenium Green, Compton Dando</li> <li>• Queen Charlton Village Green</li> </ul>
<p><b>Compton Martin</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Amenity Field, behind the village hall</li> <li>• The Batch, in the centre of the Village adjacent to the Church and opposite the pond</li> <li>• The Mill Pond, in the centre of the village opposite St Michael's Church and The Batch</li> <li>• Combe View, between The Batch and The Combe</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dunkerton</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tunley Recreation Centre, Bath Road, Tunley, Bath BA2 0DZ</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunkerton Cricket Ground , Dunkerton Hill, Dunkerton BA2 8PE</li> <li>• Manders Orchard, Dunkerton Hill, Dunkerton BA2 8PE</li> <li>• Dunkerton Green, Church Lane, Dunkerton BA2 8BQ</li> <li>• Millennium Wood, Dunkerton, BA2 8BJ</li> </ul>
<p>East Harptree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parkers Mead</li> </ul>
<p>Englishcombe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culverhay Castle</li> <li>• Haycombe Green</li> <li>• Millstreaan and Wheelrights Orchard</li> </ul>
<p>Farmborough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Poplars, Bath Road, Farmborough, Bath BA2 0BU</li> <li>• Between Bramble Cottage &amp; 1 Church Lane Church Lane, Farmborough, Bath BA2 0BU</li> <li>• Farmborough Primary School playing field. The boundary is currently changing to accommodate a housing development. Once boundary lines are in place a separate Green Space Designation will be submitted</li> <li>• In addition the following sites are also highlighted as important green spaces for Farmborough.</li> <li>• The site designated as 'glebe land' (an area of land within an ecclesiastical parish used to support a parish priest) and known locally as "Molliers". It is home to two ancient trees and the location of the community children's play area. It is well used by walkers and dog owners and provides access to surrounding fields.</li> <li>• Farmborough public recreation ground and pavilion. This site has facility for tennis, football and cricket, as well as hosting village events (the annual fireworks night) and being well used by walkers and dog owners.</li> <li>• Farmborough Allotments.</li> </ul>
<p>Farrington Gurne</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farrington Gurney Allotments 1 and 2</li> <li>• Farrington Gurney Recreational Ground</li> </ul>
<p>High Littleton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greyfields</li> <li>• High Littleton recreational Ground</li> <li>• Gores Park Play Area</li> <li>• The Triangle</li> <li>• Hallatrow Allotments</li> <li>• Two adjoining fields adjacent to Greyfield Road</li> <li>• Proposed Local Green Space also known as Robin Candy's Fields, Greyfield Fields, Sheppard's Fields</li> </ul>
<p>Hinton Blewitt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing Field</li> <li>• Prospect Stile Viewpoint</li> <li>• Hollow Marsh</li> <li>• Burledge Common</li> <li>• Coley Reservoirs</li> <li>• Land adjacent to Lower Road</li> <li>• Lower Road to the Cam Brook Valley</li> </ul>
<p>Hinton Charterhouse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennium Green</li> <li>• Cricket Ground</li> <li>• The Drovers Pond</li> <li>• Brown's Field</li> <li>• Natural Burial Ground</li> </ul>

## Keynsham

- Abbots Wood
- Arundel and Raglan Walks
- Avon Road Green Space
- Broadlands playing fields
- Chandos Road green space
- Chalfield Close play area
- Conway Green
- Courtlands green space
- Cranmore Avenue green space
- Downfield play area
- Ellsbridge (Bath Road) green space
- Fox and Hounds green space
- Courts (green spaces) on Federate Estate
- Teviot and Cherwell Road green spaces
- Hawkswell Field
- Hawthorn Lane green space
- Kelston play area
- Keynsham Cricket Club
- Keynsham Scout and Guide Head Quarters
- Laburnham and Oak Tree Walks
- Manor Road playing fields
- Manor Road Community Woodland
- Old Vicarage Green
- Park Road play area
- Sherwood Close green space
- Teviot Road play area
- The Park Road Allotments
- The Labbotts green space
- The Paddock green space
- Walnut Close green space
- Windrush Green
- Winscombe Close play area

## Midsomer Norton

- Boxbury Hill
- Midsomer Norton Allotments
- Charlton Park
- Cricket Ground
- Garden of Friendship Catholic Church
- Hillside Avenue Recreational Area
- Hollies Gardens
- Land west of Northmead including railway
- land west of Northmead-south of the railway
- Land west of Staddlestones
- St Chads
- Town Park
- Welton Green
- Welton Vale

## Paulton

- Springfields Buildings, Old Mills
- Miners Welfare Recreation Ground, Tennis Court Road,
- Football Ground (Paulton Rovers), Athletic Ground,

- Winterfield Road
- Purnell Sports Club, Bristol Road
- Wallenge
- Memorial Park and Old Vicarage Garden
- Wildlife Area adj Hill Court Car Park, Ashleigh Close
- Land Between Brookside And Valley View Road,
- Brookside
- Chivers Knoll (Woodland Trust)
- Large Orchard at a house called Olcote on Brittens Hill
- Oxlease, adj Ox Lease Lane, Paulton, Bristol
- New Allotment Area & Pool
- Cemetery & Allotments, Bath Road, Paulton
- The Paddock at the rear of the former Somerset Inn
- Land West of St Julians Close
- Land West of Old Mills Lane
- Land South of Abbotts Farm Close
- Land South of Abbotts Farm Close at Farrington Road

#### Newton St Loe

- Playing Field
- Wildlife Meadow
- Village Green adjacent the pub.

#### Peasedown St John

- Albert Avenue & Frederick Avenue
- Orchard Way
- Peasedown Meadows, Wellow Lane
- Eckweek Lane Play Area
- Beacon Field and Play Area
- Carlingcott Tump, Carlingcott
- Ecewiche Green
- Recreation Ground
- Camerton & Peasedown Croquet Club
- Peasedown St John Cricket Club
- Camerton Wood & Lower Plantation
- Prince of Wales Village Green, Dunkerton Hill
- Braysdown Allotments, Braysdown Lane
- Hillcrest Green, Bath Road
- Braysdown Works and Woodland

#### Radstock

- Whitelands
- Springfields Buildings

#### Saltford

- War Memorial garden - Corner of Bath Road and Manor Road BS31 3DL
- Green space at Haselbury Grove BS31 3AD
- Manor Road / Claverton Road playing field
- Pedestrian link way behind the Closes from Montague Road
- Allotment site, Wickhouse Close
- Green space at Broadway, Saltford, Broadway, BS31 3BX
- The Shallows BS31 3EU

#### Timsbury

- The Recreation field for historical & recreational value
- The allotment field off Lippiatt Lane
- The route and associated corridor of the Somersetshire Coal Canal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CROW access land west of Radford Hill</li> <li>• Wooded coal slag heap ‘batches’ of old Upper and Lower Conygre pits</li> <li>• Triangle green space at south end of Church Lane is a carefully managed and appreciated green space.</li> <li>• Southlands Drive Woodland</li> <li>• Land west of Farmborough Road</li> <li>• Upper Conygre Pits</li> <li>• St Mary's School Playing Field, Timsbury</li> <li>• Land North of Lansdown Crescent</li> </ul>
<p>Ubley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glebe Field</li> </ul>
<p>Wellow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Car Park</li> <li>• Church House Enclosures, Conygre</li> <li>• Church Yard</li> <li>• Henley View Garden Allotments</li> </ul>
<p>West Harptree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Jarmans Field, Lower Bristol Road</li> </ul>
<p>Westfield</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land north of Fosseyway Gardens</li> <li>• Playing fields at Norton Radstock College, Wells Road, Westfield</li> <li>• Westhill Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Norton Hill Recreation Ground, Fosseyway, Westfield</li> <li>• Land north of Highfields, Westfield</li> <li>• Section of Waterside Valley - Land south of Norton Radstock College, Westfield</li> <li>• Section of Waterside Valley - Land east of Westfield Trading Estate</li> <li>• Section of Waterside Valley - Land east of Cobblers Way, Westfield</li> <li>• Section of Waterside Valley - Land east of Waterford Park housing estate</li> <li>• Section of Waterside Valley - Land north of Charlton Lane</li> <li>• Cricket Pitch, Prattens, Charlton Lane, Westfield</li> <li>• Waterford Park Allotment Site, Waterford Park, Westfield</li> <li>• Westfield Cricket Ground</li> <li>• Waterford Park Allotment Site, Waterford Park, Westfield</li> <li>• Play Area and green space at the end of Shakespeare Road, Westfield</li> </ul>
<p>Whitchurch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Gardens/Allotments off Norton Lane, Whitchurch</li> <li>• Whitchurch Cricket Club</li> <li>• Whitchurch Village Fete Field, Off Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 0PU</li> <li>• The Millennium Garden on the corner of Staunton Lane and the A37 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol.</li> <li>• Whitchurch Village Play Park, off Norton Lane, Whitchurch</li> </ul>

This information will feed into the 5 area profiles.

## 4.5 Strategy and Research Review

### *Green Spaces Strategy (2007)*

A comprehensive consultation programme was completed for the 2007 Green Spaces Strategy. Analysis was particularly targeted on the following aspects of each kind of open space:

- Frequency of use
- Type of use
- Access to green spaces
- Expectations and suggested improvements
- Quality of green spaces and their facilities
- Quantity

A variety of different forms of market research and consultation were undertaken including consultations with equalities groups and focus groups from Bath, Keynsham and Norton Radstock. In addition to this an on-street survey was carried out across the district.

A brief summary of the findings is noted below:

- 95% of those who were interviewed had visited a green space in the district in the previous 12 months
- The respondents from Bath and Keynsham were more satisfied with green space provision than those from Norton Radstock.
- Formal green spaces were visited by a larger proportion of the respondents.
- Informal green spaces were visited more frequently.
- Informal green spaces were largely located closest to people's homes and therefore were the easiest to get to and the quickest to walk to.
- Royal Victoria Park was seen as the 'jewel' of green space provision in Bath and North East Somerset and there was demand for similar provision in other areas.
- Natural green spaces and sports facilities were most in need of improvement
- Families were harder to please due to their higher expectations which are harder to meet
- The most important improvements to formal green spaces were;
  - Provision of toilets
  - Rain shelter and sun shade
  - Sufficient good quality seating and litter bins
  - Cleanliness (free of litter, graffiti, dogs mess)
  - Managed sensitively for wildlife
  - Sense of safety

### *Fit for Life Strategy (2014)*

The Fit for Life Strategy sets out the Council's ambitions for improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities in Bath and North East Somerset through increasing physical activity levels. It seeks to find ways to make physical activity more central to people's lives through making explicit links to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

A wide range of consultation was carried out to inform the development of the strategy. Based on this the strategy has identified the following priority groups for increasing participation in Sport and Active Lifestyles:

- Ethnic Minorities.
- 14-18 year olds (particularly females) - this is the age where levels of activity start to drop.
- Middle aged men.
- Families.
- Those experiencing health inequalities.
- Older People.
- Those who are carrying excess weight, both children and adults.
- Those with long term health conditions.
- Those with disabilities.

Headline findings from the consultation process include:

- Although 97% state regular activity is either very important or important, slightly under a half state they are not undertaking as much activity as they would like to (46%).
- Women are currently less satisfied than men with the amount of activity they are currently doing.
- Slightly under half (47%) of the sample would like to undertake more physical activity than they currently are. Female respondents show a higher desire to take part in more activity/exercise than men and those age 55+ are the least likely to take part in more activity.
- Of those who would like to do more activity but don't, the main barrier preventing them from doing so is the lack of time due to work pressure at 54% (nationally 47%), followed by lack of time due to home pressures at 22% (nationally 5%). Lack of motivation is a higher barrier in this area than nationally at 11% (nationally 2%).
- The key issues to be addressed according to respondents were availability of time at 55% and direct costs at 40% stating either very important or important, followed by accessible and good quality facilities at 26%.

### ***Key Themes***

Several cross cutting themes came out of the consultation with focus groups held with population groups known to have lower physical activity levels.

- Most inactive people know they need to be more active and say they want to be.
- Recognition of individuals own responsibility to be active.
- Being part of a groups or exercising with friends helps motivate people to exercise more.
- Outdoor spaces/environment a great opportunity to be active for this area
- Club base is strong at both recreational and elite level,
- Awareness of what is already happening could be better - better marketing and communications needed.
- Local facilities perceived generally to be adequate to good with friendly, supportive staff and management, although both Bath and Keynsham were seen as being a bit tired and "not as good as they used to be".
- There has been strong representation amongst the consultation for more accessible warm water swimming within the area.

### ***Healthy Weight Strategy (2015)***

Research for the healthy weight strategy indicated that:

- In B&NES over half (55.7%) of adults are estimated to be obese or overweight, which is lower than the UK national average

- However B&NES has a higher than national average of reception-aged children who are obese or overweight (23%) and therefore addressing childhood obesity is a particular priority for the district.
- Elderly people are also vulnerable to diet-related ill-health and suffer disproportionately from malnutrition.
- Diet-related health inequalities are apparent in B&NES with poor diet and unhealthy weight disproportionately affecting residents who live in areas of multiple deprivation and children who are from a black or ethnic minority background.

Recommendations of relevance to the open spaces study include:

- Ensure there is a good supply of resilient, well-managed, maintained and fit for purpose green spaces and playing pitches that meet the needs of the community they serve as well as safeguard against the loss of open space and recreational facilities.
- Work with Leisure and Tourism, parks and allotments and open spaces to create opportunities for spontaneous play and maximising opportunities for physical activity.
- Provide safe open spaces and play areas which are stimulating, challenging and age appropriate for children.
- Create family friendly environments that enable opportunities for active play and planned physical activity.
- Provide modernised leisure facilities which are make them more attractive, accessible and affordable to young people and families.
- Strengthen partnership with Planning Department to influence the need for residents to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life on new planning applications.
- Work with providers of public transport to promote the benefits of travelling sustainably - linking walking and cycling routes with public transport networks.
- Maximise on opportunities for integrating walking and cycling routes with art and culture and world heritage sites.

### ***Food strategy (2014)***

One key deliver theme of the Food Strategy is Local Food Production, which has relevance to allotments and community gardens. A specific objective is to "improve opportunities for community food growing". The strategy notes that community food growing "provides people with a source of local and healthy food, contributes to physical activity, provides dietary and mental health benefits and can improve opportunities for community cohesion and social engagement".

The strategy notes that "in B&NES there is a high demand for allotments with nearly every site across the District now full with a waiting list. Further provision of allotments and community food growing space is needed to meet the demand for community food growing and to enable a wider number of people to benefit from the benefits of food growing".

Potential future action proposed includes:

- Support allotment provision and management via the delivery of the Allotments' Management Plan and by working in partnership with Parish Councils.
- Provide further guidance on local policies that support the provision and retention of allotments and community food growing space, including site criteria, through the forthcoming Place Making Plan (2016); and develop the work of regeneration to incorporate food growing space into new and existing developments.
- Develop initiatives and guidance to support community and commercial food growing.
- Continue to incorporate edible and fruiting plants into public spaces to provide residents with a source of fresh, local food.

## ***Play Strategy (2006 - 2012)***

The Play Strategy process involved consultation with children, young people and parents. Some of the key findings were:

- Play Parks were mentioned as one of the best places to play, particularly Radstock Park, Victoria Park in Bath and the Memorial Park in Keynsham.
- Issues that prohibit enjoyment of parks by children included dog mess not being cleared, broken glass and litter, broken play equipment, vandalism of equipment, motorcyclists, adults shouting at them and gangs of older children.
- Children wanted more adults to keep an eye on play parks and more police and CCTV cameras.
- Play facilities are one of the main motivating factors behind visits to formal and informal green spaces.
- Local green space provision is crucial for children as they are limited to how far they can travel alone.
- The distance children travelled increased with age, but parents (and children's) perception of the safety of a green space and the route to it is also critical.
- Both parents and children had high levels of fear in relation to play and public space. This was based partly on experience of bullying and intimidation by older children and adults and partly on a perception that the parks were not safe places to be.
- In urban parts of the district there appears to be an oversupply of small-equipped play areas, located within sites that are too small, and with limited appeal to older children.
- The potential of informal play within green spaces generally is not being fully exploited.
- Children want a range of types of green space and activities from informal (kicking a ball around), natural (e.g. playing and cycling) and play facilities.
- There is an increasing demand from children and young people for BMX dirt tracks to play on (and other kinds of wheeled sports).

## ***Play and Youth - more recent consultation and research***

The B&NES Youth Connect Service highlighted a number of more recent studies and consultation of relevance as noted below:

### ***A Cold Bath - youth survey and report (2015)***

This research was guided by a steering group with representation from the B&NES Youth Connect Service and voluntary sector youth organisations. The aim of the research was "to identify the needs and opportunities relating to young people (11 - 18 yrs.) resident in or visiting the city centre, especially in the evening.

The bulk of the research was undertaken via face-to-face interviews and conversations. Members of the research team met informally with young people on the streets of Bath and entered into conversations about provision, needs and places to 'hang-out'. This was followed up by a number of Focus Groups at different educational facilities in the city, as well as at detached youth work organisations. Interviews were used to gauge the opinions of and work being carried out by local churches and statutory bodies. This was then combined with secondary, 'paper-based' research gathered online.

Based on the research the study made recommendations in relation to 3 main themes:

- Provision of Safe Spaces
- Support with Career Mapping
- Provision of detached, relational youth work

As regards safe spaces the report concluded that "if there is one area in which young people feel neglected in Bath it is that of having nowhere to 'hang out' with mates". The report notes "we have found that young people struggle to find spaces to hang out. There can often be an aggressive response to groups hanging out in the city from the residents and police which makes the situation worse".

This is further illustrated by direct quotes from young people: "*there are no places to go when it rains... at least none that are free*"; and "*I constantly see groups from schools taking drugs in the parks. I don't want to be around it so I usually hang out in Bristol instead*".

#### *Foxhill - Children and Young People - Survey and report (2013)*

This report was undertaken by the Children's Society. It was commissioned by Foxhill Futures<sup>2</sup> supported by Creating Excellence<sup>3</sup> to involve children and young people in the planning phase of the regeneration of Foxhill.

From April - July 2013 The Children Society worked in Foxhill to gather the views of children and young people about what they liked and disliked in the area and what they thought could be improved in the new development. They spoke with 120 children and young people aged from 2 to 17 years old; and spoke with 25 adult community members who were mostly grandparents and parents.

The report noted that play and recreation opportunities were important to all children and young people involved in the consultation.

Foxhill has two main play spaces (Springfield and Tipeetoe) but neither was rated as good-enough by children, due to the following issues (direct quotes):

- The youth shelter has lots of graffiti in it
- Too much dog poo
- People do drugs and drink alcohol in the park
- The BMX track is no good now we're bigger
- The football nets have holes in them.

Older children were using sports fields away from Foxhill as they felt equipment was better elsewhere.

#### *Key Issues*

- Dog fouling - this was the top concern of all children consulted (and their parents).
- Litter and broken glass - children and young people commented that rubbish and dangerous glass were part of the reasons for them not using the play spaces.
- Vandalism: "The kids play areas have been vandalised. There's glass everywhere, and graffiti"
- Safety: "It's not safe for children to go out and play on own and cars drive too fast"
- Local parks need to be continually updated, maintained and cleaned to provide a safe stimulating environment for children who lives their lives locally.
- Ideas for the future regeneration - park improvements for younger children

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<sup>2</sup> Foxhill Futures is a community based group established to help give Foxhill residents a say on its future.

<sup>3</sup> Creating Excellence is a not for profit company dedicated to providing "great places for people to live and work in by providing practical assistance in support of good design and effective community engagement".

## *Bishop Sutton*

Youth Connect officers specifically suggested that Bishop Sutton has very little green space for young people.

*"The young people are moved on from the back of the Village Hall green space. The police are regularly called when they use this space. Currently the Police have asked the Parish Council to gain a Public Spaces Protection Order for the back of the village hall in Bishop Sutton".*

## *Radstock*

Youth Connect noted need and aspirations to improve play and youth facility provision in Radstock.

## *Bath BMX Club - aspirations*

Youth Connect also highlighted the following aspirations from the *Bath BMX Club*:

*"The Bath BMX track is currently maintained by Bath BMX Committee, made up of keen riders and parents and recognised by the local council. Indeed, Bath & NE Somerset (BANES) have, over the last 2 years, completely re-developed the track. However, we have now reached the end of all possible improvement without additional funding.*

*The site is ideal for further development. With the space available, it would be possible to build a national standard track for current riders whilst attracting new riders. As there has already been considerable investment on the site with the road cycle track (from the council and British Cycling) and brand-new clubhouse facilities, it would seem to be a logical next step to develop the area into a cycling hub, similar to Cyclopark in Kent. As well as improving the BMX track, the plan is to add additional mountain bike tracks and pump/skills tracks".*

## 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The primary survey work, officer engagement, and review of exiting strategy documents, research and consultation have highlighted a wide range of issues of value to the wider Green Spaces Study.

The findings and evidence highlighted in this document will feed into the main report in relation to:

- The development of green space policy statements
- The recommended standards for typologies of green spaces (quantity, quality and access elements).
- The 5 area profiles
- The recommended action plans

There is a strong degree of consistency across the various sources on key areas of local need and aspiration from which we can be confident that the findings are robust and reliable, providing a strong evidence base to be combined with the detailed facilities audit.