



MOSS 2010/11

MERTON OPEN SPACE STUDY

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1 Introduction

- 1.0.1 This Merton Open Space Study (MOSS) is an assessment of current open space provision based on 'Planning Policy Guidance 17: Open space, Sport and Recreation' (PPG17) typologies of open spaces (ref chapter 2, paragraph 2.3.7). It is an audit of the existing facilities and sets out the likely demand and need for future facilities.
- 1.0.2 The aim of the study is to set out an action plan which will enable the Council to provide a network of accessible open spaces and high quality recreational facilities to meet the needs of future Merton residents as well as enhancing current provision by recognising if there are any specific space or service deficiencies that need to be addressed.
- 1.0.3 The conclusions from this study inform the council's approach to a variety of strategies and projects, including Merton's Local Development Framework, the Green Grid, the Wandle Valley Regional Park, Climate Change Action Plan and others, all of which will help to deliver different elements of the MOSS conclusions.
- 1.0.4 Merton is a suburban borough with already a significant amount of green space, with over 60 parks and 25% of the borough being open space, compared to a 10% London average.
- 1.0.5 Merton has a population of approximately 200,000 in 2010/11. Population projections methods differ resulting in different estimates. The disparity between the two estimates (Greater London Authority and Office of National Statistics) becomes greater the further the projection reaches ahead of the current date.
- 1.0.6 The population of Merton is relatively evenly spread across most of its 20 Wards but is more densely populated in the eastern wards of Colliers Wood, Abbey, Cricket Green, and Figges Marsh.
- 1.0.7 There are extremes of poverty and wealth in the borough. Some wards are in the top 5% most affluent in the country, whilst some are in the top 15% most income deprived. Multiple problems related to poor economic prospects, low education attainment, poor health and lower incomes are more frequent in eastern wards of the borough such as Figges Marsh, Cricket Green, Pollards Hill, Lavender Fields and St Helier. These socio-economic problems are compounded by environmental and infrastructure differences including more limited access to public transport and open spaces in the eastern part of the borough.
- 1.0.8 Like many London boroughs, there is an increasing number of young people in the borough. The spike in the birth rate for Merton in the last five years is requiring the local authority to provide a substantial increase in school places. This would imply the need to plan for additional supporting services also, including play and recreational facilities.
- 1.0.9 The other growing age group in Merton is the 65 plus years which may suggest consideration be made on the types of recreational facilities offered in the future and the opportunity to consult with our older residents to identify specific needs and aspirations.
- 1.0.10 Merton is considered as a relatively healthy borough but there are variations in standards again showing an east west divide with pockets of deprivation existing in the east.

2 Policy Overview

- 2.0.1 Open space provides opportunities for people to meet and interact, play, relax or get involved in activities. High quality green and open space also has a positive impact on communities' mental and physical health by providing safe, accessible and affordable opportunities to exercise and relax. However, more recently in England, political and financial constraints have led to a decline in urban parks and prevented them from realising their full potential.
- 2.0.2 This study offers some suggestions to the adoption of different working practices such as more creative approaches to financing and maintaining urban parks, multi-disciplinary team working, consultation with local communities, and partnership working.

2.1 Scope of the Study

- 2.1.1 This open space assessment is a spatial study concerned with place shaping and delivery. The previous Merton Open Space Study 2005 (MOSS) set out a vision, outcomes sought, guiding principles and an Action and Implementation Plan to manage our open space network. This refresh has the following objectives to:
- Refresh the previous audit of 2004 to identify current provision of different types of open space;
 - Refresh assessment of supply for open space provision to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality green spaces and sport and recreation facilities to meet the needs of local communities and visitors;
 - Determine whether any demographic and population changes will lead to increased demand and if so suggest ways to prepare for any predicted additional demand;
 - Use the findings as Merton's evidence base to support policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 2.1.2 The scope of this work is to determine the role that particular usage of open space play in a hierarchy of provision. The aim is to produce an assessment of the extent of provision and to distinguish the principal functions (typology) of the space, for example, differentiating between formal public open spaces (parks or village greens) and recreational open space.
- 2.1.3 The refresh will deal with all publicly accessible open space and green corridors under the following categories:
- Public parks and gardens (**see Chapter 4**);
 - Natural/semi natural green spaces (**see Chapter 5**);
 - Provision for children and young people (**see Chapter 6**);
 - Allotments (**see Chapter 7**);
 - Cemeteries, churchyards and other burial grounds (**see Chapter 8**);
 - Playing pitches (**see Chapter 9**);
 - Leisure facilities (**see Chapter 10**);
 - Greenways and cycle routes (**See Chapter 11**).

2.2 Background

National Policy Context

- 2.2.1 Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17) states that local planning authorities must first undertake local assessments of need and audit local provision. Boroughs should consider both the qualitative and the quantitative elements of open space, wildlife sites, sports and recreational facilities, as part of an open space strategy.
- 2.2.2 Quality depends on two things: the needs and expectations of users, on the one hand, and design, management and maintenance on the other - in other words fitness for purpose. In this context, 'users' means people of all ages, all social or ethnic groups and abilities or disabilities, and also wildlife. Ensuring that something is fit for purpose requires clarity as to what that purpose is.
- 2.2.3 Many open spaces are multi-functional in practice. For this assessment the use has been defined by the 'primary purpose' so that each open space, or sport and recreation facility, is counted only once in an audit of provision.
- 2.2.4 Quantity is the final key attribute. It is usually measured in terms of the amount of provision (for example, area, the number of pitches or allotments or pieces of play equipment). However, this can be over-simplistic for pitches and some other outdoor sports facilities. For example, a pitch can accommodate only one match starting at 1400 hours on a Saturday afternoon, however, this does not truly reflect the usage.
- 2.2.5 The long term outcomes PPG 17 aims to deliver are:
1. Networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable;
 2. An appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision; and
 3. Clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space and sport and recreation provision.
- 2.2.6 PPG17 indicates that authorities should use the typology of open spaces proposed by the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (UGSTF), or a variation of it. It is summarised in the table below and provides a clear framework for 'joined-up thinking' in relation to planning, design and management

	PPG17 Typology	Primary purpose
Greenspaces	Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces, including urban woodland	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness
	Green corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration
	Outdoor sports facilities	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports
	Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters
	Allotments, community gardens and urban farms	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity
Civic spaces	Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events

Figure 2.1 – Typology

Source: PPG 17 A Companion Guide

Regional Policy Context

2.2.7 The Consolidated Draft Replacement London Plan 2010 sets out the Mayor’s objectives including:

Objective 1: To accommodate London’s growth within its boundaries without encroaching on open spaces.

...

Objective 6: To make London an exemplary world city in mitigating and adapting to climate change and a more attractive, well-designed and green city.

2.2.8 Policy 2.18 Green infrastructure: the network of open and green spaces advises that1:

- Boroughs should follow the guidance in PPG17 and undertake audits of all forms of open space and assessments of need.

- Boroughs should produce open space strategies that cover all forms of open space. These should identify priorities for addressing deficiencies and should set out positive measures for the management of open space. These strategies and their action plans should be kept under review.

Local Policy Context

2.2.9 These are the key local strategic policy documents, that influence local service provision and spatial planning of the borough, including the protection and enhancement of Merton's open spaces.

Community Plan

2.2.10 The Council's Community Plan 2009-2019 (also referred to as our 'Sustainable Community Strategy') and the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF) set out planning policy for Merton's strategic and spatial development over the next 15 years.

2.2.11 The Community Plan was developed by the Merton Partnership, a range of key players from the public, private and voluntary sectors to co-ordinate the delivery of local services. Each agency has joint ownership of the objectives and outcomes of the Partnership.

2.2.12 The Community Plan forms the strategic framework for the council's business plan. It is based on the issues Merton residents tell us they would like to see improved. The original Community Plan 2006-15 was launched in June 2006, and the Partnership agreed to refresh the Plan every three years.

2.2.13 The refreshed Plan was agreed by the Merton Partnership on 23 April 2009 and sets out the Partnership's vision and priorities for the borough. These visions include empowering people to manage their own health and well being, encouraging more activity by the over 50's and allowing young people to enjoy healthy and rewarding lives in a safe and clean environment whilst having fun.

The Local Development Framework

2.2.14 The LDF is the delivery mechanism for the Community Plan. The Core Strategy is a key element of the framework and sets out the spatial vision and the strategic objectives for the area. The Core Strategy is being prepared for submission to the Planning Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State in February 2011. Within the plan is Merton's thematic Policy 'Open space, nature conservation, leisure and culture' which deals with how we intend to:

- Protect and enhance our existing open space;
- Improve access to our open spaces;
- Improve opportunities for residents and visitors to experience nature;
- Promote culture, sport recreation and play in the borough.

2.2.15 Until adoption of the LDF, Merton will continue to operate under the current planning system, working to Merton's Adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (October 2003) which sets out the planning framework through to 2016. The UDP sets a framework of policies and proposals against which planning decisions are made. It also sets out ways in which the natural and historic environment can be protected. Planning policies for open space are included within Chapter 4 of the UDP, A Safe, Green and Healthy Borough the Natural Environment and Leisure and Recreation sections of the UDP.

2.2.16 The existing policies include:

The Natural Environment

- NE.1: Metropolitan Open Land;
- NE.2: Development in Proximity to MOL;
- NE.3: Green Chains;
- NE.4: Wandle Valley Country Park;
- NE.5: Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- NE.6: Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation;
- NE.7: Species Protection;
- NE.8: Green Corridor;
- NE.9: Management of Land;
- NE.10: Nature Conservation in back land areas;
- NE.11: Trees; Protection;
- NE.12: Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features.

Leisure and Recreation Open Land

- L.1 Informal Recreation;
- L.2: Policy for Walking Routes;
- L.3: Water Environments;
- L.4: River Wandle.

Provision of Open Space

- L.5 Urban Green Space;
- L.6: Public Open Space;
- L.7: Recreational Open Space;
- L.8: Open Space Deficiencies;
- L.9: Children's Play Facilities;
- L.10: Allotments.

Sports and Recreation

- L.11 The Protection of Existing Facilities and Land;
- L.12: Provision of New Facilities;
- L.13: Improving Provision.

SPD on Planning Obligations - Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.2.17 Following legislation which introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), S106 contributions are now restricted to measures that directly relate to a development, that are necessary to make the development acceptable and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. This means that from 6 April 2014 it will become unlawful for the council to require S106 contributions to be pooled for infrastructure provision such as open space, play provision and amenity facilities as is currently the case. It is therefore likely that Merton will be preparing to adopt a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule in 2011/12.
- 2.2.18 The Community Infrastructure Levy enables local authorities in England and Wales to levy a standard charge on most types of new development, to fund infrastructure needed to support development in an area. The new arrangements are intended to create a simpler, more transparent system of standard charges for funding infrastructure. Local authorities will be required to identify and cost infrastructure

needed to support the development of the area and this will form a Charging Schedule. CIL revenue will be available to be spent on any capital infrastructure identified in the Charging Schedule. A proportion of the funds raised are to be passed to local neighbourhoods to spend on the infrastructure that local people consider is most necessary to balance local and strategic needs.

Merton's Cultural Strategy 2007-2010

- 2.2.19 "A Better Future for All" is the cultural strategy for the people of Merton. Culture covers a wide range of things for people, including the arts, sport, leisure, parks and open spaces, children's playgrounds and activities for teenagers, libraries and heritage as well as activities that acknowledge and celebrate different backgrounds. In short it covers everything people of all ages do in their spare time.
- 2.2.20 The strategy promotes open spaces as places to go and sets out its aim to improve parks and open spaces to reflect their cultural heritage.

Merton's Healthier Communities Strategy 2008-2012

- 2.2.21 Health is defined by the World Health Organisation as:

"A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"

- 2.2.22 Access to open space and recreational facilities plays a fundamental role in encouraging sustainable communities and consequently community social and physical well being. Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities is a shared priority between national and local government. The Merton Partnership includes a Healthier Communities Thematic Partnership, who aims to co-ordinate health improvement activities through a strategy. One of the visions for future health in Merton is to improve the physical and psychological well-being of Merton residents through the promotion of sport and recreation and use of the borough's open spaces.
- 2.2.23 Healthcare for London is an NHS programme, run on behalf of London's Primary Care Trusts, to improve the capital's health and health services. The report, 'A framework for Action' published in 2007, takes into account the views of patients, public, staff and partner organisations, and also considers national and local patient and public surveys. It details how London's healthcare needs to change over the next 10 years, in particular prevention being better than cure and ways to focus on reducing differences in health and healthcare which includes assessing the accessibility to open space and sport and recreation facilities.

Merton's Children and Young People Plan (C&YPP) 2006-09

- 2.2.24 Provides the overarching framework for improving the lives of our children and young people across the Every Child Matters outcomes and links to other cross-borough responses.
- 2.2.25 The C&YPP includes the development of a local play strategy within Strategic Aim 6: "Developing better places to go and things to do that children and young people enjoy" to respond to the national Big Lottery Children's Play Initiative.
- 2.2.26 The right to play is considered so important to the development of children and young people that the United Nations included the statement below in its **Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

2.2.27 “Every child has the right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities”.

(Article 31)

Merton’s Free Play Strategy (2007-2012)

2.2.28 Sets out a vision to provide play opportunities for children and young people in Merton. It was developed after consultation with children, young people, parents, carers and organisations with an interest in play. It was approved by the Children’s Trust in September 2007 and supports our Children and Young People Plan as part of Merton’s commitment to provide a range of positive activities for all children and young people.

Merton Open Space Strategy 2005

2.2.29 The Merton Open Space Study 2002 was undertaken in by planning consultants WS Atkins. The study included:

- A survey of publicly owned open spaces to assess facilities, landscape and visual quality, and their ecological, cultural and educational value;
- Discussion with focus groups to ascertain the needs and views of different open space users;
- A playing pitch assessment, to assess existing and future supply and demand of playing pitches. This involved a survey of sports clubs/teams that play within the borough;
- Objectives and recommendations for developing Merton’s open space strategy (MOSS).

2.2.30 The final consultant’s report was published in April 2005 in three separate volumes:

- Volume One – Strategic Open Space Assessment;
- Volume Two – Landscape Strategy;
- Volume Three – Playing Pitch Assessment.

2.2.31 In addition there was a Playing Pitch Assessment Update in 2003 (Appendix 1 of the MOSS 2005)

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The quantitative and qualitative audit of open spaces was undertaken by officers from the council through research and aerial mapping exercises based on the recommendations in accordance with PPG17 and the Companion Guide. Maps were prepared identifying sites under the main typology heading and these have been used to visually identify areas of the borough where there are possible deficiencies in that typology.

2.3.2 Each open space has been digitised using GIS software and its associated attributes have been recorded on a linked database. This will enable the council to update the database and undertake further analysis. Individual sites can then be reviewed as necessary.

2.3.3 The assessment looks at each typology in terms of:

- Need – the demographic links, future supply issues that may arise

- Deficiency – current and any possible future?
- Accessibility
- Funding – justification for seeking funding arrangements

2.3.4 Sites were originally identified in the MOSS carried out in 2003/04, since then we have collected up to date information on sites and recorded these under the PPG17 classification and the GLA classification, based on it's primary open space purpose.

2.3.5 Locations are identified by official site names and road names/locations where possible. However, for some typologies where there is no official named site the nearest road name is used.

2.3.6 There are some types of open space which have been deliberately excluded including:

- Small spaces under 0.2 of a hectare (using GLA classification) However, where sites were identified during consultation as being of high value such as play spaces and allotments they have been included due to their amenity value.
- 'SLOAP' (space left over after planning) – this term describes spaces that are incidental to development, too small or irregular in shape to be usable, but which may nevertheless create maintenance and other obligations.
- Other incidental areas of land that do not have a specific use.
- Civic spaces. The typology of civic space, as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide includes civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians, providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events. The council have chosen not to include an audit of civic space within this open space assessment. This is because these sites offer different amenity value to the more recognised open spaces across the borough and Merton has a significant percentage of green open spaces. The council has prepared a separate Public Realm Strategy (2008) which sets out the visions to enhance the quality of our streets and public amenity spaces

3 Demographics

3.0 Introduction

3.0.1 In order to understand and prepare for future demand this chapter looks at the projected demographic changes across Merton for the next 15 years and what impact this could have on the demand and supply of open space and sports provision for the borough.

3.1 Demographics

3.1.1 The 2001 Census showed that Merton had a total population of about 187,900 in 78,884 households and an average household size of 2.38 people.

3.1.2 Merton's population has been projected from the 2001 Census to be around 200,000 people in 2010. Population projections are sourced from two organisations, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Both sets of estimates are based on the census data (2001) but projection methods and data sources differ resulting in different estimates.

3.1.3 The Office for National Statistics projects population trends for England and Wales based on fertility, mortality and migration trends, and use these national trends to project populations at a borough level.

3.1.4 The GLA takes the ONS data and uses its knowledge of housing development trends and future capacity for new homes in each borough to revise the projections, giving what they consider to be a more accurate figure for residential population in London. .

3.1.5 In the mid year estimates 2010, the ONS have projected Merton's population to be **208,800** (up from 206,400 in the mid year estimates 2009), and the GLA have projected Merton's resident population to be **200,700** (up from 198,068 in 2010). The Census (March 2011) will give the most accurate portrait of the residential population in each borough. In forecasting future demand, this study uses the GLA low projections.

3.1.6 Both sets of estimate figures are based on 2001 census data but projection methods differ resulting in different estimates for changes in population. The disparity between the estimates becomes greater the further ahead the projection until it reaches a difference of around 40,000 people in 2031.

3.2 Birth rates

3.2.1 In 2010 ONS released the first information on the number of births in England and Wales for calendar year 2009. ONS identified that birth rates in London increased by 1,594 (1.25%) since 2008 to reach 129,245 in 2009. Since 2001 the London birth rate has increased by 24%.

3.2.2 The birth rates increases has been more rapid in the outer London boroughs when compared to the inner London boroughs with 72% of London increase being from outer boroughs.

3.2.3 The birth rate in Merton over the last six years has risen by over 30%. This trend is expected to continue. Provisional birth rate figures from ONS has identified that Merton needs to have an additional 18 forms school entry by January 2014.

3.2.4 Demographic profile has a direct influence on sport participation levels and open space usage as people's involvement in sport generally varies according to age.

3.2.5 In the table provided below is a breakdown of Merton’s demographic percentage of population profile by ward based on the 2001 Census population figures and predicted population for 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025.

Ward	Population size (census 2001) MYE	Predicted Population 2010 %	Predicted Population 2015 %	Predicted Population 2020 %	Predicted Population 2025 %
Abbey	5.1%	5.4%	5.4%	5.5%	4.6%
Cannon Hill	4.9%	4.7%	4.6%	4.6%	4.9%
Colliers Wood	4.9%	5.8%	6.2%	6.3%	6.5%
Cricket Green	5.5%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%	5.9%
Dundonald	4.8%	4.7%	4.7%	4.6%	4.3%
Figge’s Marsh	5.2%	5.3%	5.3%	5.3%	5.8%
Graveney	5.0%	4.9%	4.9%	4.9%	4.9%
Hillside	4.9%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	4.0%
Lavender	5.1%	5.2%	5.2%	5.3%	5.2%
Longthornton	5.1%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.5%
Lower Morden	4.5%	4.4%	4.3%	4.3%	4.7%
Merton Park	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	4.8%
Pollards Hill	5.2%	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%	5.7%
Ravensbury	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.3%
Raynes Park	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	4.6%
St Helier	4.9%	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%	5.2%
Trinity	4.8%	4.6%	4.6%	4.5%	4.1%
Village	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%	4.2%
West Barnes	5.1%	4.9%	4.9%	4.8%	4.9%
Wimbledon Park	5.4%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.1%
Rounded Total	191,000	197,300	198,200	197,500	196,700

Table 3.1 - Demographic % Population

Source: GLA 2008 Round Population Projection – rounded to the nearest 100

3.2.6 The figures suggest that by 2016 the number of 0-5 year olds will drop, while the impact of the increased birth rates will lead to an increase in 6-11 year olds. However this does not tally with birthrates published annually which show a continued rise in 0-5 year old within Merton and across many outer London boroughs. Therefore the GLA data must be said to be an extremely conservative view of the population. Publication of the results from Census 2011, due in 2012/13, will give a more realistic picture.

3.2.7 The number of over 65 year olds is also expected to increase.

3.2.8 The number of people living in Merton is expected to:

- increase from the 2001 census records to 198,167 (3.74%) by 2015;
- decline to 197,492 by 2020 (0.3%); and
- further decline to 196,701 by 2025 (0.4%)².

3.2.9 Forecasting beyond the next 5 years becomes unreliable and for the purpose of this document we will be considering demographic changes to 2015/16 in most instances.

² GLA Round Demographic Projections – low.

3.2.10 The Wards with largest population (2015) are predicted to be Colliers Wood, Abbey, Cricket Green, and Figges Marsh which are all situated in the east of the borough. However, this has tended to be the case historically. The numbers by ward do not significantly differ with a fairly evenly spread population across the borough.

3.2.11 **Table 3.2** below shows the estimated population as percentages by age groups;

Year	0-5yrs	6-11yrs	12-15yrs	16-64 yrs	65+yrs	
2011	9.2%	6.9%	4.4%	67.4%	12.1%	198,000
2016	8.8%	8%	4.3%	66.3%	12.6%	198,000
2021	8.3%	7.8%	5%	65.6%	13.3%	197,300
2026	8.1%	7.3%	4.9%	65.6%	14.1%	196,700

Table 3.2 - Estimated % population by age groups

Source: GLA 2008 Round Ward Population Projections –low + rounded to the nearest 100

3.3 Child population density

Ward Name	0-4yrs	5-9yrs	10-14yrs	15-19yrs
Abbey	6.5%	3.8%	2.7%	3.0%
Cannon Hill	4.3%	5.2%	4.9%	4.8%
Colliers Wood	5.8%	4.9%	4.5%	5.1%
Cricket Green	5.8%	7.3%	7.9%	7.8%
Dundonald	4.2%	2.9%	2.5%	2.3%
Figge's Marsh	6.0%	6.2%	6.3%	6.7%
Graveney	4.9%	4.7%	4.7%	5.4%
Hillside	3.5%	3.2%	2.5%	1.9%
Lavender Fields	5.2%	4.8%	5.4%	6.3%
Longthornton	4.8%	5.6%	6.0%	6.1%
Lower Morden	3.7%	4.4%	5.1%	5.7%
Merton Park	5.3%	4.9%	4.5%	4.8%
Pollards Hill	4.4%	5.4%	7.3%	7.7%
Ravensbury	5.3%	5.7%	5.7%	5.8%
Raynes Park	5.1%	4.4%	3.9%	3.4%
St. Helier	4.8%	5.6%	6.3%	6.3%
Trinity	4.1%	4.0%	3.7%	2.8%
Village	4.7%	6.2%	5.8%	4.6%
West Barnes	5.2%	4.6%	4.6%	5.1%
Wimbledon Park	6.4%	6.2%	5.7%	4.4%
	15,500	12,000	11,000	11,000

Table 3.3 - Projected % Population density for 2011

Source: GLA 2008 Round Population Projection – low rounded to the nearest 100

3.3.1 The projections for 2011 show the most densely populated wards for:

- 0-4 y year olds are Abbey, Wimbledon Park, Figges and Cricket Green;
- 5-9 year olds are Cricket Green, Wimbledon Park, Village and Figges Marsh;
- 10-14 year olds are Cricket Green, Pollards Hill, Figges Marsh and St Helier;
- 15-19 year olds are Cricket Green, Pollards Hill, Figges and St Helier.

3.3.2 **Table 3.4** below shows the total projected under 19's population figures (2011) by ward

Ward Name	0-4yrs %	5-9yrs %	10-14yrs %	15-19yrs %	Total %
Abbey	6.5%	3.8%	2.7%	3.0%	4.2%
Cannon Hill	4.3%	5.1%	4.9%	4.8%	4.8%
Colliers Wood	5.8%	4.9%	4.5%	5.2%	5.1%
Cricket Green	5.8%	7.2%	8.1%	7.7%	7.1%
Dundonald	4.2%	2.9%	2.5%	2.3%	3.1%
Figge's Marsh	6.0%	6.2%	6.3%	6.7%	6.3%
Graveney	4.9%	4.7%	4.7%	5.4%	5.0%
Hillside	3.5%	3.2%	2.5%	1.9%	2.9%
Lavender Fields	5.2%	4.8%	5.4%	6.3%	5.4%
Longthornton	4.8%	5.6%	5.9%	6.1%	5.6%
Lower Morden	3.7%	4.4%	5.1%	5.7%	4.6%
Merton Park	5.3%	4.9%	4.5%	4.8%	4.9%
Pollards Hill	4.4%	5.4%	7.3%	7.7%	6.0%
Ravensbury	5.3%	5.7%	5.8%	5.8%	5.6%
Raynes Park	5.1%	4.4%	3.9%	3.4%	4.3%
St. Helier	4.7%	5.6%	6.3%	6.3%	5.6%
Trinity	4.1%	4.0%	3.7%	2.8%	3.7%
Village	4.7%	6.2%	5.8%	4.6%	5.3%
West Barnes	5.2%	4.6%	4.6%	5.1%	4.9%
Wimbledon Park	6.5%	6.3%	5.8%	4.4%	5.8%
	15,500	12,000	11,100	10,700	49,300

Table 3.4 - Total Projected % Population under 19's by ward (2011)

Source: GLA 2008 Round Population Projection – low

3.3.3 As a total the most densely populated wards for under 19's are:

- Cricket Green;
- Figges Marsh;
- Pollards Hill;
- Wimbledon Park.

3.4 Ethnicity by ward

3.4.1 Merton has a similar ethnic mix when compared with the rest of outer London.

3.4.2 By 2016 BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) will represent 32% of Merton's population, a 7% increase since the 2001 Census³. Merton's increases are mirrored by the London wide picture as shown in **Figure 3.1** below.

3.4.3 The east of the borough is more diverse than the west; with the BAME population rising to around 50% in some wards (Graveney ward has the highest BAME population with 52.8%). Pupils in Merton schools come from a diverse background with around 50% from BAME groups, and over 160 languages spoken.

³ Source: GLA Ethnic Minority Round 2008

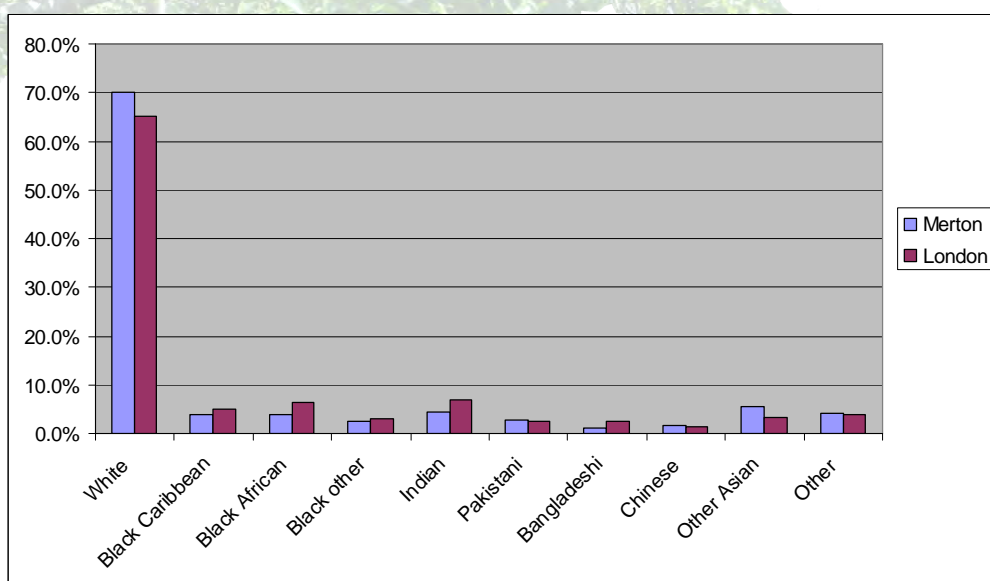


Figure 3.1 - Ethnicity in Merton and London 2010 projections

3.5 Health deprivation and disability

3.5.1 Merton is ranked 5th of 32 boroughs in London on mortality which is significantly lower than the national average and is well below the London average.

3.5.2 It is important to note, however, that within the borough there are variations in standards of health linked to the way people live their lives and the opportunities available to choose healthier lifestyles in their communities.

3.5.3 In Merton 13.8% of the population identify themselves as having a long term limiting illness, the sixth lowest percentage in London.

3.5.4 Male life expectancy in Merton is 79 years, while female life expectancy is 83 years (2009) the sixth highest in London. These figures drop significantly in some wards in the east of the borough, for example Figges Marsh, where male life expectancy is only 72.7 years (2005).

3.6 Indices of Deprivation

3.6.1 A number of pockets of deprivation exist within Merton. These pockets are mainly in the eastern wards (such as Figges Marsh, Cricket Green, Lavender, Graveney and Ravensbury) and some smaller pockets in the western wards (Trinity, Abbey and Hillside).

3.6.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government published the PLACES 2008 survey in September 2009. This is a household survey that provides information on people's perceptions of their local area and the local services they receive.

3.6.3 Section 1 deals with questions about the local area. Below is an extract from the survey results.

Q1. Which of these things would you say are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

Response	Merton residents %	London average %
Access to nature	21.7	20
Activities for teenagers	14.2	17.1
Parks and open spaces	36.7	35.6
Sports and leisure facilities	12.2	12.8

Q2. Which of these things if any do you think most need improving?

Response	Merton residents %	London average %
Access to nature	5.8	7.2
Activities for teenagers	33.3	37.1
Parks and open spaces	9.5	10.5
Sports and leisure facilities	20.4	19

3.6.4 37% of those asked cited parks and open spaces as the most important in making somewhere a good place to live slightly above the London average figure. While Merton residents felt that the things that most needed improving were activities for teenagers and the need to improve our parks and open spaces was relatively low at only 10%. Sports and leisure facilities were identified as the priority by 20% slightly higher than the London average.

3.7 Annual Residents Survey⁴

- 3.7.1 The 2009/10 Annual Residents Survey report measures residents views on the council's services including the local residents views on the image of the council, issues of concern, service delivery and users perception of the council.
- 3.7.2 Residents were asked which three areas are of most concern. These were identified as 'crime', 'level of council tax' and 'traffic congestion'. Only 8% identified 'lack of recreational facilities' in their top three. This was a decrease of 3% from the 2008/09 survey. 14% identified 'Not enough being done for young people', down 5% from the previous year.
- 3.7.3 The residents were asked about their perceived level of service for various services offered by the council. This included:
- 3.7.4 Perceived level of service for sports and leisure facilities: 15% felt it was poor, 40% felt it was good-excellent (up 1% from previous years survey but below the London wide survey result of 47%).
- 3.7.5 Perceived level of parks, playgrounds and open spaces: 7% felt it was poor, 68% felt it was good-excellent (up 3% from previous years survey and slightly below the London wide survey result of 70%).
- 3.7.6 Young people aged 11-17 were also asked what were their three main areas of personal concern and these were crime (49%), bad behaviour (39%) and bullying (30%). Only 15% stated lack of recreational facilities but 22% felt not enough is done for youth.
- 3.7.7 The perceived level of service for under 17's was also measured.

⁴ Source: TNS Social on behalf of London borough of Merton 2009/10

- 3.7.8 Perceived level of service for sports and leisure facilities: 14% felt it was poor and 54% good to excellent (a drop by 2% from the previous years survey and 6% lower than the London wide survey).
- 3.7.9 Perceived level of parks, playgrounds and open spaces: 6% felt it was poor and 68% good to excellent (a drop of 4% from the previous years survey and 4% below the London wide survey)

3.8 Conclusion

3.8.1 What we can conclude from the demographic data is that:

- the younger active population age groups are the groups increasing in the borough and London wide which could mean an increased need for more sports pitches, play spaces and leisure facilities as the active population grows.
- Over the past five years, birth rates in Merton (and London-wide) have jumped putting an unexpected pressure on early years services. If the upward trend continues it may create the need for more school places and eventually more homes and other supporting services, such as formal play spaces to cope with a larger population.
- There are differences between the east and west of the borough in terms of wealth, health and age structure that affect the demands for different types of recreation open space and play.

4 Parks and Gardens

4.0 Introduction

- 4.0.1 The typology of parks and gardens, as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide, covers urban parks, country parks and formal gardens (including designed landscapes), which provide ‘accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.’ This chapter also includes open spaces that do not have marked playing pitches.
- 4.0.2 Parks offer free, accessible, flexible and inclusive spaces, providing an important urban ‘social space’. In urban areas parks and open space have a significant amenity value and provide a contrast to the built environment. Urban parks and open spaces can also be used as an educational resource for a wide range of subjects in both formal and informal settings for example, school field trips.

4.1 Distribution of Parks and Gardens

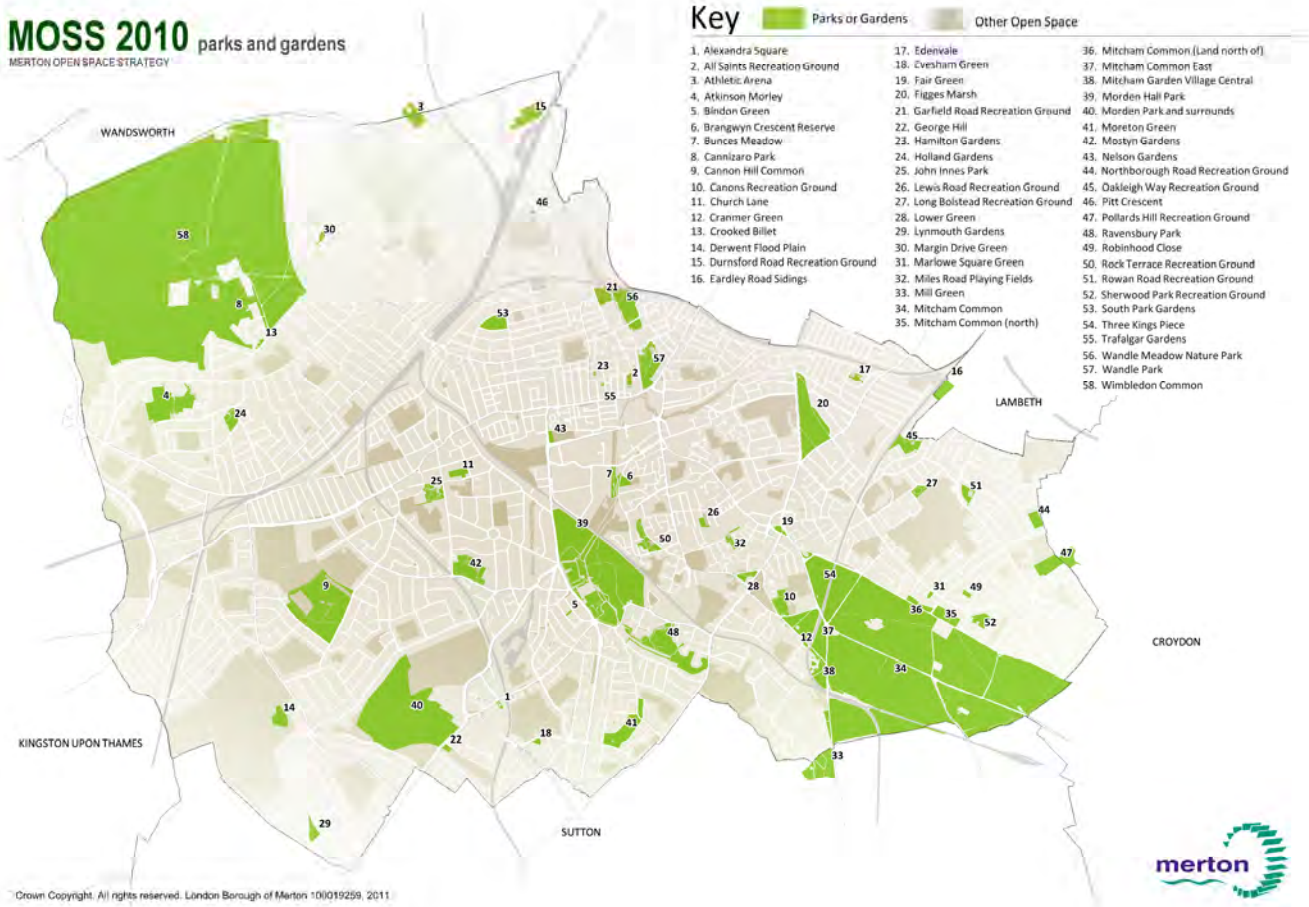
- 4.1.1 Merton has 76 sites identified within the assessment as park and gardens (according to PPG17 typology) totalling 677 hectares (ha), which equates to 18% of total area of Merton. **Figure 4.1** identifies LB Merton’s informal open spaces across the borough which includes our parks and gardens. **Table 4.1** identifies distribution and hectares by ward.

Ward	Hectares	Sites
Abbey	1.71	5
Cannon Hill	16.98	2
Colliers Wood	4.11	1
Cricket Green	82.06	15
Dundonald	0.21	1
Figges Marsh	9.98	2
Graveney	0.56	2
Lavender Fields	1.38	3
LB Lambeth	1.47	1
LB Sutton	4.58	1
Longthornton	4.80	4
Lower Morden	2.66	2
Merton Park	43.45	4
Pollards Hill	115.20	9
Ravensbury	13.20	5
Raynes Park	1.24	1
St Helier	37.98	5
Trinity	8.81	3
Village	322.02	6
Wimbledon Park	5.43	4
Merton Total	677.84	76

Table 4.1 - Distribution of all parks and gardens by ward

MOSS 2010 parks and gardens

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY



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Figure 4.1 - Parks and Gardens

MOSS 2010 parks and gardens
MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

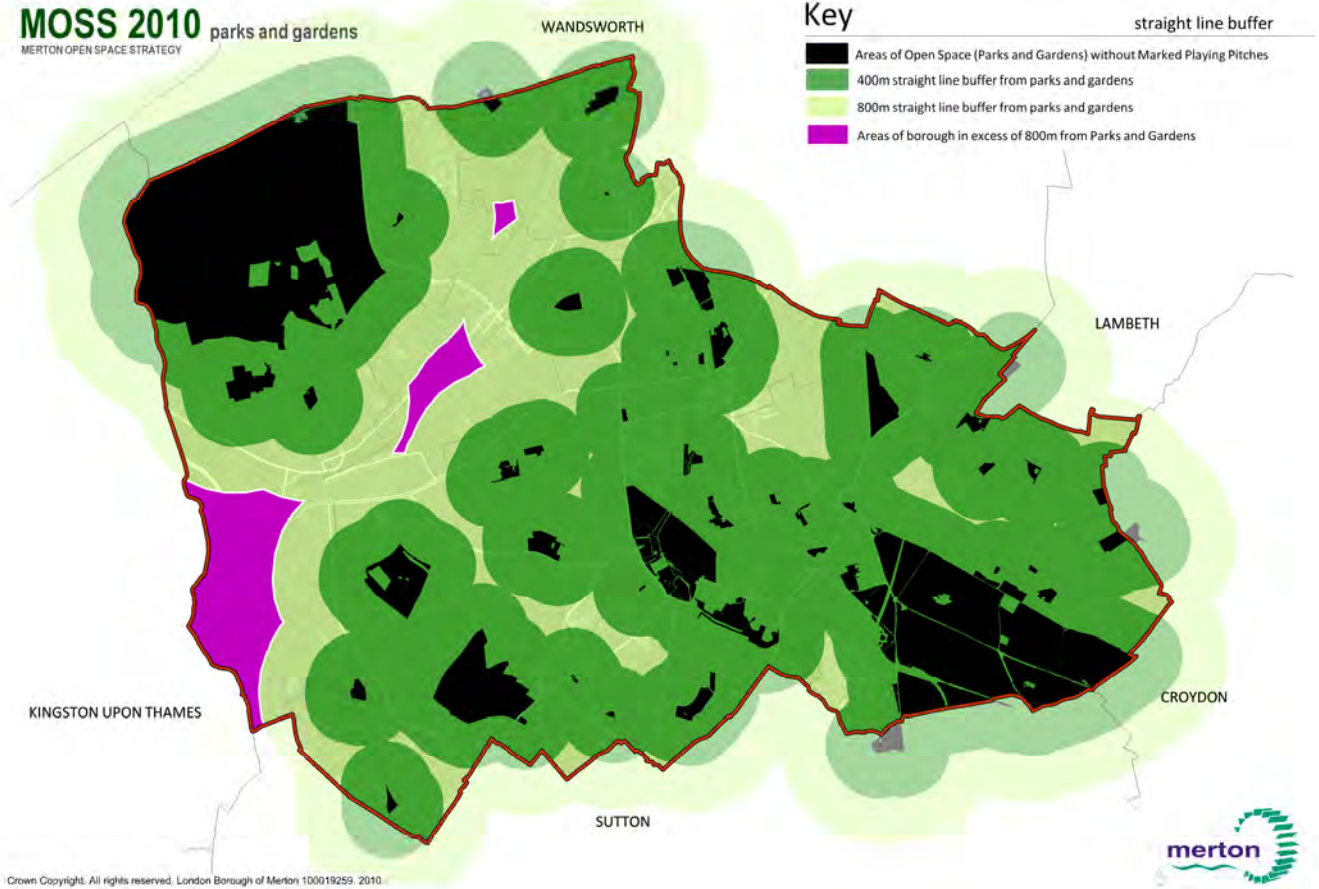


Figure 4.2 - Parks and Gardens with 400m straight line

4.2 Historic Parks

4.2.1 Merton has four parks designated on the Register of Historical Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The register is compiled and maintained by English Heritage. Entries are graded I, II* (II star), or II. The four parks in Merton are:

Park	Grading
109 Wimbledon Park	Grade II*
12 Cannizaro Park	Grade II*
61 Morden Hall Park	Grade II
93 South Park Gardens	Grade II

Table 4.2 - Historic Parks

4.2.2 As yet parks and gardens listed in English Heritage's Register do not have legal protection comparable to that which applies to listed buildings, but the council must consult interested expert parties on planning applications affecting them and their setting.

4.3 Green Flag parks

4.3.1 The Green Flag Award scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK. It was first launched in 1996 to recognise and reward the best green spaces.

4.3.2 The scheme provides national standards for parks and green spaces across England and Wales. Parks are judged against eight key criteria:

1. A welcoming place;
2. Healthy, safe and secure;
3. Clean and well maintained;
4. Sustainability;
5. Conservation and heritage;
6. Community involvement;
7. Marketing;
8. Management.

4.3.3 In 2010 Merton has three parks that have been awarded Green flag status:

- Colliers Wood Recreation Ground, off Merton High St , Colliers Wood (Colliers Wood Ward)
- Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Field, Marina Avenue, Motspur Park (West Barnes Ward)
- John Innes Park, Mostyn Rd, Merton Park (Merton Park Ward)

4.4 Maintenance, protection and enhancements of our open space

Maintenance of our parks and gardens

4.4.1 The council undertakes ground maintenance activity and is responsible for the management and development of open space in Merton. . This includes sports pitch preparation and staff attendance across the open space network. At Mitcham and Wimbledon Common the maintenance activities of the Common are undertaken by the conservators groups in partnership with the council.

4.4.2 There are a number of Friends and Residents groups who with the council help support the maintenance of parks. There is a growing willingness amongst some residents groups to be involved in the management of local amenities, parks and open spaces and develop them cooperatively for local health and well being. The council welcomes this partnership working and intends to encourage future partnership working.

Planned improvements

4.4.3 Merton Council's Greenspaces team operates a parks development programme carried out in conjunction with Friends Groups and stakeholders.

4.4.4 Users' perception of safety and security is greatly influenced by the attractiveness and look of a park. Graffiti and damage will portray a negative image of the park and can deter use.

Protecting open space

4.4.5 Due to the large amount of green and open space in the borough, the emphasis is on protection and long-term management of the existing space and opportunity spaces (such as along railway corridors and allotments) and encouraging access to privately owned open space.

4.4.6 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) records any net loss or gain of open space across the borough. The most recent AMR reported that during 2009/10 there was one completed application that resulted in a loss of 0.012 ha of open space in Merton (Dundonald Ward).

Enhancing open space provision

- 4.4.7 Despite the large amount and variety of open spaces across the borough, it is unevenly distributed. Accessibility must also be taken into consideration, in terms of the facility to walk to a site or the use of public transport. **Figure 4.2** identifies our parks and gardens with a buffer representing a straight line walking distance of 400m.
- 4.4.8 This demonstrates that most residents in central and eastern wards are within 5 minutes walk of public open space, and that there are parts of Raynes Park where residents are more than 10 minutes walk from public open space.

4.5 Funding

- 4.5.1 The Green spaces team bid to secure funding each year. Below is a list of some of the possible sources:
- Pro-Active London;
 - The Heritage Lottery fund;
 - Big Lottery Fund;
 - Awards for All;
 - Capital Funding;
 - S106 money.

4.6 Conclusion

- 4.6.1 Merton has a lot of open space and most residents are within 10 minutes walk of public open space. This measure also doesn't account for access to private gardens, which can also provide biodiversity and recreational value on a smaller scale.
- 4.6.2 Figure 4.2 demonstrates that there are pockets of the borough in the western wards, especially around Raynes Park, that are more than 10 minutes walk from the nearest open space. Opportunity to provide and maintain more open space in these areas should be taken, for example from the redevelopment of large sites.
- 4.6.3 Maintenance is important to ensure that open spaces continue to be attractive and useful. Aside from the areas indicated in Fig 4.2, the borough does not need significantly more open space under current population projections. Instead funding should be sought from development to maintain existing open space rather than providing more open space.

5 Natural and Semi Natural Open Spaces

5.0 Introduction

5.0.1 This chapter of the study deals with the open spaces in the borough that has been designated for their natural (biodiversity) and geological characteristics. The typology of natural and semi-natural green spaces as set out in PPG17: A Companion Guide includes sites that offer ‘wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness’.

5.0.2 **Figure 5.1** below identifies all areas of natural and semi natural spaces, including railway sidings and land locked pockets across Merton, which cannot be accessed by the public. The map also shows the council’s Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI’s), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR’s) as well as other accessible natural spaces, which have not been formally designated. Although the map shows the entire open space polygon, only part of the site (in some instances) is considered natural/semi-natural and fall within a larger open space site. An example would be Morden Park, which is also recognised in other chapters of the MOSS for its recreational and leisure values.

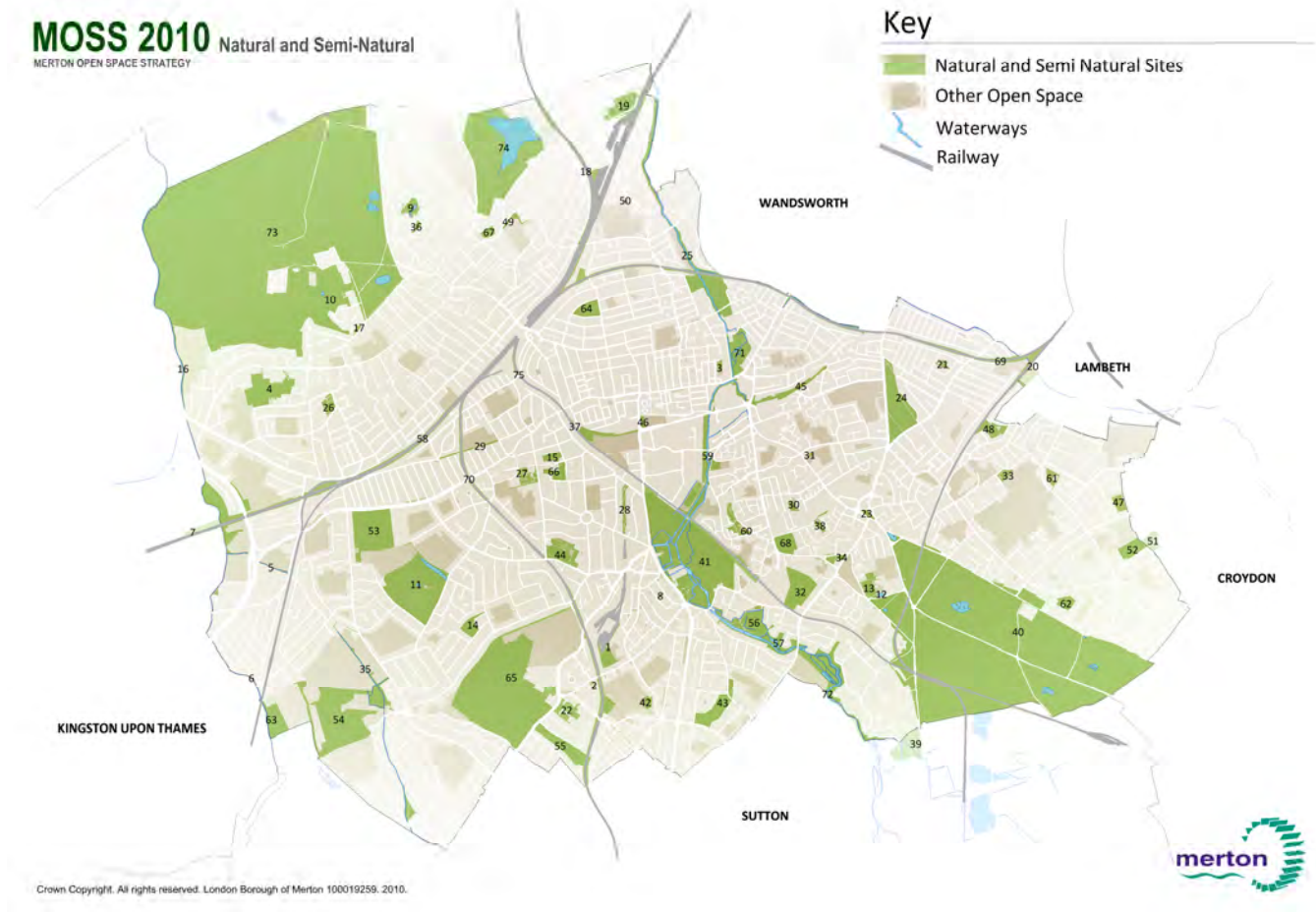


Figure 5.1 - Natural and Semi-Natural

5.0.3 PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005) (para 5) states that Local Development Frameworks should:

- (i) indicate the location of designated sites of importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, making clear distinctions between the hierarchy of international, national, regional and locally designated sites; and
- (ii) identify any areas or sites for the restoration or creation of new priority habitats which contribute to regional targets, and support this restoration or creation through appropriate policies.

5.1 Designated Sites of Importance for Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's)

- 5.1.1 SAC's are areas that have been given special protection under the European Union's Habitats Directive. They provide increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to conserve the world's biodiversity.
- 5.1.2 Wimbledon Common is designated as a SAC and is protected by LB Merton, LB Wandsworth and LB Kingston as it falls within these boroughs' boundaries. We also consider the impact of development with regard to Richmond Park SAC, which is adjacent to Merton.

Nationally Designated Sites

- 5.1.3 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) are the country's very best wildlife and geographical sites designated by Natural England. They represent the UK's most important sites of biological or geological (or mixed) interest. Merton's only site designated as SSSI is Wimbledon Common. The condition of an SSSI is assessed by Natural England. There are 6 reportable condition categories.
- 5.1.4 Wimbledon common was assessed in August 2010: 94.99% of the main habitats assessed were reported as 'unfavourable recovering'. Unfavourable recovering condition is often known simply as 'recovering'. This is defined as SSSI units that are not yet fully conserved but all the necessary management measures are in place. Provided that the recovery work is sustained, the SSSI will reach favourable conditions in time. There is no defined timetable for the management treatment.
- 5.1.5 The remaining 5.01% was recorded as 'unfavourable declining'. This means that the special interest of the SSSI unit is not being conserved and will not reach favourable condition unless there are changes to site management or external pressures. Natural England suggests less mowing of the dwarf shrub heath lowland.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

- 5.1.6 The Greater London Authority (GLA) carries out a rolling programme of borough surveys of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). There are 76 sites which lie either partly or wholly within the borough of Merton. These are shown on **Figure 5.2** and listed in **Table 5.1**, **Table 5.2**, and **Table 5.3**.
- 5.1.7 There are three kinds of sites, which are chosen on the basis of their importance to a particular defined geographic area. This use of search areas is:
 - To protect the best sites in London; and
 - To provide each part of London with a nearby site, so that people are able to have access to enjoy nature.
- 5.1.8 The 3 sites categories are:

- Sites of Metropolitan Importance (SMI);
- Sites of Borough Importance (SBI) which are graded as 1 and 2; and
- Sites of Local Importance (SLI).

5.1.9 Boroughs have the authority to designate Local Nature Reserves within SINCs. Merton currently has 15 sites recognised for their local importance. These are shown on **Figure 5.5** below.

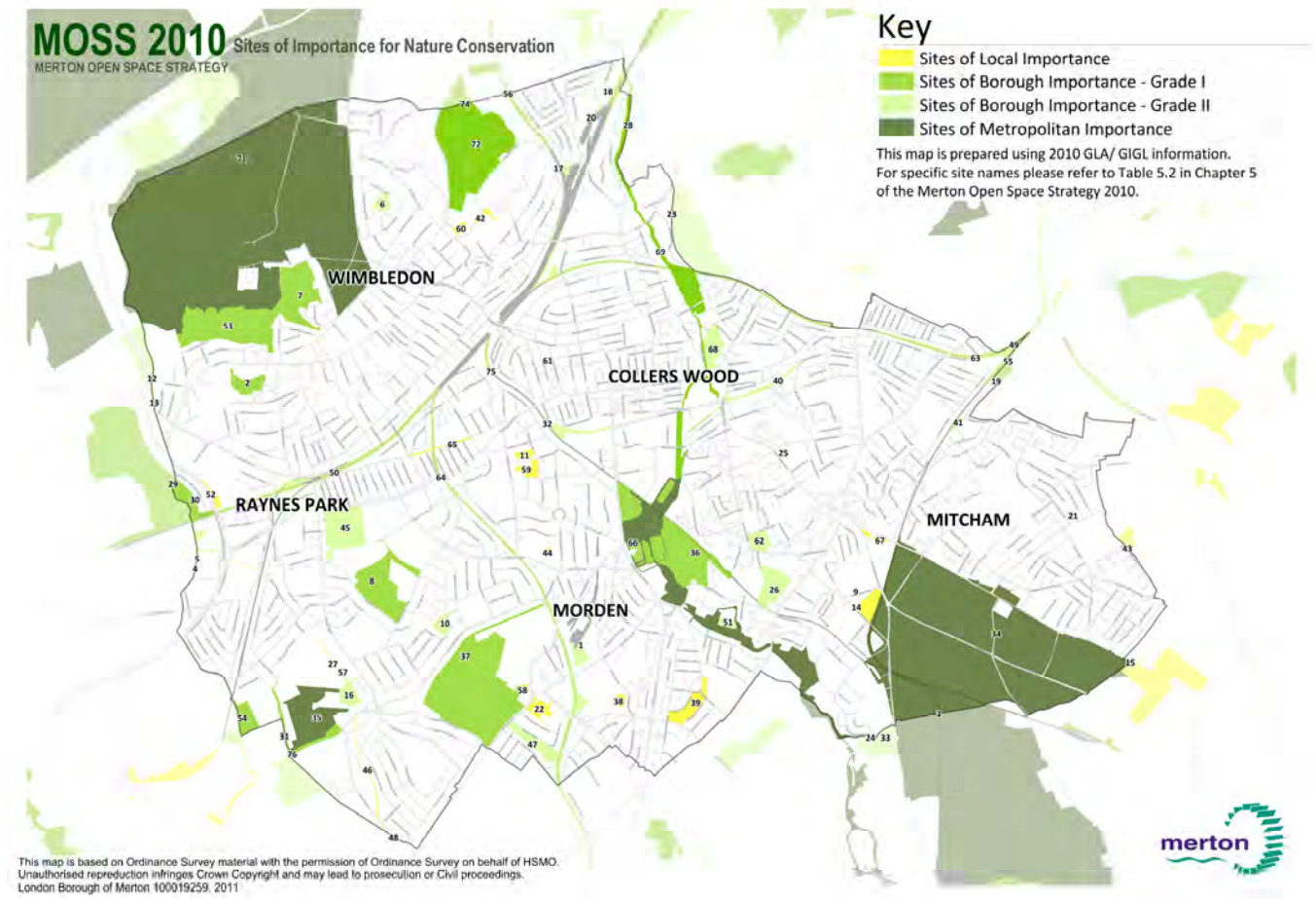


Figure 5.2 - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

MOSS 2010 sites of importance for nature conservation

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

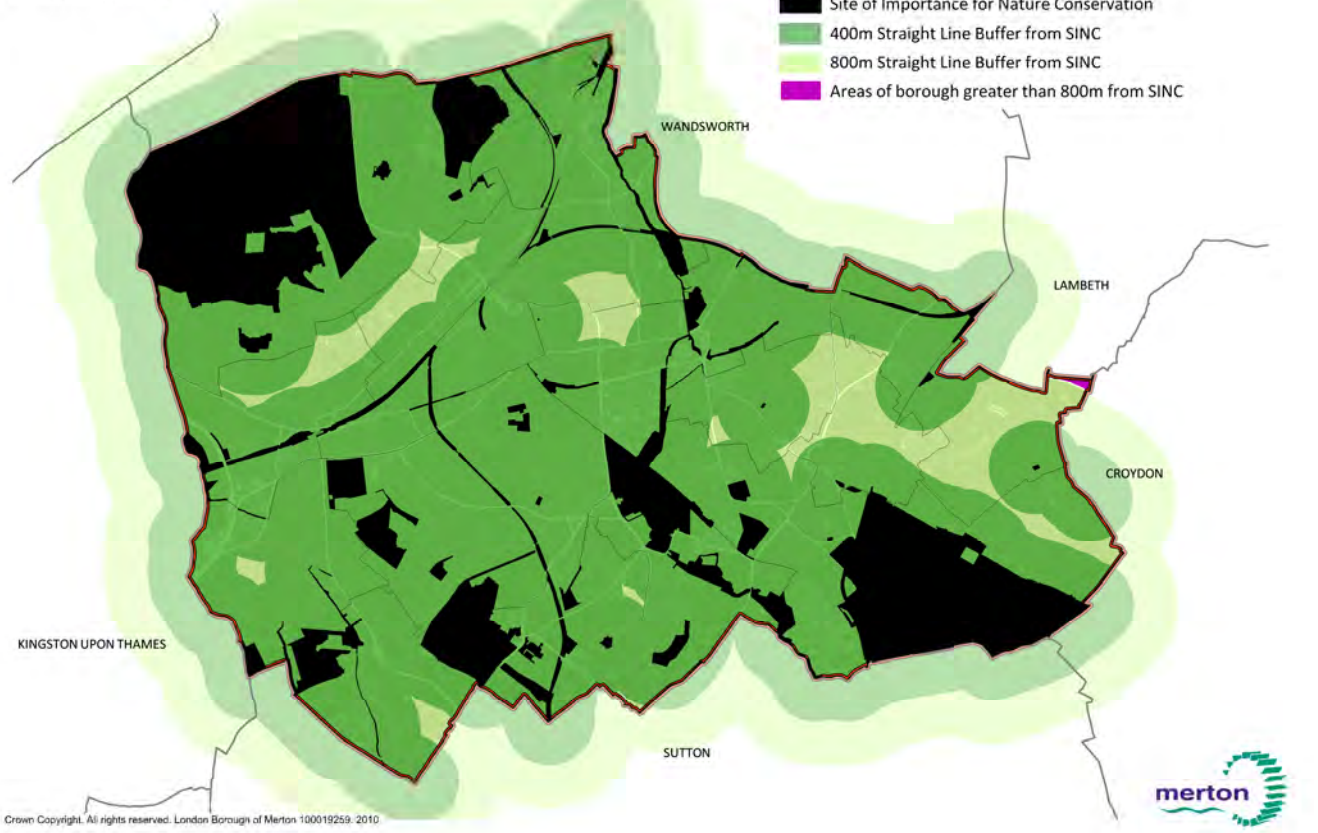


Figure 5.3 - SINC straight line buffer

MOSS 2010
MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

sites of importance for nature conservation

Key

1km straight line buffer

- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Metropolitan and Borough Status only)
- 1km Straight Line Buffer
- Areas of borough greater than 1km from SINC of Metropolitan or Borough status

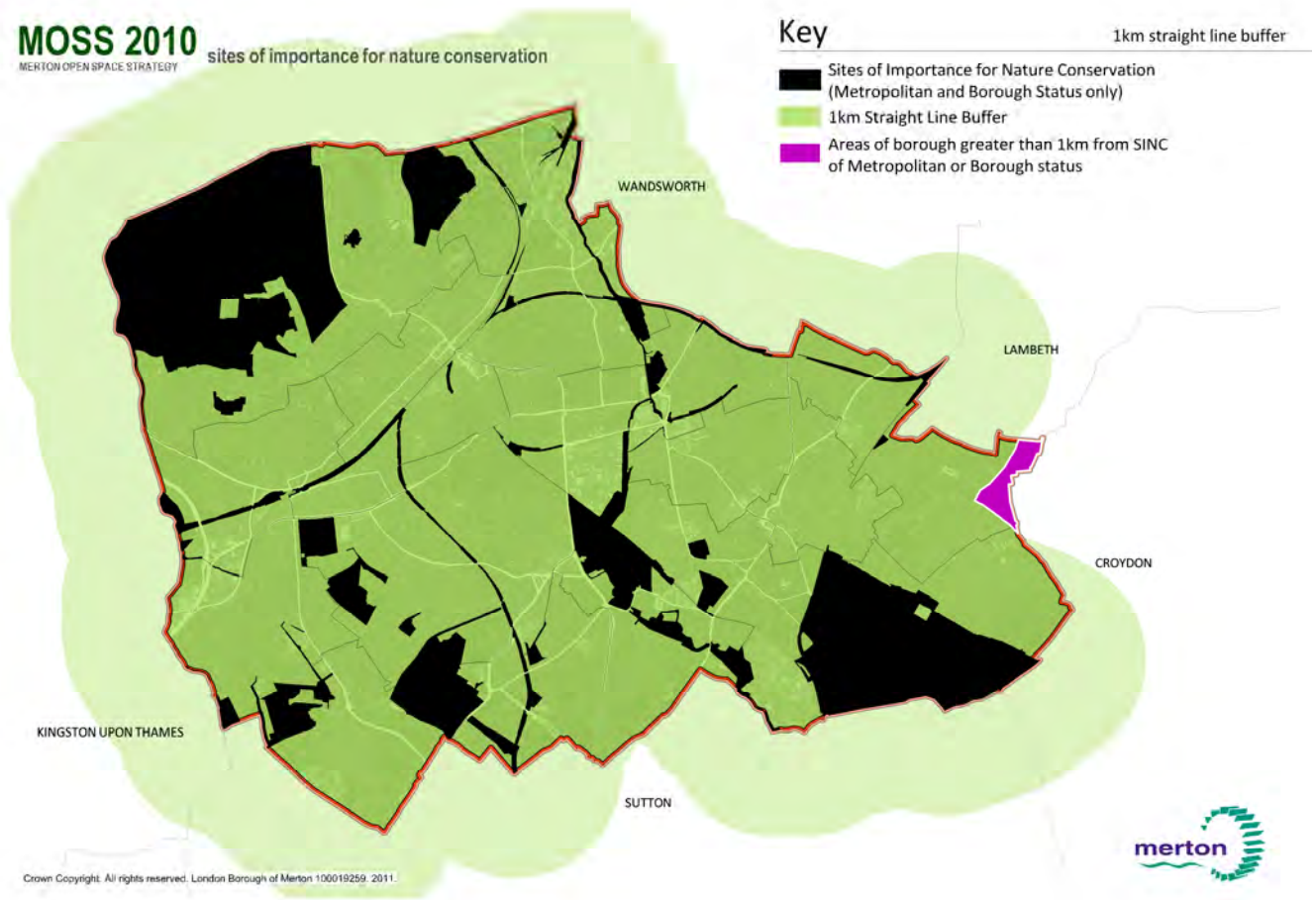


Figure 5.4 - SINC 1km straight line buffer

Merton’s Sites of Metropolitan Importance

5.1.10 Sites of Metropolitan Importance (SMI) have the highest priority for protection. These sites contain the best examples of London’s habitats, sites that contain particularly rare species or groups of species. Alternatively they can be sites of particular significance within otherwise heavily built-up areas of London, which may not be the best examples of habitats but offer the opportunity for enjoyment of nature in extensively built up environments.

5.1.11 Merton has the following SMI’s:

Ref	Site
34	Mitcham Common
35	Morden Cemetery
66	Upper River Wandle and surroundings
71	Wimbledon Common

Table 5.1 - Sites of Metropolitan Importance

Merton’s Sites of Borough Importance

5.1.12 Sites of Borough Importance are divided into two grades; Grade 1 and Grade 2. They are not confined to borough boundaries. In the same way as SMI’s some of the borough’s sites are chosen for providing the opportunity for enjoyment of nature in extensive built environments.

Table 5.2: Sites of Borough Importance		
Ref	Site	Grade
Grade 1		
2	Atkinson Morley Hospital Woodland	1
7	Cannizaro Park	1
8	Cannon Hill Common	1
30	Malden Golf Course and Thames Water Pipe Track	1
36	Morden Hall Park and Deen City Farm	1
37	Morden Park	1
53	Royal Wimbledon Golf Course South	1
54	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Wood	1
69 & 70	Wandle Trail Nature Park	1
72 & 73	Wimbledon Park – Merton section	1
76	Worcester Park Green Lanes in Merton	1
Grade 2		
1	Abbotsbury Road Woodlands	2
5	Beverley Brook in Merton	2
6	Buddhapadia Temple Grounds	2
10	Cherry Wood	2
13	Coombe Wood (Merton section)	2
16	Derwent Road Floodwash	2
17	District Line through Wimbledon Park	2
18	Durnsford Wetland	2
20	East Wimbledon Railsides	2
26	London Road Playing Fields	2
27	Lower Pyl Brook	2
32	Merton Park Green Walks	2
40	Myrna Close Valley	2
41	Oakleigh Way Nature Reserve	2
45	Prince George’s Playing Fields	2
47	Pyl Brook Nature Reserve	2
50	Railsides West of Wimbledon Station	2
51	Ravensbury Park	2
62	St Peter and St Paul Churchyard, Mitcham	2
63	Streatham Junction to Wimbledon Railsides	2
64	Sutton Line South of Wimbledon	2
68	Wandle Park	2
75	Wimbledon to Dundonald Road Tramlink	2

Table 5.2 - Sites of Borough Importance

Merton’s Sites of Local Importance

- 5.1.13 Sites of Local Importance (SINC) are sites of particular value to people nearby (such as residents or schools). These sites may already be used for nature study or run by management committees mainly composed of local people. Sites are given this designation in recognition of their role.
- 5.1.14 Local sites are particularly important in areas otherwise deficient in nearby wildlife. Areas of deficiency are defined in the Mayor’s biodiversity strategy⁵ as built up areas more than one kilometre walking

⁵ Source: Annex 1, Para 2.13, pg118, Mayor’s Biodiversity Strategy

distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC site. An areas designation can change year to year, being closely related to changes to SINC designation or access.

5.1.15 **Figure 5.4** identifies Merton’s Metropolitan and Borough SINC’s with a 1 km straight line buffer. This demonstrates that the borough is deficient in Metropolitan or Borough SINC’s (using straight line distance) in one area only. One small pocket in the Graveney Ward on the border with Lambeth, near Streatham.

5.1.16 It is acknowledged that the mayor’s definition is a one kilometre walking distance which should include any barriers, such as roads and bridges. For this reason we have prepared another map (**Figure 5.3**) which demonstrates a 400m (5 minute walk) and 800m (10 minute walk) straight line buffer from all SINC’s within the borough boundary. Using these smaller buffers there is one pocket of deficiency in Graveney Ward. However our residents have access to SINC’s adjoining the borough boundary and if we include these sites as well there are no deficiencies. This means that all resident have access to a nature conservation site within a 10 minute walk from their home.

ID Ref	Site
9	Canons Pond
11	Church Lane Playing Fields
14	Cranmer Green Pond
21	Eltandia Hall Nature Area
22	Haig Homes estate, Green Lane
25	Liberty Middle School Wildlife Area
38	Morden Recreation Ground Spinney
39	Moreton Green
42	Park House Middle School Conservation Area
44	Poplar First School Nature Area
46	Pyl Brook by Garth Road
52	Raynes Park Sports Ground Conservation Area
57	St John Fisher School Nature Garden
58	St Lawrence’s Churchyard, Morden
59	St Mary’s Churchyard and Glebe Fields, Merton Park
60	St Mary’s Churchyard, Wimbledon
61	St Mary’s RC Primary School Nature Garden
65	The Chase
67	Three Kings Pond and Commonside Rough

Table 5.3 - Sites of Local Importance

5.1.17 The London Boroughs’ SINC data is maintained by Greenspaces Information for Greater London (GiGL) on behalf of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Local Wildlife Sites Board (LWSB). The GiGL Annual Monitoring Report for 2010 identified there was a 10.37% of deficiency in Merton in 2009 and no change in deficiency for 2010.

Borough Name	Borough Area (ha)	Area of Deficiency ha (2009)	AoD % of Borough ha 2009	Area of Deficiency ha (2010)	AoD % of Borough ha 2010	Change area (ha)	Change (%)
Merton	3750.68	388.99	10.37	388.99	10.37	0.00	0.00

Table 5.4 - GiGL Annual Monitoring Report (2010)

Merton’s Local Nature Reserves

5.1.18 Local authorities were given the power through the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949), to provide or secure the provision of Local Nature Reserves (LNR’s). A Local Nature Reserve is

one of several places in a city or town where animals can comfortably reside and plants can grow wild. Sites are declared LNR's because they have features of special interest and are designated on the basis of English Nature guidelines.

- 5.1.19 The actual function of a nature reserve is to provide a place where nature can thrive and not be harmed or drastically altered. For example, natural features of the reserves include brambles which are allowed to grow and provide places for certain types of birds to set up nests, and meadows which are cut only once a year, in order to allow certain types of plant life to grow and insects to reside.
- 5.1.20 Sites are declared Local Nature Reserves because they have features of special interest such as flora and fauna, which are maintained under guidelines from a site's management plan.
- 5.1.21 The London Borough of Merton has fifteen LNRs which are provided below at **Table 5.5** and at **Figure 5.5**.

Ref	Site	Area ha	% of the Borough
1	Bennetts Hole (part of Upper River Wandle SINC)	1.53	0.04
2	Cannon Hill Common	12.79	0.40
3	Cherry Wood	1.75	0.05
4	Cranmer Green	3.23	0.08
5	Derwent Floodwash (pending formal designation)	1.92	0.04
6	Fishpond Wood and Beverly Meads (part of Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath SINC)	5.72	0.15
7	Lower Wandle	2.77	0.07
8	Merton Park Green Walk	1.51	0.03
9	Morden Park	27.40	0.70
10	Myrna Close	0.71	0.02
11	Oakleigh Way	0.64	0.02
12	Pyl Brook	2.70	0.07
13	Ravensbury Park	7.32	0.20
14	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Wood	2.90	0.07
15	Wandle Meadow Nature Park	3.81	0.10
	Total	76.70	2.04⁶

Table 5.5 - Local Nature Reserves

- 5.1.22 We have more LNRs than any other London borough. 2.03% of the borough space is designated as LNRs. All of the reserves have their own management plans that are formed to protect and preserve the local flora, fauna, and landforms.

⁶ To note: Total area of Merton is 3762.473 hectares

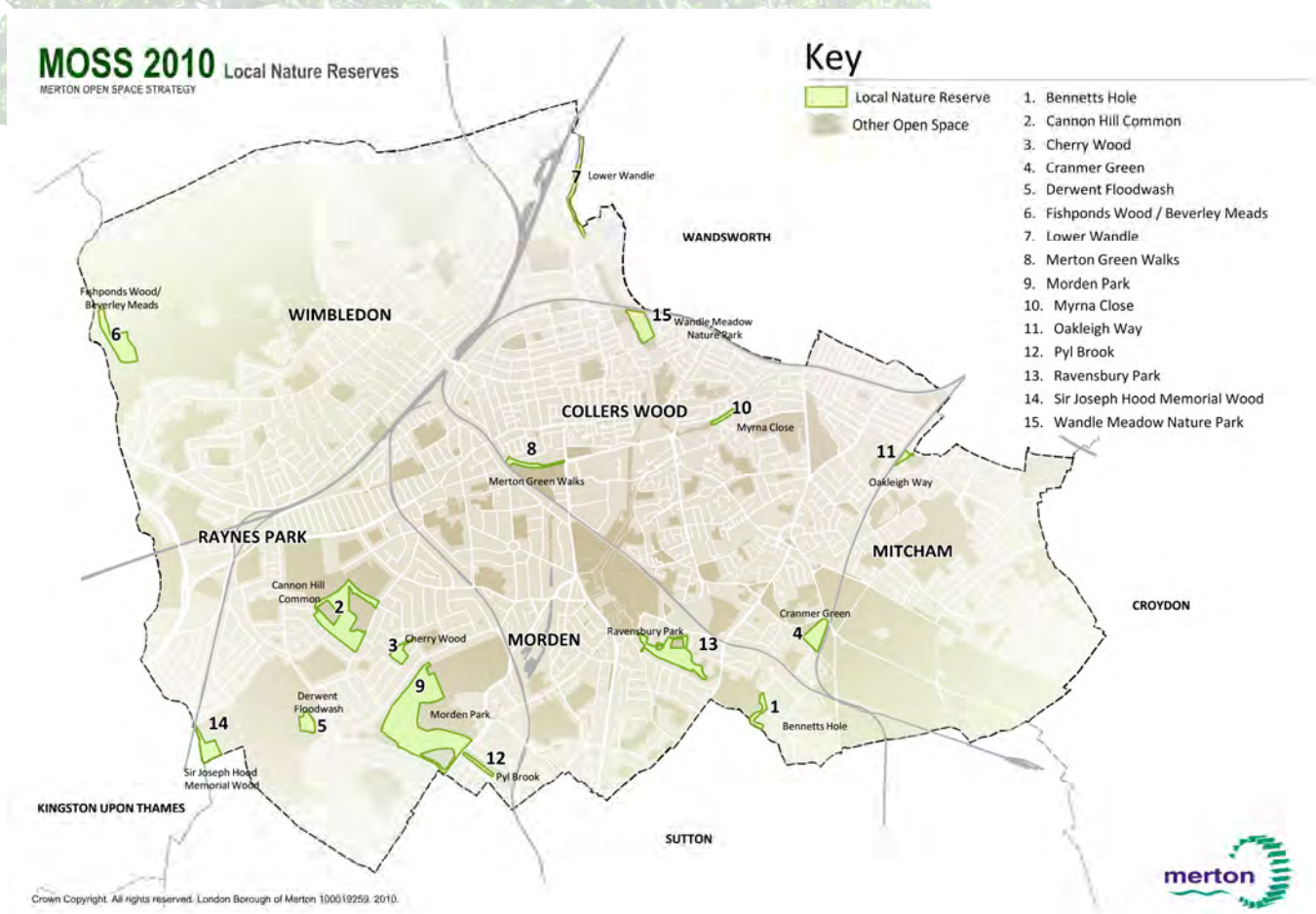


Figure 5.5 - Local Nature Reserves

National Indicator 197 Biodiversity Sites (NI Sites)

- 5.1.23 National Indicator 197 Biodiversity is the reported indicator that demonstrates the percentage of locally designated wildlife sites that are under active management. In 2009 Merton reported that the active management of SINCs had risen from 29 (51%) in 2008 to 34 (59%) in 2009. The 2010/11 target is 70%.
- 5.1.24 Merton's wildlife sites are identified in **Table 5.1**, **Table 5.2**, **Table 5.3**, **Table 5.5** - Local Nature Reserves and also at **Figure 5.2 - Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation**.
- 5.1.25 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy: Connecting with London's nature (July 2002) seeks to ensure that there is no overall loss of wildlife habitats in London, and that more open spaces are created and made accessible, so that all Londoners are within walking distance of a quality natural space.
- 5.1.26 Councils have a responsibility to conserve London's wildlife and its habitats and involve Londoners in a greater understanding, enjoyment and participation in nature. We should try to ensure all Londoners have ready access to wildlife and natural green spaces access.
- 5.1.27 Policy 3D.14 'Biodiversity and nature conservation' in the adopted London Plan 2008 (consolidated with changes since 2004) states that development plan documents (DPDs) should identify areas of deficiency and opportunities taken to achieve positive gains for conservation.

5.2 Geodiversity

- 5.2.1 In 2009 a geodiversity audit of London was commissioned by a partnership led by the GLA. This was entitled London's Foundations: Protecting the geodiversity of the capital. This set out geological sites of special scientific interest in Greater London.
- 5.2.2 These are designated as:
- Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIG's) and;
 - Locally Important Geological Sites (LIG's).
- 5.2.3 Merton does not have any designated sites but Putney Heath, in neighbouring Wandsworth, is registered as a potential LIG. Merton Council will recognise the importance of this future designation and should consider the impact of development with regard to Putney Heath.

5.3 Conclusions

- 5.3.1 The borough has a sufficient amount of accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC areas based on the Mayor's biodiversity strategy⁷ criteria of built up areas more than one kilometre walking distance from a site.
- 5.3.2 Merton Council should continue to identify any suitable areas or sites of opportunity for the restoration or creation of priority habitats through the strategic planning process.
- 5.3.3 Merton Council should investigate the formal designation of Derwent Floodwash as a Local Nature Reserve in partnership with the owners, Wandsworth Council.
- 5.3.4 LB Merton will continue to review sites for possible future SINC designation as part of the strategic planning process.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP):

- 5.3.5 Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) are the planning method for implementing the UK Biodiversity Action Plan at the local level.
- 5.3.6 The London Plan sets the strategic context for open space planning, based on protecting and promoting a network of open spaces throughout London:
- "The Mayor will and boroughs should resist development that would have a significant adverse impact on the population or conservation status of protected species or priority species identified in the UK, London and Borough Biodiversity Action Plan⁸"**
- 5.3.7 Although both national and regional government encourages local authorities to produce Local Biodiversity Action Plans there is no actual requirement to do so. Merton's SINC's support habitats that are of regional importance and the borough is represented on all the relevant Regional Habitat Action Plan working groups.

⁷ Source: Annex 1, Para 2.13, pg118, Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy

⁸ Source: Policy 3D.14 Biodiversity and nature conservation, London Plan, 2008

Merton's Regional Habitats

5.3.8 The London Biodiversity Partnership identified nine regional Habitats for London:

Ref	Priority Habitat Type	Present in Merton
1	Woodland	✓
2	Heathland	✓
3	Acid Grassland	✓
4	Meadows	✓
5	Standing Water	✓
6	Rivers and Streams	✓
7	Reedbeds	✓
8	Chalk Grassland	
9	Floodplain Grazing Marsh	

Table 5.6 - Regional Biodiversity Habitats

5.3.9 Each habitat type has a target for both enhancement and creation in the London Plan. Merton Council uses Greenspaces Information for Greater London (GiGL) to maintain records on biodiversity and habitat status. GiGL have identified potential land parcels that may be suitable for habitat creation if there is found to be no conflict with other potential land uses. This is a major ongoing task, for example there are 394 parcels just for woodland. GiGL will continually update data to advise on suitability.

5.3.10 The Regional Spatial Strategy (London Plan) and Local Development Framework Core Output Indicator relevant to biodiversity is E2: Changes in areas of biodiversity habitat. In 2009/10 there was no change in biodiversity areas.

5.3.11 The changes in biodiversity value are reported in the council's Annual Monitoring Report. The most recent 2009/10 AMR recorded a total of 7.3 hectares of additional priority habitat created or restored including improvements to Mitcham Common acid grassland, Morden Park Meadow and Ravensbury Park backwater channels.

5.3.12 Stag beetles, common starling and various bat species are the most commonly spotted priority species in LB Merton.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 LB Merton should maintain a list of regionally important habitats present in the borough and seek to identify suitable new sites for their creation where there is need.

5.4.2 LB Merton to continue to record biodiversity data using GiGL (or similar data source) to monitor changes in biodiversity (areas and improvements).

5.5 Wandle Valley Regional Park:

5.5.1 The London Plan Further Alterations published in Autumn 2006 included a commitment by the Mayor of London to work with partners to take forward regional parks proposals including the Wandle Valley Regional Park, a linear park based around the river Wandle. This has been taken forward in Consolidated Draft Replacement London Plan 2010 Blue Ribbon Network policies.

- 5.5.2 The boundary for the park has been developed using the working criteria of:
- 5.5.3 “Open space visually and/or physically linked to the current and historical route of the River Wandle”.
- 5.5.4 The River Wandle is a tributary of the Thames, stretching from Carshalton in Sutton and Waddon in Croydon, running through Merton and joining the Thames at Wandsworth in the north. The Wandle Valley encompasses four London boroughs: Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton and Croydon.
- 5.5.5 Groundwork London and the GLA submitted a successful bid for funding to the European Commission, Sustainable and Accessible Urban Landscapes (SAUL) to progress the regional park proposals. £145,000 was provided to integrate a regional park plan.
- 5.5.6 The Regional Park concept challenges traditional notions of “parks” as single public green spaces with clearly defined boundaries, landscaped areas and facilities such as playgrounds. Within Table 3D.1 London’s public open space hierarchy in the London Plan (2008), regional parks are defined as:
- 5.5.7 “Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publicly accessible and provide a range of facilities and features offering recreational, ecological, landscape, cultural or green infrastructure benefits. Offer a combination of facilities and features that are unique within London, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards”.
- 5.5.8 The size of regional parks vary but the London Plan open space hierarchy states as a benchmark that a regional park should be over 400 hectares in size and should aim to attract visitors within a radius of eight kilometres.
- 5.5.9 LB Merton and its partners recognise that the creation of a Regional Park not only requires strategic decision-making and political commitment, it also requires public consultation. Three strands of consultation took place, two events for business to raise awareness of the benefits of a Regional Park. The third consultation focussed on young people’s views. The Wandle Valley Partners came up with the vision:
- “An innovative, sustainable and high quality Regional Park in the Wandle Valley that is easily accessible, with a rich and thriving biodiversity, offering recreational, landscape, heritage, cultural and resource management benefits in which local people and businesses can take pride and ownership”**
- 5.5.10 In June 2006, a small working group including Leisure officers, planners and Wandle Valley Stakeholders was formed known as the Wandle Forum. The group is a not for profit unincorporated association. The creation of the Wandle Valley Regional Park is not only about promoting the open spaces and natural environment, it is also about encouraging high quality approaches to planning and development, enhancing the industry and heritage and maximising economic potential. Wandle Valley Regional Park partners have designated governance arrangements, relevant to local context in order to meet the vision. These are reviewed on a regular basis to reflect the evolving priorities.
- 5.5.11 The Regional Park is still at the proposal stage and the definitive boundary as well as the listing of the public open spaces within the proposed park boundary is still to be agreed. The production of a Scoping Review and Action Plan for the Governance of this proposed Regional Park is due to be prepared during 2011/12.

Funding of the Wandle Valley Regional Park

- 5.5.12 The four boroughs involved have developed an equitable sharing of the costs of administering and supporting the proposed governance structure for the regional park through the transitional phase and for continuing the coordination of the Wandle Forum.
- 5.5.13 The boroughs are also lobbying the Mayor of London to help fund the creation and management of the Wandle Valley Regional Park, in particular once the funding for the Lee Valley has concluded after the 2012 Olympics.
- 5.5.14 The Wandle Valley Regional Park boundary is still currently unconfirmed but Figure 5.6 shows the current proposed boundary.

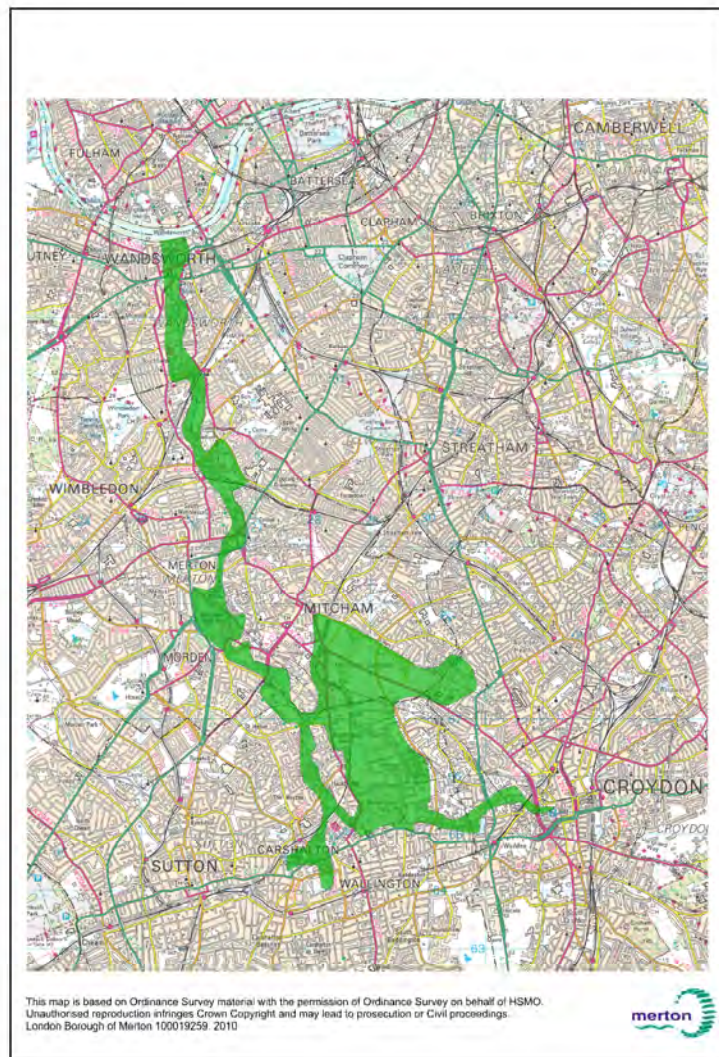


Figure 5.6 - Wandle Valley Regional Park

6 Provision for Children and Young People

6.0 Introduction:

- 6.0.1 **‘Play is what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons.’⁹**
- 6.0.2 Play is a generic term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviours that are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. It has frequently been described as ‘what children and young people do when not being told what to do by adults.’
- 6.0.3 PPG17 states typology of provision for children and teenagers as ‘including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops and other more informal areas (for example “hanging out” areas, teenage shelters)’.
- 6.0.4 The 2008 GLA (low) projected population figures for 2011 identified that the top 4 wards for under 19 year olds in Merton are:

Cricket Green	7.07%;
Figges Marsh	6.27%;
Pollards Hill	6%;
Wimbledon Park	5.77%.

6.1 Play spaces:

- 6.1.1 Play is the fundamental way that children enjoy their childhood. It is essential to their quality of life as children. Government feels that play should be an integral part of the wider policies for children and young people.
- 6.1.2 The Play Place Grid below gives examples of the types of facility and space which offer children and young people the best opportunities for play and informal recreation and which should form the basis of provision where children should be able to play freely and free of charge in their own neighbourhoods.

Types of Play Space	Supervised and semi-supervised	No formal supervision
Designated places for play and informal recreation	Adventure playgrounds	Playground/play areas. Bike, skate and skateboard facilities
	Open Access play centres	Ball courts
	Play ranger and outreach projects	Multi-use games area
	Mobile play facilities	Hangout/youth shelters
	School playgrounds (out of school hours)	
Non-designated places for play	Parks with rangers and gardeners	Residential streets

⁹ Source: Department for Culture Media and Sport, (DCMS), 2004

and informal recreation	Streets with wardens	Neighbourhood open spaces
		Parks and green spaces
		Beaches, rivers and lakes
		Woodlands and natural open spaces
		Routes to school and play areas
		Playing fields and recreation grounds
		Public squares and piazzas
		Public rights of way

Table 6.1 - The Play Place Grid

- 6.1.3 Playable spaces are any public spaces used by children or young people for unstructured play. We know that children and young people use formal playable spaces that are deliberately designed for free play including parks, playing fields, play areas and multi-use games areas. Play can take different forms; older children for example describe their play in terms of meeting up with friends at informal meeting places. Children and young people’s self-directed free play is the focus of Merton’s Free Play Strategy (2007-2012).
- 6.1.4 The strategy was developed by Merton’s Children’s Trust and responds to the views and experiences of play that Merton gathered from children and young people, their parents and carers and community organisations. The strategy covers all children and young people up to the age of 19 (and 24 years with a disability).
- 6.1.5 It is not possible to analyse the non-designated play locations in the borough and so this section of the document deals with formal defined play spaces in the borough. Merton defines a children’s playspace as ‘an area that contains five or more pieces of equipment for children’s play and seating for accompanying adults’.

MOSS 2010 children and young people

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

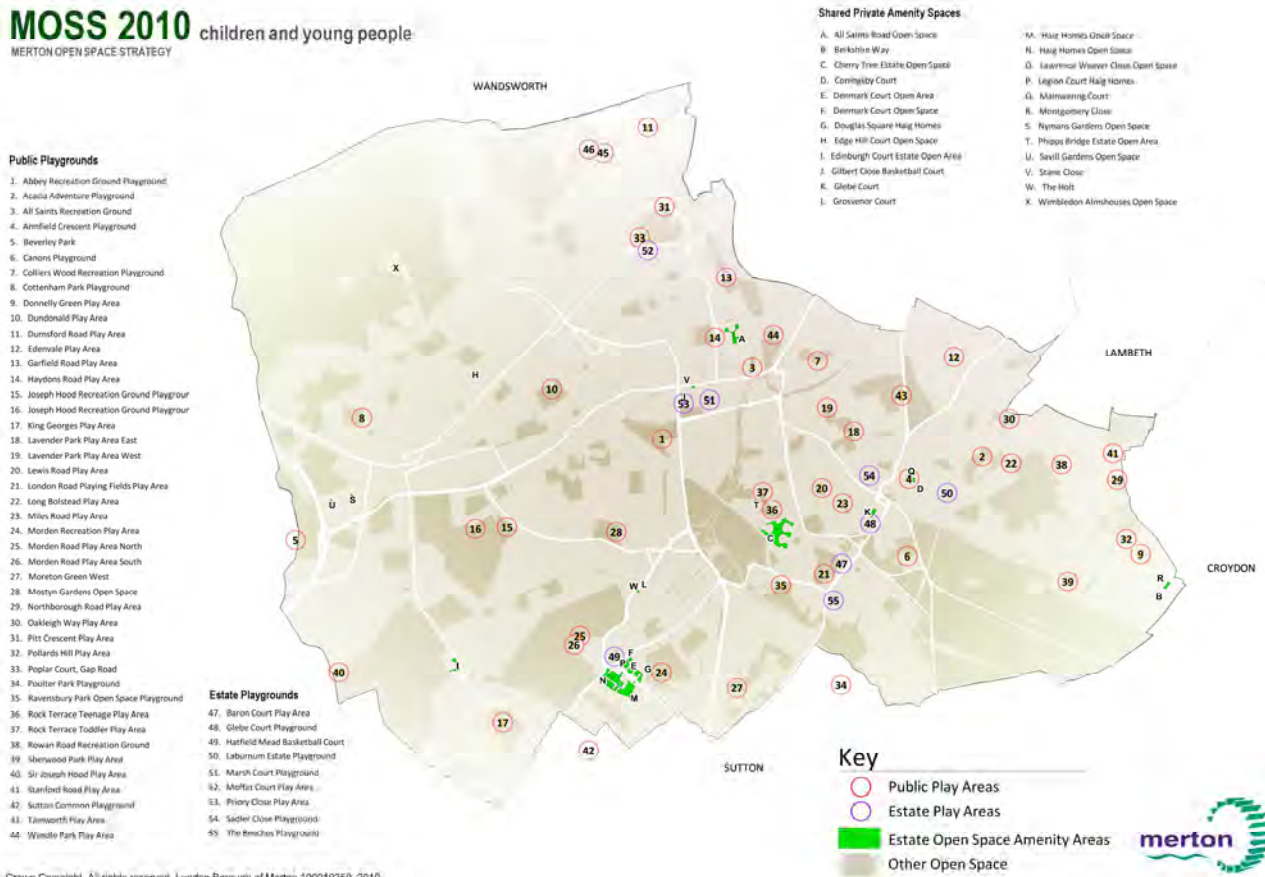


Figure 6.1 - Children and Young People

6.1.6 Merton has 53 play spaces across the borough totalling 7.28 hectares. See Figure 6.1 and Table 6.2.

Ward/Borough	Hectares	No. of sites
Abbey	0.33	4
Cannon Hill	0.44	3
Colliers Wood	0.20	2
Cricket Green	0.84	8
Dundonald	0.12	1
Figges Marsh	0.46	4
Graveney	0.17	1
Lavender Fields	0.51	3
LB Kingston	0.34	1
LB Sutton	0.44	2
Longthornton	0.71	5
Lower Morden	0.19	1
Merton Park	0.11	1
Pollards Hill	0.39	3
Ravensbury	0.41	3
Raynes Park	0.10	1
St Helier	0.38	3
Trinity	0.23	2
Village	0.27	2
West Barnes	0.32	1

Wimbledon Park	0.40	4
TOTAL	7.36	55

Table 6.2 - Play Spaces by Ward

6.1.7 All of the boroughs wards have at least one playground. Cricket Green has the majority with 8 sites and Longthornton 5 sites. Dundonald, Graveney, Lower Morden, Merton Park, Raynes Park and West Barnes only have 1 play space each.

Analysis of formal play space in Merton:

6.1.8 Play areas are classified in the new Fields in Trust (previously Six Acre Standards guide) Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008) which identifies their effective catchment (how far residents are willing, on average, to travel to access the different types of play areas):

Local Area of Play (LAP): are small low-key games area approximately 100m walking distance and 60m straight line catchment.

Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP): Play space with a small games areas containing approximately five types of equipment and approximately 400 m walking distance and 240 m straight line catchment.

Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP): Play space containing eight types of equipment and provides opportunities for ball games or wheeled activities approximately 1000 m walking distance and 400m straight line catchment.

6.1.9 Play spaces available to Merton residents are shown in **Table 6.3** below:

ID	Classification	Name	Ward	Items of Equipment
1	NEAP	Abbey Recreation Ground Playground	Abbey	9
2	NEAP	Acacia Adventure Playground	Figges Marsh	Greater than 8
3	LEAP	All Saints Recreation Ground	Abbey	5
4	NEAP	Armfield Crescent Playground	Figges Marsh	9
5	NEAP	Beverley Park	Local Authority (Kingston)	Greater than 8
6	NEAP	Canons Playground	Cricket Green	7
7	NEAP	Colliers Wood Recreation Playground	Colliers Wood	11
8	NEAP	Cottenham Park Playground	Raynes Park	7
9	NEAP	Donnelly Green Play Area	Pollards Hill	16
10	NEAP	Dundonald Play Area	Dundonald	9
11	NEAP	Durnsford Road Play Area	Wimbledon Park	9
12	NEAP	Edenvale Play Area	Graveney	10
13	NEAP	Garfield Road Play Area	Trinity	11
14	NEAP	Haydons Road Play Area	Trinity	7

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15	LEAP	Joseph Hood Playground East	Cannon Hill	Climbing man and a Jungle Gym
16	NEAP	Joseph Hood Playground West	Cannon Hill	8
17	NEAP	King Georges Play Area	Lower Morden	15
18	NEAP	Lavender Park Play Area East	Lavender Fields	6
19	NEAP	Lavender Park Play Area West	Lavender Fields	16
20	NEAP	Lewis Road Play Area	Cricket Green	13
21	NEAP	London Road Play Area	Cricket Green	8
22	NEAP	Long Bolstead Play Area	Longthornton	13
23	LEAP	Miles Road Play Area	Cricket Green	6
24	NEAP	Morden Recreation Play Area	St Helier	6
25	NEAP	Morden Playing Fields	Cannon Hill	16
26	LEAP	Morden Road Play Area South	St Helier	Unknown
27	LEAP	Moreton Green West	Ravensbury	6
28	LEAP	Mostyn Gardens Open Space	Merton Park	3
29	LEAP	Northborough Road Play Area	Longthornton	7 pieces of equipment (slides, swing, other bits for climbing)
30	NEAP	Oakleigh Way Play Area	Longthornton	11
31	LEAP	Pitt Crescent Play Area	Wimbledon Park	4
32	LEAP	Pollards Hill Play Area	Pollards Hill	4
33	NEAP	Poplar Court, Gap Road	Wimbledon Park	MUGA, 8 pieces of equipment (including Jungle Gym)
34	NEAP	Poulter Park Playground	Local Authority (Sutton)	Unknown assumed greater than 8
35	LEAP	Ravensbury Park Playground	Ravensbury	unknown assumed less than 8
36	LEAP	Rock Terrace Teenage Play Area	Cricket Green	5
37	NEAP	Rock Terrace Toddler Play Area	Cricket Green	Lots of equipment. Approximately 28 pieces (4 Jungle Gyms, 3 swings, slides etc.)
38	NEAP	Rowan Road Recreation Ground	Longthornton	14
39	LEAP	Sherwood Park Play Area	Pollards Hill	7

40	NEAP	Sir Joseph Hood Play Area	West Barnes	11
41	NEAP	Stanford Road Play Area	Longthornton	9
42	NEAP	Sutton Common Playground	Local Authority (Sutton)	Greater than 8
43	NEAP	Tamworth Play Area	Lavender Fields	13
44	NEAP	Wandle Park Play Area	Colliers Wood	8
45	NEAP	Wimbledon Park Play Area East	Village	9
46	LEAP	Wimbledon Park Play Area West	Village	5
47	NEAP	Baron Court Estate Play Area	Cricket Green	the beaches' – MUGA, 12 pieces of equipment (Jungle Gym, slides etc.)
48	LEAP	Glebe Court Playground	Cricket Green	7
49	NEAP	Hatfield Mead Basketball Court	St Helier	Owned by Merton Priory Homes. MUGA (Basketball/ Soccer/ hockey), 11 pieces of equipment (slides, springers, swings etc.)
50	NEAP	Laburnum Estate Playground	Figges Marsh	MUGA and 20 pieces of equipment (swings and springers, Jungle Gym, zip wire etc.)
51	NEAP	Marsh Court Playground	Abbey	Seesaw, mini slide, 2 springers, 2 Jungle Gyms, tyre swing
52	LEAP	Moffat Court Play Area	Wimbledon Park	Unknown
53	LEAP	Priory Close Play Area	Abbey	5 including a jungle gym, trampoline and swing
54	LEAP	Sadler Close Playground	Figges Marsh	Unknown assumed less than 8
55	LEAP	The Beeches Playground (Estate)	Ravensbury	Unknown

Table 6.3 - Merton's Play Spaces

To note: The sites have been categorised based on the items of equipment on site and not from a formal list supplied by Fields in Trust.

Type	Number
NEAP	37
LEAP	18
Total	55

Table 6.4 - Summary of designated play spaces in Merton

6.1.10 This study has identified 67 parks and open spaces, which contain formal play space including:

- 43 equipped play areas maintained by the borough's Greenspaces team;
- A further 10 play provision sites;
- 3 additional sites are in neighbouring boroughs but are used by Merton residents due to their close proximity. These are: Beverley Park in LB Kingston and Sutton Common playground and Poulter park playground in LB Sutton.

6.1.11 We have included 24 sites of shared private amenity space that are semi-public in our mapping, refer to **Figure 6.1** for locations. These are, for example, open space in the grounds of blocks of flats and spaces accessible to local residents for recreational and informal use. We have other private and semi-private amenity spaces across the borough but these have not been included because of limited accessibility.

6.1.12 LB Merton's play spaces include:

- 37 formal playgrounds with some play equipment suitable for under 5's;
- 36 with some equipment suitable for under 12's;
- 13 with facilities for over 12's;
- 10 play areas located on housing estates managed by the council.

6.1.13 There are two skateboard parks in Merton, one at Rock Terrace Recreation Ground, Phipps Bridge (Cricket Green Ward) for use with skateboards, skates and BMX bikes. This is set within the large teenage area of the grounds, which also include a climbing wall, goal ends and an all weather kick-about area. The other park is at Pollards Hill Recreation Way, Mitcham (Pollards Hill Ward). The site also offers outdoor gym equipment, goal ends and a teen shelter.

6.1.14 There is a new adventure playground located in the east of the borough in Acacia Road, Mitcham Eastfields (Figges Marsh). A play space for 8-16 year olds where play workers are on site at all times when the playground is open.

6.1.15 Fields in Trust (FIT) Planning for Design and Outdoor Sport and Play (2008) set a quantity benchmark standard of 0.25 hectares of designated equipped playing space per '000 population. In Merton this would equate to 49.5 hectares (based on the current population figure of 198,068 - projected 2010 GLA Low projection). This is unrealistic in a suburban borough. LB Merton currently has 7.28 ha of designated play spaces which equates to 0.036 ha per '000 population. However, Local authorities can set their own quality benchmark standards using the Children's Play Councils Quality Assessment Tool.

Conclusion

6.1.16 In terms of designated play space availability, the borough provision of 0.036 hectares per '000 population is well below the FIT quality benchmark standard.

6.1.17 Play spaces tend to be located evenly across the eastern part of the borough; which is good for residents, particularly the three eastern wards identified as most densely populated with under 19 year olds (Figges Marsh, Pollards Hill and Cricket Green). There is less provision for play in the west and north west of the borough, particularly in the wards of:

- Village
- Raynes Park;
- Hillside;

- West Barnes;
- Cannon Hill;
- Merton Park;
- South west of Wimbledon Park; and
- Dundonald.

6.1.18 There are only 13 play spaces with facilities for children over 12 years old; the group projected to have greatest growth by 2016.

6.1.19 These wards should be considered as higher priority wards (in particular Wimbledon Park where there is a high percentage of under 9 year olds) for future play space provision and possible contributions from new development.

6.1.20 However it should be noted that the green space in the west of the borough (lacking in formal play spaces) tends to cater more for open recreation space. Play is likely to take place on these sites but as informal play.

6.2 Play spaces in school:

6.2.1 Each of Merton's schools have playgrounds and spaces that pupils of the school have access to during play times and for limited periods before and after school depending on the extended school activities provided. One primary school, Poplar Primary in Poplar Road South (Merton Park ward) provides free community access to their enclosed ball area during evenings, weekends and school holidays by arrangement with Merton Council's Parks Service. Poplar school multi sports court offers facilities for basketball, five-a-side football, netball, mini-cricket and ball games.

6.2.2 Other schools provide community access through hire arrangements or through children attending supervised play provision in after school clubs, childcare and play schemes.

6.2.3 St Mark's Academy, Acacia Road (Figges Marsh ward) has 3 new tennis courts and a new multi-use games area (MUGA). Facilities are available to the community during evenings, weekends and school holidays.

6.2.4 Harris Academy, Wide Way (Pollards Hill ward) has a sports centre and outdoor multi-use games area, used by the school during school hours and available for community use during evenings, weekends and school holidays with toilet, changing and shower facilities. Facilities are available for basketball, netball, indoor hockey, 5-a-side football, futsal, volleyball (International size court), cricket nets, badminton (4 courts), table tennis, martial arts and trampolining. There is also a pitch area, which accommodate two 11-a-side goals, six 5-a-side goals, or two hockey goals, 4 hard surface tennis courts and 2 netball courts, a junior cricket pitch and brand new pavilion. The pitch is suitable for junior matches and training, and also non-competitive adult use.

Conclusion

6.2.5 There may be opportunity for the public to share facilities with schools outside school hours and in the holiday times. The configuration of the school site – especially ease of access between the play area and the school boundary – will be one of the determining factors in deciding whether shared facilities are reasonably achievable

6.2.6 Existing shared use arrangements should be strengthened and formalised if they have not been already and future shared use opportunities could be determined following consultations with the community.

6.3 Meeting the needs of children and young people:

- 6.3.1 Play England in conjunction with Ashley Godfrey Associates have developed local indicators for play provision. The indicators focus on participation, access, quality and satisfaction of local spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation.
- 6.3.2 The local play indicators offer a set of tools to measure the performance of local authorities in providing appropriate facilities and spaces for play and informal recreation. The local play indicators focus on:
1. Children and young people’s use of spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation;
 2. Children and young people’s access to spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation;
 3. Children and young people’s experience of spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation;
 4. The quality of local spaces and facilities available for play and informal Recreation.

Indicator	Description	Method of generation	Result
Indicator 1: Participation	The percentage of all children and young people aged birth to 16 (from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who play out for at least four hours each week.	Household survey	Merton does not currently measure participation. The 2011 census may identify levels of play.
Indicator 2: Access to a variety of facilities and spaces	The percentage of children and young people aged birth to 16 years that have access to at least three different types of space or facility (doorstep, local and neighbourhood), at least one of which is a dedicated place for play and informal recreation, which are all within easy walking or cycling distance as defined in Table 6.6 below.	Open space and play strategy audits GIS Mapping	This refresh study has included a map of all the formal play spaces and assessed the accessibility based on Play England’s Tools for evaluating local play provision (Oct 2009). recommended distance thresholds for catchment areas.
Indicator 3: Quality of facilities and spaces	The proportion of play spaces and facilities with high scores for location, play value and care and maintenance as assessed using the Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool.	Quality Assessment Tool	Care and maintenance is measured annually for Merton by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (Rospa) See 6.5.24 – 6.5.29
Indicator 4: Satisfaction	The percentage of all children and young people (from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who think that the range and quality of play facilities and spaces they are able to access in their local neighbourhood is good/very good.	Questionnaire survey of children and young people	TellUs survey – See 6.5.34 – 6.5.38

Table 6.5 - Local Play Indicators

Source: Tools for evaluating local play provision: A technical guide to Play England local play indicators (October 2009)

Indicator 1: Participation

- 6.3.3 “The percentage of all children and young people aged birth to 16 (from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who play out for at least four hours each week. There are 42,304 0-16 year olds in Merton (2010)”.

- 6.3.4 The 2005 Open Space Strategy recorded the highest percentage of users of parks were the 12–15 age range and playing informal sports as the most popular reason they used the park. There are no recent statistics on users of parks and play areas.
- 6.3.5 The 2009 high school Tellus survey of 200 children and young people showed that over half of those surveyed used playgrounds and open spaces to ‘meet with friends and spend time’ which included self directed activity like football and basketball. Overall the borough has high uptake rates of sport with 92.1% of children and young people doing 2 or more hours in school, compared with 76.5% nationally¹⁰.

Indicator 2: Access

- 6.3.6 “The percentage of children and young people aged birth to 16 years that have access to at least three different types of space or facility (doorstep, local and neighbourhood), at least one of which is a dedicated place for play and informal recreation, which are all within easy walking or cycling distance as defined in Table 5.5 below”.
- 6.3.7 The local play indicators seek to measure the extent to which, wherever they live or spend the majority of their free time, children and young people have access to spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation which pass the ‘three frees’ test:
- free of charge;
 - where children are free to come and go;
 - where children are free to choose what they do while they are there.
- 6.3.8 This can be difficult to measure, especially where this involves the use of school buildings and where supervised provision occurs as this is not strictly meeting the ‘three frees’ test.
- 6.3.9 **Figure 6.1** identifies the formal play spaces across the borough. To determine the catchment areas for the different types of play space, Play England have specified distance thresholds to use shown in table 6.6 below.

Types of space	Distance criteria	
	Walking distance (m)	Straight line distance (m)
Type A: doorstep spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation	100	60
Type B: local spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation	400	240
Type C: ‘Neighbourhood’	1000	600

Table 6.6 - Distance thresholds for catchment areas

Source: Play England Tools for evaluating local play provision: a technical guide to Play England local play indicators (October 2009). (To note: Criteria is also in line with the FIT Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play 2008 guidelines for LAPS, LEAPS and NEAPS)

¹⁰ Source: TellUs Survey 2009

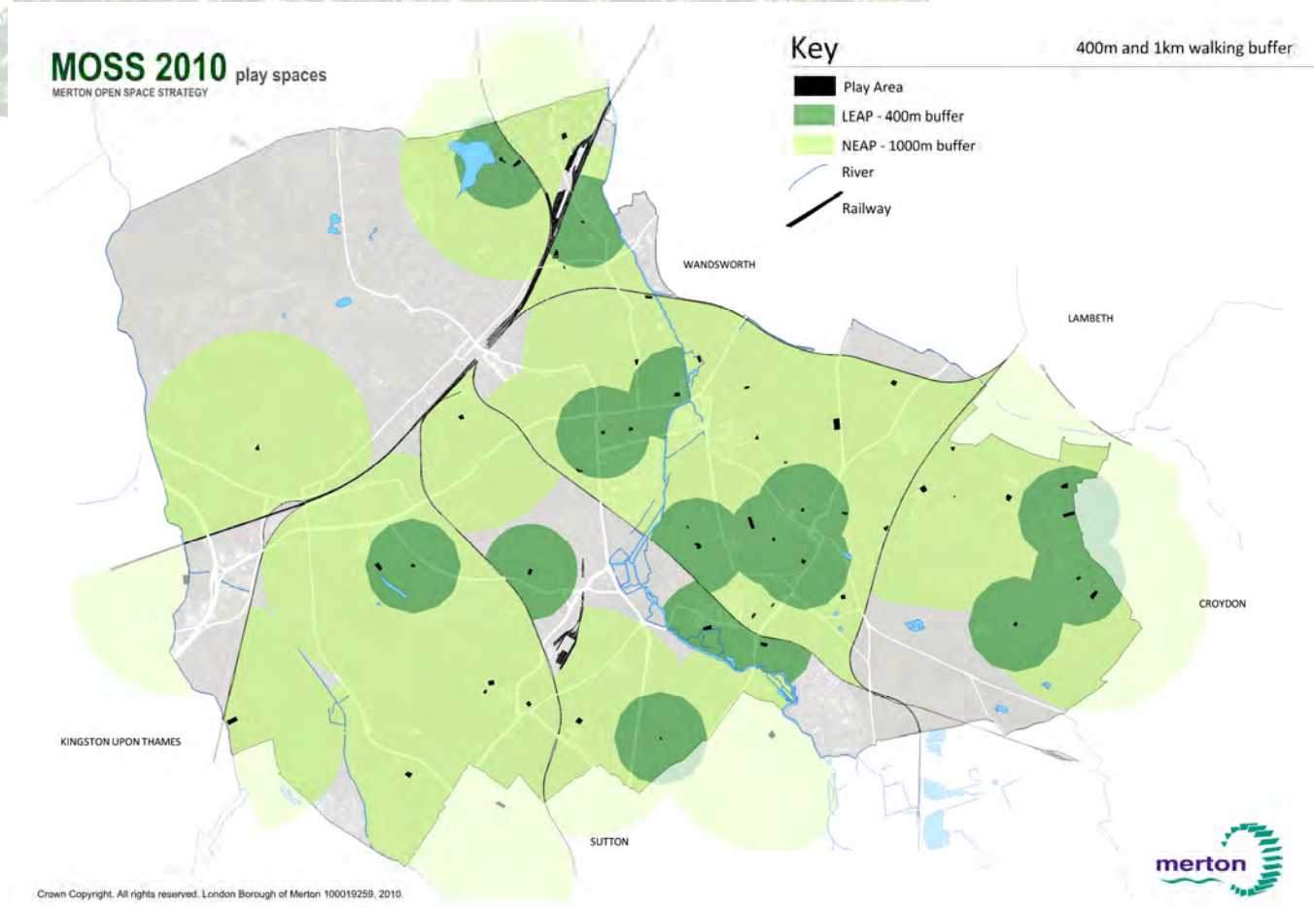


Figure 6.2 - Play Spaces walking buffer

6.3.10 Figure 6.2 shows Merton play spaces with a 400m (Local spaces/LEAP sites) and 1000m (Neighbourhood spaces/NEAP sites) buffer based on the walking distance criteria. The borough is generally well covered in terms of walking distance but some wards are showing deficiencies in play spaces. These are:

- Village;
- Hillside;
- South of Merton Park;
- North of Ravensbury;
- South of Cricket Green; and
- Pockets of Pollards Hill and pockets at the boundary of the borough at Lower Morden, Colliers Wood and West Barnes.

MOSS 2010 play spaces

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

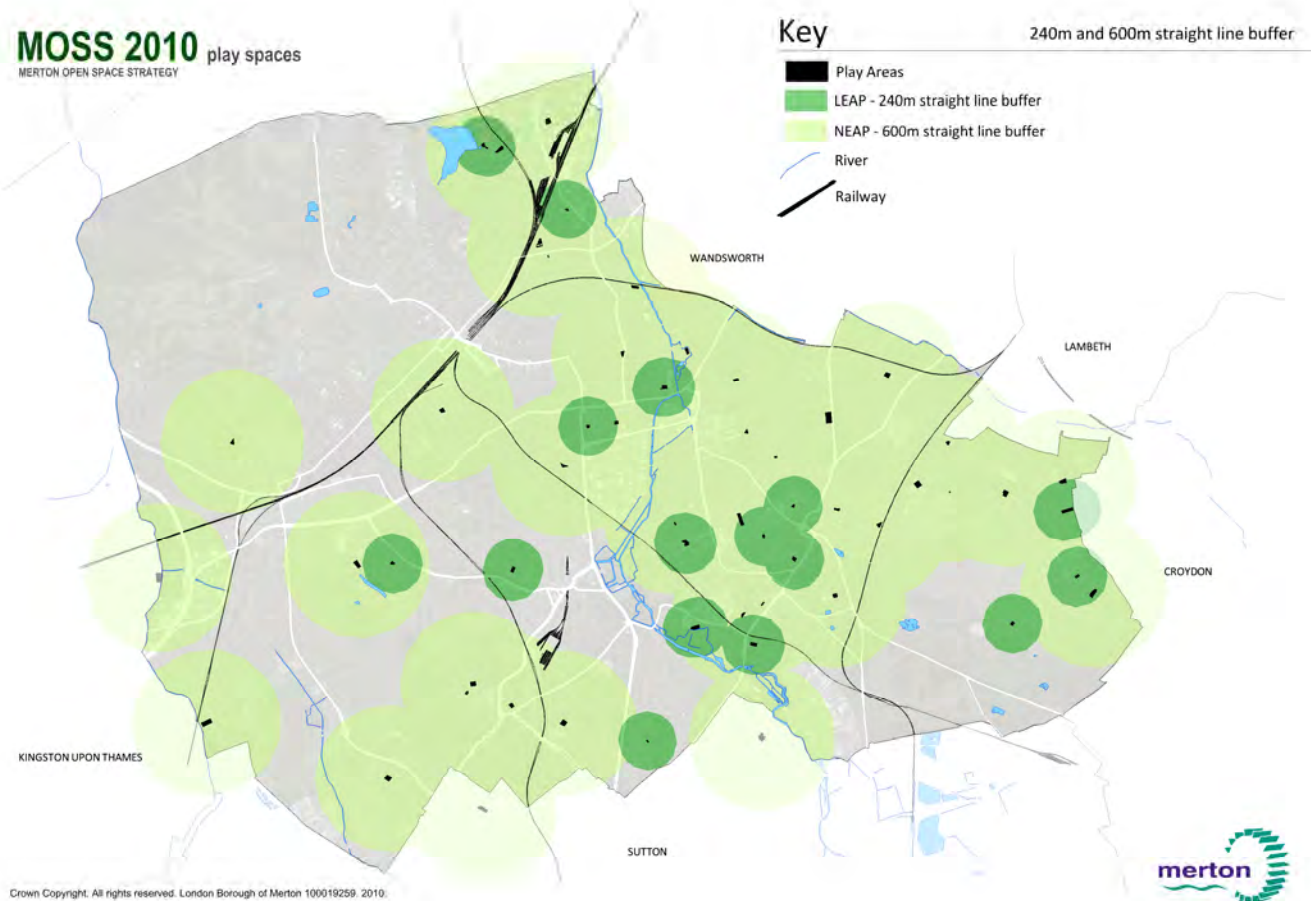


Figure 6.3 - Play Spaces straight line buffer

6.3.11 **Figure 6.3** shows LB Merton play spaces sites using the straight line threshold of 240m (Local spaces/LEAP sites) and 600m (Neighbourhood spaces/NEAP sites). This demonstrates that there is good provision in the east of the borough but highlights deficiency in:

- Village;
- Cricket Green and Pollards Hill (at the Commons); and
- Pockets of deficiency in most Wards including Raynes Park, Hillside, Trinity, east of Wimbledon Park, Merton Park, Cannon Hill, West Barnes, Lower Morden, Ravensbury and Longthornton.

6.3.12 Kids is a national charity working with disabled children, young people and their families. The KIDS Inclusion Framework: Planning for Inclusion: Making your Play Strategy inclusive (January 2007) provides guidance on ensuring play strategies are inclusive for all children. Inclusive provision refers to play provision that removes barriers to children often excluded from local mainstream provision because of disability, ethnicity, social or economic background, or any other reason.

6.3.13 The Kids Playwork Inclusion Project (PIP) (2005-06) indicated that local play strategies do not always ensure that all the play and leisure requirements of disabled children are respected and promoted. Strategies must encourage inclusive provision, which is open and accessible to all, and takes positive action in removing disabling barriers so that disabled and non-disabled children can participate.

6.3.14 Kids First based at Merton Mencap (Merton's forum for parents and carers of children and young people (0 to 25 with disabilities or special needs) were consulted on all year 1 Play Pathfinder Sites. Some of the

play spaces provide specialist sessions for children with special needs and their carers to attend. For example, The Acacia Adventure Playground offers sessions on Sundays for carers to bring children with special needs for free and provides specialist play workers.

Conclusion on Access

- 6.3.15 Participation levels in play should be measured from 2011 to establish popular play spaces in the borough. This can be recorded using the Annual Residents Survey. Questions should be:
- What is the nearest play space used regularly?
 - What improvements would residents like to see to the chosen play space?
 - How often are residents using play spaces?
- 6.3.16 The Free Play Strategy Action Plan Refresh (2010) provides the tools to carry out any play space user and satisfaction surveys. This should be used in future to measure satisfaction levels, currently not recorded. Consultation should include Kid First to reach disabled users and their carers. The survey could also be used to measure the impact of the play pathfinder programme.
- 6.3.17 LB Merton should ensure that free play is accessible, welcoming and engaging for all, including those who are disabled or have specific needs and wishes and allow for the differing needs of people of different ages and with different play interests. Future strategies should include Kids First (or any other local forum for children with special needs) in any consultation process.
- 6.3.18 Using the Play England's distance threshold for catchment areas the wards identified as having pockets of deficiency in terms of accessibility to play space are:
- Colliers Wood;
 - Cricket Green;
 - Hillside;
 - Lower Morden;
 - Merton Park;
 - Pollards Hill;
 - Ravensbury;
 - Raynes Park;
 - Trinity;
 - Village; and
 - West Barnes.
- 6.3.19 There are 3 play spaces in neighbouring boroughs that have been included in the study because of their close proximity to Merton; Sutton Common and Poulter Park playgrounds in the south of the borough, and Beverly Park is to the west in the borough of Kingston but access is limited for many residents by the barrier of the A3 dual carriageway. These are shown on **Figure 6.1**.

Indicator 3: Quality:

- 6.3.20 The Greenspaces team currently assess 53 equipped play areas using:
- The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Play Value Assessment Tool. Each play area is assessed against different elements under three indicators: Site Features; Equipment Features and Play Co-operation;

- Independently carried out annual health & safety inspection through the Royal society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

Play Value Assessment tool

- 6.3.21 The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) promotes improved playground safety throughout the UK. It follows the European Playground Equipment and Surfacing Standards, which sets the benchmark for levels of quality and safety throughout the EU.
- 6.3.22 Due to its extensive experience in playground design the NPFA developed a method to assess the play value for children. There is no pass or fail – the purpose is to produce a relative score that can be used to compare playgrounds. Sites are assessed on their merits, provision, levels of vandalism design and different manufacturers.
- 6.3.23 Where an item does not meet the appropriate standards of safety the item is scored and the number of non-compliant items recorded together with final play value score. After a general assessment, the playground’s equipment is scored item by item and a final score is awarded.

Merton’s Free Play Strategy Refresh (2010) identified a strategic aim (4):

- 6.3.24 “To develop and improve the quality of play (playable) space across Merton for all children and young people”.
- 6.3.25 The strategic objective SA 4.3 “Improve play spaces identified as in need of improvement in line with funding opportunities” is measured as part of the council’s Play Value Assessment. The sites considered priority for future funding are:
- London Road Playing Fields;
 - Sherwood Recreation Ground;
 - All Saints Recreation Ground;
 - Miles Road Playing Fields; and
 - Pitt Crescent.

Annual Health and Safety Check

- 6.3.26 The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) carried out an independent safety survey of our playgrounds and equipment in July 2009. The inspection includes assessment of:
- Site safety;
 - Suitability and conditions of ancillary items;
 - Standard compliance, suitability and condition of equipment; and
 - Dimensional compliance, suitability and condition of surfacing.
- 6.3.27 Sites are scored on risk using the following table. Each piece of equipment in the playground is marked individually alongside environmental and other hazards such as if the site is adjacent to roads or water hazards or not directly overlooked. The assessed level of risk for a playground are categorised as follows:

Risk Score	Risk Categories
1-3	Very low risk - (Monitor)
4-7	Low risk - (Monitor and take reasonable action if required)

8-12	Medium risk - Take action to reduce if possible, or available
13-20	High risk - Take action immediately and access control measures
21+	Unacceptable risk - Remove or immobilise before taking immediate action and assessment of control measures

Table 6.7 - Assessment Levels for Playground Risks

6.3.28 An average figure is given and the site identified as a low, low to medium, medium or high risk. The 2009 assessment identified the playground sites as follows:

Site	Assessed Level of Risk for the Playground at Time of Inspection
Cottenham Park	Low
Joseph Hood Recreation Ground No.2	Low
King George Playing Field No.2	Low
King George Playing Field No.3	Low
Morden Recreation Ground No.2	Low
Moreton Green	Low
Mostyn Gardens No.1	Low
Mostyn Gardens No.2	Low
Morden Park No.1	Low
Wimbledon Park No.2	Low
Durnsford Road No.2	Low
Pitt Crescent	Low
Haydens Road	Low
Garfield Road No.	Low
Wandle Park	Low
All Saints Recreation Ground	Low
Colliers Wood No.2	Low
Tamworth Recreation Ground No.2	Low
Figges Marsh	Low
Oakleigh Way	Low
Rowan Road No.2	Low
Stanford Road	Low
Pollards Hill No.1	Low
Pollards Hill No.2	Low
Miles Road	Low
Lavender Park No.2	Low
Lavender Park No.3	Low
Glebe Court	Low
London Playing Fields	Low
Rock Terrace No.1	Low
Lewis Road No.2	Low/Med
Elm Nursery No.2	Low/Med
Sir Joseph Hood Memorial	Med
King George Playing Field No.1	Med
Morden Recreation Ground No.1	Med
Morden Park No.2	Med
Abbey Recreation Ground	Med
Wimbledon Park No.1	Med

Durnsford Road Play Area	Med
Garfield Road No.1	Med
Colliers Wood No.1	Med
Tamworth Recreation Ground No.1	Med
Long Bolstead	Med
Rowan Road No.1	Med
Donnelly Green	Med
Sherwood Recreation Ground	Med
Cannons Recreation Ground	Med
Lewis Road No.1	Med
Elm Nursery No.1	Med
Lavender Park No.1	Med
Dundonald	High
Edenvale	High
Rock Terrace No.2	High

Table 6.8 - Playground Assessment

(To note: The sites differ from the map because some of the playgrounds have been sub-divided).

- 6.3.29 A risk assessment of faults and standard failures is given in terms of low, medium and high. As a general principle items marked as “low” only require monitoring. Items marked as “medium” require appropriate action within resources and individual site assessment. Items marked as “high” require urgent action. In rare cases where an item is likely to result in major injury or death, the operator or appropriate representative will be notified from the site by telephone. This will be indicated on the report. In the most recent study sites have been identified as low-med risk, the majority, 30 are considered low risk, 18 medium risk and 3 high risk.
- 6.3.30 The sites identified as high risk were Edenvale, Dundonald and Rock Terrace no 2. The inspector’s concerns regarding the equipment at Edenvale and Dundonald were rectified immediately. Both related to the rope being able to form a noose and trip hazards. Rock Terrace 2 has a skateboard square. Skateboarding by nature of the activity is high risk and so is marked as such. While the skateboarding square remains on site the risk will remain as high. Low risk items should be monitored and if accidents occur, remedial action will be required.

Risk Assessment

- 6.3.31 The last borough Play Value Assessment was carried out in 2007. We will be doing a further assessment after the year 1 play pathfinder sites are completed which should be by early 2012.
- 6.3.32 **Managing Risk in Play Provision:** Implementation guide (Ball and others, 2008) shows how play providers can replace current risk assessment practice with an approach to risk management that takes into account the benefits to children and young people of challenging play experiences, as well as the risks. The guide is based on the Play Safety Forum’s position statement ‘Managing risk in play provision’, first published in 2002. The guide is endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive and RoSPA and states: **‘Children need and want to take risks when they play’**. It aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of death or serious injury.’

Conclusions on quality

6.3.33 The council responds quickly to any risks of health and safety identified by RoSPA but clearly play is never completely without risk. Future strategy must be to reduce the risk of danger while still offering stimulating play environments. Merton will work closely with the NPFA and Play England in line with the implementation guide when designing new and upgrading existing playgrounds across the borough. We will also continue to carry out annual safety checks of equipment.

Indicator 4: Experience

6.3.34 “The percentage of all children and young people (from all social and ethnic groups, including those who are disabled), who think that the range and quality of play facilities and spaces they are able to access in their local neighbourhood is good/very good”.

6.3.35 Experience of spaces and facilities for play and informal recreation – National Indicator 199 (NI 199) collects information about the extent to which children and young people are satisfied with the parks and play areas in their local area. This information is collected through the annual TellUs survey and is available to top tier local authorities through the annual report of the survey.

6.3.36 The latest TellUs survey took place in May 2010. It is distributed through our schools. 1700 questionnaires were returned equating to 4% under 16’s in Merton. 64% of those asked said that they were satisfied with parks and play areas as opposed to the national average of 54%.

Conclusion on Experience

6.3.37 Experiences in play should continue to be measured using NI 199 and other opportunities, such as adding questions to other relevant consultations.

6.4 Funding:

6.4.1 The Children’s Plan (2007, Dept for Children Schools and Families) announced a significant programme of capital investment to make more play areas safe and exciting places to be. Part of the funding was to support the Pathfinder programme.

6.4.2 In 2009 Merton secured £2.5 million to develop 28 play areas and one staffed adventure playground to be completed before March 2011. The funding was to be used to refurbish existing play areas or develop entirely new play areas in parks, on housing estates or adventure playgrounds. Unfortunately the national programme was halted in 2010 due to the economic downturn and only the year one funding was received.

6.4.3 The sites that have benefitted from improvements are:

ID	Name
9	Donelly Green
10	Dundonald Recreation Ground
12	Edenvale Open Space
13	Garfield Recreation Ground;
49	Hatfield Mead
51	Marsh Court
52	Moffat Court
28	Mostyn Gardens
30	Oakleigh Way Recreation Ground

33	Poplar Court
53	Priory Close
40	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields
43	Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground
55	The Beeches

Table 6.9 - Pathfinder Funded sites 2010

- 6.4.4 Six of the fourteen are situated in or next to housing estates and eight in local parks. These play areas were chosen by the council and voluntary sector through the Play Partnership and previous consultations, they are all refurbishments of existing sites. These are identified in **Figure 6.1**.
- 6.4.5 Play funding is also obtained through contributions via planning obligations. The current UDP policy L.8: Open Space Deficiencies sets out the policy requirement for contributions:
- 6.4.6 The Planning Obligations SPD sets out that only unusually large developments are able to provide adequate on-site provision of play space; all housing developments under 50 units are to provide a financial contribution. Contributions are calculated on basis of a year’s maintenance cost of £2,500. Where any new facility is provided an annual maintenance fee for 5 years of £2,500/per year for the new playground is required.
- 6.4.7 With regard to shared private amenity space, if a development scheme is deficient in private amenity space provision there will be a charge of £500 per 10 square metres of deficiency. This level of contribution will be applied with discretion where the scheme is only just below the threshold.
- 6.4.8 Other funding streams for play include BIG Lottery Funding to improve access to play, children’s play initiatives to support development of free local, inclusive play spaces, with the remaining funds being used to support play infrastructure and local projects.

7 Allotments, Garden and City (Urban) Farms

7.0 Introduction:

- 7.0.1 Allotments, community gardens and inner city farms provide valued outdoor leisure areas for residents living in the urban environment. Whilst there has been an established trend toward collective areas to grow vegetables for more than a century in the United Kingdom, the demand for plots has fluctuated over time. In recent times increased environmental awareness has led to renewed interest in smallhold farming with support from all levels of government to encourage self-sufficient food growing in London.
- 7.0.2 Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) sets out planning objectives and guidelines with regard to maintenance, quality and ongoing supply when undertaking an assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities. In this document, allotments, community gardens and city (urban) farms are recognised as one grouped typology, and of significant public value in their contribution to promoting health, well-being and physical exercise for people of all ages.
- 7.0.3 In June 2009, the London Assembly Planning and Housing Committee agreed to conduct a review of the role of the planning system in supporting agriculture in London. The findings ‘Cultivating the Capital: Food growing and the planning system in London’ were published in January 2010 for consultation. The recommendations included that:
- boroughs should incorporate urban agriculture in Local Development Frameworks (LDF’s);

- boroughs should support the range of street and farmers markets and their contribution to the vitality of town centres;
- the London Plan should encourage temporary use of vacant public and private land for agriculture;
- promoting the inclusion and preservation of productive land for growing food within housing developments as well as green roofs and other “unconventional” growing spaces;
- the Mayor should commission an assessment of sites owned by the GLA group regarding their potential for short or long-term urban agriculture and boroughs should do the same for council owned land as well as existing brownfield sites through the LDF process.

Analysis of allotments in Merton:

- 7.0.4 An assessment of all allotment sites within the borough was undertaken to establish their location and levels of usage.
- 7.0.5 There are 20 allotment sites within the borough, one located just over the boundary in the neighbouring borough of Kingston, and one city farm. The majority of sites are maintained by a Local Authority or National Trust. Two sites are maintained by allotment associations and the Ridge Road Allotments are privately owned and managed. Refer to **Figure 7.1**.

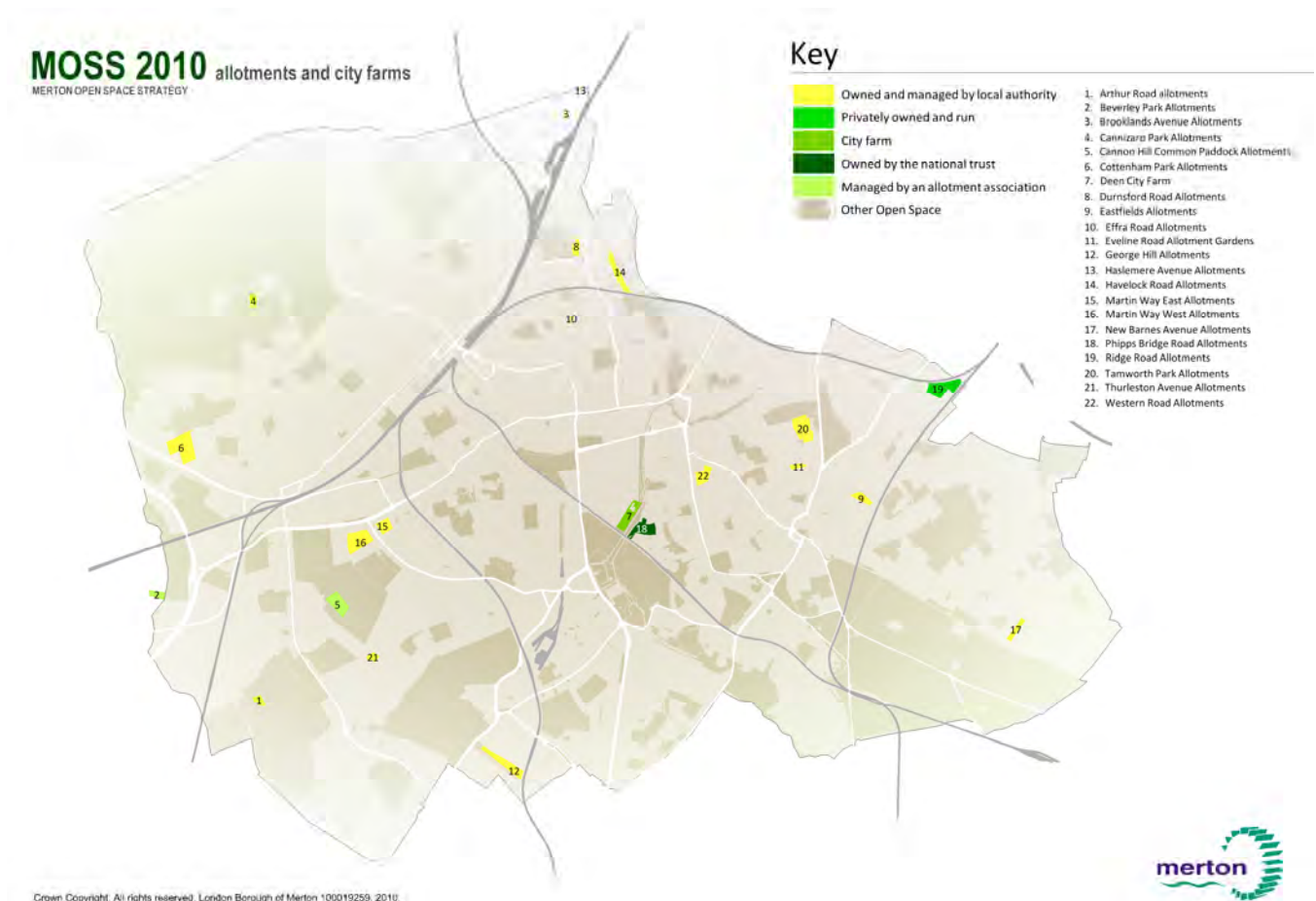


Figure 7.1 - Allotments and city farms

7.0.6 There are 1,461 allotment plots¹¹ within the borough with 35 additional plots located on the Beverley Park site in the London Borough of Kingston. A summary of the sites and the number of plots on each can be seen below in **Table 7.1**. Allotments plots vary in size, but most measure between 125 and 250 square metres (5 to 10 square rods).

No	Name	Area (ha)	Management	Plots
1	Arthur Road Allotments	0.64	Local Authority (Wandsworth)	39
2	Beverly Park Allotments	0.67	Allotment Association	35
3	Brooklands Avenue Allotments	0.25	Local Authority	15
4	Cannizaro Park Allotments	0.70	Local Authority	36
5	Cannon Hill Common Paddock Allotments	2.13	Allotment Association	107
6	Cottenham Park Allotments	4.32	Local Authority	274
7	Deen City Farm		Board of Trustees	N/A
8	Durnsford Road Allotments	0.89	Local Authority	46
9	Eastfields Allotments	1.00	Local Authority	53
10	Effra Road Allotments	1.33	Local Authority	12
11	Eveline Road Allotments Gardens	5.13	Local Authority	22
12	George Hill Allotments	2.40	Local Authority	116
13	Haslemere Avenue Allotments	0.92	Local Authority	5
14	Havelock Road Allotments	1.86	Local Authority	83
15	Martin Way East Allotments	1.26	Local Authority	235
16	Martin Way West Allotments	3.16		
17	New Barnes Avenue Allotments	0.94	Local Authority	56
18	Phipps Bridge Road Allotments	2.19	Local Authority/ National Trust	53
19	Ridge Road Allotments	2.54	Private - North Mitcham Plot Holders Association	95
20	Tamworth Farm Allotments	2.86	Local Authority	88
21	Thurleston Avenue Allotments	0.59	Local Authority	40
22	Western Road Allotments	1.53	Local Authority	86

Table 7.1 - Merton Allotment Sites and City Farms

¹¹ Plot sizes are measured in rods, an old Anglo-Saxon unit so-called because it was the length of the rod used to control a team of oxen. A rod is 5.5 yards (5.03 metres).

7.1 Analysis of Demand:

7.1.1 Allotments within the borough are in high demand, with recent waiting list information shown in **Table 7.2**, indicating that where data is available that the council maintained sites have waiting lists. Many of the sites are advising prospective allotment owners of an indicative waiting period exceeding 2 years, and are closed to further applications. Anyone who lives in Merton can apply for an allotment plot. Due to the high demand for allotments, Merton can no longer accept applications from people living outside the borough.

7.1.2 The sites are generally well distributed throughout the borough. Overgrown plots are reclaimed each year, with 10 plots at Martin Way and 25 plots at Phipps Bridge reclaimed during 2009-2010. There are currently no plans for new allotment sites within the borough.

No	Name	Plots	Applicant Waiting List
1	Arthur Road Allotments	39	Data not available
2	Beverly Park Allotments	35	33
3	Brooklands Avenue Allotments	15	59*
4	Cannizaro Park Allotments	36	144*
5	Cannon Hill Common Paddock Allotments	107	Data not available
6	Cottenham Park Allotments	274	232
8	Durnsford Road Allotments	46	114*
9	Eastfields Allotments	53	37
10	Effra Road Allotments	12	128*
11	Eveline Road Allotments Gardens	22	38*
12	George Hill Allotments	116	77
13	Haslemere Avenue Allotments	5	36*
14	Havelock Road Allotments	83	99*
15	Martin Way East Allotments Martin Way West Allotments	235	136
16	New Barnes Avenue Allotments	56	37
17	Phipps Bridge Road Allotments	53	23*
18	Ridge Road Allotments	95	Data not available
19	Tamworth Farm Allotments	88	50
20	Thurleston Avenue Allotments	40	40*
21	Western Road Allotments	86	48

Table 7.2 - Allotment Waiting Lists

To note: Figure 7.2 – Allotment Waiting Lists (As at July 2010) and * means that the site is closed to further applications)

Revenue and Allotments costs in Merton:

7.1.3 A standard rental charge is applied annually for allotment plot usage rights. This charge is calculated per 25m², and is currently £10, with a lesser charge for concessions. In return, and in addition to the plot usage rights, the council ensures that the water supply is available between spring and autumn and provides waste bays for the effective collection and disposal of waste products.

7.1.4 Total allotment income is generated from tenants' rent contributions. From 1st October 2009- 30th September 2010 the amount collected was £51,514. Income from rent contributions is used for maintenance and repairs to all 18 sites in Merton.

7.2 Conclusion:

- 7.2.1 Merton is currently experiencing high demand for existing allotments. This suggests that allotments are highly valued in their contribution toward open space and leisure activities within the borough. Existing allotments are well spaced throughout the borough and are well placed to meet demand.
- 7.2.2 It is unlikely however that the council is going to be in a financial position to allocate and maintain more land for allotments. Provision of new privately or charitably run allotments should be encouraged but realistically it is unlikely that such proposals will come forward from the private sector in a borough like Merton.
- 7.2.3 Therefore efficient use should be made of existing allotments to ensure that as much of the demand can be met as possible with the amount of land available.

8 Cemeteries and Churchyards

8.0 Introduction:

- 8.0.1 Whilst cemeteries and churchyard areas are not usually associated with recreational open space, they are recognised as an important area for quiet reflection and provide a welcome break within the built environment. They also fulfil an important strategic function by providing burial plots within close proximity to homes of relatives.
- 8.0.2 Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) sets out planning objectives and guidelines with regard to maintenance, quality and ongoing supply when carrying out an assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities. In this document, cemeteries and churchyards are recognised as one grouped open space typology, not only for quiet contemplation and burial but also for their links to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.
- 8.0.3 PPG17 states that local authorities should have regard to the role that such places play regardless of public accessibility. It states that such places are valued in particular for their strategic function, as a community resource and visual amenity.

8.1 Merton's cemeteries and churchyards:

- 8.1.1 There are 10 sites identified within the borough which are used for the purpose of cemeteries or churchyards with five additional sites located just over the borough boundary in the neighbouring boroughs of Croydon, Wandsworth and Sutton. See **Figure 8.1**.

MOSS 2010 cemeteries and church yards

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

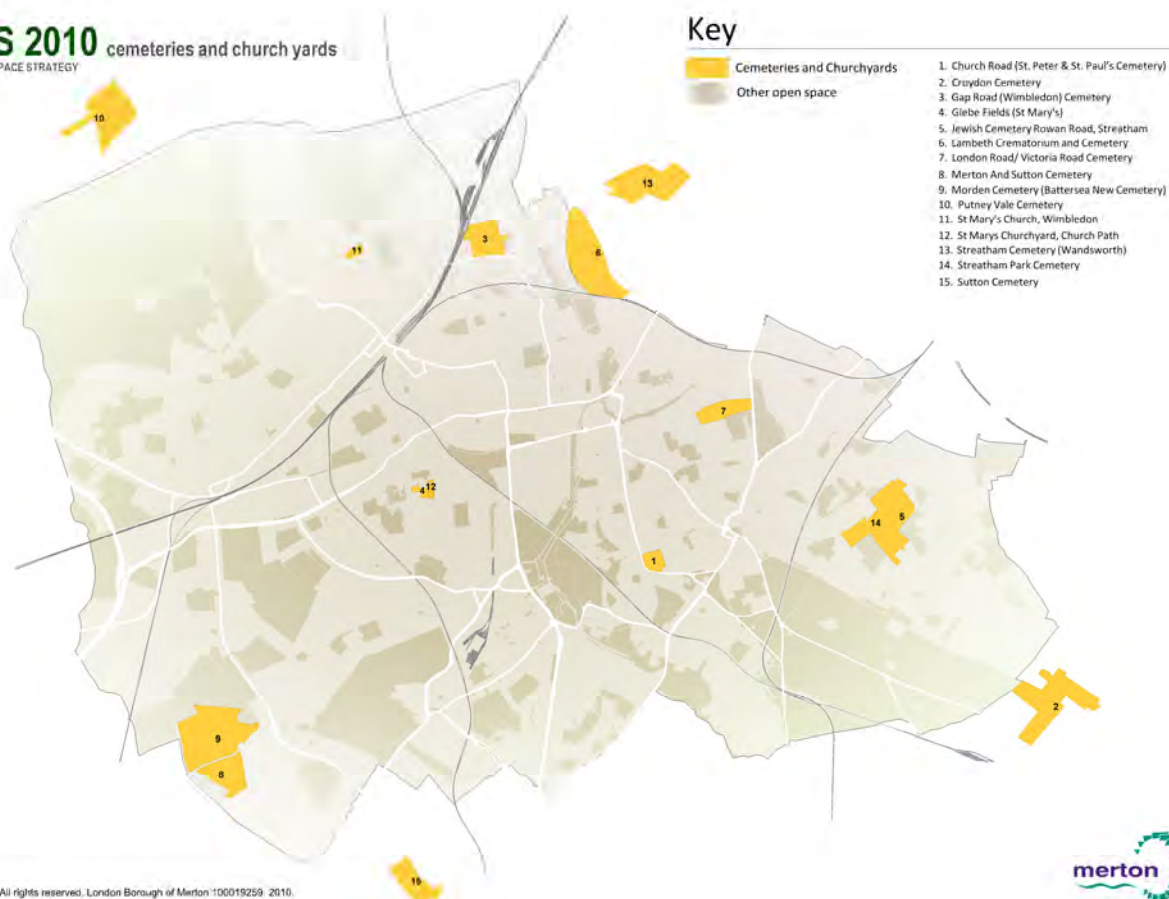


Figure 8.1 - Cemeteries and Church Yards

8.1.2 It is recognised that borough boundaries should not be absolute when measuring supply of existing open spaces, particularly where localised demand can be met by travelling a short distance over the borough boundary. Furthermore, the majority of LB Merton sites offer purchase rights to a grave to non-residents however there is ordinarily a higher fee.

8.1.3 In addition to cemeteries and churchyards, there are five sites which also perform cremations, detailed in **Table 8.1 - Cemeteries and Churchyards** below.

No.	Name	Area (ha)	Managed and Maintained by	Type
1	Church Road (St. Peter & St. Paul's Cemetery)	2.7	Local Authority	Cemetery
2	Croydon Cemetery	20.03	Local Authority (Croydon)	Cemetery and Crematorium
3	Gap Road (Wimbledon) Cemetery	8.35	Local Authority	Cemetery
4	Glebe Fields (St Mary's)	0.83	Local Authority (maintained only)	Churchyard
5	Jewish Cemetery Rowan Road, Streatham	2.14	Burial Society Hessed V'ameth	Cemetery
6	Lambeth Crematorium and Cemetery	20.98	Local Authority (Lambeth)	Cemetery and Crematorium
7	London Road/ Victoria Road Cemetery	6.0	Local Authority	Cemetery

8	Merton and Sutton Cemetery	9.02	Run by Merton and Sutton Joint Cemetery Board and maintained by Local Authority	Cemetery
9	Morden Cemetery (Battersea New Cemetery)	24.14	Local Authority (Wandsworth)	Cemetery and Crematorium
10	Putney Vale Cemetery	16.11	Local Authority (Wandsworth)	Cemetery and Crematorium
11	St Mary's Church, Wimbledon	1.07	Local Authority (maintained only)	Churchyard
12	St Mary's Churchyard. Church Path	0.7	Local Authority (maintained only)	Churchyard
13	Streatham Cemetery (Wandsworth)	15.51	Local Authority (Lambeth)	Cemetery
14	Streatham Park Cemetery	18.5	Dignity Funerals	Cemetery and Crematorium
15	Sutton Cemetery	8.22	Local Authority (Sutton)	Cemetery

Table 8.1 - Cemeteries and Churchyards

Capacity:

8.1.4 Regrettably, precise remaining plot details are obtainable for Merton managed or maintained sites only. After consultation with surrounding boroughs and other organisations the approximate capacity of each site has been collated, which is detailed in **Table 8.2** below.

No.	Name	Area (ha)
1	Church Road (St. Peter & St. Paul's Cemetery)	Closed to further applicants
2	Croydon Cemetery	Open (reclaimed graves)
3	Gap Road (Wimbledon) Cemetery	150
4	Glebe Fields (St Mary's)	Churchyard
5	Jewish Cemetery Rowan Road, Streatham	Unknown
6	Lambeth Crematorium and Cemetery	Limited Plots remaining
7	London Road/ Victoria Road Cemetery	1448
8	Merton and Sutton Cemetery	2216
9	Morden Cemetery (Battersea New Cemetery)	Open (30 years)
10	Putney Vale Cemetery	Open (10 years)
11	St Mary's Church, Wimbledon	Churchyard
12	St Mary's Churchyard. Church Path	Churchyard
13	Streatham Cemetery (Wandsworth)	Limited Plots remaining
14	Streatham Park Cemetery	Open (2-3 years remaining)
15	Sutton Cemetery	Approximately 3,000

Table 8.2 - Cemetery Capacity (As at August 2010)

8.1.5 There are four operating cemeteries run or maintained by Merton Council - Gap Road, Church Road, London Road, and Merton and Sutton Cemetery (managed by a joint board, maintained by the council). With the exception of Church Road, where burials in already purchased graves only are accepted, the council sites have graves available to purchase. On average, on each of these sites, there are between 18 and 232 burials a year, which gives an approximate lifespan of 8 years.

8.1.6 It is understood that both the Lambeth Cemetery and Streatham Park Cemeteries have limited plots remaining, and plots are generally not available for pre-purchase.

8.1.7 Sutton Cemetery has approximately 3000 full size graves available, and an approximate lifespan of 30-50 years.

- 8.1.8 There are plans for a new extension commencing in 2011 for the Merton & Sutton Joint Cemetery. The extension will create about 5000 new plots, which are expected to extend the lifespan of the cemetery to 20 years. Beyond this, there is additional land owned by the cemetery which could provide a further 20,000 new plots. This would extend the life of the cemetery to 86 years.
- 8.1.9 In addition, the Gap Road Cemetery site may provide an extra 200 new plots if old shrub borders were utilised.

8.2 Conclusion

- 8.2.1 There are a number of cemeteries and churchyards available to residents within the borough, and these are generally well distributed. Cemeteries are an important and valued element within the Merton landscape, not only providing visual relief from built form, but also as a place of quiet reflection. Whilst there is finite land available to provide additional cemeteries within the borough, there are plans to ensure supply in the medium term.

9 Playing Pitches

9.0 Introduction

- 9.0.1 In the autumn of 2010, the council successfully bid for grant funding to help explore ways to improve the quality and quantity of playing pitches in Merton. To this end, in early 2011 consultants Neil Allen Associates were commissioned to provide an objective assessment of the current supply and demand for pitches and the potential future requirements for playing pitch needs in the borough over 15 years, in compliance with Sport England requirements.
- 9.0.2 The Merton Sports Pitch Study 2011 will provide more qualitative information on the quality of playing pitches (quality of changing rooms, car parking facilities and floodlighting) and utilisation rates of playing pitches (teams that use the pitches and type of sport that they play) in Merton. Throughout this chapter we have highlighted specific areas where it is envisaged that this future research will supplement further. This future research will assist the council with the management of playing pitches located in Merton.
- 9.0.3 Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) states typology of provision for outdoor sports facilities including participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports. This chapter will look at the playing pitches within the borough.
- 9.0.4 Merton has 68 sites totalling approx 280 hectares of land containing designated playing pitch space used by the community, schools, members of sports organisations and sports clubs as well as being used as casual play space areas. Playing pitches in Merton are used for a variety of sporting activities including football, rugby, cricket and hockey. This section of the study considers the need for playing pitch provision in Merton up to 2025. Refer to **Figure 9.1 - Playing Pitches**.

MOSS 2010 playing pitches

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

Key

- Publicly accessible
- Available to Members
- Available to Sports Club / Community Association
- Used only by Schools (curricular or extra curricular)
- Other open space

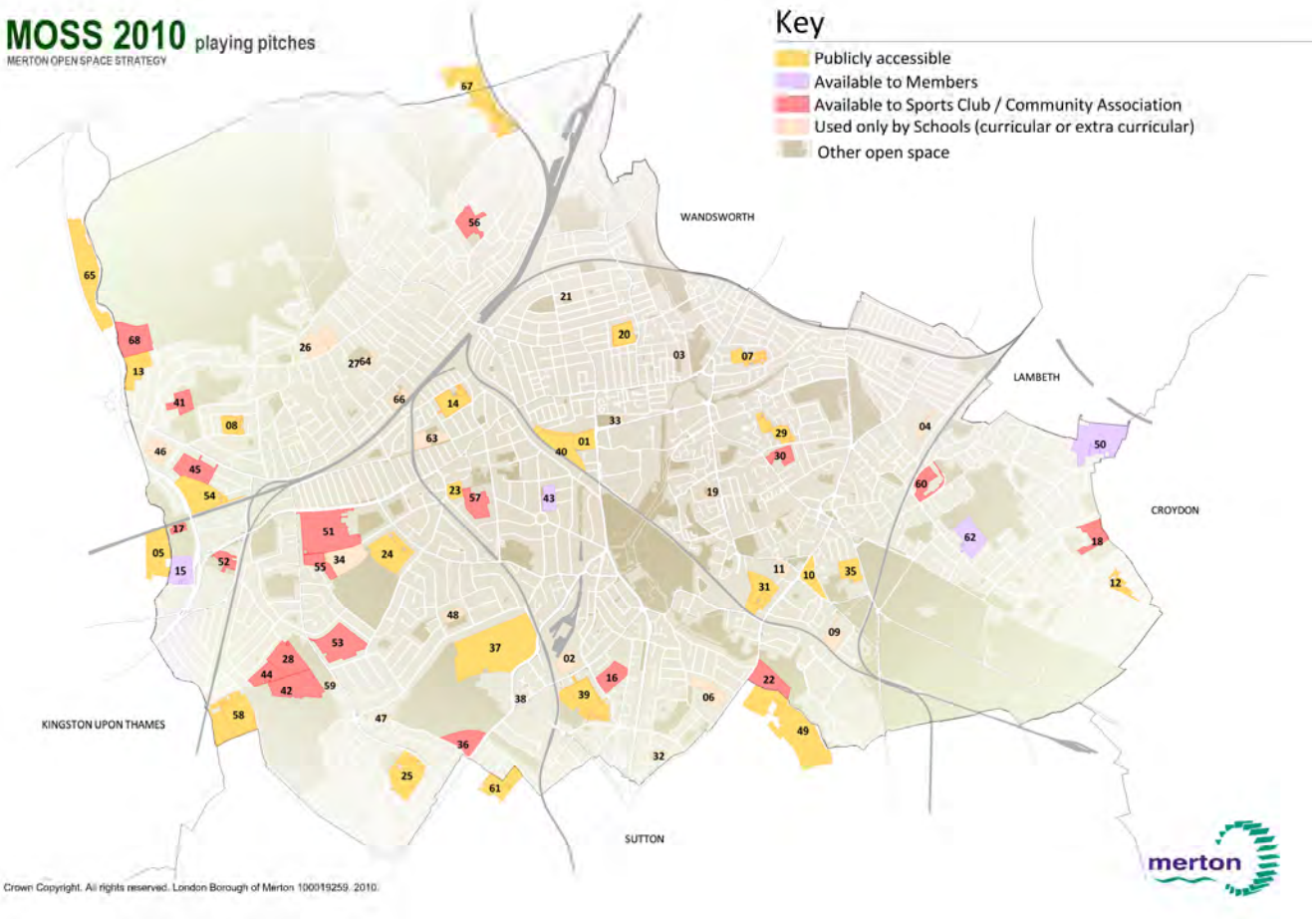


Figure 9.1 - Playing Pitches

9.1 Methodology:

9.1.1 Playing pitches have been assessed under the following headings:

Sub-heading	Explanatory Text
Deficiency:	Existing provision of playing pitches in the borough;
Accessibility:	Distinguishing between playing pitches in secured community use and non secured community use, playing pitch surface types, types of services and facilities available and assessing playing pitches accessibility;
Need:	Identifying utilisation rates and changes in the demographic profile of the borough's population in the next fifteen years to identify demand (need and supply) issues that may arise;
Funding:	Justification for seeking funding arrangements.

Table 9.1 - Methodology for Assessing Playing Pitches

9.1.2 Through both primary and secondary research of both qualitative and quantitative information, this analysis updates the previous MOSS chapter on playing pitches completed by Atkins in 2003. This analysis utilises:

- council information and research;
- desktop research (using aerial photography) and mapping of existing playing pitches; and,
- site visits where the above records are incomplete

9.1.3 The methodology, we have adopted for this section is in line with PPG17, A Companion Guidance to PPG17 (May 2002) and Sports England guidelines 'Towards a Level Playing Field' (2003).

Key Changes in Methodology from Previous Research

9.1.7 The key changes, detailed below, are the principle reasons why there would be differences in the results provided by this study and with studies previously completed. These are:

The inclusion of additional playing pitches

9.1.8 In order to ensure that the needs and deficiencies for playing pitches are both realistic and credible, we have included school playing pitches and playing pitches that are on or within close proximity to Merton's borough boundary i.e. walking distance.

9.1.9 As a London borough, Merton is well connected with surrounding areas by a variety of means of transport, cycling and walking, and thus it is fair to assume that Merton residents will regularly use playing pitches, especially those within close proximity (walking distance) to the borough boundary and vice versa. Therefore for the purpose of this study we have included three open space sites with designated playing pitches that are within close proximity to Merton's borough boundary; Beverly Park (RB Kingston), Poulter Park (LB Sutton) and Sutton Common (LB Sutton) comprising approximately 30 additional hectares of playing pitches.

9.1.10 As part of this study, we have also included 21 playing pitches located in school open space sites (totalling circa 52 hectares). These playing pitches are used for curricular and extra curricular activities. Often these pitches are made available to community groups and organisations after school hours and during the holiday periods.

9.1.11 Therefore, as set out under Section 9.3 below, this study is based on access to 188 playing pitches located within 65 sites (comprising circa 310 hectares) located within the borough or within close proximity to the borough boundary.

Different methodologies applied

9.1.12 In previous studies, the overall number and type of playing pitches used in the 2003 and 2010 research were based on an average of results from several databases in addition to desktop research. For this study, desktop research was supplemented by aerial photography and site visits to ascertain the actual number and types of playing pitches available for use rather than aggregating results from several different datasets.

9.2 Seasonal Differences

9.2.1 Results and recommendations arising from open space studies can differ dependant on which time of year research into playing pitches takes place; for instance, whether the research was undertaken in the summer or winter months. The reason for this is that more people would ordinarily participate in sporting activities in warmer weather and varying results and recommendations could arise. As more

people participate in sporting activities during the summer months; this would identify the maximum demand for playing pitches and would be more realistic to assess accurately the number of playing pitches required in Merton for the next fifteen years.

9.3 Analysis of Existing Playing Pitch Provision

9.3.1 This section will provide an analysis of the current provision of playing pitches in Merton by:

- distinguishing between playing pitches in secured/ non secured community use; and
- the type of playing pitch surface and facilities available.

9.3.2 It is intended for the more qualitative analysis of playing pitches will be completed as part of future research.

Existing Playing Pitch Provision

9.3.3 There are 188 playing pitches located within 65 sites (comprising circa 310 hectares) located within the borough or within close proximity to the borough boundary including playing pitches located in school open space. The full list of playing pitch sites are detailed in Appendix 1. For the purposes of this main report playing pitches have been categorised by its location; firstly by ward and then by sub-area. Categorising by sub-area rather than ward level is more appropriate for playing pitches as it identifies patterns of locations where pitches are available and trends of residents using them. Table 9.2 below provides details on the wards situated within each sub-area.

Sub Area	
Mitcham	Cricket Green, Figges's Marsh, Graveney, Pollards Hill, Lavender, Longthornton.
Morden	Lower Morden, Merton Park, Ravensbury, St Helier.
Wimbledon	Abbey, Colliers Wood, Dundonald, Hillside, Trinity, Village, Wimbledon Park
Raynes Park	Cannon Hill, Raynes Park, West Barnes.

Table 9.2 - Merton's Sub-areas for Play Pitch Assessment

9.3.4 As detailed in **Table 9.3** below, a large proportion of the playing pitches in Merton are located in the northern and western areas of the borough; in the Raynes Park and Wimbledon sub-areas. The majority of playing pitch provision in the borough is for football (full-sized), followed (in order of the number of pitches available) by mini-football, cricket and rugby. Outside of the Raynes Park sub-area, the majority of mini-football pitches are part of facilities provided by local schools.

	Sub Area	Total no sites	Size (ha)	Full Size Football	Mini Football	Rugby
Playing pitches accessible to the general public	Mitcham	7	32.7	7	2	0
	Morden	7	34.3	11	4	4
	Raynes Park	14	106.5	28	23	8
	Wimbledon	9	54.3	22	3	3
	Subtotal	37	227.8	68	32	15
Playing pitches located in school open spaces	Mitcham	7 (3)	13.5 (9.1)	3 (3)	4 (1)	0
	Morden	6 (1)	9.1 (3.9)	2 (1)	5	1 (1)
	Raynes Park	4 (1)	12 (1.7)	4 (1)	1	3
	Wimbledon	8 (1)	15 (3.7)	7	5 (1)	1

	Subtotal	25 (6)	49.6 (18.4)	16 (5)	15 (2)	5 (1)
Sites outside LB Merton	LB Kingston & LB Sutton	3	31.8	3	1	3
	Total	65	309.2	87	48	23

Table 9.3 - Existing Pitch Provision in Merton

(Source: Council Research, July 2010). Note: Other than numbers in brackets, the numbers in the table above represent playing pitches and sites that are defined as being within secured community uses

9.4 Availability and Accessibility of Playing Pitches

9.4.1 Using the Sports England Guidance, playing pitches are designated as those that are available to the local community (sites in secured community use) and sites that are not available for community use (no public access to the site). These categories can be generally described as follows:

Secured Community Use (SCU): Includes playing pitches owned by the local authority; schools and other institutional facilities that are made available to sports clubs/community associations; and, any playing pitches that are used or maintained by clubs/private organisations which are made available to the public through membership of a club or admission fee.

No Public Access to the Site: Includes sites that are not made available for use by the community. This section includes mostly playing pitches located in School Open Space that through both policy and practice, are used strictly for educational purposes.

9.4.2 79% of sites (149 of 188 playing pitches included in the study) in the borough would be defined as within secured community use.

9.4.3 Excluding sites that are defined as not being in SCU, a large proportion of playing pitches located in school open space are only used by the schools for curricular or extra curricular activities. Only 24% (6 sites) of school open spaces that contain playing pitches are available to sports club/community associations and 50% of these sites (3 school open space sites) are located in Mitcham and the surrounding areas and 16.6% (1 school open space sites) are located in the Wimbledon, Raynes Park, and Morden sub-areas.

9.4.4 Significantly, both the Morden and Mitcham sub-areas have the fewest number of playing pitches in Merton, with only:

- 25 playing pitches (26%) in SCU in Mitcham; and,
- 26 playing pitches (26%) in SCU in Morden

9.4.5 This is in comparison to:

- 35 playing pitches in SCU in Wimbledon (22%); and,
- 72 playing pitches in SCU in Raynes Park (46%).

9.4.6 In the Mitcham sub-area, all of the full-sized football pitches and cricket playing pitches located in school open spaces are within SCU. Similarly in the Morden sub-area, all of the rugby and cricket playing pitches located within school open spaces are within SCU. Whereas in the Wimbledon and Raynes Park sub-areas, which have a large proportion of playing pitches in SCU (66% of playing pitches), only one full-sized football and one mini-football playing pitch located in school open spaces are in SCU.

Other Types of Playing Pitches available in Merton:

9.4.7 In addition to the playing pitches for full sized football, mini football, full sized rugby, mini rugby and cricket pitches, our research indicated that there were other playing pitches available for Gaelic football (2 playing pitches), lacrosse (1 playing pitch) and hockey (two playing pitches) in Merton.

9.5 Types of Playing Pitches Available in Merton

9.5.1 In order to assess supply and demand for playing pitches in Merton, it is important to ascertain if these playing pitches are used on a regular basis and the frequency of use. One aspect of this is to gain an understanding as to the types of playing pitches (grass, turf, hard surface and all weather pitch) and accompanying facilities (changing rooms, floodlights, accessibility and car parking facilities) available in Merton.

9.5.2 Based on council playing pitch information in August 2010, we have identified the following information:

- A large proportion of council owned playing pitches in the borough are grass pitches;
- There are very few council owned hard surface/ all weather pitches in the borough;
- The majority of council owned weather pitches are used for multi use games areas (MUGA's) and not exclusively for one sporting activity;
- The majority of council owned pitches in the borough have car parking facilities (either car parks or on-street car parking);
- The majority of council owned playing pitches have changing room facilities; and
- A minority of playing pitches have floodlighting available.

9.5.3 Appendix 1: Playing Pitch Assessment Update of the MOSS 2005 provides a full qualitative assessment of playing pitches in Merton with reference to playing pitch surface type, car parking facilities, changing facilities and floodlights. It is intended for the future qualitative and quantitative study of playing pitches to supplement this part of the refresh; including providing information on playing pitches in SCU located in school open spaces and in private ownership.

9.6 Accessibility to Playing Pitches

9.6.1 Accessibility to playing pitches by car, public transport, cycling or on foot contribute to the utilisation rates of playing pitches. If playing pitches are within close proximity, particularly within walking distance of residential areas, people are more likely to participate in sporting activities. Therefore we have assessed accessibility) to playing pitches by cycling and by foot. While this assessment does not take into consideration the actual physical barriers to walking or cycling to a playing pitch, it does show the broad catchment of residential areas to the playing pitches in Merton.

9.6.2 To identify the accessibility, playing pitches have been assessed against the following distance benchmarks

Walking	400 metres	Equivalent to 5 minutes walking distance
	800 metres	Equivalent to 10 minutes walking distance
Cycling	2km	Equivalent to 10/ 15 minutes cycling distance

Table 9.4 - Accessibility Benchmarks

9.6.3 As discussed in Chapter 6, Provision for Children and Young People, for walking distance the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) sets standards for walking distance to different types of play areas,

whether local or neighbourhood level. These walking and radial distances vary from 100m to 1,000m for walking distances and from 60m to 600m for radial distance, which is (equivalent of between 1 min and 15 minutes of time) ultimately dependant on type of play area. Similarly, the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007) national indicator for assessing deficiencies in proximity to local shopping facilities is 800m (10 minute walk). Although this benchmark is used to assess proximity to local facilities, this benchmark of 800m is based on the principle that on average a person walks 5km/hour.

9.6.4 For cycling, the benchmark of 2km used in this study is based on Merton's 2010 Biking Borough Study definition of short journeys for cycling. (See chapter 11).

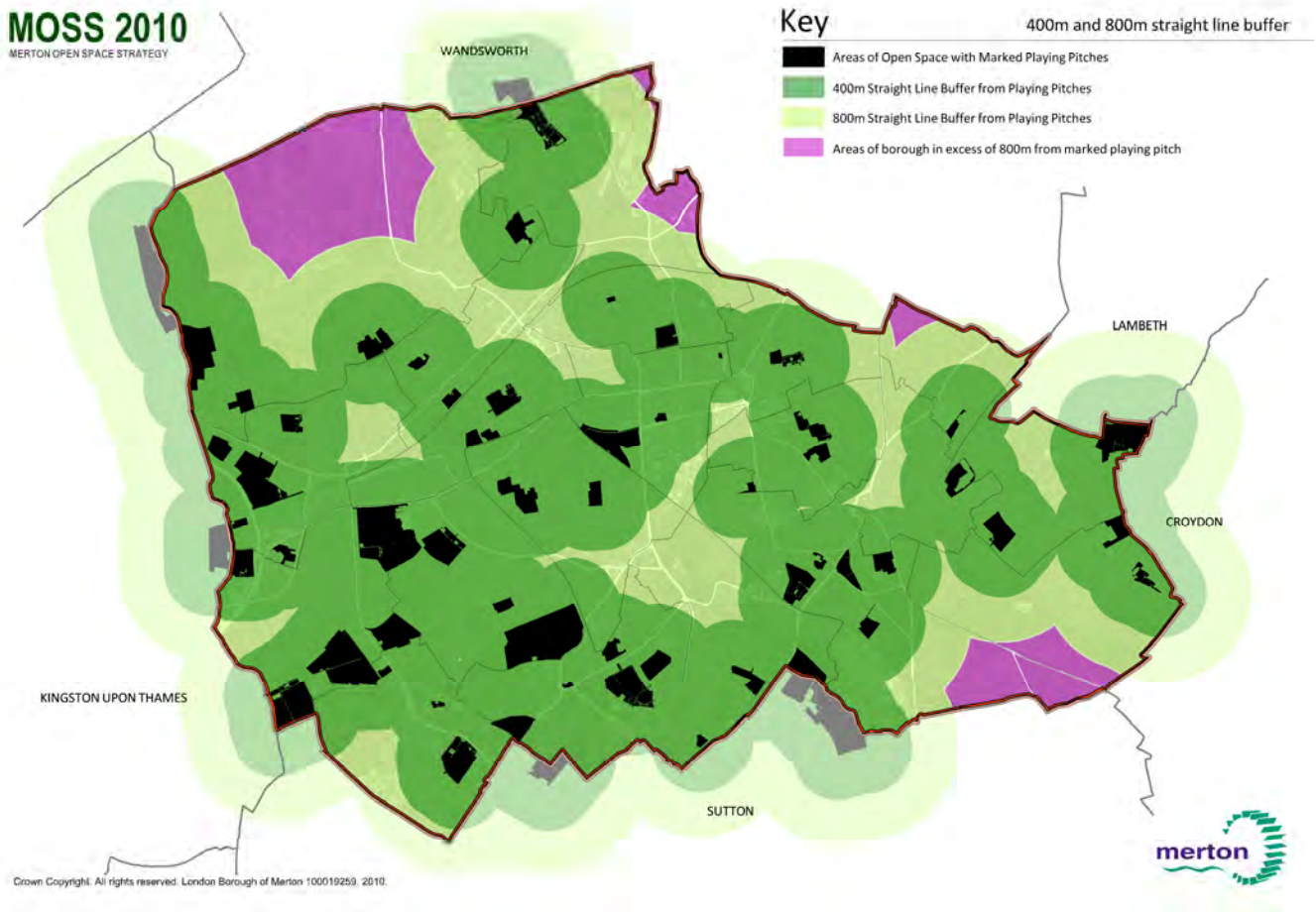


Figure 9.2 - Playing Pitch straight line buffer

Playing Pitch accessibility by foot:

9.6.5 **Figure 9.2** demonstrates that the majority of playing pitches in Merton are roughly within 10 minutes walking distance (catchment area) of a residential area in Merton. The areas of the borough in excess of 800m from a marked playing pitch (marked in Fig. 9.2 in pink) are mostly parts of Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons and so have few residents.

9.6.6 Even with lowering the radius to 400m distance, a large proportion of playing pitches in secured community use would be broadly within 5 minutes walking distance of residential areas (catchment area). This is shown in a darker colour green at **Figure 9.2**.

Playing Pitch accessibility by cycling:

9.6.7 Using the cycling threshold of 2km distance (this equates to a 10 to 15 minute cycle) all playing pitches in the borough are within the 2km radius for cycling.

9.6.8 The qualitative assessment of playing pitches to supplement this information further, for instance, by identifying whether there are cycle racks or car parks (that requires payment) at or near these playing pitches.

9.7 Demand for Playing Pitches:

9.7.1 This section examines the need and demand for playing pitches in Merton by:

- gaining a clear understanding of the usage rates of playing pitches in the borough;
- analysis of population projections in the next 15 years; and,
- comparing the ratio of playing pitches per person in Merton with neighbouring boroughs.

9.7.2 It is intended for more qualitative analysis on demand for playing pitches will be undertaken in further research and this will supplement this quantitative information; particularly regarding information on qualitative utilisation rates and demand for playing pitches.

9.8 Usage rates of existing council owned playing pitches

9.8.1 Council playing pitch information (August 2010) based on analysis of electronic booking information, shows that council owned rugby, cricket and lacrosse playing pitches are at 100% usage rates whereas council owned football playing pitches are at 70% or 80% usage rates. Based on the council's records of playing pitch regular hires, there are currently 85 teams that regularly rent council owned playing pitches mostly to play sports such as football, cricket, rugby and lacrosse. **Figure 9.3** below shows the percentage of sports that teams who regularly hire council playing pitches play.

9.8.2 Although it is understandable that utilisation rates for playing pitches vary depending on which time of year (summer months or winter months) analysis was undertaken, it is felt that using the summer figures represents the maximum demand and where demand for booking playing pitches or even using playing pitches for casual use would show highest likely demand.

% of sports that use council owned pitches

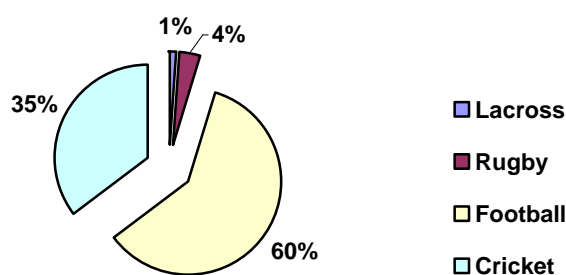


Figure 9.3 - Percentage of sports that use council owned playing pitches

- 9.8.3 Figure 9c shows that most popular sport for bookings on council owned sites is for football, with the majority of bookings, at least 98%, for men’s teams and the remaining 2% of bookings for female teams.
- 9.8.4 Depending on queries and demand for additional playing pitches in the borough, and if need cannot be accommodated within existing council owned playing pitches, the council’s existing policy is to facilitate demand by creating new playing pitches for the required sport. Although this measure is practicable in the short term, we need to make certain if we have an adequate supply of playing pitch facilities to address needs and demand of a growing/declining population and to identify if we as a borough require additional / fewer playing pitches.

Analysis of Population Forecasts

- 9.8.5 Future needs for playing pitches in Merton is assessed on a strategic level by analysing predicted population growth forecasts for the next fifteen years (the duration of the plan period).
- 9.8.6 **Table 9.5** below provides a summary of the GLA 2008 Population Forecasts from 2011 to 2026 Round Demographic Projection – low. The GLA projections are based on the Office for National Statistics mid-year estimates for 2001 and incorporate annual births and deaths as used in the estimates between mid-2001 and mid-2007. Based on the 2001 in conjunction with annual birth and death rates are linked to housing capacity data provided by London boroughs.
- 9.8.7 However it is important to note that the GLA 2008 round projections are lower than the Office of National Statistics projections for Merton for the same period. Annual birth rate data for the borough supports the ONS projections (i.e. greater population growth) rather than the lower projections supplied by the GLA – in the six years from 2003-2009 the number of children born in Merton rose by more than 30% . Therefore the GLA 2008 projections should be treated as a very conservative view of the borough’s likely future population
- 9.8.8 For analysis purposes, we have categorised the population forecasts into four separate groups; 5-9yrs, 10-19yrs, 20-49yrs and 50+ yrs. These age group categories are appropriate for the purposes of this study and for assessing playing pitch requirements as people’s activity needs and requirements change over time and the need for different types of playing pitches. Persons within the age group of 0-4 yrs, were excluded, as these needs would be minimal and are addressed in different sections of this MOSS Refresh Study.
- 9.8.9 Persons between 5–19 yrs (particularly between 5 to 12 yrs) require more junior pitches for football with the majority of need being catered by playing pitches located within schools premises up until the age of 16 yrs (this is when students typically leave secondary schools and thereafter have the option of attending college where they can choose which subjects to study). Requirements for playing pitches within this age group of between 5–19 yrs would be mostly for extra curricular sporting activities. For these reasons, the need requirements of playing pitches for persons over the age groups 19yrs+ are significantly higher.

	2011	% change in 5 years	2016	% change in 5 years	2021	% change in 5 years	2026
5-9yrs	12,000	+15.5%	13,800	-6.5%	12,900	-5.7%	12,200
10-19 yrs	21,800	0%	21,800	+8%	23,600	+2%	24,000
20 – 49yrs	93,800	-4.95%	89,200	-4.5%	85,200	-3.5%	82,100
50+ yrs	55,000	+6.8%	58,700	+5.6%	62,100	+4.8%	65,000
Total Population	198,000		198,045		197,345		196,700

Table 9.5 - Summary of Populations Forecasts from 2011 to 2026

To note: These figures have been rounded up/down to the nearest 100 persons. The percentage shows the difference (% increase/decrease) from one forecast year to another.

9.8.10 It is important to highlight that although forecasting the population growth/decline for the next fifteen years is useful and beneficial in spatial planning terms there are issues with the accuracy of population forecasts being realistic for this length of time. As mentioned above, the GLA 2008 population projection does not reflect the same projections produced by the Office of National Statistics or the birth rates; therefore the GLA 2008 data should be taken as a very conservative projection of Merton's population, especially from 2016 and beyond. As the census is due to be updated in March 2011, with publication in 2013, it is reasonable to suggest that this study's analysis of playing pitches should be updated in the next five years following publication. Forecasting demand for at least the next five years is in accordance with PPS12: Local Spatial Planning (July 2008).

9.9 Demand for playing pitches

Demand for playing pitches in secured community use for the first five years:

- 9.9.1 In the next five years the number of young people between 5-19yrs is projected to increase by 15.5%. The majority of playing pitch demand for this age group would be for junior football and rugby pitches, particularly for extra curricular activities. It is expected that the age group from 19+yrs to increase by less than 2% within the same timeframe.
- 9.9.2 Therefore using the demand scenario of at least 90% of playing pitches in the council's ownership (average usage rates for football, rugby and cricket pitches) being used in the summer months (highest demand scenario of demand), all playing pitches in Merton, whether in public or private ownership, should be retained. In circumstances where there is extra demand for both junior football and rugby pitches, new playing pitches could be identified and re-marked for the relevant sporting activity. Also, if there is a decline in the age group over 19yrs booking requests for playing pitches, these full sized playing pitches could be re-marked to accommodate junior teams..
- 9.9.3 The analyses arising from the qualitative research proposed for 2011 (Merton's proposed Playing Pitch Study 2011) will be used to inform what type of maintenance work or provision of new facilities required. This will help to improve the overall quality of the existing playing pitch sites and help increase usage rates.

Demand for playing pitches in secured community use for the next 10 years:

- 9.9.4 Between 2011 and 2021, the population between 5-19yrs is predicted to significantly increase by 17% whereas it is anticipated that the population in the age category of 19+yrs will increase by circa 3% (GLA 2008 projections) Therefore demand for playing pitches, particularly from the younger age groups would justify the:
- retention of existing playing pitches in Merton (both within public and private ownership);
 - continual need for funding the upkeep and maintenance of playing pitches in council ownership; and
 - identification of new sites within council ownership and to work jointly with private providers (where appropriate) for the provision of new playing pitches as part of new developments.

Demand for playing pitches in secured community use for the plan period (15 years):

9.9.5 Although as already mentioned, it is difficult to ensure accuracy of population forecasts for a 15 year period, the GLA's population forecast from 2011 to 2026 shows that the population between 5-19yrs is expected to decline by circa 2% whereas the population over 19yrs+ is expected to increase by 2.4%. However this small decline in population between the age group of 5-19yrs would not justify the loss of playing pitches in the borough over the 15-year period, especially as Merton's birth rate rise of more than 30% from 2003-2009 suggests that there will be more young people in Merton than the GLA 2008 projection sets out. Therefore, until more detailed population data becomes available, existing provision of playing pitches would need to be maintained..

9.10 Other aspects of playing pitch assessment that should be taking into consideration

9.10.1 In addition to assessing needs, supply and demand for Sports England guidelines 'Towards a Level Playing Field' (2003) recommends that a 'strategic reserve' of playing pitches should be identified for a number of reasons including:

- the informal use of playing pitches;
- demand for playing pitches for different types of sporting activities (sometimes remarking playing pitches may not be appropriate for a particular sporting activity);
- playing pitches requiring maintenance, recovery or being waterlogged; and,
- uncertainties with forecasting demand for playing pitches in the future. (This is particularly relevant to Merton as set out earlier in this chapter)

9.10.2 Also, within the next fifteen years, lifestyles and attitudes towards health and healthy living could change and have a significant impact on the number of people who participate in sport (even those between 5 to 19 yrs) thus this rate of demand for playing pitches could change. Therefore, it is important that the council should ensure that there is some strategic reserve of playing pitches in Merton.

9.11 Other Types of playing pitches

9.11.1 Should demand be sought for playing pitches for other type of sporting activities, outside of the more popular sporting activities such as football, rugby and cricket, this demand could be accommodated in the following way:

- Gaelic Football: this sport could be easily accommodated on existing rugby playing pitches;
- Lacrosse: this sport could be accommodated on existing football playing pitches; and
- Hockey: this sport is ordinarily played on small grass or synthetic/ turf surfaces and could be accommodated on existing MUGA in LB Merton.

9.11.2 Currently the council are receiving a number of queries from AFL (Australian Football League) for playing pitches in the Wimbledon area, and depending on playing pitch availability, this sport could be accommodated on existing football and rugby playing pitches. However not all sports can be accommodated on existing playing pitches due to existing capacity issues and the different design requirements of playing pitches for the required sporting activities. Therefore the council should consider identifying new playing pitches should demand arise.

9.12 Funding

Why funding is required

9.12.1 Funding is required to ensure that there is an adequate number of usable playing pitches to meet the borough’s existing needs and future demands to:

- maintain the physical aspects of existing playing pitches (including maintenance of changing facilities, floodlights and hygiene) in council ownership;
- make improvements to the existing playing pitch provision in council ownership throughout the borough (including provision of more changing facilities, floodlighting, and secure bicycle racks);
- provide more council owned synthetic, turf and all weather pitches throughout the borough (this would allow all year usage of pitches for all sporting activities ;
- manage, upkeep and maintenance of playing pitches in council ownership; and,
- identify and provide new playing pitches in the borough should demand arise (including identifying suitable sites, marking of pitches, providing changing facilities and floodlighting);

Fees for playing pitches in Merton

9.12.2 Merton has a schedule of charges associated with booking playing pitches on regular or casual basis which is ultimately determined by the type of sport, the type of the playing pitch and associated facilities (for instance, availability of changing facilities, type of surface and whether the pitch is for an adult or junior pitch). The price charter from 01 April 2010, details the price range for hiring playing pitches. The price ranges to hire a playing pitch are detailed in **Table 9.6** below. The price charter is updated on an annually basis.

Casual Booking		<i>Adult:</i>	Between £37 and £95;
		<i>Junior:</i>	Between £26 and £66;
Regular Booking	Fixtures of 11	<i>Adult:</i>	Between £707 and £825;
		<i>Junior:</i>	Between £494 and £579;
	Fixtures of 13	<i>Adult:</i>	Between £941 and £1,052;
		<i>Junior:</i>	Between £658 and £736.

Table 9.6 - Pitch Hire Charges

9.12.3 The price that the council can hire out a playing pitch is determined by the quality of the playing pitch, type of facilities and services available and the price must be competitive in comparison to other playing pitches not within council ownership. The quality of the overall council owned playing pitches will be assessed in the forthcoming research, which is intended to supplement this study.

9.12.4 The revenue generated from hiring the playing pitches is used for the maintenance, management, provision of new facilities and identification and provision of new playing pitches to meet demand. Ultimately, the overall revenue generation is dependant on usage rates, which is determined by weather, sporting seasons, popularity and participation in sports as well as the overall quality of the playing pitch. Thus, revenue generated from hiring playing pitches is a fixed source of income; it is not constant. As such, this source of income is supplemented by other sources such as grant funding and other monies continually contributed towards the maintenance, management, quality, quantity and accessibility of playing pitches in the borough.

Grant funding:

9.12.5 Grant funding, for example, from Sport England and the Mayor of London would contribute significantly towards the maintenance and new provision of playing pitches in the borough. However due to the existing economic climate and various budgets both regionally and nationally being reduced, there is a need for Merton to explore various methods upon which to secure funding for the continual investment and support for playing pitches in the borough.

Developer Contributions received through S106 agreements:

- 9.12.6 Merton's Planning Obligations SPD (2006) sets out how funding is calculated for section 106 requirements associated with new development in the borough, including for open space, which includes playing pitches.
- 9.12.7 By April 2014, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will largely replace Section 106 agreements for contributions for open space, including playing pitches. As the CIL received will also be to support other infrastructure, including education, healthcare and transport, accurate information on the use of and the expected impact of new development on playing pitches will be essential to justify CIL expenditure on open spaces and playing pitches

9.13 Conclusion:

- 9.13.1 The majority of playing pitches located in Merton are available to the community and cater for all age groups. These playing pitches can accommodate a wide range of sporting activities including football, rugby, cricket, hockey and lacrosse. There is also interest from alternative sports (e.g. Gaelic football; Australian Football League)
- 9.13.2 The analysis of supply and demand demonstrates that Merton should maintain existing pitch provision in the short and medium term and consider new opportunities for playing pitches in Merton to accommodate different sporting activities, particularly in the Morden and Mitcham areas.
- 9.13.3 Questions over the accuracy of population projections beyond five years – particularly where the GLA 2008 projections for young people (up to 19 years) differ radically from the ONS projections and the birthrate - means that the data used in this study is likely to be a conservative projection of Merton's population. On publication of the 2011 Census, data should be reviewed against these projections. Depending on how well the demographic profile of Merton residents from the 2011 Census aligns with the GLA projections for 2011, an addendum to this study could be explored where there are large discrepancies, in order to accurately plan for playing pitches in the long-term.
- 9.13.4 Furthermore, this analysis emphasis that continual funding is required and opportunities of funding needs to be explored in order to meet residents existing and future needs for playing pitches.

10 Leisure

10.0 Introduction:

10.0.1 This section includes swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness facilities (gyms), indoor tennis centres, outdoor tennis courts, outdoor / green gyms & trim trails, paddling pools, ice rinks and other sports specific facilities, but not artificial grass pitches (ATP) and multi-use games areas (MUGAS) as these are covered in other sections of this document.

10.0.2 The two recognised planning tools used to measure supply and demand for sport and leisure are the Active Places Power and the Sports Facility Calculator, whilst the Active People Survey (APS) measures sport participation. The APS was first measured in 2005/06 and this provided Merton's baseline of 22%. Merton has improved year on year with 23% active people in 2007/08 and now in 2009/10 the figure has increased to 24%. This demonstrates an increase over four years of 2.2% against a local target in the borough's Local Area Agreement of 1% over three years.

10.0.3 **Figure 10.1** provides details of all facilities in the borough.

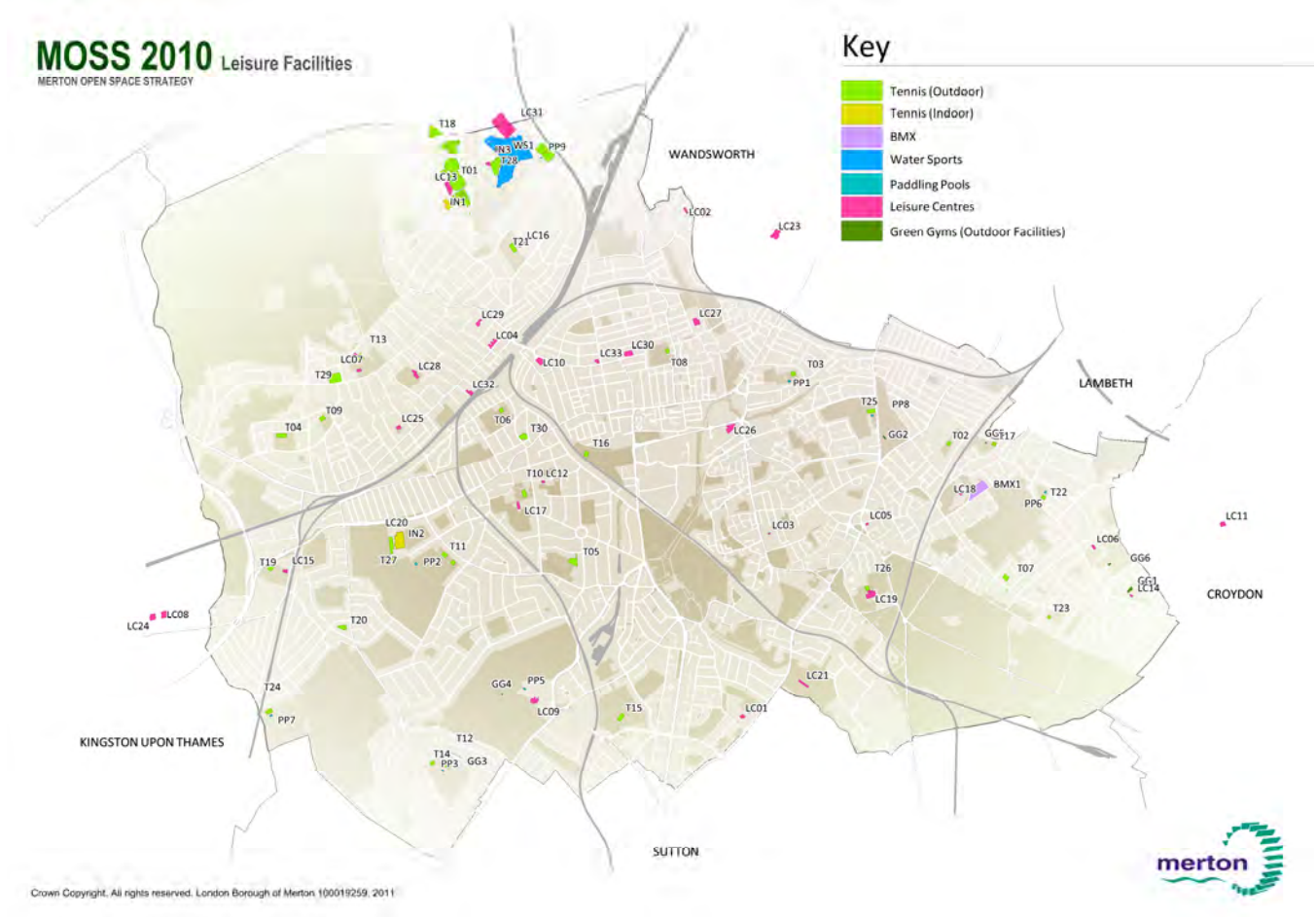


Figure 10.1 - Leisure Facilities

10.1 Leisure Centres:

10.1.1 Merton currently own three leisure centres:

- Morden Park Pool, London Road, Morden (St Helier ward);

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- Canons Leisure Centre, Madeira Road, Mitcham (Cricket Green ward);
- Wimbledon Leisure Centre, Latimer Rd (Trinity ward).

10.1.2 Each of Merton's leisure centres have swimming pools and offer other facilities such as sauna, exercise classes, sports halls, health and fitness suites, crèche and toddler facilities and community space (see Figure 10.2).

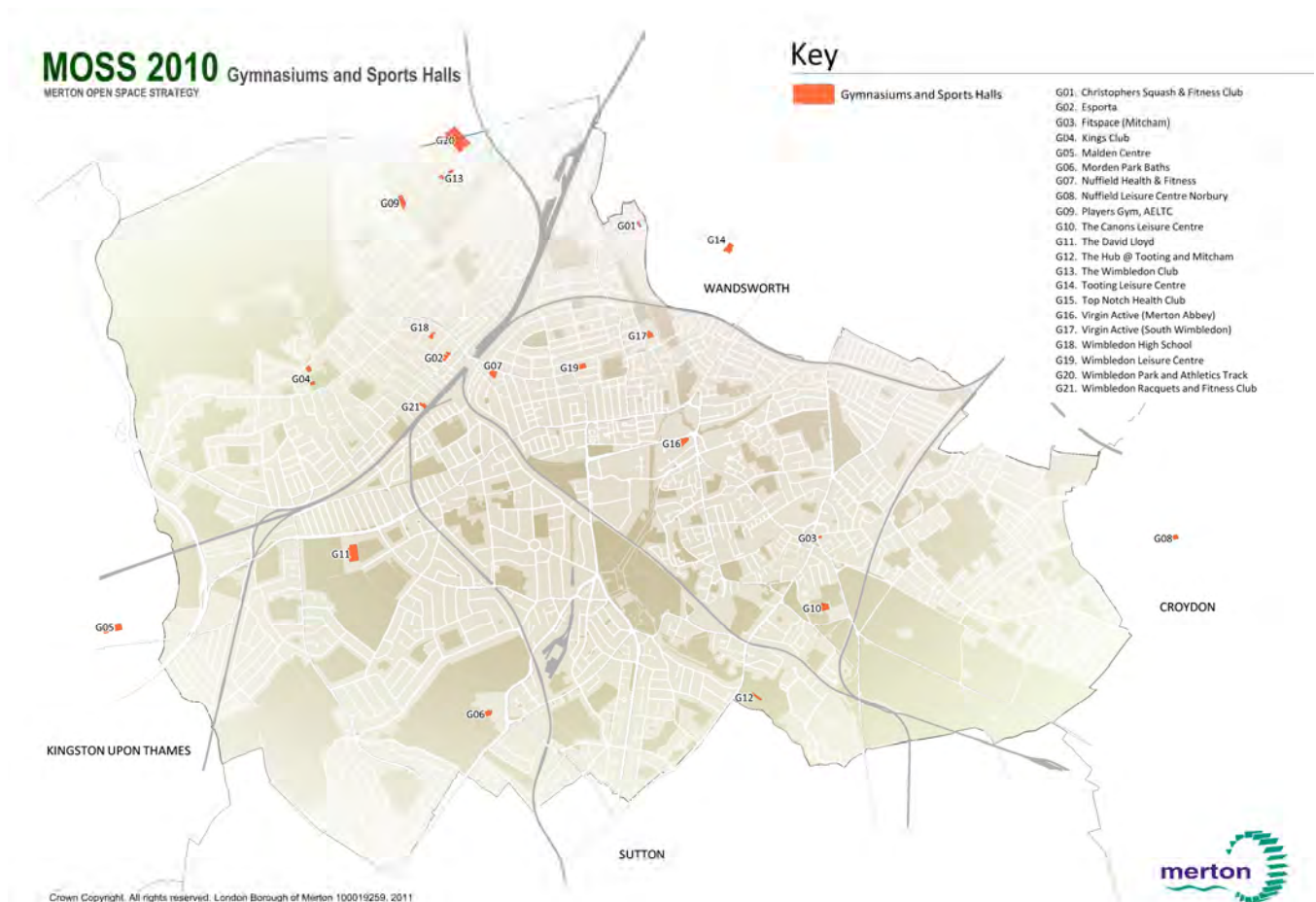


Figure 10.2 - Gymnasiums and Sports Halls

10.1.3 Merton's leisure centres are managed by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) under a contract. The aim is to promote and encourage more people to engage in health and physical activity at the leisure centres, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability or financial background.

10.1.4 A new 15 year contract was entered into with GLL in December 2010. The benefits of the contract include:

- Local Leisure Centre Advisory Committees;
- Delivering cross cutting programmes with partners;
- Including health, crime diversion, children and young people strategies.
- Introducing Inclusive Fitness Initiative Gyms;
- Improving access for those with disabilities;
- Investing in Community Development Officers to work directly in the community to engage new users;
- Delivering the 'bridging the gap' agenda in the east of the borough
- A social pricing policy
- Investing in the leisure centres to make them modern and relevant for today's customers.

- 10.1.5 The contract places particular importance on the need to increase sports and physical activity participation and assisting the council achieve its wider social objectives such as improving health, reducing obesity and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. GLL is required to increase usage at the Council's three leisure centres on an annual basis to 2025, whilst Merton has set a minimum target of an annual increase of 0.3% year on year for resident participation in sport and physical activity on average 3 x 30 minutes a week.
- 10.1.6 Under the terms of the contract, Merton Council and GLL will work together to improve and increase the range of opportunities on offer within the borough's leisure centres; there is an agreed programme of facility improvements within the new contract.
- 10.1.7 Facility improvements are planned for the Canons and Wimbledon Leisure Centres during the next 15 years. However Morden Park Pools is ageing with significant and increasing operating costs and has the potential to fail during the next 15 years.
- 10.1.8 In December 2010, the council commissioned Sport England to undertake an assessment of the level of supply and demand for swimming pools and sports halls in Merton. This was undertaken using Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM), a computer model which helps to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities.
- 10.1.9 The FPM seeks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities for a particular sport are capable of meeting local demand for that sport taking into account how far people are prepared to travel to a facility. In order to estimate the level of sports facility provision in an area, the model compares the number of facilities available (supply), by the demand for that facility (demand) that the local population will produce.
- 10.1.10 The findings from these assessments will be used to determine what swimming and sports hall facilities are needed in the future as well as identifying preferred areas for location.

10.2 Swimming pools

- 10.2.1 The Sport England Facilities Planning Model statistics for swimming pools take account of all existing indoor swimming pools of at least 20m in length or minimum 160m² (this is a 20m x 8m pool) which are available for community use and for all or part of the weekly peak period. If there is an individual pool, which is less than 160m, for example a learner pool, which is part of a larger complex of pools, then this is included. All outdoor pools and those indoor pools, which have no access for community use have been excluded (see **Figure 10.3**).

MOSS 2010 Swimming and Paddling Pools
MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

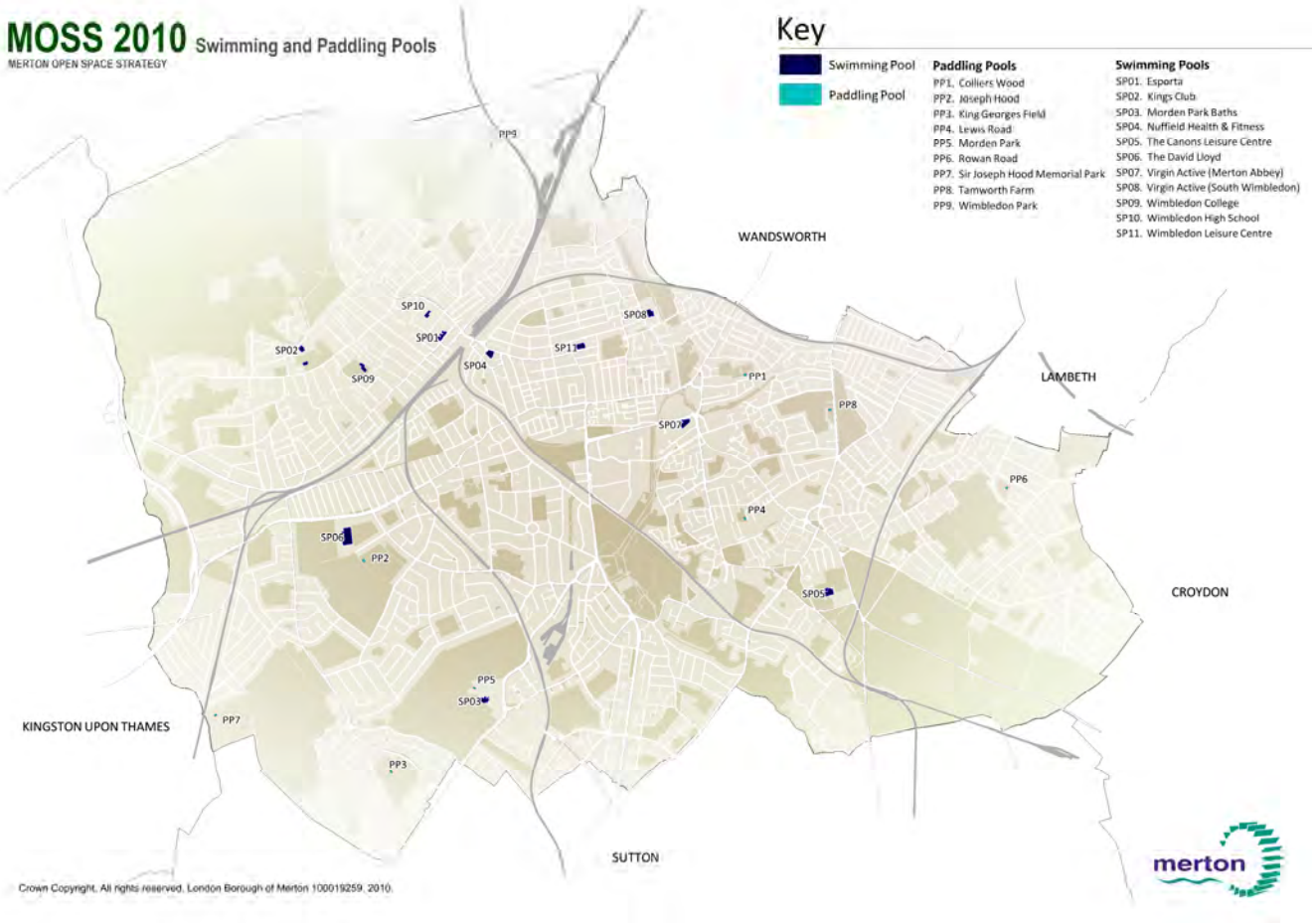


Figure 10.3 - Swimming and Paddling Pools

10.2.2 **Table 10.1** below provides the list of swimming pools in the borough, which meet the Sport England FPM criteria.

ID	Name of Centre	Ward
SP01	Esporta Health and Fitness	Hillside
SP02	The Kings Club	Village
SP03	Morden Park Baths	St Helier
SP04	Nuffield Health & Fitness Wellbeing	Dundonald
SP05	The Canons Leisure Centre	Cricket Green
SP06	The David Lloyd	Cannon Hill
SP07	Virgin Active (Merton Abbey)	Colliers Wood
SP08	Virgin Active (South Wimbledon)	Trinity
SP09	Wimbledon College	Hillside
SP10	Wimbledon High School	Hillside
SP11	Wimbledon Leisure Centre	Trinity

Table 10.1 - Swimming Pools in Merton

10.2.3 The Sport England Facilities Planning Model results also include scenarios that examine the impact of swimming pools in neighbouring Boroughs. This includes the 5 neighbouring local authorities of Kingston, Sutton, Croydon, Lambeth and Wandsworth, plus Epsom and Ewell and Richmond.

10.2.4 Due to the poor condition and increasing costs of Morden Park Pools the Sport England Facilities Planning Model explored a number of different scenarios around this particular facility.

10.2.5 The key statistics are set out in the bullet points below:

- Total capacity for swimming in Merton at its 10 swimming pool sites (excluding the existing Morden Park Pools) is 18,800 visits by Merton residents per week, whilst the total demand from Merton residents for swimming is 12,000 visits. In other words, the total Merton demand for swimming is some 63.8% of total swimming pool capacity. (These figures are based on residents only and pool location).
- Taking into account how much of Merton’s demand is imported to / exported from other local authorities, the estimate is that the average level of swimming pool capacity used across the 10 swimming pool sites (excluding the existing Morden Park Pools) in Merton is 59.1%. If the commercial swimming pool sites are excluded, then the estimate of the percentage of swimming pool capacity used of the public pool sites is 60.9%. This is well within the “pools full” level of 70% of total swimming pool capacity used.
- It is estimated that 69% of all visits to swimming pools by Merton residents are made by car and all residents within Merton have access to at least 5 swimming pools within the recommended 20 minute drive time.

10.3 Sports halls:

- 10.3.1 A sports hall serves as a valuable indoor facility for the community providing space for sports clubs, sports coaching and holiday programmes as well as being flexible enough to cater for a wide variety of community uses such as arts and cultural events and community functions.
- 10.3.2 Sport England’s Facilities Planning Model (FMP) for sports halls examines a number of scenarios to identify whether increased sports hall provision is required in the borough in the future.
- 10.3.3 It covers the provision of sports halls in Merton and takes account of the level of provision in the five neighbouring local authorities of Kingston, Sutton, Croydon, Lambeth and Wandsworth, plus Epsom and Ewell and Richmond.
- 10.3.4 All existing indoor sports halls of at least three badminton courts, which are available for community use, for all or part of the weekly peak period, are included in this study (see Figure 10.1). All sports halls, which have no access for community use are excluded.
- 10.3.5 **Table 10.2** below provides the list of sports halls in the borough, which meet the Sport England FPM criteria.

ID	Name	Ward
1	Bishopsford Arts College	Ravensbury
5	Wimbledon College	Hillside
14	Harris Academy Merton	Pollards Hill
15	The Kings Club	Village
23	Raynes Park Leisure Centre	Raynes Park
24	Ricards Lodge High School	Village
25	Rutlish School	Merton Park
26	St Marks Church of England Academy	Figges Marsh
27	Canons Leisure Centre	Cricket Green
32	Ursuline High School	Raynes Park

35	Wimbledon High School	Hillside
38	Wimbledon Racquets Fitness Club	Hillside

Table 10.2 - Sports Halls

- 10.3.6 Of the 12 sports hall sites in Merton, all of them are either of a size to provide for the full range of indoor sports at local competition level or are specialist facilities
- 10 (83%) are 4-badminton court size; a 4-badminton court size sports provides for the full range of indoor sports at a recreational and local competition level;
 - One is a 6-badminton court hall at the Canons Leisure Centre (Mitcham). A 6-badminton court size sports hall can accommodate a combination of indoor sports activities at the same time with more flexible programming of activities and can also provide for a higher level of event competition.
 - One is a 3-badminton court hall at Wimbledon Racquets Fitness Club, which is a specialist international standard badminton facility.

10.3.7 The Sports England Facilities Planning Model explored the addition of sports halls into the borough in specific locations.

10.3.8 The key statistics are set out in the bullet points below:

- Total sports hall demand in Merton is some 85.7% of total capacity (“sports hall full” level is 80%). This calculation only takes into account Merton residents and does not account for any cross-borough movement, such as people working in Merton visiting sports halls close to their workplace rather than nearer their home.
- Taking into account accessibility issues in certain areas of the Borough and the impact of importing / exporting of users from other Boroughs, the model estimates that the used capacity of 13 Merton sports hall sites is 100% - in effect the sports halls are full and there is unmet demand for 4-5 badminton courts (even with the introduction of a new 4 court sports hall by 2015, for example in the Morden area. If this facility was further increased to become a 6-badminton court sports hall the supply and demand situation would remain the same.)
- If a new 6-badminton court sports hall was built at the Tooting and Mitcham Hub along with the addition of a new 4/6-badminton court hall in Morden then under this scenario there would 100% of the total capacity of the (now) 14 sports halls in Merton used at peak times. So the provision of new sports hall facilities at Tooting and Mitcham and in Morden is still not sufficient to reduce the “halls full” for the Merton sports centres because of the large amount of demand that Merton imports from neighbouring boroughs.
- There is current shortfall of sports halls as identified in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model study, and therefore there is a need to plan for additional sports halls in the borough in the long term.

10.4 Health and fitness facilities within the borough:

10.4.1 The table below shows all of the health and fitness sites across the borough:

ID	Sites within the borough	Access	Size by Fitness Stations
17	Morden Park Pools (London Rd, Morden)	Public	36
27	The Canons Leisure Centre (Madeira Rd, Mitcham)	Public	100

36	Wimbledon Leisure Centre (Latimer Rd, Wimbledon)	Public	80
37	Wimbledon Park and Athletics Track (Revelstoke Rd, Wimbledon)	Public	32
		Public Total	248
2	Christopher's Squash and Fitness Club (Plough Lane Wimbledon)	Private	30
3	David Lloyd (Bushey Road, Raynes Park)	Private	300
5	Wimbledon College (Mansel Rd, Wimbledon)	Private	4
6	Esporta (Worple Rd, Wimbledon)	Private	90
7	Fit Space (Upper Green East, Mitcham)	Private	100
15	The King's Club (Woodhayes Rd, Wimbledon)	Private	25
18	Nuffield Health Club (The Broadway, Wimbledon)	Private	80
28	The Hub @ Tooting and Mitcham (Bishopsford Rd, Mitcham)	Private	40
29	Wimbledon Club (Church Road, Wimbledon)	Private	30
33	Virgin Active (Watermill Way, Merton Abbey)	Private	140
34	Virgin Active (Battle Close, South Wimbledon)	Private	135
38	Wimbledon Racquets and Fitness (Cranbrook Rd, Wimbledon)	Private	17
39	YMCA Wimbledon & Kingston (The Broadway, Wimbledon)	Private	36
		Private Total	1027
		Borough Total	1275

Table 10.3 - The Total Number of Health and Fitness Sites across Merton

Source: Active Places Power

10.4.2 Sport England's Active Places Power planning tool has been used to assess supply and demand for health and fitness facilities in Merton.

10.4.3 There are currently 1285 health and fitness stations at 17 sites in Merton, with the following availability to the public:

Types of Health & Fitness Stations	Stations	Venues
Local authority pay and play	112	2
Local authority registered membership	136	2
Commercial sports club/ community access	87	3
Commercial registered membership	911	8
Private school use/ commercial use	29	2

Table 10.4 - The Total Number of Health and Fitness Stations Across Merton

10.4.4 Comparative provision with other areas can be calculated by reference to the facilities per 1000 data as follows (population data from 2001 Census):

Merton	7.23 stations / 1000
London region	7.00 stations / 1000
England	5.80 stations / 1000

10.4.5 Merton's current provision (including private facilities) is slightly higher than the London average. At the regional average, with the current population, no further stations would be required, and an over supply of about 0.23 stations per 1000 of population currently exists.

10.4.6 Active Places Power measure accessibility by the proportion of the population that live within 20 minutes by car. The current situation is:

- 100% of the population lives within 20 minutes drive of the nearest site.
- Furthermore, the borough has an average distance time to the nearest site of 4.6 minutes with every ward accessible under 6 minutes travel by car.
- The furthest distance is 7.03 minutes and the nearest 2.92 minutes.

In summary

10.4.7 Sport England's Active Places Power calculations suggest that there is a slightly higher provision of health and fitness facilities in Merton than the average and that no further stations are required to bring provision up to the average for the region. There are no areas of main deficiency in the borough (see **Figure 10.1**).

10.5 Tennis

10.5.1 Merton is world famous for the annual Wimbledon Tennis Championships at the All England Lawn Tennis Club, Church Road, Wimbledon and in 2012 the venue will be used to host the Olympic Tennis event in 2012.

10.5.2 The All England Club in partnership with Merton and Wandsworth, fund and operate the **Wimbledon Junior Tennis Initiative (WJTI)**. This is a programme of school visits providing local children with their first opportunity to experience tennis. Each week one school in Merton and one in Wandsworth receive a full day of tennis coaching in the school. After each visit six of the most promising youngsters from the school are invited back to receive free tennis coaching at the weekends at Wimbledon and some will be chosen to progress to the WJTI academy and scholarship programme.

MOSS 2010 Tennis Courts

MERTON OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

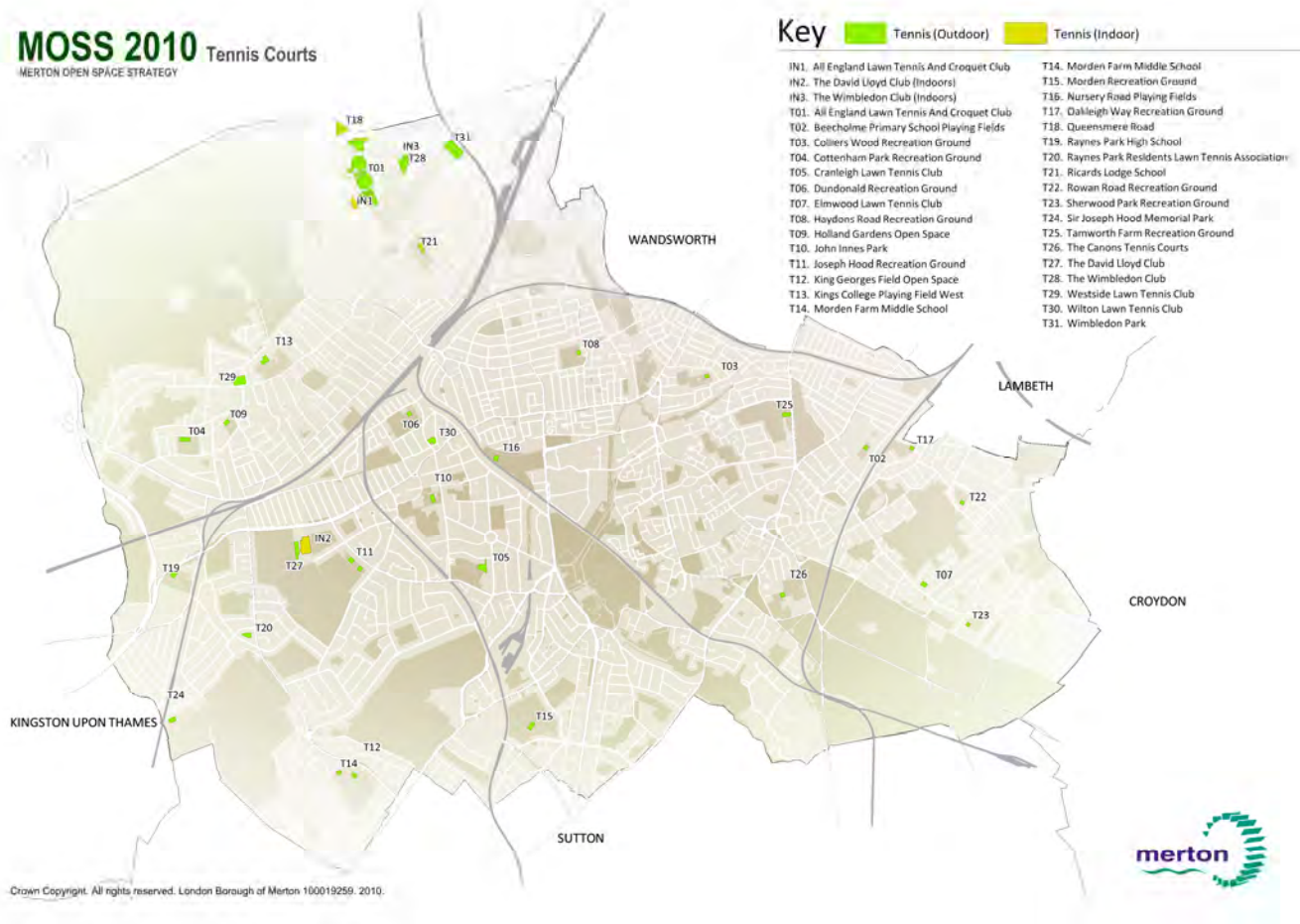


Figure 10.4 - Tennis Courts

10.5.3 There are 30 sites providing tennis courts within Merton, which are detailed on **Figure 10.4** above and in **Table 10.5** below.

ID	Name	Access	Tennis Courts
T01	All England Lawn Tennis And Croquet Club	Members Only	26
T02	Beecholme Primary School Playing Field	Used only by Schools (curricular or extra curricular)	1
T03	Colliers Wood Recreation Ground	Public	2
T04	Cottenham Park Recreation Ground	Public	6
T05	Cranleigh Tennis Club	Members Only	4
T06	Dundonald Recreation Ground	Public	2
T07	Elmwood Lawn Tennis Club	Members Only	3
T08	Haydon's Road Recreation Ground	Public	2
T09	Holland Gardens Open Space	Public	3
T10	John Innes Park	Public	4
T11	Joseph Hood Recreation Ground	Public	3
T12	King Georges Field Open Space, Tudor Drive	Public	3

T13	Kings College Playing Field West	Used only by Schools (curricular or extra curricular)	6
T14	Morden Farm Middle School	Used only by Schools (curricular or extra curricular)	2
T15	Morden Recreation Ground	Public	4
T16	Nursery Road Playing Fields	Public	3
T17	Oakleigh Way Recreation Ground	Public	2
T18	Queensmere Road	Members and Guests	6
T19	Raynes Park High School	Available to Sports Club / Community Association	3
T20	Raynes Park Residents Lawn Tennis Association	Members and Guests	3
T21	Ricards Lodge School	Available to Sports Club / Community Association	6
T22	Rowan Road Recreation Ground	Public	1
T23	Sherwood Park Recreation Ground	Public	2
T24	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Park	Public	4
T25	Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground	Public	5
T26	The Canons Leisure Centre	Members and Guests	2
T27	The David Lloyd Club	Members Only	12
T28	The Wimbledon Club	Members Only	15
T29	Westside Tennis Club	Members Only	12
T30	Wilton Lawn Tennis Club	Members and Guests	4
T31	Wimbledon Park	Public	20
Total			xxx

Table 10.5 - Outdoor Tennis Courts

10.5.4 Outdoor tennis courts are spread evenly across the borough but the more publicly accessible sites tend to be in the south west of the borough, particularly in the wards of Cannon Hill, Merton Park, West Barnes and Lower Morden and a little further north in Raynes Park ward.

10.5.5 There are the following indoor tennis courts in the borough or within a five mile radius of the Merton Civic Centre in Morden:

- All England Lawn tennis Club, Wimbledon – 5 indoor courts
- David Lloyd, Raynes Park – 12 indoor courts
- The Wimbledon Club, Church Road, Wimbledon – 1 indoor court

10.5.6 The following indoor tennis clubs are within a 5 mile radius of Merton Civic Centre, Morden:

- David Lloyd, Cheam – 2 indoor courts
- Esporta Croydon – 10 indoor courts
- Sigi Cornish Tennis Centre, Kingston – 2 temporary indoor courts
- Surbiton Rackets and Fitness Club – 2 temporary indoor courts

- The Harbour Club, Chelsea – 9 indoor courts
- The Hurlingham Club, Chelsea – 3 indoor courts

10.6 Outdoor/Green Gyms and Trim Trails

10.6.1 Outdoor/green gyms are designed to suit young people and adults. They are there to encourage Merton residents of all fitness levels to get outside, enjoy the fresh air and get into shape (see **Figure 10.5**).

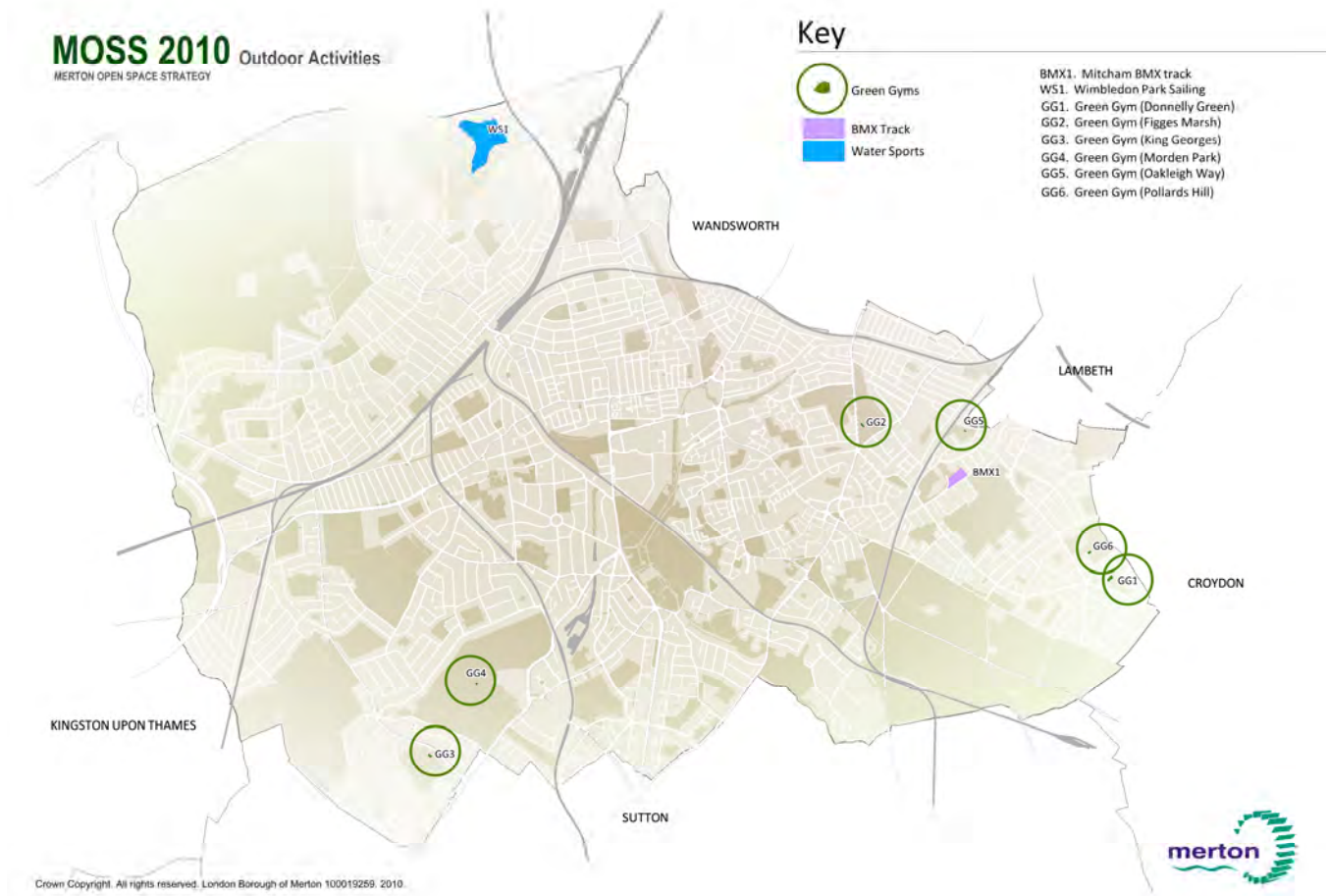


Figure 10.5 - Outdoor Activities

10.6.2 The gyms are free to use and available to residents during park open times. All equipment is European Safety Standard compliant and there are signs showing instructions on how to operate the individual pieces of equipment.

10.6.3 Recently Green Gyms have been installed at:

- Oakleigh Way Recreation Ground (Figges Marsh ward);
- Morden Park (St Helier Ward);
- Donnelly Green;
- Pollards Hill Recreation Ground (Pollards Hill Ward);
- Figges Marsh.

10.6.4 Trim Trails have been previously installed in the borough and one remains in part in Morden Park.

10.7 Ice rinks

10.7.1 The nearest ice rink to Merton is in the London Borough of Lambeth, in Streatham, SW16 on the A23, around 2km from Merton and within easy access by a variety of transport modes.

10.8 Paddling pools

10.8.1 In 2010 Merton has eight paddling pools in the borough:

- Colliers Wood Recreation Ground -South Gardens (Colliers Wood ward);
- Joseph Hood Recreation Ground - Martin Way (Merton Park ward);
- King Georges Playing Fields - Tudor Drive, Morden (Lower Morden ward);
- Lewis Road Recreation Ground – Mitcham (Lavender Fields ward);
- Morden Park - London Road (St Helier ward);
- Rowan Road Recreation Ground - Rowan Road (Longthornton ward);
- Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Playing Fields – (West Barnes ward);
- Tamworth Recreation Ground - London Road, Mitcham (Figges Marsh ward);

10.8.2 Refer to **Figure 10.3 - Swimming and Paddling Pools**.

10.8.3 An interactive water-play area also exists at:

- Wimbledon Park – Revelstoke Road (Wimbledon Park ward)

Watersports

10.8.4 Wimbledon Park Lake is the venue for the borough's Watersports Centre (Wimbledon Park ward). The centre is licensed under the Outdoor Adventure & Licensing (Young Persons) Act and provides a range of educational and recreational watersports activities including canoeing, sailing and other paddlesports. The centre also provides qualifications in first aid, sailing and paddle sports, as well as a range of other theory courses related to watersports. The borough is planning to add a boldering wall and climbing tower to the range of facilities at the centre in order to allow a wider outdoor and adventure experience at the venue.

10.8.5 The Watersports Centre is currently operated out of an ageing late 1960's early 70's building. The council will carry out a condition survey in 2011 with a view to seeking external funding to improve the facility to support modern day outdoor and adventure sporting requirements as well as properly providing for the educational activities operating from the site.

10.8.6 Refer to **Figure 10.5 - Outdoor Activities**

10.9 Athletics

10.9.1 Wimbledon Park is the venue for the borough's purpose built synthetic surface athletics track (Wimbledon Park ward). The track is six lanes, with eight lanes in the sprint area and provides for the full range of athletics track and field events. It also has a clubhouse and tiered seating stadium for easy viewing. It is the home of Hercules Wimbledon Athletics Club.

10.10 Orienteering

10.10.1 Wimbledon Park is the venue for the borough's purpose built orienteering course (Wimbledon Park ward). This was installed in partnership with British Orienteering and is a valued addition to the range of outdoor sporting activities on offer in this location.

10.11 BMX Track

10.11.1 The council are working in partnership with St Mark's Church of England Academy (Mitcham) and British Cycling to raise sufficient funds to install a regional standard BMX track with floodlights and a mountain bike track on land that the school own near their site in Mitcham.

10.11.2 Leisure activities are shown at **Figure 10.1** to **Figure 10.5**.

10.12 Conclusion

10.12.1 The council will aim to increase sports & physical activity participation (3 x 30 mins a week) year on year by 0.3% of the population.

10.12.2 A mix of sport and leisure facilities are required to achieve this aim. The council will regularly review their services and those of their neighbouring boroughs along with supply and demand statistics in order to facilitate investment in leisure facilities, including bidding for funds from outside sources.

10.12.3 Investment will be required for improvements, adaptations and upgrades in all the leisure and sports facilities and these will be identified by condition surveys, inspections and changing rules and regulations of the individual sports.

10.12.4 The council will seek to ensure that investment is applied to maintain and further develop existing facilities and provide new where there is a clear gap between supply and demand.

10.12.5 The council will seek to address shortfalls in provision by trying to access those facilities in the borough in private ownership, so that public/community access is possible and where this is not possible the council will seek to provide facilities on publicly accessible sites on land in public/not for profit ownership.

10.12.6 The council will need to ensure that a wide-ranging and diverse range of sports, health and physical activity facilities are available for Merton's residents both within the borough and where this is not possible within adjoining boroughs.

10.12.7 Merton already has a wide range of facilities and is seeking to improve existing ones (Canons & Wimbledon Leisure Centres) and develop new (BMX Track) as well as looking to the future needs of the Watersports Centre at Wimbledon Park.

10.12.8 Merton will consider the provision in neighbouring boroughs and in particular accessibility to Merton residents based on 20 minute walking, public transport or car travel time, prior to investing in new facilities in the borough.

10.12.9 The council will secure funding from new developments to invest in the wider leisure offer to cater for residents needs on area as well as local needs and will prioritise the use of this funding to maintain and improve existing facilities as well as replace and provide new facilities as determined by needs and priorities at the time.

Introduction

10.12.10PPG17: A Companion Guide includes sites that offer opportunities for ‘walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel and opportunities for wildlife migration’. It also covers river and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes within towns and cities, pedestrian paths within towns and cities, rights of way and permissive paths.

11 Greenways and Cycle Routes

11.0 Introduction

11.0.1 Cycling routes run across our green spaces and link in with the road network. **Figure 11.1** identifies all our cycle routes and this chapter will include information relating to highways provision for cyclists.

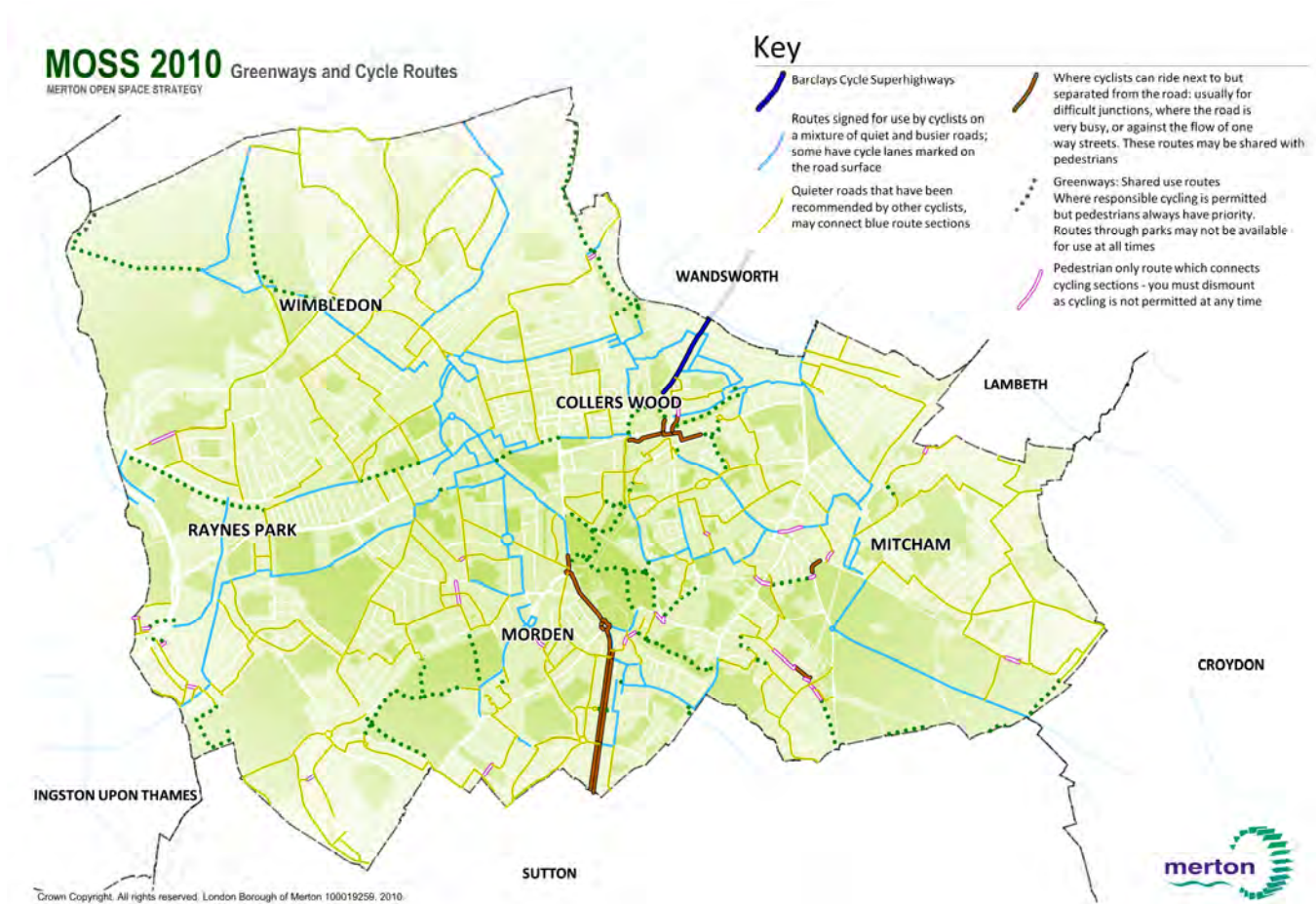


Figure 11.1 - Greenways and Cycle Routes

11.0.2 Merton is committed to encouraging cycling and are keen to develop cycle routes that are user friendly, clearly signed and form useful links to the existing London Cycle Network (LCN), the network of leisure routes (including those developed as part of the Greenways project) and also Merton’s town centres.

11.0.3 Working with Transport for London’s (TfL) Cycling Centre of Excellence and the London Cycle Network Team based at Camden, it is the responsibility of the Traffic Management Team to develop, design and implement new routes as well as help to maintain and improve existing facilities for cyclists in the borough. Merton’s officers work in conjunction with key stakeholders such as Merton Cycling Campaign

and Sustrans (a charitable sustainable transport organisation) to help develop high quality cycle routes in Merton.

- 11.0.4 There is real potential for increasing cycling in London. Half of all trips made in London are less than two miles and a high proportion of Merton's residents are able to use cycles to make these trips with the associated health, cost and environmental benefits. The level of cycling in London is relatively low compared with many other European cities and Merton is seeking to encourage a safer and more usable road and leisure network for cyclists, which should help overcome the perceived barriers to cycling.
- 11.0.5 In December 2009 Transport for London (TfL) offered a limited number of 'Biking Borough' grants to outer London Boroughs. The grants were for consultancy work to help boroughs shape their cycling strategy to assist in achieving the Mayor's 400% increase in cycling by 2026. Merton was successful in achieving a grant and commissioned The Cycling Star Alliance to deliver the Merton Biking Borough strategy project.
- 11.0.6 The Cycling Star Alliance, Biking Borough Strategy 2010 concluded that:
- Cycling in Merton is mainly used for very short trips with 58% of trips below 2km and 21% between 2km and 5km. This is a noticeably higher proportion of shorter trips than in London overall. However at the same time the proportion of cyclists in Merton making longer trips (over 8km/5 miles) is double that in London – 18% compared to 9%;
 - Household access to bicycles is higher in Merton than the London average of 30%, with 38% of all households having access to a bicycle. The proportion of people living in a household with access to a bicycle is also higher (44% compared to the London average of 38%);
 - Department for Transport cycle counts over the 10 years from 1999 to 2008 reveal that while cycling levels were relatively static at the start of the decade they have been rising rapidly in recent years, with an increase of nearly 100% between 2001 and 2008.
- 11.0.7 The strategy sub-divided the borough in the same way as the Merton's Core Strategy sub-areas of:
- Colliers Wood;
 - Mitcham;
 - Raynes Park;
 - Morden;
 - Wimbledon.
- 11.0.8 NB. The Wandle Valley sub area has been integrated into the relevant geographical sub areas.
- 11.0.9 Transport for London's Cycling Revolution: London report includes the need to create cycle hubs. This is defined as a site "where potential for a shift to cycling is greatest and resources can be targeted".
- 11.0.10 An assessment of potential cycle hubs has indicated that the Morden area has the greatest potential for a shift to cycling and where resources could be targeted, particularly from the development potential of the area within the MoreMorden regeneration plan. Morden cycle hub will then form the blueprint for creating additional hubs across the borough.
- 11.0.11 The Cycle Star Alliance report identified the areas with highest propensity for cycling opportunities lie around a band running roughly west-east between Raynes Park, Wimbledon and Colliers Wood. Please refer to **Figure 11.1 - Greenways and Cycle Routes**.

11.1 Funding:

11.1.1 TfL provide funding for cycling within 3 main programmes:

- Smarter Travel;
- Area based schemes;
- Corridors and neighbourhoods.

11.1.2 The amount allocated by TfL for these programmes is determined by formula for each borough. The three funding areas provide greater flexibility allowing the borough to align cycling initiatives with wider initiatives within these programmes. The borough has received funding from TfL for cycle training, maintenance, promotion and cycle parking.

11.2 Public Rights of Way:

11.2.1 The council has a duty to publish a Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP). Merton's plan was published in 2008.

11.2.2 There are two highway authorities within the borough. Merton Council and Transport for London (TfL). Merton is responsible for all borough roads except the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN), which is owned, managed, maintained, and operated by TfL. All the Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the Borough come under the responsibility of Merton Council. There are approximately 32kms of public rights of way, which the council maintains¹².

11.2.3 Local authorities are required to assess the extent to which rights of way meet current and likely future needs of the public. Consideration must also be given to the opportunities provided by local rights of way, such as footpaths, cycle tracks, bridleways and restricted byways, for exercise and enjoyment of the area. A key responsibility is the assessment of the level of accessibility of local rights of way to those with restricted mobility with particular mention for those who are blind or partially sighted.

11.2.4 Currently Merton as the Local Highway Authorities has a duty under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Highways Act 1980 to maintain and keep the definitive map and statement of public rights of way and to ensure that ways are adequately signposted, maintained and free from obstruction.

11.2.5 Types of rights of way include:

Footpath: When a path is used for walking only, it is a footpath. (This is different from the pavement alongside a road);

Bridleway: Bridleways are also footpaths, but additionally users are permitted to ride or lead a horse, and ride bicycles. Horse drawn vehicles are not allowed. Cyclists must give way to pedestrians and horseriders. Motorcycling is not allowed;

Byway open to all traffic (BOAT): BOATs allow the use of wheeled vehicles of all kinds, but the highway is normally used for walking or horse riding. Driving of off-road type vehicles for recreational purposes often happens along such highways. They are not surfaced, and can get very wet and muddy for obvious reasons;

¹² Source: ROWIP 2007/8

Road used as a public path (RUPP): Some highways are still legally classified as a RUPP, which is a very vague definition. Most of these are being reclassified as BOATs or other highways;

Restricted Byway: A category of right of way created under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. A restricted byway allows a right of way on foot, on horseback, or leading a horse, cycling and for any vehicles other than mechanically propelled vehicles.

11.2.6 There are other types of ways that may or may not be Public Rights of Way but provide different levels of access:

Permissive Paths: These are where a landowner allows access over their land without dedicating it as a right of way. Permissive paths are normally found on land owned by a body that allows public access, bodies include Local Authorities, a Public Transport Authorities, and the National Trust.

11.2.7 A permissive path must have some sign or similar indication that it is not intended to be a right of way. The landowner can close off or divert the path if they wish to do so, without any legal process being involved. The landowner can also make restrictions that would not normally apply to highways, for example to allow horse riding but not cycling, or create alternative paths;

Access paths: These are access paths across Merton used at the discretion of the landowner. Access paths are identified where they are not signed as a public right of way at both ends of the paths;

Paths on Wimbledon Common and Mitcham Common: There are many walking routes on the two common areas in Merton. They are all subject to the byelaws of the individual commons;

Morden Hall Park: The National Trust parkland covers more than 50 hectares (125 acres or 500k m²), with the River Wandle meandering through. There are many walking routes in the path only two being Public Rights of Way;

Cannon Hill Common: Cannon Hill Common covers 21 hectares of open space, and is a Site of Borough Importance – Grade 1 for Nature Conservation. 1100m of pathway improvements or new paths were installed in 2007. All the paths are now useable and the accessibility for people with reduced mobility around most of the Common has been improved by the introduction of ramps. The paths are not currently Public Rights of Way;

11.2.8 Cyclists are the second biggest user group of public rights of way in Merton.

11.2.9 Disabled people have the right to be able to access the public realm however the condition, terrain and the use of street furniture like kissing gates, and stiles on individual paths mean that the PROW network is only partially accessible.

11.2.10 Tourists visit Merton public open space and attractive areas in which to walk. Those areas particularly popular to tourists include Wimbledon and Mitcham Commons and Morden Hall Park.

11.2.11 Horse riders are a tiny percentage of the total users of the rights of way network and are mainly concentrated on Wimbledon Common.

11.2.12 There are no byways open to all traffic in Merton, this means that users of motorised vehicles are restricted to privately owned land for off-road activities.

11.2.13 The borough's Public Rights of Way are divided into 6 District areas for surveying and maintenance purposes. These are as follows:

Area 1: Village, Wimbledon Park, Hillside;

Area 2: Abbey, Trinity;

Area 3: Colliers Wood, Lavender Fields, part Cricket Green;

Area 4: Graveney, Longthornton, Figges Marsh, Pollards Hill and part Cricket Green;

Area 5: Dundonald, St Helier, Ravensbury, Merton Park;

Area 6: Lower Morden, West Barnes, Raynes Park, Cannon Hill.

11.2.14 See **Figure 11.2** for Merton's Public Rights of Way.

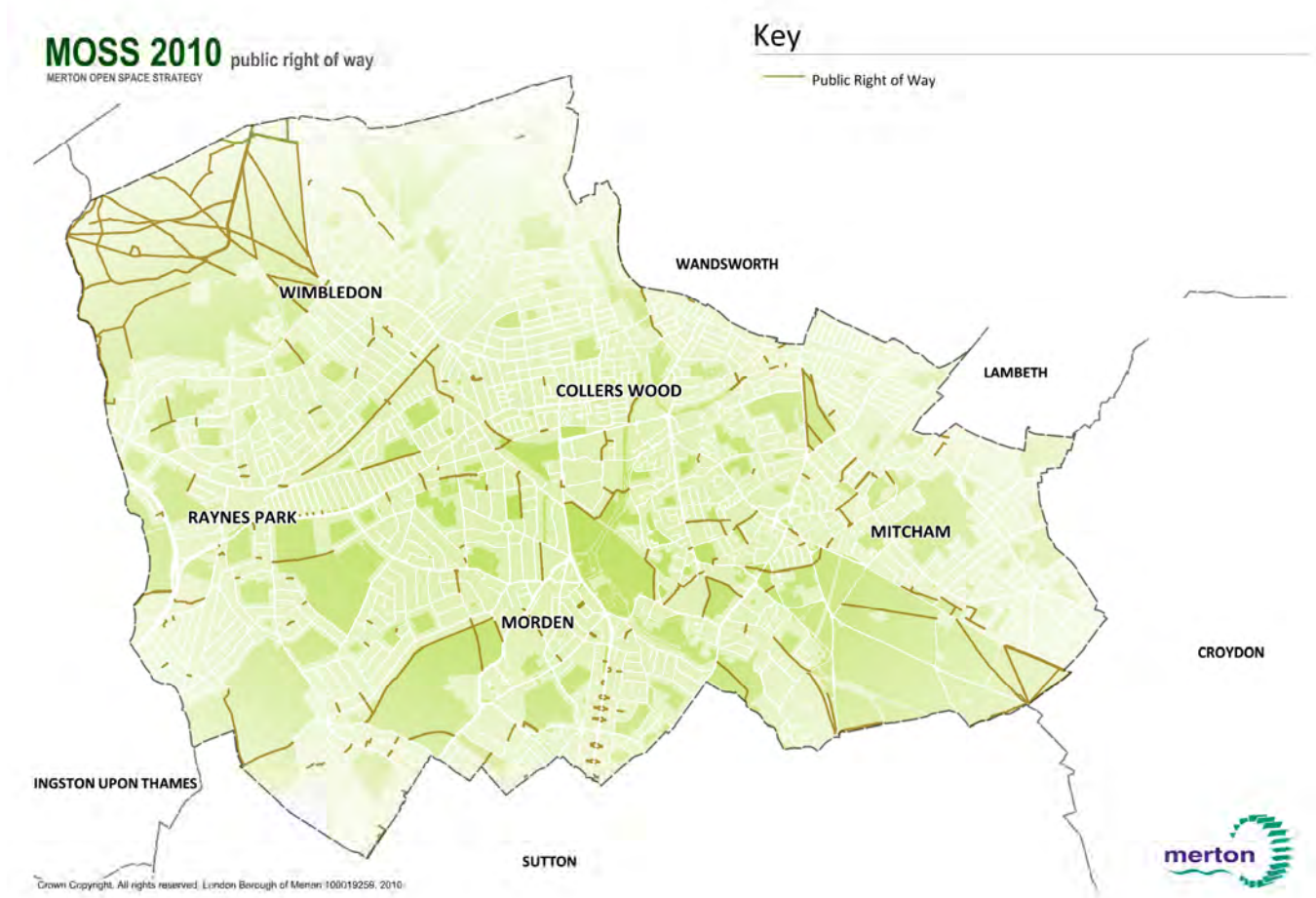


Figure 11.2 - Merton's Public Rights of Way

11.3 Healthy Walks:

11.3.1 Walkers generally fall into two categories, those:

- who walk for practical reasons, for example, commuting, going to school or shopping, and;
- who walk for pleasure, recreation or health. This includes Ramblers, dog walkers, joggers and nature watchers.

11.3.2 Merton operates a Healthy Walks Programme to encourage people of all ages and abilities to get some fresh air in their local parks and open spaces. The average turn out tends to be 30 people every two weeks. No formal records are retained to measure the use of the facility and the group leaders are voluntary.



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12 Action Plan

Key Objective	Key Activity/Action	Purpose/outcome	Lead agent	Link to Plans/National
12.0 Parks and Gardens				
Review of our parks and gardens	Establish community forum (part of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel).	Issues facing Merton's open spaces and to encourage community involvement in addressing open space issues	Community Forum	PPG17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation
To identify use of our open space	Annual green spaces survey	Measurement of: Users of our open spaces; Volumes of use; Perception of quality; How far people travel to visit the space; Activities they do on site.	Community Forum/Leisure Services	PPG17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation
Formal reporting of loss of open space per annum	Annual Monitoring Report	To identify possible deficiencies and need To consider compensatory measures for any loss	Strategic Planning	PPG17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation
12.1 Natural and Semi-Natural				
NI197 Biodiversity: Measure the percentage of locally designated wildlife sites that are under active management.	Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) data	Protect and enhance biodiversity	Greenspaces	National Indicator NI197
Identify areas of deficiency and opportunities taken to	Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) data	To identify suitable sites of opportunity for the restoration or creation of priority habitats	Greenspaces with Development Management	CDR London Plan 2010

achieve positive gains for conservation				
Formal designation of Derwent Floodwash as a LNR	Explore designation and preparation of a management plan	Protect and enhance biodiversity	Strategic Planning (designation) / Greenspaces (management plan)	UK Biodiversity Action Plan and CDR London Plan (2010)
Identify regionally important habitats in Merton	5 yearly surveys or in line with London Plan review.	Protect and enhance biodiversity	Greater London Authority	UK Biodiversity Action Plan and CDR London Plan 2010
Habitat creation	Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) data. Implementation of development management policies	Update of records on biodiversity and habitat status. GIGL have identified potential land parcels that may be suitable for habitat creation if there is found to be no conflict with other potential land uses.	GIGL / Greenspaces with Development Management.	UK Biodiversity Action Plan and CDR London Plan 2010
E2: Changes in areas of biodiversity habitat	Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) data	To measure the creation of new and restored existing habitats.	Greenspaces	Local Biodiversity Action Plan/Regional Habitat Action Plan representations
12.2 Provision for Children and Young People				
To measure the participation in play	Household survey Census 2011 Annual Residents Survey Annual TellUs survey	No of children that play out for at least 4 hours per week	Corporate Services	Play England's Local Play Indicators (Indicator 1)
To measure the access to a variety of facilities and spaces	Household survey Census 2011 Annual Residents Survey	To increase the percentage of children that have access to at least 3 different types of play spaces.	Corporate Services	Play England's Local Play Indicators

	Annual TellUs survey			(Indicator 2)
To measure the quality of facilities and spaces	Quality Assessment Tool (RoSPA)	Improve Merton's scores on location, play value, care and maintenance using the Playable Space Quality Assessment Tool.	Corporate Services	Play England's Local Play Indicators (Indicator 3)
To measure children and young peoples satisfaction of play spaces in Merton	NI 199 measured through the Annual TellUs survey Free Play Strategy Action Plan 2011 Census	Improve the number of children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play in their local area.	Corporate Services	Play England's Local Play Indicators (Indicator 4)
Allotments Gardens and City (Urban) Farms				
Safeguarding allotments as a means to encouraging the use of land for growing food	Measure the number of plots and occupancy levels 3 times a year.	To increase occupancy and to reduce the waiting list of allotments.	Strategic Planning (safeguarding) with Greenspaces (management)	London Plan (2009) Policy 7.22 Land for Use
Reducing maintenance costs of allotments	Prepare a management plan to encourage ways of self management of sites.	Improve economic efficiency of allotments.	Greenspaces with partner organisations	London Plan (2009) Policy 7.22 Land for Use
Cemeteries and Churchyards				
Adequate provision of cemetery spaces	Record demand, plot availability and future projected demand.	To assess whether there are sufficient cemeteries to meet demand.	Greenspaces	London Plan (2009) Policy 7.23 Burial spaces
12.3 Playing Pitches				
Adequate provision of playing pitches to meet demand	Preparation of a qualitative/quantitative Playing Pitch Assessment.	To assess whether there are sufficient pitches to meet demand and to identify any areas of the borough with deficiency.	Spatial Planning/Leisure Services	PPG17: A Companion Guide.
Measure the existing quality and facilities on Merton's playing pitches	Preparation of a qualitative/quantitative Playing Pitch Assessment	To improve facilities and the quality of playing pitches in Merton.	Spatial Planning/Leisure Services	PPG17: A Companion Guide.

12.4 Leisure Facilities				
An increase in sports and physical activity participation year on year by 0.3% of the population	Active People Survey	To promote healthy lifestyles and encourage physical education.	Leisure Services with partners	Sport England
Enhance the leisure infrastructure within a 20 minute walk time accessibility catchment	Management plan to regularly review the facility stock in Merton and our neighbouring boroughs Actively seek contributions from development	To provide a mix of sport and leisure facilities for residents. To improve, adapt and upgrade all sports and leisure facilities	Leisure Services with partners	Sport England
12.5 Greenways and Cycle Routes				
To assist in achieving the Mayors 400% increase in cycling by 2026	Management plan to develop, design and implement new routes And to maintain and improve existing facilities.	To encourage a safer and more usable road and leisure network for cyclists. Develop cycle routes linking to the London Cycle Network (LCN)	Traffic Management Transport Planning Sustrans TfL	London Plan (October 2009) Policy 6.9 Cycling
Create a cycle hub in Morden	MoreMorden Area Action Plan	Morden sub area has greatest potential for a shift to cycling. Morden cycle hub will then form the blueprint for creating additional hubs across the borough.	Regeneration/Spatial Planning	Cycle Star Alliance Biking Borough Strategy 2010
Maintain and keep definitive map and statement of Public Rights of Way (PROW) as the Local Highways Authority	Survey and maintain PROW within the 6 District Areas.	To ensure our PROW meet current and future needs of the public for exercise and enjoyment of the area.	Traffic and Highway Services	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

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Promote walking on our PROW and open spaces	Healthy Walks Programme	To encourage residents to use our local parks and open spaces to walk for pleasure, recreation, health as well as practical reasons such as commuting, going to school etc.	Transport Planning	MOSS 2011
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Appendix 1: List of all Playing Pitches

ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
1	Abbey Recreation Ground	2.7	Local Authority	2	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Abbey
2	Abbotsbury School	2.1	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	St Helier
3	All Saints Primary School Playing Field	0.1	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Abbey
4	Beecholme Primary School Playing Field	1	Unknown	0	1	0	0	1	School Open Space	Graveney
5	Beverley Park	7.2	Local Authority (Kingston)	2	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	n/a
6	Bishopsford Community School	3	Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Ravensbury
7	Colliers Wood Recreation Ground	2.5	Local Authority	1	1	0	0	2	Open Recreation Space	Colliers Wood
8	Cottenham Park Recreation Ground	2.6	Local Authority	0	8	0	1	6	Open Recreation Space	Raynes Park
9	Cranmer Primary School	2	Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Cricket Green
10	Cricket Green Open Space	2.9	Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Cricket Green
11	Cricket Green School	0.8	Unknown	0	2	0	0	0	School Open Space	Cricket Green
12	Donnelly Green	1.8	Local Authority	0	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Pollards Hill

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ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
13	Drax Playing Fields	4.5	Local Authority	2	1	0	1	3	Open Recreation Space	Village
14	Dundonald Recreation Ground	4.4	Local Authority	3	0	0	2	2	Open Recreation Space	Dundonald
15	Emmanuel School Playing Fields (Blagdons)	4.3	Private	0	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
16	Farm Road Training Ground	3.9	Unknown	4	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	St Helier
17	Goals Five a side area, Beverley Way	0.9	Private	0	11	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Raynes Park
18	Harris Academy Fields and Playground	3.5	School	0	1	0	1	0	School Open Space	Pollards Hill
19	Haslemere School	0.6	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Cricket Green
20	Haydons Road Recreation Ground	3.1	Local Authority	0	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Trinity
21	Holy Trinity Primary School	0.3	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Trinity
22	Imperial club sports ground	5.2	Private	1	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Ravensbury
23	John Innes Recreation Ground	1.6	Local Authority	0	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Merton Park
24	Joseph Hood Recreation Ground	7.4	Local Authority	3	0	0	1	3	Open Recreation Space	Cannon Hill
25	King Georges Field Open Space	7.6	Local Authority	3	3	0	1	3	Open Recreation Space	Lower Morden

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ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
26	Kings College Playing Field West	3.2	Unknown	6	1	0	0	6	School Open Space	Village
27	Kings College School Playing Field East	1.5	Private	1	0	0	1	0	School Open Space	Village
28	Kings College School Sports Ground	5.9	School	1	1	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
29	Lavender Park	3.3	Local Authority	1	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Lavender Fields
30	Liberty M/ School Western Road	2.3	School	2	0	0	1	0	School Open Space	Lavender Fields
31	London Road Playing Fields	5.7	Local Authority	0	1	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Cricket Green
32	Malmesbury School	0.7	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Ravensbury
33	Merton Abbey School	0.7	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Abbey
34	Messines Playing Field	5.7	Unknown	2	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Cannon Hill
35	Mitcham Sports Ground	2.9	Local Authority	2	1	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Cricket Green
36	Morden Cricket Club	4.6	Sports Club	0	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	St Helier
37	Morden Playing Fields	24.6	Unknown	0	0	0	1	6	Open Recreation Space	Cannon Hill
38	Morden Primary School	0.3	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	St Helier

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ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
39	Morden Recreation Ground	9.1	Local Authority	2	1	3	0	4	Open Recreation Space	St Helier
40	Nursery Road Playing Fields	6	Local Authority	3	0	1	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Abbey
41	Oberon Playing Fields	2.9	Local Authority	2	1	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Village
42	Old Blues RFC	7.9	Sports Club	0	0	4	0	0	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
43	Old Rutlishians Sports Ground	2.3	Sports Clubs & Associations	1	0	1	1	0	Open Recreation Space	Merton Park
44	Old Tenisonians Sports Ground	3.4	Community Organisation	3	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
45	Old Wimbledonians Sports Ground	5.3	Sports Club	2	0	2	2	0	Open Recreation Space	Raynes Park
46	Playing Field Wimbledon College	3	Unknown	0	0	3	1	0	School Open Space	Raynes Park
47	Playing Field, Hatfield Primary School	0.5	Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	School Open Space	Lower Morden
48	Playing Fields Hillcross Primary School	1.6	Unknown	1	1	0	1	0	School Open Space	Cannon Hill
49	Poulter Park	19.6	Local Authority (Sutton)	0	0	3	0	0	Open Recreation Space	n/a
50	Powerleague Soccer Centre (Norbury)	11	Unknown	7	0	0	2	0	Open Recreation Space	Longthornton
51	Prince Georges Playing Field	14.1	Other	8	0	0	0	9	Open Recreation Space	Cannon Hill







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ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
52	Raynes Park High School	1.7	Private	1	0	0	0	3	School Open Space	Raynes Park
53	Raynes Park Playing Fields	8	Private	5	0	0	1	0	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
54	Raynes Park Sports Ground	8	Local Authority	2	0	2	3	0	Open Recreation Space	Raynes Park
55	Raynes Park Vale Sports Ground	2.6	Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Cannon Hill
56	Ricards Lodge School	3.7	School	0	1	0	0	6	School Open Space	Village
57	Rutlish Playing High School Field	3.9	School	1	0	1	1	0	School Open Space	Merton Park
58	Sir Joseph Hood Memorial Park	11.5	Local Authority	3	3	0	0	4	Open Recreation Space	West Barnes
59	St John Fisher School	0.7	Unknown	0	2	0	0	0	School Open Space	Lower Morden
60	St Marks Church Of England Academy	3.3	Unknown	1	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Figges Marsh
61	Sutton Common	5	Local Authority (Sutton)	1	1	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	n/a
62	Westminster City Sports Ground	5.1	Unknown	4	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Longthornton
63	Wimbledon Chase Primary School Playing Fields	2.8	School	0	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Dundonald
64	Wimbledon College Playing Fields	1.3	School	0	0	1	0	0	School Open Space	Hillside

ID	Name	Hectares	Ownership	FS Football	Mini Football	Rugby	Cricket	Tennis	Type	Ward
65	Wimbledon Commons Extension	12.1	Local Authority	9	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	
66	Wimbledon High School Playing Fields	1.5	Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	School Open Space	Hillside
67	Wimbledon Park	12	Local Authority	2	0	0	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Village
68	Wimbledon Rugby Football Club	6.8	Local Authority	0	0	2	0	0	Open Recreation Space	Village
		314.1 (ha)	Playing Pitches/ type of sport	96	50	23	33	78		

Colour Key:

	Mitcham Sub-Area
	Morden Sub-Area
	Raynes Park Sub-Area
	Wimbledon Park Sub-Area
	School Open Space
	Sites in other Local Authority Areas