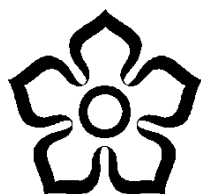


Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

2017



Leicester
City Council

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1. Executive Summary

The City in context.

1.1 Leicester is a major urban centre located in the heart of the country. It is located close to major transport networks, and is a centre for growth. The greater Leicester area now extends beyond the administrative boundary of the City Council into surrounding areas such as Braunstone Town, Oadby, Wigston, Birstall and Glenfield. Some 650,000 people live in this greater Leicester area making the city the 9th biggest in the country. It also supports the main concentration of people across the city and county area which has a combined population of around 1 million people.

1.2 The population of Leicester and Leicestershire is growing fast. Recent government projections show that the population of the administrative area of Leicester will increase by almost 12% between 2016 and 2031 - to around 388,000 people. The population of Leicester and Leicestershire as a whole is projected to increase to over 1,141,000 in the same period (an 11% increase).

Purpose of the study

1.3 Open Space is a vital resource that provides people with opportunities to relax, exercise and spend time with nature. However there is pressure for residential and employment development which needs to be balanced across the greater Leicester urban area. This study provides evidence of publically accessible open space in Leicester, and sets the city in the context of open space provision in the county. It also asks questions about open space provision and the requirements going forwards.

Current open space provision.

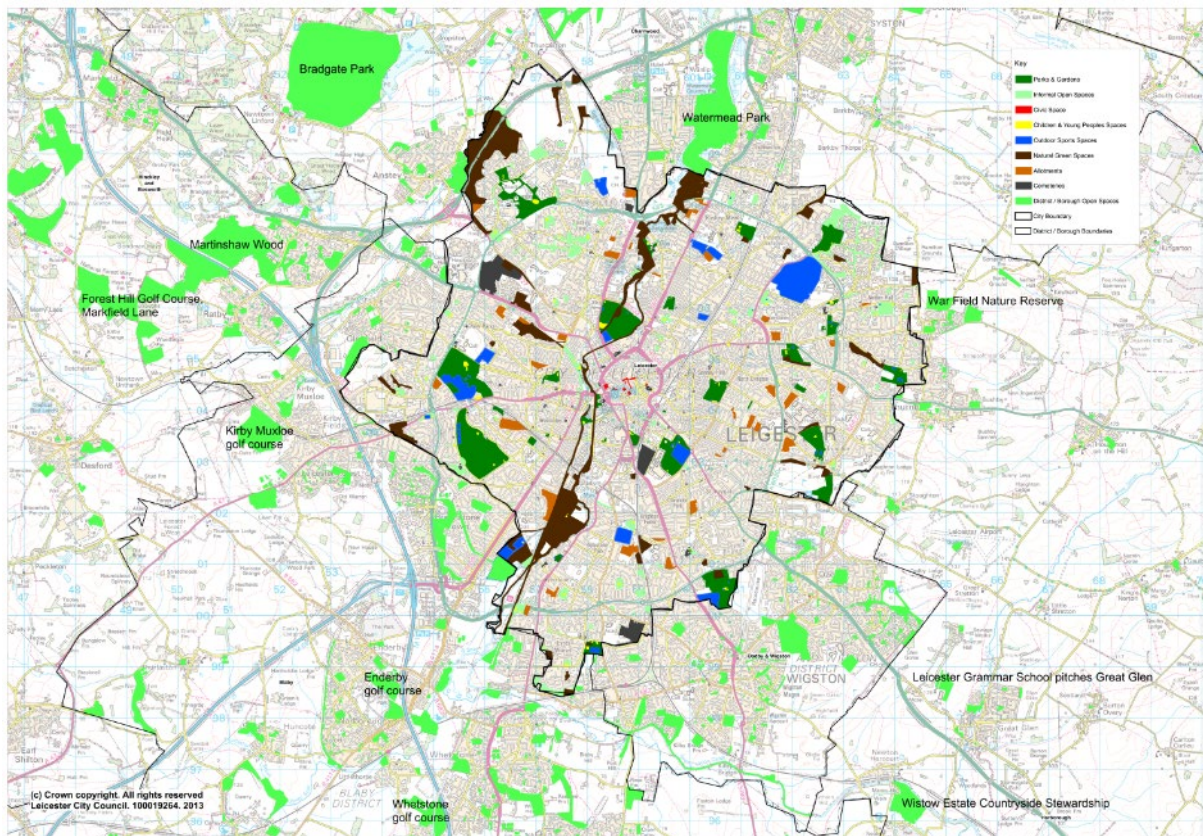
1.4 There is a total of 1102.05 ha of publically accessible open space in the City, set against a requirement of 948.29 ha, using the adopted standard of 2.88ha/1000 population. This means that there is 153.75 ha of open space that could be considered "surplus." However different areas of the city have different amounts, quality and accessibility to open space. Different open spaces also cost different amounts to maintain and can be the location of anti social behaviour.

Next Steps

1.5 The result of the consultation will be fed into the next stage of the plan making process. The balance of provision of good quality accessible open space will be considered against the need to provide land for houses and jobs.

2. Introduction

2.1 Open space is an important resource that has significant benefits in terms of the population's well-being; it can act as areas for the storage of carbon and reduce the amount of air pollution in the area. People can travel large distances to access open space particularly areas that are large and seen as destinations. Examples include Abbey Park, Aylestone Meadows and Bradgate Park in the greater Leicester area. Open spaces are also useful as areas for recreation and fitness. However, there has been increasing pressure on open space for use as development land, whether for housing, commercial or retail use. Open space also has a cost in terms of the amount of revenue that is required to ensure it is adequately maintained, safe and enjoyable to use. The design of open spaces is also important to ensure that they are overlooked (and therefore safer) and usable to a wide range of people with varying needs. The open space provision within the Greater Leicester area is shown in the map below.



- 2.2** Currently the city council has an adopted standard of 2.88ha of publicly accessible open space per 1000 population. This standard has been used to calculate the amount of open space in different areas of the city. We have asked a series of questions which are designed to examine whether this standard is still appropriate and whether there are any lower quality open spaces that could provide houses of jobs. We are also asking how far people are willing to travel to open spaces, and whether there are any that need improving. Information on the amount of open space (using our current standard), the quality of existing open spaces, and their accessibility is shown in parts 6 to 9 of the study.
- 2.3** An Open Space, Sport and Recreation study was completed for Leicester City Council in 2007 by consultants. The study complied with the central government planning policy guidance (Planning Policy Guidance 17) for open spaces that was adopted at the time. The 2007 study included public consultation, GIS mapping and quality audits before recommendations were made on quantity and accessibility standards. The study was used as part of the Core Strategy evidence base and the Core Strategy was adopted in 2010. A Green Space Strategy was also produced after the study was adopted in October 2009, as was a Green Space Supplementary Planning Document, adopted in 2011.
- 2.4** The City Council has embarked on the production of a new Local Plan. Issues and options consultation took place from the 15 October 2014 – 31 January 2015. The new Local Plan will have policies which protect open spaces, along with a proposals map which show the areas to be protected. To be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 73 and the National Planning Policy Guidance, planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- 2.5** It is important to update the 2007 open space, sport recreation study as new population data for the city has been released from the 2011 census. The amount of available open space and its quality may also have changed since the 2007 study was completed. This 2017 study was undertaken by City Council Officers in line with the NPPF and PPG, and the methodology is explained below.
- 2.6** **This study does not attempt to protect open space or determine whether it should be developed on in the future. This is determined through the Local Plan process.**

3. Open Space Consultation Questions.

Question 1: Which spaces do you use most often? e.g. Victoria Park

Question 2: How often do you use open spaces?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Less than monthly

Question 3: What type of open space do you use most often?

- Children and young people's space
- Park and garden
- Informal space
- Outdoor Sports
- Natural open space
- Allotments
- Civic Space

Question 4: Are there any areas of the city you consider need more open spaces?

Question 4a: Which Areas?

Question 4b: If so which type?

- Children and young people's space
- Park and garden
- Informal space
- Outdoor Sports
- Natural open space
- Allotments
- Civic Space

Question 5: How far do you normally travel to open spaces? (please specify: 1-2 mins, 5 mins walk; 10 mins walk; 15 mins walk)

- Children and young people's space
- Park and garden
- Informal space
- Outdoor Sports
- Natural open space
- Allotments
- Civic Space

**Question 6: which type of transport do you usually use to get to open spaces?
Walk, Car, Bicycle, Bus.**

- Children and young people's space
- Park and garden
- Informal space
- Outdoor Sports
- Natural open space
- Allotments
- Civic Space

Question 7: Do you think larger natural open spaces should have an accessibility distance of 1000m?

Question 8: Are there any underused or poor quality open spaces that you consider could be used to provide houses or jobs? Which ones?

Question 9: Are there any open spaces that you consider could be significantly improved? If so, which ones and how?

The current adopted standards for the City are 2.88ha of publically accessible open space per 1000 population. This has given the sufficient and undersupply figures shown in Appendix 1. This is currently split into six types.

As a comparison, Abbey Park is 40ha, Victoria Park is 28ha and Bede Park is approximately 2ha.

Question 10: Do you think this standard is: a. too high? b. too low? c. about right?

Question 11: Civic Space/public realm is also important. Should the city council be securing money to enhance civic space/public realm?

Question 12: How much civic space/public realm should be required compared to the other types of open space?

3.1 We have identified sites in the city which could potentially accommodate new development. A list of these sites is included in the accompanying document 'Leicester Local Plan 2016 – 2031 – Site Options Document ([LINK](#)). This list includes sites that have previously been submitted to the Council by land owners and developers. A number of these sites are current allocations from the 2006 Local Plan which we would consider re-allocating in the new local plan.

3.2 The City Council has not taken a formal view on any of these sites, and their inclusion on this list does not necessarily mean the council considers them as suitable sites for development.

Types of open space.

3.3 Parks and gardens

Public parks and gardens take on many forms, but for the purposes of this document their main functions include:

- Informal recreation and outdoor sport;
- Play space of many kinds (including for sport and children's play);
- Providing attractive walks to work, community facilities and other destinations;
- Offering landscape and amenity features;
- Providing areas for 'events'; and
- Providing habitats for wildlife.

3.4 Informal open space

These areas include spaces open to free and spontaneous use by the public, but are not laid out or managed for a specific function such as a park, public playing field or recreation ground, nor would it be managed as a natural or semi-natural habitat. It is:

- Unlikely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences;
- Predominately laid out to mown grass;
- Unlikely to have identifiable entrance points (unlike parks);
- Unlikely to have planted flower beds or other formal planting layouts, although they may have tree and shrub planting;
- Generally no other recreational facilities and fixtures (such as play equipment or ball courts), although there may be items such as litter bins and benches;
- Examples might include both small and larger informal grassed areas in housing estates and general recreation spaces. They can serve a variety of functions dependent on their size, shape, location and topography.

3.5 Equipped children and young people's space

This includes areas which are adopted or in the process of being adopted by LCC including:

- Equipped playgrounds for children;
 - Skate parks and areas for wheeled sports;
 - Designated space for youth and young adults e.g. multi use activity area; and
 - Ball courts that are suitable for casual use for football or basketball (better equipped spaces will be classed as Outdoor Sports Facilities).
- The boundaries are defined by fence lines, grass mounds or tree lines that show the boundary of the space. If none of these are present then a nominal distance around the space used to implement dog control orders are used as the boundary.

3.6 Outdoor sports space

This includes:

- Leicester City Council managed marked out pitches for a variety of sports including football, cricket, hockey, rugby, bowls etc.;
- Equipment associated with the sports pitches (such as goalposts and nets) may not be provided at all times of year;
- These spaces will often include changing facilities and drainage; and
- Ball courts for football or basketball would be suitable to be booked out for formal training by clubs. (Less well equipped spaces will be classed as Equipped Children's and Young People's Space);
- Outdoor Gyms;
- Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.

3.7 Natural open space

These areas:

- Provide a variety of habitats including meadows, river floodplain, woodland and copse, all of which are managed primarily for wildlife value;
- These areas are reasonably accessible providing open access for the public use and enjoyment; and
- These areas can also make important contributions to local Biodiversity targets, outlined in City and County Biodiversity Action Plans.

3.8 Allotments

The Allotment Act of 1922 defines the term 'allotment garden' as: "An allotment not exceeding 40 poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family."

The Allotments Act of 1925 gives protection to land acquired specifically for use as allotments, so called Statutory Allotment Sites, by the requirement for the need for the approval of the Secretary of State in event of sale or disposal. Some allotment sites may not specifically have been acquired for this purpose. Such allotment sites are known as "temporary" (even if they have been in use for decades) and are not protected by the 1925 legislation.

Allotment areas often provide taps for water and sometimes communal buildings and toilets.

3.9 Cemeteries

Churchyards and cemeteries often associated with places of worship.

3.10 Civic Space/Public Realm

Provide a setting for civic buildings (e.g. Town Hall) and/or provide opportunities for open air markets, demonstrations and civic events (e.g. Town Hall Square and Jubilee Square).

3.11 Private recreational space

Voluntary and privately run sports clubs and spaces. These areas do not require an Order to close the space, unlike public open space. E.g. Community Football/Hockey Clubs and the Botanic Gardens.

4. Other Studies

- 4.1** There are several other studies and evidence base documents that that should be read alongside this study. Green wedges are a policy designation that protects areas of land. The areas of land stretch from the city into the surrounding District and Boroughs and provide areas of separation between settlements. The Green Wedge Review makes recommendations on how well the wedges have performed against four criteria.
- 4.2** The Playing Pitch Strategy looks at the provision and quality of playing pitches within the city. It also considers where new pitch provision could be located. It considers all public and private sports pitches within the city, the supply and demand and will include cross boundary working with neighbouring districts. It considers large scale sports and leisure facilities (Leicester Tigers Rugby Club, Leicester City Football Club etc.). Private sports facilities are not considered as part of this OSSR study. Playing pitches on Education land (e.g. school playing fields/ University facilities) are also not considered as part of this OSSR study, but are considered in the Playing Pitch Strategy.
- 4.3** Information on Local Nature Reserves , Local Wildlife Sites, and proposed Local Nature Reserves and proposed Local Wildlife Sites are available on the City Council's website and the Biodiversity Action Plan. The Biodiversity Action Plan is regularly updated and the Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites are monitored.
- 4.4** The Council's Allotment Strategy (2015) noted that demand outstrips current provision, and an increase in housing numbers and population may affect this. The strategy also noted that there is a variance in demand across the city and by site some of which relates to site security and condition; work on improving these sites has commenced and is on-going.

5. Methodology

Quantity

- 5.1** The 2007 GIS mapping was audited to check typology and boundaries of open spaces. The 2007 mapping was first undertaken by consultants, using a 0.1ha site area as a minimum for the 2007 study. The open spaces were categorised according to the typologies above. A refresh of this exercise was undertaken using 2013 aerial photography, ordinance survey mapping, site visits, discussions with City Council open space managers and land ownership searches. Children's and Young Peoples Spaces under 0.1ha were included in the update, to accurately reflect play areas within the city.
- 5.2** Publicly accessible spaces within the Leicester's administrative area are considered through this audit, and they are defined as areas which are owned by the Council, or other public bodies or trusts that would have to go through a process to shut them from public access. Other areas that are owned by the City Council or other public bodies or trusts and would be seen to be accessible to members of the public and maintained for open space, sport or recreation purposes, are also included. There are relatively few open spaces that are privately owned with public access within the Leicester administrative area, apart from areas having access from public footpaths. There are a significant number of privately run or owned sports pitches within the city and these will be considered within the Playing Pitch Strategy. The definition used to identify each typology is shown above.

Primary and Secondary Typologies

- 5.3** Where there are two typologies on one space, the space has been categorised according to its primary typology (e.g. Parks and Gardens). Secondary typologies are noted for each open space. If there are permanent uses within a Park (e.g. outdoor sports), these are classed as a primary typology within a park, they are mapped as Outdoor Sports Facilities, and their area calculated. This area is then removed from the area of the Parks and Gardens, to avoid double counting.
- 5.4** This mapping allows areas to be calculated for each area, for each typology. Where a piece of open space crosses an area boundary, the open space was split between each area. The areas can then be compared to the updated population for each ward to give an undersupply or sufficient supply for each type of open space for each ward. The City Council's currently adopted open space standards of a total of 2.88ha per 1000 population, which were used in the 2007 study, are also used for this update.

Current Area standards

Parks and Gardens:	0.5 ha per 1,000 population
Informal Open Space:	0.5 ha per 1,000 population
Equipped Children and Young People's Space:	0.08 ha per 1,000 population
Outdoor Sports Space:	1.0 ha per 1,000 population
Natural Open Space:	0.5 ha per 1,000 population
Allotments:	0.3 ha per 1,000 population

5.5 This gives an overall open space area standard of 2.88 ha per 1,000 population. These standards have been applied to planning applications since the adoption of the Green Space SPD in 2011. This has resulted in open spaces and play areas being secured in numerous planning applications. Off-site contributions for enhancements to the quality of nearby open spaces have been secured where it was not possible to provide open space on site, or the ward was not deficient in quantity of open space. Commuted sums for the maintenance of open spaces have been secured where the Council has agreed to adopt the open space. The sums cover the maintenance of the open space for a period of 20 years.

5.6 The parks have been classified into the City Park, District Parks and Local Parks

City Park

- Abbey Park

District parks

- Beaumont Park
- Braunstone Park
- Evington Park
- Hamilton Park
- Humberstone Park
- Knighton Park
- Spinney Hill Park
- Victoria Park
- Western Park

All other parks are classed as local parks.

Quality

5.6 Quality Audits based upon the Green Flag methodology are undertaken by the City Council's Standards and Development Service for Parks and Gardens, Amenity Spaces and Allotments. This information is displayed for each area along with priorities for spending in that area. This is based upon the assessments giving quality scores for the open spaces, along with current open space and planning priorities. Assessments of quality have also been undertaken for Children's and Young Peoples Spaces, and options for enhancement outlined.

5.7 Natural Open Space quality assessments are undertaken every year by Nature Conservation specialists within the council. Local Wildlife Site quality assessments are carried out every year, but are often on land owned and managed by the City Council so will also be assessed under the Green Flag methodology. Quality assessment for playing pitches and sports on parks pitches will be carried out together with the playing pitch strategy which sits alongside this assessment.

Accessibility

5.8 The accessibility standards below were recommended in the 2007 study, as a result of public consultation. Officers have applied these standards when commenting on planning applications.

District and City Parks:	1,000m
Local Parks:	300m
Informal open space:	100m
Equipped Children and Young Peoples Space: Pre Teen:	300m
Outdoor Sports Space:	3,000m
Natural Open Space:	300m
Allotments:	1,000m

5.9 However larger Natural Open Spaces such as Aylestone Meadows, Castle Hill Country Park and Watermead Park serve a larger area, so it is suggested an accessibility distance of 1000m is used.

6. City Wide Quantity

6.1 An overall city wide analysis of the quantity of open space available is shown below. The accessibility of open spaces has also been shown by type of open space, at a city wide scale. The city has then been split into a total of six areas. These are the Inner Area, North East, South East, South, West and North West. The areas have been chosen based on the type of development in that area, and using arterial routes as boundaries. The boundaries are shown below. The quantity and quality of open space in each of the areas are then described.

Quantity

6.1 Overall the City of Leicester has 1,102 hectares of open space. The total amount of open space required due to the population of Leicester is 948 hectares, using the current standard of 2.88 ha per 1,000 people. Therefore there is currently more open space (154 ha) than is required by the standard.

TOTALS BY TYPE OF OPEN SPACE	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	342.66	164.63	178.02
Informal Open Space	180.43	164.63	15.80
Children and Young People's Space	22.79	26.34	-3.55
Outdoor Sports Facilities	140.12	329.27	-189.15
Natural Open Space	324.29	164.63	159.66
Allotments	91.76	98.78	-7.03
TOTAL	1102.05	948.29	153.75

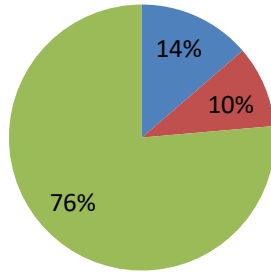
The City Council also hold an allotment outside the administrative area, in Braunstone Town, of 2.7ha.

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report. **The areas in this report do not include areas that lie outside the administrative area of Leicester (to the north and south), but are shown on the maps.**

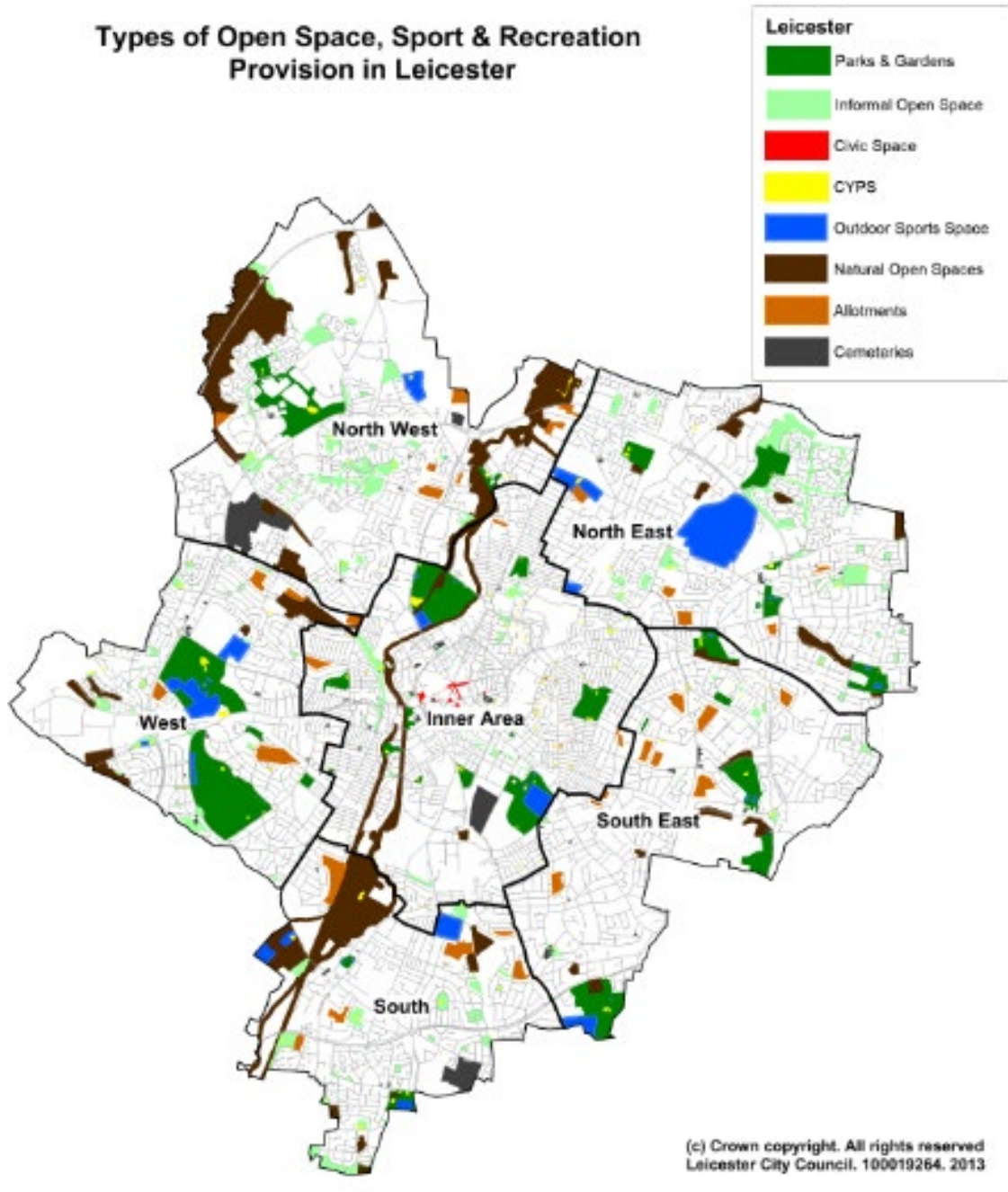
6.2 However open space is not evenly distributed across the city. Some areas have more and others less. The quantity of open space in each area is shown later in the document. The age profile of the City is also shown below. This is important as it shows the level of demand for children and young people's space.

City Wide by Age

■ Age 0-9 ■ Age 10-17 ■ Age 18+



Types of Open Space, Sport & Recreation Provision in Leicester



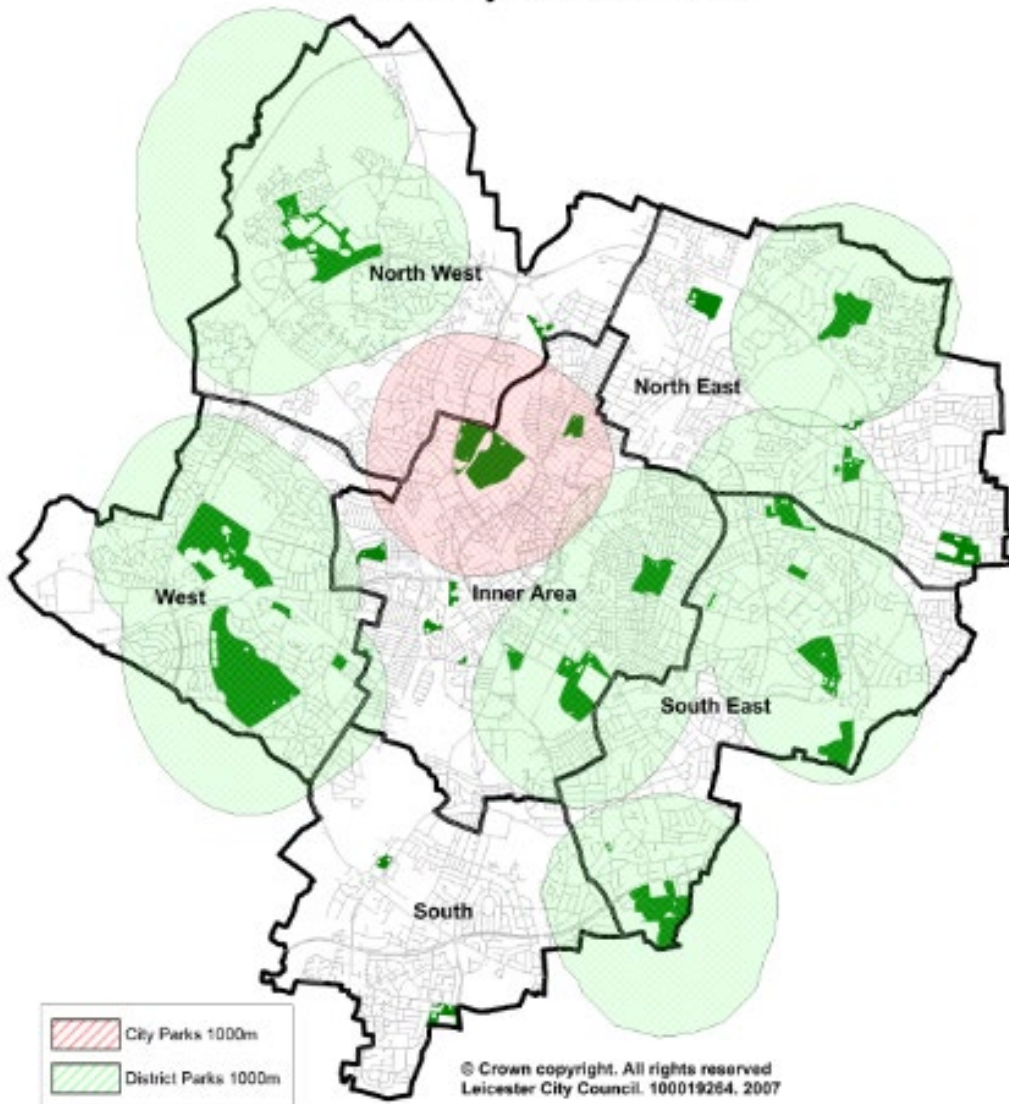
7. City Wide Quality

7.1 The quality of open spaces within Leicester is good, with seven parks having Green Flag status. There have also been a series of outdoor gyms installed recently, helping to keep park users healthy and active. However there are some open spaces that would benefit from enhancements, such as improved play facilities, better promotion or removing graffiti. The Parks and Green Spaces service has a programme of works to improve certain spaces, as funding becomes available.

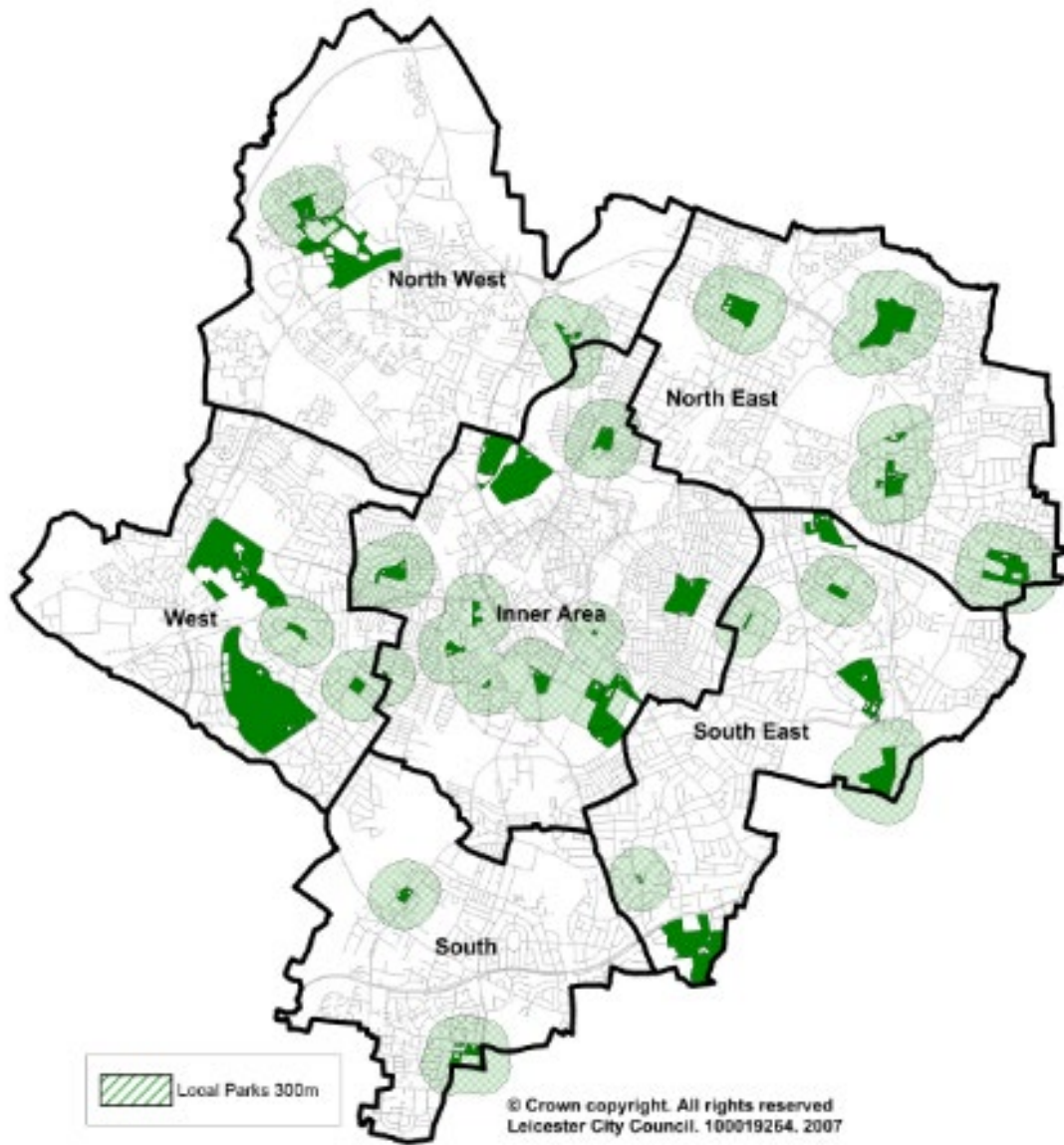
8. City Wide Access

8.1 It is important to consider how accessible open spaces are. The following maps show the accessibility area surrounding the open spaces. This is shown for each type of open space, using the current accessibility standards. Some areas of the city have better access to open spaces, whereas in other areas of the city, it is more difficult to access open space.

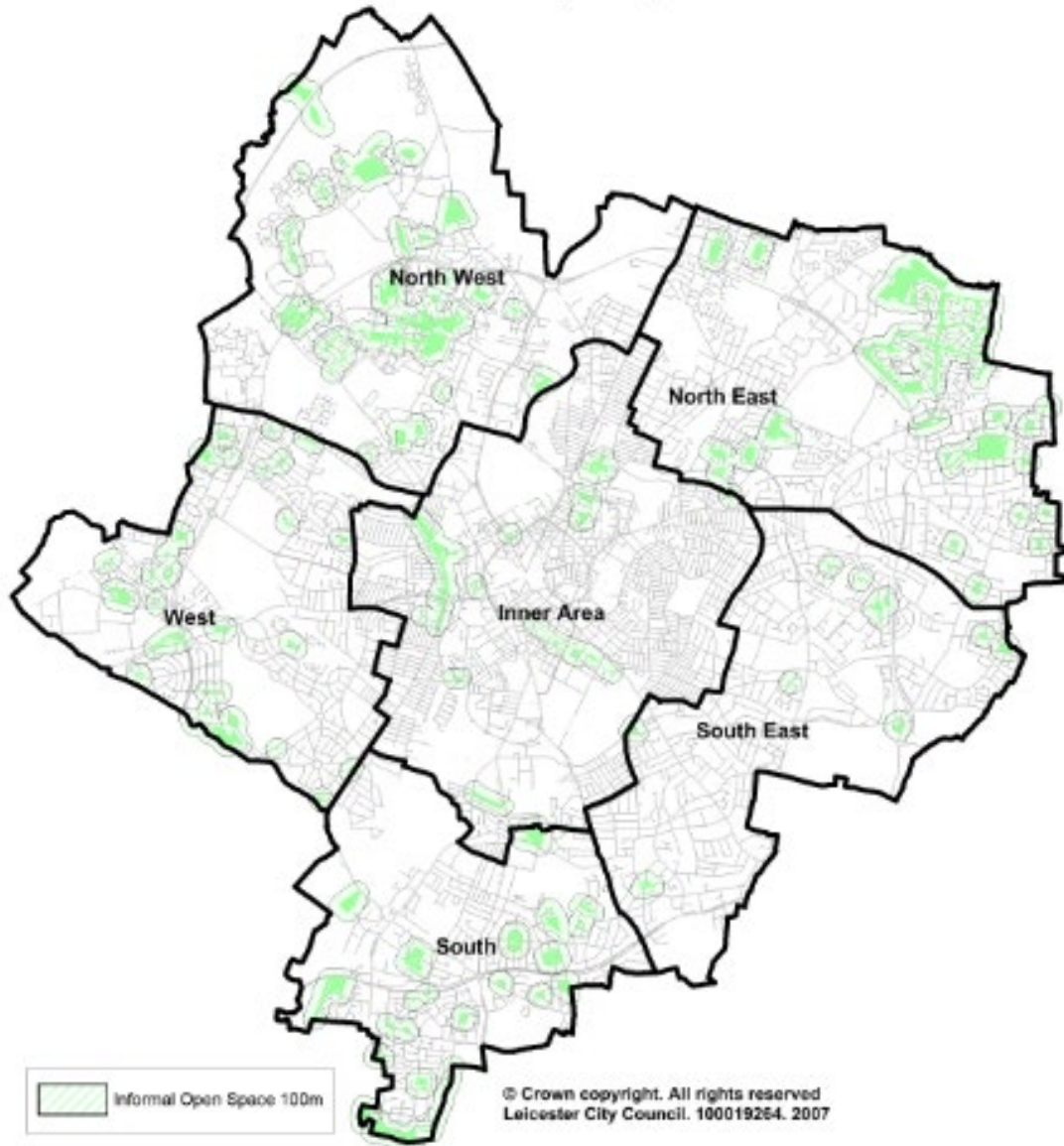
Access to City and District Parks



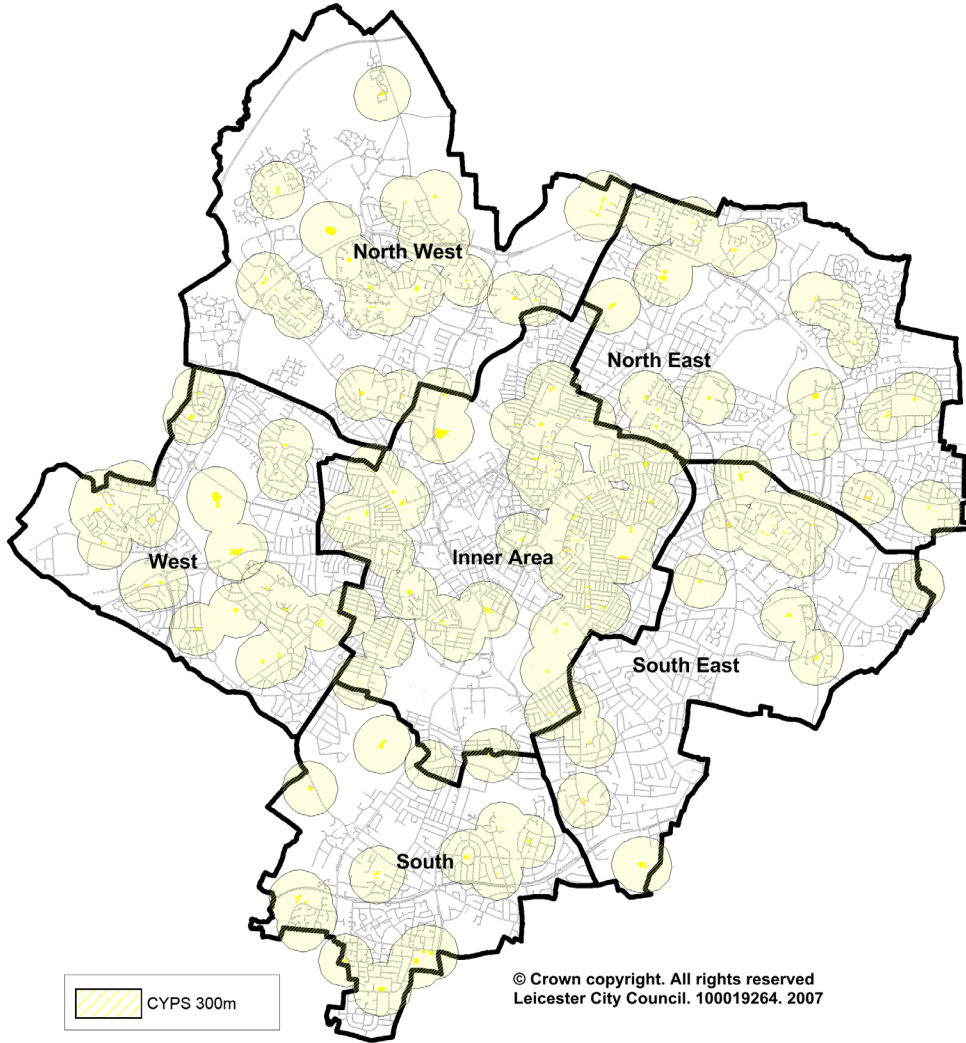
Access to Local Parks



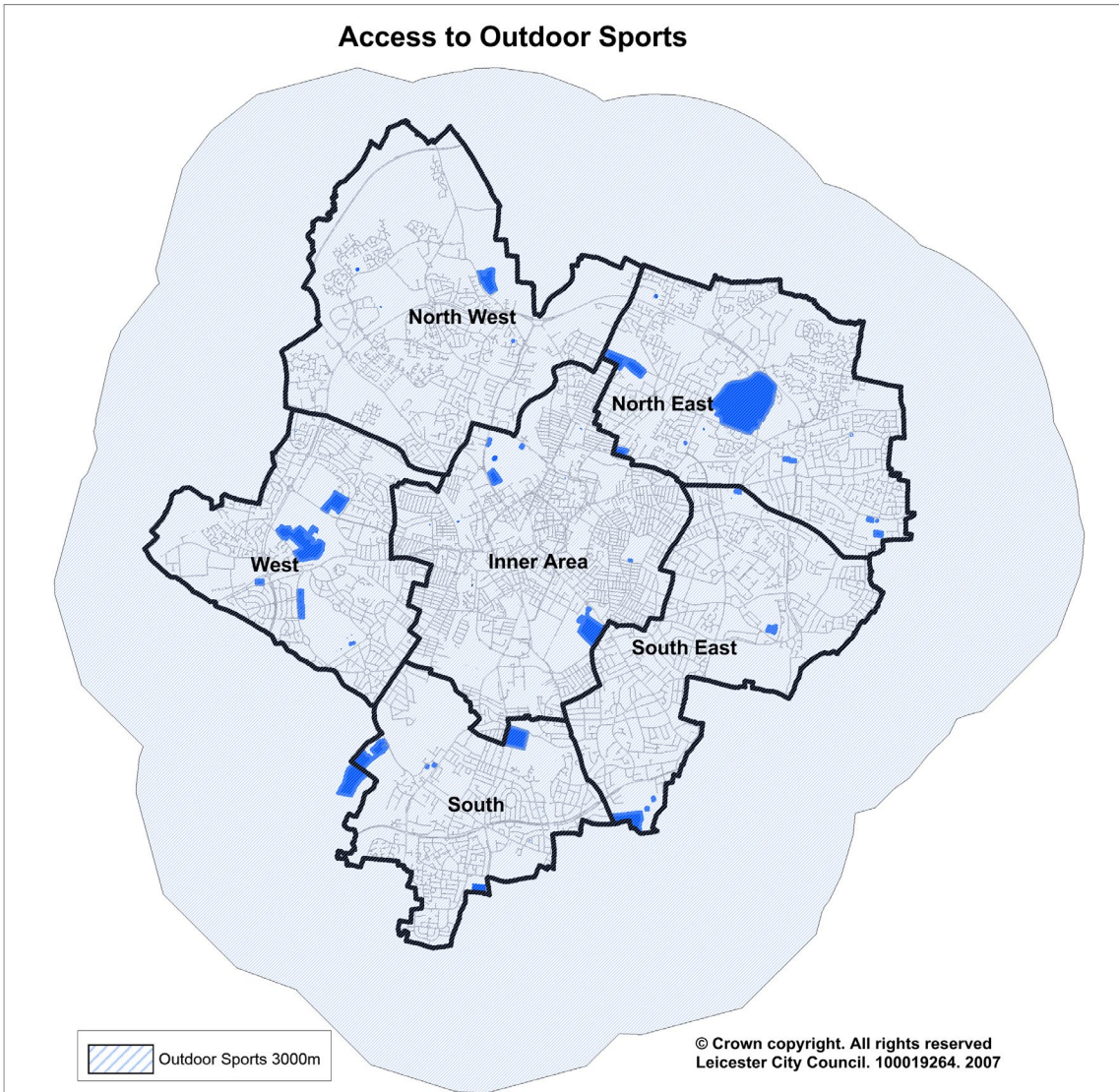
Access to Informal Open Space



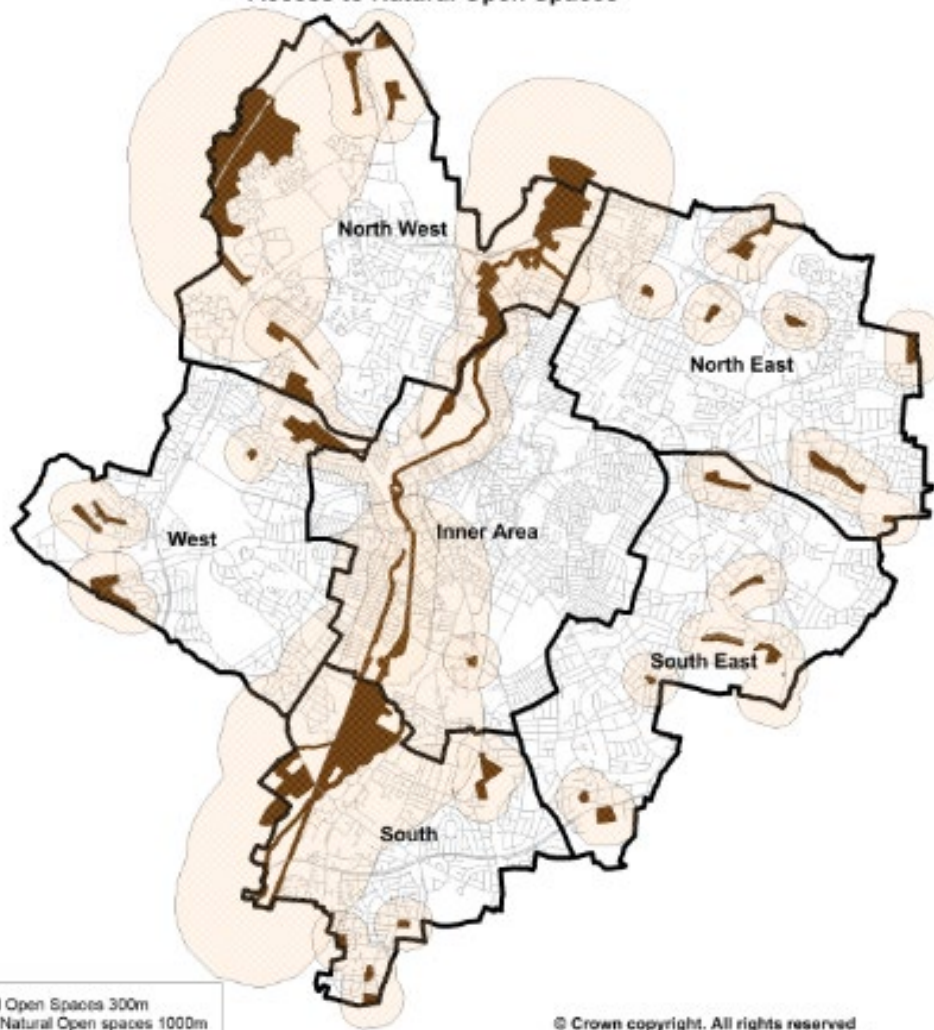
Access to Children & Young People's Provision



Access to Outdoor Sports



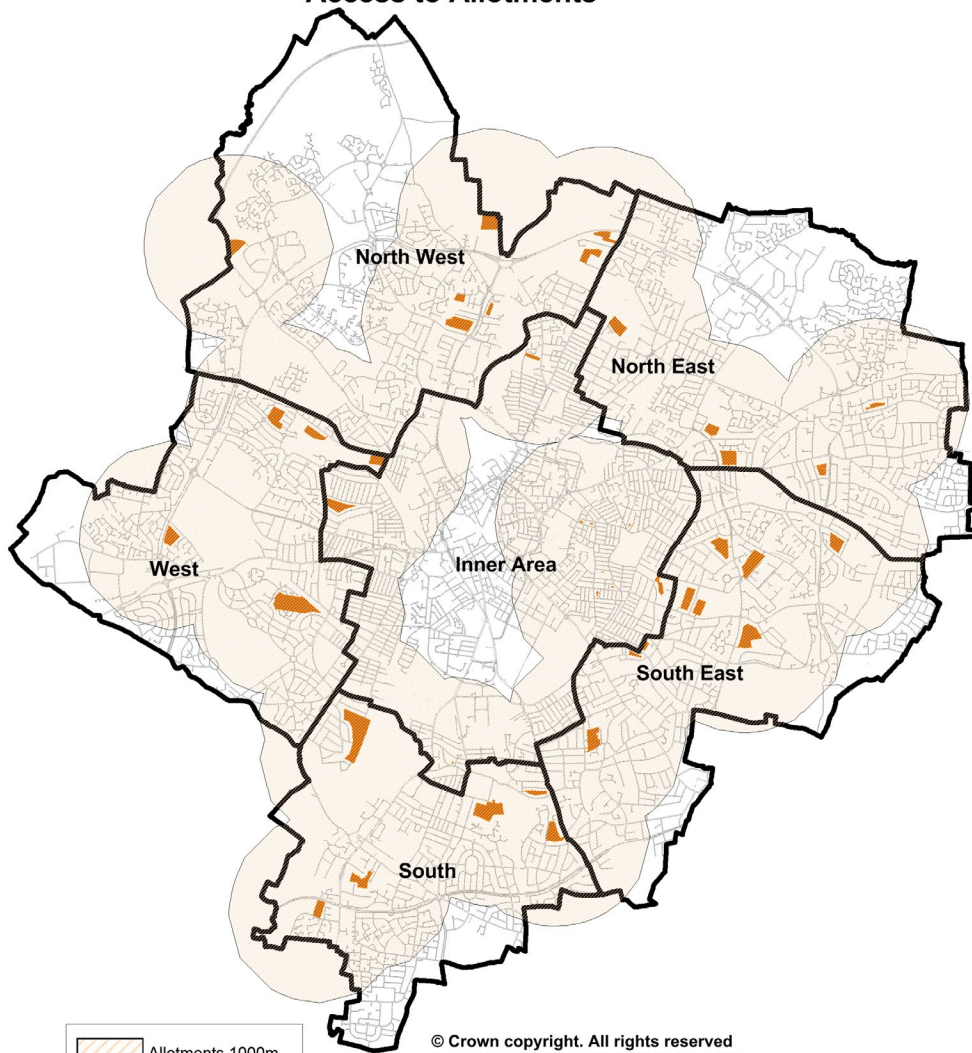
Access to Natural Open Spaces



Natural Open Spaces 300m
Larger Natural Open spaces 1000m

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Access to Allotments



 Allotments 1000m

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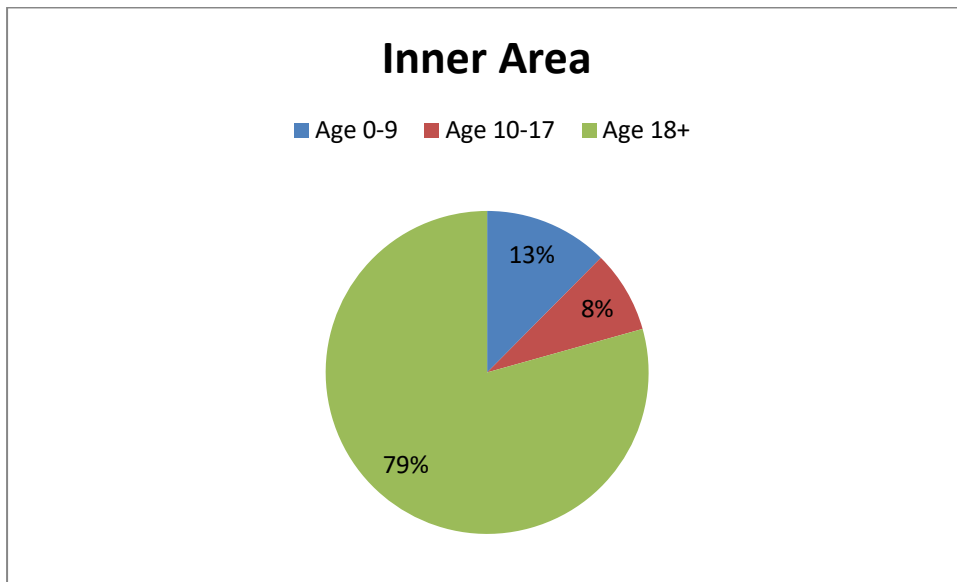
9. Area by Area Analysis

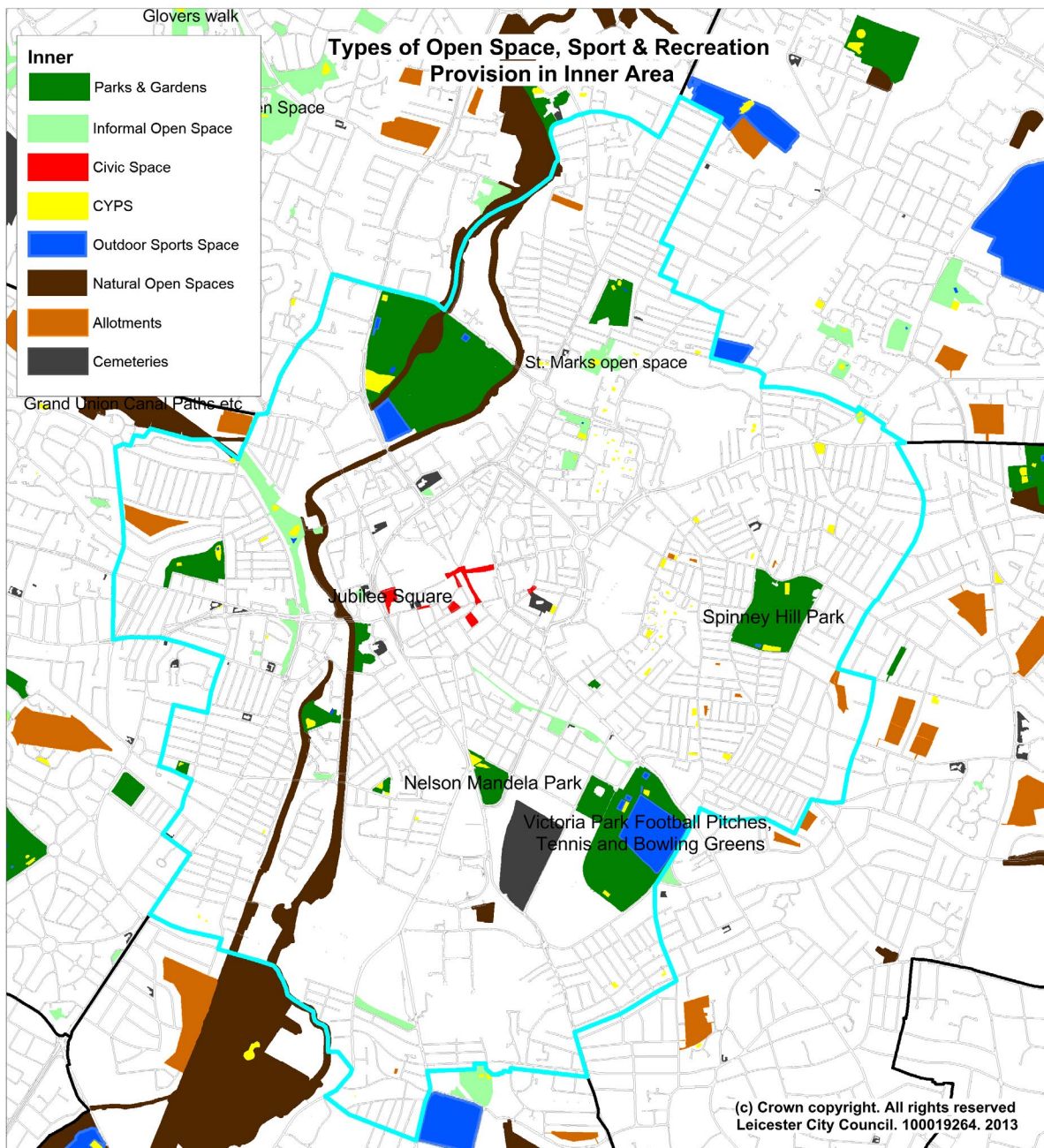
Inner Area

9.1 The inner area as an undersupply of open space, due to the high density of development and population numbers. This is common with many cities. Outdoor sports facilities are in greatest undersupply, due to the large area they require. There is a sufficient supply of Parks and Gardens, and a high level of people aged over 18 compared to the city average.

Inner Area	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency	
Area Totals	151.31	337.31	-186.00	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	83.06	58.56	24.50	Sufficient supply
Informal Open Space	15.16	58.56	-43.40	Under supply
Children and Young People's Space	6.49	9.37	-2.88	Under supply
Outdoor Sports Space	12.91	117.12	-104.21	Under supply
Natural Open Space	29.10	58.56	-29.46	Under supply
Allotments	4.59	35.14	-30.55	Under supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





Inner Area Quality	
TYPE	
9.2 Parks & Gardens	<p>There are a number of other parks and garden sites within the area including the De Montfort Hall gardens, Victoria Park, Cossington Street Recreation Ground, Westcotes Gardens and Fosse Recreation Ground.</p> <p>Abbey Park, Spinney Hill Park and Castle Gardens have all been awarded Green Flag award status. These three parks have all had investment into new equipment such as play equipment and furniture. Spinney Hill Park in particular has been extensively regenerated as a result of being awarded funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund as part of the 'Parks for People' project.</p> <p>Bede Park has a wide range of facilities and further improvements have recently been implemented with a new designated barbeque area, an outdoor gym, and a parkour training area within the new extension to the park. Nelson Mandela Park and Thirlmere Gardens have been refurbished in part to include Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGA). Anti-social behaviour has been identified as a problem on these three sites and needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Prebend Gardens is an attractive site with a variety of landscape features including a pond/wetland area, annual bedding and grassed areas. There is sufficient signage throughout and there is a high level of community involvement, particularly with the presence of a 'Friends of Prebend Gardens' group. The audit highlighted the need to re-surface the gravel paths and prevent street drinking within the site.</p>
9.3 Informal Open Space	<p>St Mary's Triangle, Kamloops Crescent, Overton Road and Rally Park form the majority of the informal open space within the inner area.</p> <p>Kamloops Crescent is an open and accessible site which provides seating areas, a good quality play area and street lighting. Overton Road open space is an open aspect site with play area facilities present. The marketing of these sites needs to be improved to increase the use of the area and increase community involvement.</p> <p>The Rally Park is one of the main sites of informal open space within the area. Improvements have been made to the site including the installation of a new play area, a refurbished BMX track and installation of CCTV within some areas of the site.</p> <p>The informal open spaces present along New Walk are attractive looking and compliment the historic promenade. There is a need to reduce litter within these open spaces</p>

	and also graffiti is a recurrent problem.
9.4 Children & Young People's space	<p>There are a large number of parks within the inner area. Cossington Street Recreation Ground, Dane Street, Maidstone Road Play Area, Nelson Mandela Park, Rally Park Cycle Trail, Spinney Hill Park Mixed Use Games Area, St Matthews Play Area, St Peters Play Area, and Victoria Park (near to the pavilion café) are all in good condition with limited need for any enhancement. Both Atlas Ball Court and Medway School/Nursery are currently in a reasonable condition but have limited scope for enhancement.</p> <p>Other parks are in good condition but could be enhanced with the addition of other equipment. Victoria Park (new), Uppingham Road Gardens (Sparrow Park) and Overton Road for example are all in good condition but could be improved by the addition of an agility or balancing trail. A climbing unit would benefit the site at Vulcan Road/Upper Charnwood Street; Fosse Recreation Ground could be enhanced with a slide or swing unit; Bridge Road Gardens could be improved by the addition of a seesaw and Onslow Street Play Area has the potential for a Sensory Community Garden to be added.</p> <p>A number of play facilities are currently in need of a major refurbishment: Cedar Road Ball Court, Hazel Street, Martin Street and Spinney Hill Park (Junior). Vernon Street Melbourne Street also requires major works due to issues with anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Although not currently in a poor condition, following inspections it is estimated that: Abbey Grounds (Main), Clarendon Park, Orchardson Avenue Ball Court, St Marks Open Space and St Pauls Pocket Park will all need refurbishing in the next five years.</p> <p>There is opportunity to enhance both Abbey Grounds Pet Corner and Westcotes Gardens through extending the play areas. Further equipment is required at Thirlmere Street and St Marks Estate as the range is currently limited. More specific pieces of equipment have been identified for the following sites: St Georges (Swings), Spinney Hill Park Infant Area (Replacement sand pit), Wesley Hall (swings, roundabout, and seesaw), Taylor Road (Agility Trail), Stephenson Drive (balancing trail), Ash Street (climbing unit) and Bede Park (roundabout, agility trail, seesaw).</p> <p>Works have also been identified at Fosse Recreation Ground/Ball Court as new floodlights, fencing and line markings are required. Garfield Street would benefit significantly from access improvements and fencing works are required at Overton Road Ball Court. Rally Park has the potential for an added junior play area and due to anti-social behaviour; Cedar Road play area requires new equipment</p>

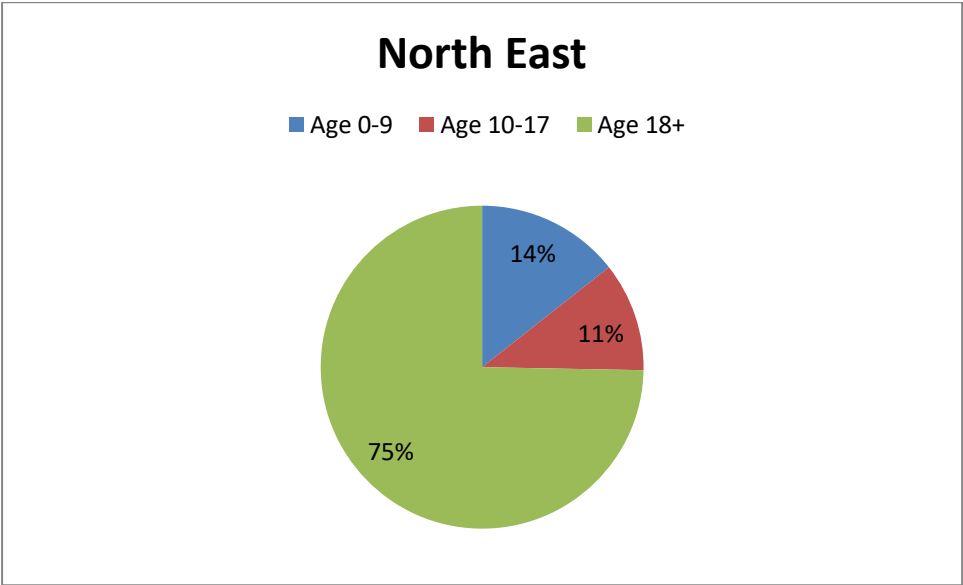
	for 4-8 year olds. The future of Manor House neighbourhood centre is being considered
9.5 Outdoor Sports facilities	The quality of Outdoors Sports Facilities within the area is being addressed through the 'Playing Pitch Strategy'.
9.6 Natural Greenspace	The quality of Natural Open is contained within the Biodiversity Action Plan.
9.7 Allotments	<p>Holden Street, Sandhurst Road, New Park Road, Keddleston Road and Cecil Road allotments all fall within the inner area. They are generally in good condition, well managed and provide a range of facilities.</p> <p>Path resurfacing and boundary improvements are however required at the Sandhurst Road, Keddleston Road and Cecil Road sites. New Park Road allotments also require removal of Japanese knotweed and clearance of encroaching vegetation at the site boundary.</p>

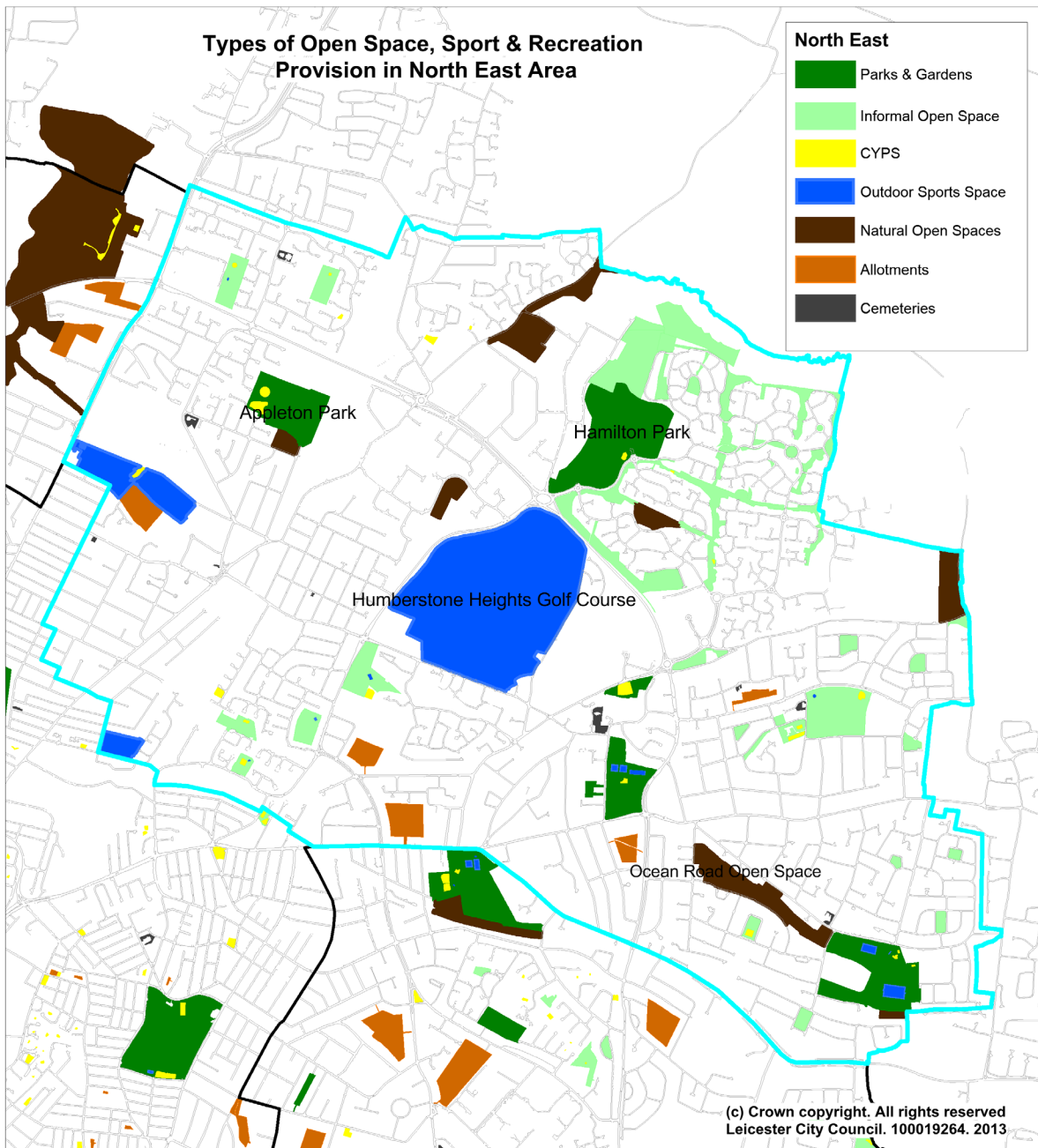
North East Area

9.8 There is a sufficient supply of open space in the north east area overall, and of parks and gardens and outdoor sports facilities. There is an undersupply of allotments and CYPS. There is a higher number of aged 10-17 than the city average.

North East	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency	
Area Totals	198.97	132.78	66.19	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	42.20	23.05	19.15	Sufficient supply
Informal Open Space	57.11	23.05	34.06	Sufficient supply
Children and Young People's Space	3.03	3.69	-0.66	Under Supply
Outdoor Sports Space	67.73	46.10	21.63	Sufficient supply
Natural Open Space	19.92	23.05	-3.13	Under Supply
Allotments	8.98	13.83	-4.85	Under Supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





North East Quality	
TYPE	
9.9 Parks and Gardens	<p>Appleton Park is a large open site with a mix of formal greenspace and natural areas. The site contains a variety of new play equipment and a large area of managed grassland. The audit highlighted the need to re-instate a number of paths throughout the site and increase community involvement throughout the site.</p> <p>Hamilton Park is a large site and is predominately an area of natural greenspace. The site contains a variety of features including an adventure playground, a small lake and areas of managed grassland. The audit highlighted improvements that have been made to the park including the re-surfacing of tarmac paths and installation of new site gates and barriers.</p> <p>Monks Rest Gardens is a well-used community park with attractive areas including feature tree specimens. The audit highlighted the need to redevelop the play area and to use investment in some areas of the park to increase the standards. The bowling greens present on site are of high quality.</p> <p>Willowbrook Park is a fairly open site containing a number of facilities including a recently developed play area, good quality football pitches and a pavilion. Areas of woodland and dense tree planting provide good wildlife habitats and increase the conservation value of the site. The site would benefit from improved marketing and provision of educational information to increase the number of visitors to the site.</p>
9.10 Informal Open Space	<p>Netherhall Road open space is an open aspect site containing both natural and formal areas used for amenity purposes and sports pitches. The site has been improved with the installation of an outdoor gym and also new play equipment. Craven Recreation ground is an open aspect site with new outdoor gym equipment, football pitch goals and areas of managed meadows. Towers Hospital is an area of informal greenspace with a variety of landscape features. These include shrub borders, a woodland area, the old Towers Hospital building and a play area. These three sites could all be improved with increased signage at the entrances.</p> <p>Trevino Drive is a predominantly grassed area with a play area. Many features within the site require increased maintenance to improve the standard of the site. There is a problem with graffiti throughout the site,</p>

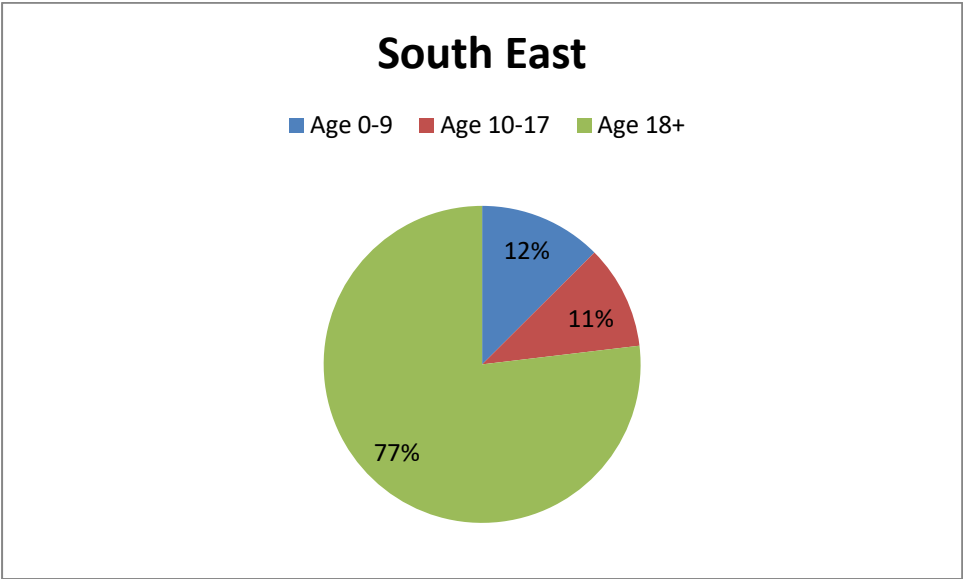
	<p>which requires attention.</p> <p>Morton walk open space is an open aspect sites with play area facilities present on site. Marketing of the site could be improved to increase community involvement.</p>
<p>9.11 Children & Young People Space</p>	<p>Appleton Multi-Use Area, Rushey Fields Recreation Ground, Hamilton Mixed Use Area, Monks Rest Gardens, Armdale Drive Ball Court/Cycle Trail and Langford Way are some of a number of parks within the north east area to be considered to be in good condition. Despite issues with vandalism and graffiti Barnes Close is in a reasonable condition, as is Kirminton Gardens, despite the need for a new boundary fence. Speedwell Drive has been assessed and appears to be in reasonable condition currently, but due to heavy use, could require refurbishment in approximately 5 years' time. Specific equipment has been identified as being beneficial to some of the parks in good condition but with limited activities, Christopher Drive and Netherhall Road Junior Area could benefit from agility or balance trails, Attingham Close from a number of spring based rockers and Jesse Jackson Park would benefit from the addition of a roundabout, seesaw and multi-play unit.</p> <p>There are however, also a number of sites which are in need of refurbishment, these sites include: Stanier Drive, Butler Close Play Area, Hastings Road, Cedarwood Close, Humberstone Recreation Ground and Netherhall Road. It has been noted that any refurbishment of the infant area of Appleton Park should focus on increased sand play equipment. Willowbrook park also requires refurbishment, further fencing is required at the infant area whereas a climbing/slide unit is required at the junior area. The Willowbrook Bal Court would benefit from a repair of the currently out of use floodlights.</p>
<p>9.12 Allotments</p>	<p>The four main allotments sites within the north east area are: Netherhall Road, Uppingham Road, Colchester Road and Wycombe Road which provide a range of facilities such as storage huts at Uppingham Road and toilet blocks at Wycombe Road.</p> <p>Encroaching vegetation is an issue on the paths at Netherhall Road and at the boundary fence of Wycombe Road. Colchester Road is also particularly overgrown and requires clearing in order to open up existing plots.</p>

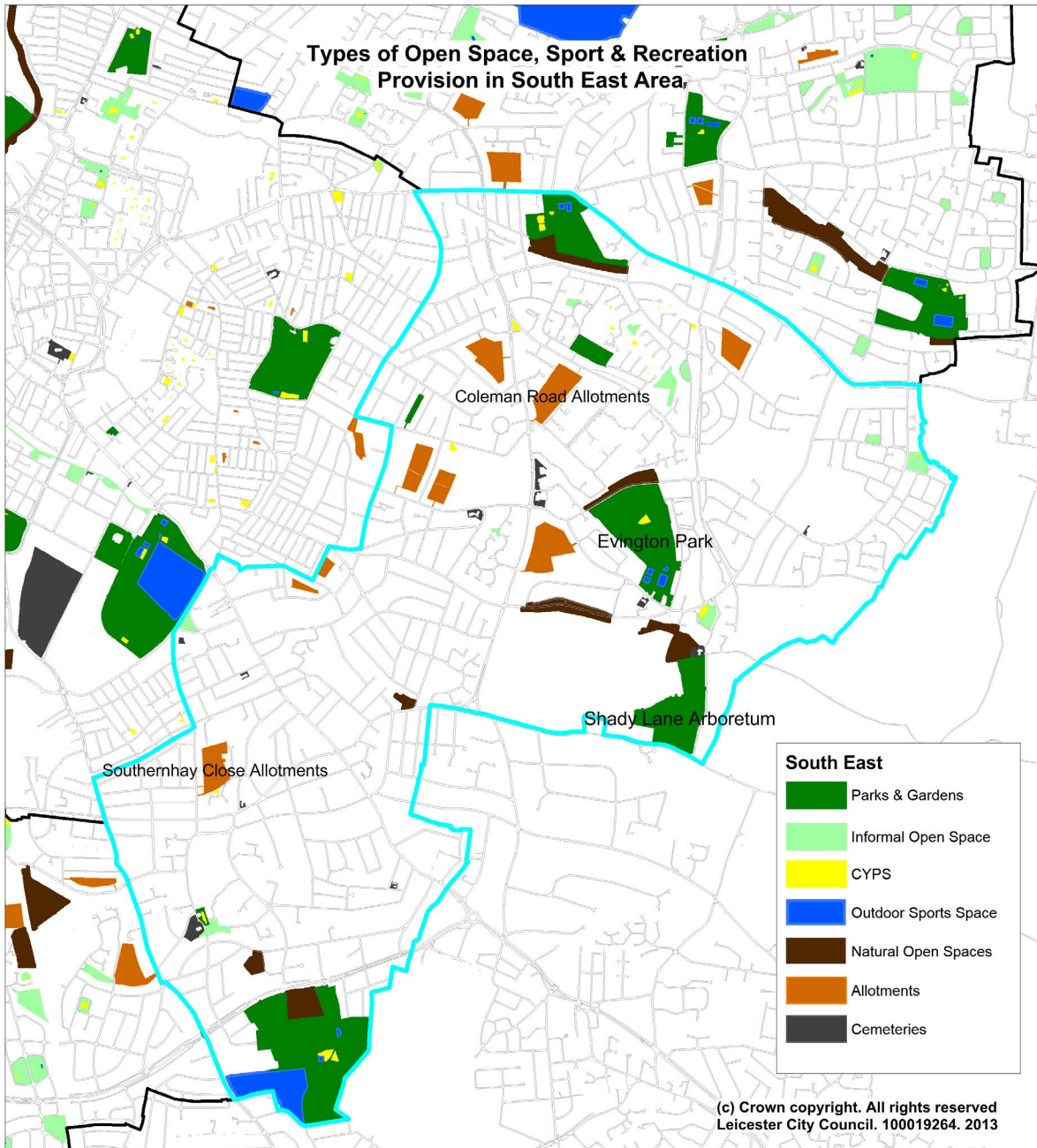
South East Area

9.13 There is a tight supply of open space in the south east area, with an undersupply of outdoor sports space and a good supply of parks and gardens and allotments. The age profile is similar to the city average.

South East	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency	
Area Totals	115.63	110.40	5.24	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	64.79	19.17	45.62	Sufficient Supply
Informal Open Space	5.47	19.17	-13.70	Under supply
Children and Young People's Space	2.10	3.07	-0.97	Under supply
Outdoor Sports Space	8.29	38.33	-30.04	Under supply
Natural Open Space	12.55	19.17	-6.62	Under supply
Allotments	22.43	11.50	10.93	Sufficient Supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





South East Quality	
TYPE	
9.14 Parks and Gardens	<p>Knighton Park is a large, attractive district park and currently holds Green Flag award status. The park contains a variety of high quality features including two play areas, outdoor gym equipment, a pitch and putt course, tennis courts, sports fields, nature areas and ornamental gardens. The park is well sign-posted throughout and has a high level of community involvement. Chapel Lane Gardens is a small attractive site located within pleasant surroundings. The site contains a variety of shrubs and plants, a play area and picnic seating areas. The audit highlighted the need for horticultural maintenance to improve the hedges and raised borders.</p> <p>Gwendolen Gardens is a long narrow site providing a walk-through greenspace with number of benches and attractive borders. The entrances to the site require opening up to improve the welcoming feel of the site. Frequent anti-social behaviour is a problem within the site (high level of street drinking, graffiti and fly tipping).</p> <p>Evington Park is a high quality site providing a range of facilities which include bowling greens, tennis courts, sports pitches and play areas. The site has active community involvement with a bowls club and a 'Friends of Evington Park' group. Ongoing implementation of the management plan for all sites should be a priority to maintain the high standards of the district parks.</p> <p>Lily Marriot Gardens is a smaller attractive site which contains two play areas. The park audit highlighted the need to clear the pond area and to increase the management of the naturalised areas</p>
9.15 Informal Open Space	<p>Sedgebrook Road Open Space, Kingscliffe Crescent open space and Evington Recreation Ground are the main informal greenspaces within the ward. Evington Recreation is a good quality site containing a variety of features including a war memorial and play area. The site has a variety of land features including annual bedding, hedge borders and wild flower areas. There is an active 'Friends of Group' on the site and therefore good community involvement. St. Mary's triangle is an open grassed area with a variety of trees and ornamental shrubs.</p> <p>Both Kingscliffe Crescent and Sedgebrook Open Space are small sites and could benefit from increased</p>

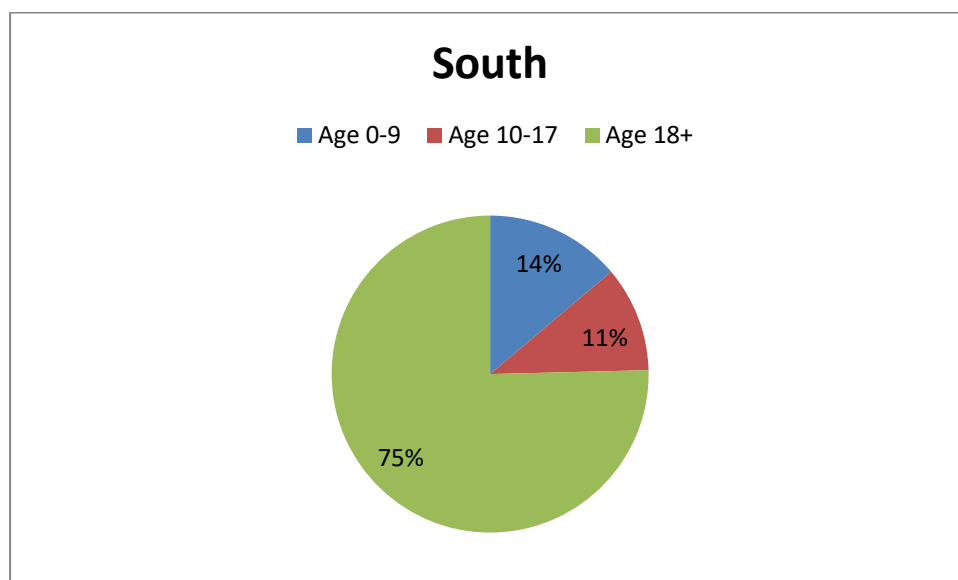
	marketing of the site to improve the level of community involvement.
9.16 Children & Young People Space	<p>Evington Park, Humberstone Park, Church Lane, Knighton Park and Southernhay Avenue are all sites within the south east area which are currently in good condition. Both Southernhay Avenue and Evington Park could benefit from the addition of a balancing or agility trail, whereas Knighton Park could benefit from a new standing seesaw. There is space available to add further play equipment at the Church Lane site; however it is unlikely to be necessary or appropriate to do so. Turner Walk Ball Court is also in good condition and could be further improved following consultation with local residents.</p> <p>A number of sites in the area have been assessed as being in a poor location. Balderstone Close, Goodwood Amenity Area, Higgs Close and Rockingham Close. There is little room for improvements on these sites, although an agility trail could be beneficial to the Goodwood site.</p> <p>Sites such as Evington Village Green, Lily Marriot Gardens and Thomasson Road could be improved with the addition of an agility or balance trail. Downing Drive and Crown Hills could both benefit from a new multi-play unit and despite currently being in a reasonable condition Mcvicker Close will need refurbishment in approximately five years. Coleman Road requires enhancement following a road traffic accident in 2015 leaving it with limited equipment on the site.</p>
9.17 Allotments	<p>A number of allotments are located within the south east area.</p> <p>The Wakerley Road allotments site is a well-managed area which provides good quality facilities to the tenants. Gwendolen Road, Ethel Road, Walshe Road and Blackenhall Road allotments require improvements to the path infrastructure. Broad Avenue and Kimberley Road require boundary fence improvements. Stoughton Drive North allotment has good site security but requires maintenance to the encroaching vegetation hanging over from neighbouring dwellings. The audit of Broad Avenue allotments also highlighted the need to improve the site's water points.</p>

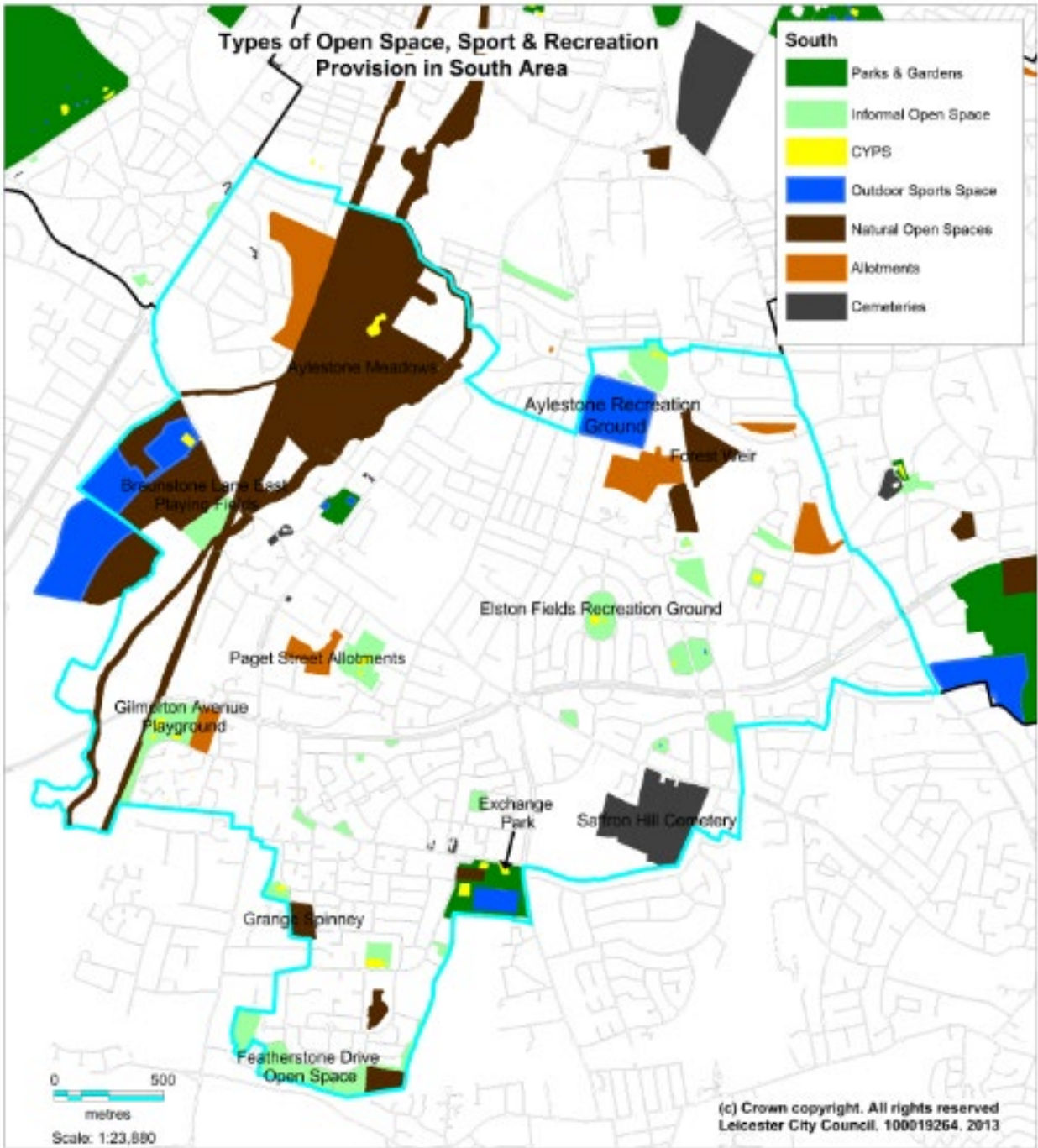
South Area

9.18 There is a sufficient supply of open space in the south area. There is an undersupply of outdoor sports facilities and a high level of natural open space. The age profile is similar to the city average.

South	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency	
Area Totals	175.39	108.81	66.58	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	5.62	18.89	-13.27	Under supply
Informal Open Space	34.85	18.89	15.96	Sufficient Supply
Children and Young People's Space	2.95	3.02	-0.07	Under supply
Outdoor Sports Space	18.42	37.78	-19.36	Under supply
Natural Open Space	90.35	18.89	71.46	Sufficient Supply
Allotments	23.20	11.33	11.86	Sufficient Supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





South Quality	
TYPE	
9.19 Parks and Gardens	Aylestone Hall Gardens is the only park and garden within the area and has been awarded Green Flag status. The gardens are attractive with the presence of colourful foliage and annual bedding. During the audit it was noted that the site was a welcoming place and maintained very good community involvement.
9.20 Informal Open Space	<p>There are a number of informal open spaces within the southern area. Montrose Road Open Space is an open site with sustainable arboriculture and woodland management. Attention is needed to improve parts of the play area including replacement swings and bark material. Gilmorton Open Space contains a variety of play equipment including a ball court which is of good quality and well maintained. The site is easy to access and contains a lot of seating areas. Both sites have issues of littering within the play areas.</p> <p>Elston Recreation ground and Meadow Gardens are both open sites containing a play area which is the main site feature. Attention should be made to the litter and graffiti problems within these sites which were identified during a park audit.</p> <p>Aylestone Road Recreation Ground north contains seasonal sports pitches, a hard surface ball court and play area. The audit highlighted the need to open up the entrance to the site on Knighton Lane East and to remove self-sets and areas of brambles throughout the site. Similarly Chiltern Green requires a reduction in the number of brambles and roses within the shrub beds to increase visibility.</p> <p>Sturdee Road Recreation Ground is one of the larger sites of informal greenspace in the ward and contains football pitches and play areas with a variety of play equipment. Featherstone Drive open space and Sonning Way open space are large open sites with many naturalised areas. Access to the sites should be improved to ensure that the sites are suitable for wheelchair users.</p>
9.21 Children & Young People Space	<p>Exchange Park Infant area and Gilmorton Avenue (Areas 1 & 2) are currently in a good condition and require limited improvements. Aylestone Playing Fields, Montrose Spinney Infant Area, Neston Gardens and Meadow Gardens are also all currently in good condition but have scope for additional equipment. Meadow Gardens and Neston Gardens could particularly benefit from a balancing trail.</p> <p>A number of the parks including Ambleside Drive, Hillsborough Road Recreation Ground, Gilmorton Avenue</p>

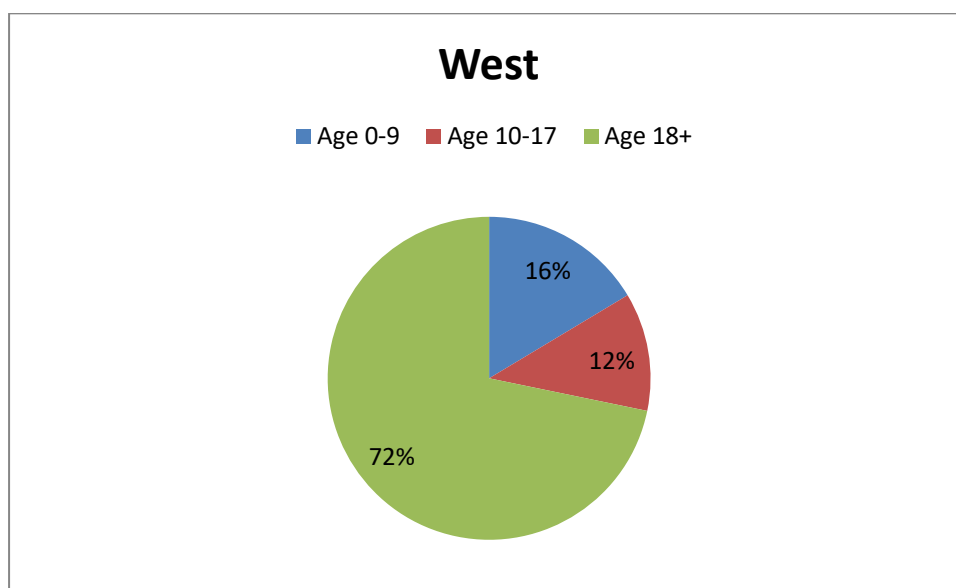
	<p>(Main Area) Elston Fields, Exchange Park (Junior) and Chiltern Green have been identified as potentially requiring new play equipment, agility trails have been specifically identified as being beneficial to Ambleside Drive, Exchange Park Junior, Elston Fields and Chiltern Green. Chiltern Green also has the potential for a balancing trail on site.</p> <p>Aylestone Recreation Ground, Aylestone Play Space, Aylestone Ball Court and Montrose Spinney Junior Area have all been subject to graffiti and/or vandalism. A 2014 refurbishment of Montrose Spinney has been successful in reducing the levels of vandalism on site. The other areas listed above will require major repair and improvement works to bring them into a suitable condition.</p>
<p>9.22 Allotments</p>	<p>There are six allotment sites present in the southern area: Gilmorton, Meredith Road, Welford Road, Sutton Road, Whittier Road and Paget Street allotments. The allotments contain a range of facilities including the society shop at Welford Road and solar panels and wheelchair accessible, compostable toilets at Whittier Road</p> <p>Both of these sites require improvement to the path surfaces within the site and also maintenance to the encroaching vegetation along the fence lines. Recycling of various materials on site is encouraged by both societies. Footpath improvements are required at Welford Road, Sutton Road and Meredith Road allotments, with Meredith Road and Welford Road also in need of maintenance to their boundary fences.</p>

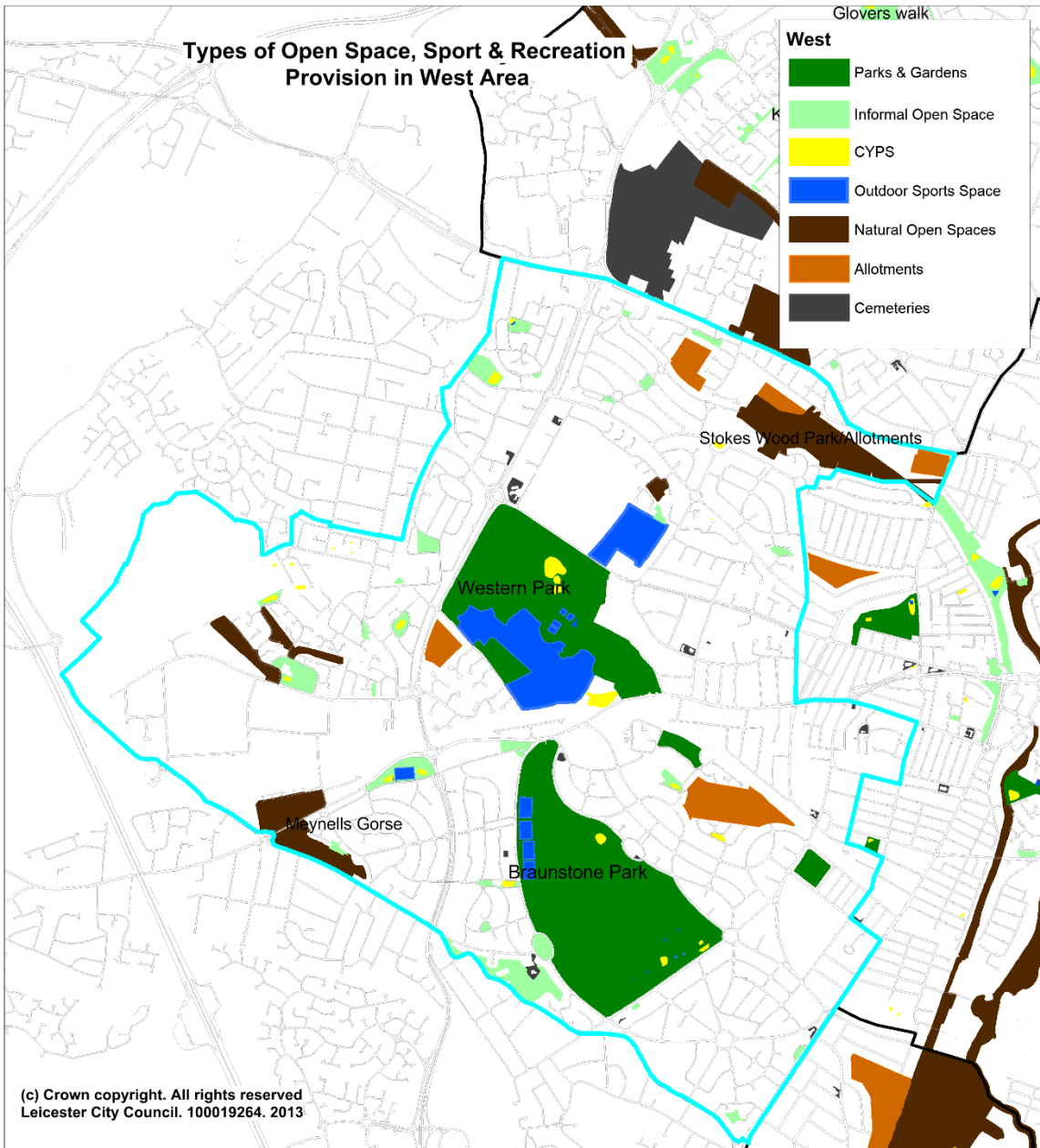
West Area

9.23 There is a good level of open space in the area, but an undersupply of outdoor sports facilities. There is a high level of parks and gardens in the area and a high level of people aged 0-17 compared to the city average.

West	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency	
Area Totals	203.07	159.31	43.76	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	111.78	27.66	84.13	Sufficient Supply
Informal Open Space	17.55	27.66	-10.11	Under supply
Children and Young People's Space	4.50	4.43	0.07	Sufficient Supply
Outdoor Sports Space	26.91	55.32	-28.41	Under supply
Natural Open Space	24.94	27.66	-2.72	Under supply
Allotments	17.39	16.59	0.79	Sufficient Supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





West Area	
TYPE	
9.24 Parks and Gardens	<p>Braunstone Park is a large, attractive, open park and has recently received Green Flag status. This achievement reflects the improvements that have been made to increase the quality of this park. There are a variety of facilities including football pitches, play area, fishing pools and outdoor gym equipment. It was noted in the most recent audit that horticultural maintenance throughout the park is of good quality.</p> <p>Western Park is a good quality park and provides a range of facilities for the local community. These include a variety of play equipment for children of all ages. There is also a variety of sports facilities in the park including tennis courts, bowling greens and a BMX track. Some areas of playing field are maintained as cricket, football and baseball pitches. Areas of woodland and meadow within the park provide pockets of natural features and increase the ecological value of the site.</p> <p>The park audit highlighted the need to increase maintenance of park buildings (remove graffiti) and also to the tennis courts.</p> <p>The park is a well-used site and promotes a 'Friends of Western Park' group.</p> <p>Quality audits highlighted that litter is a consistent problem throughout the park and gardens sites. Both Rancliffe Gardens and Westcotes park have features which make the site feel safe and secure including appropriate provision of facilities and safe equipment. Westcotes Park could be improved with decorative annual bedding borders and maintenance to the tarmac path within the site.</p>
9.25 Informal Open Space	<p>Hockley Farm Road open space has been improved with the installation of new play equipment, however there is still a need to re-surface the paths throughout the site and increase the management of the woodland areas. Litter bins are required on site to reduce litter problems. Church Fields is within an attractive setting with several entrances, although accessibility could be improved for wheel chair users. Batersbee Road open space is one of the larger sites of informal open space in the ward and provides local residents with a football pitch, small play area and a woodland area. Ryder Road open space has recently been improved with the installation of an agility trail and Sharmon Crescent provides a play area for children. Many of the informal greenspaces were noted as having both litter and graffiti problems.</p>

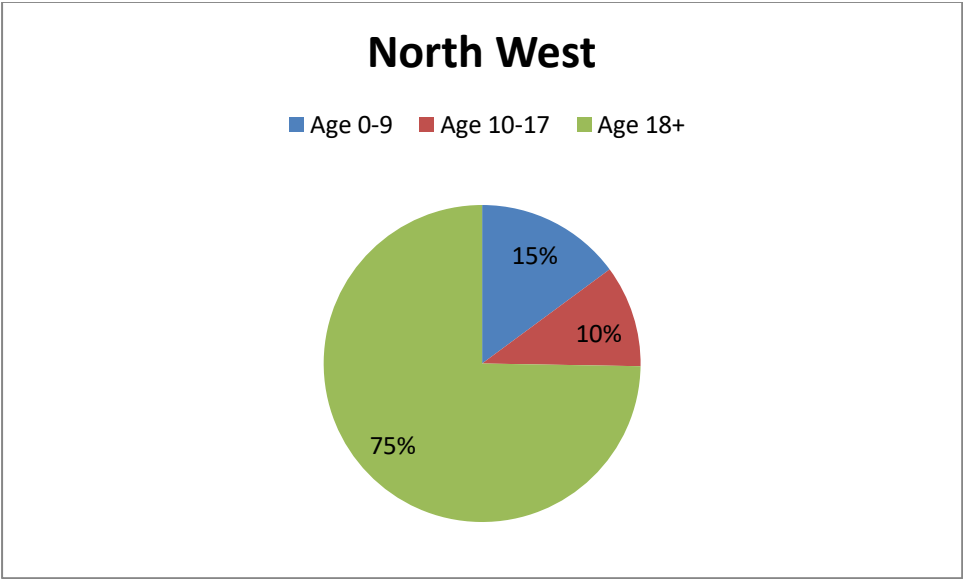
<p>9.26 Children & Young People Space</p>	<p>Pindar Road play area, Dupont Gardens, Ryder Road (large play area), Westcotes Park and Braunstone Park (adjacent to skate park) are currently in good condition with little scope for enhancement. The junior site at Western Park remains in good condition, but has the potential for improvement on the site of the former paddling pool; the junior area of Western Park is in need of a refurbishment of the sand pit. Despite being in good condition the following sites have been identified as potentially benefitting from further play equipment: Ashthorpe Road (multi-play unit and nest swing), Lamem Road (roundabout and sensory play features), Mulberry Avenue play area (roundabout and seesaw) and Rowanberry Avenue (roundabout, seesaw and balancing trail). The play area at Benbow Rise is currently in a reasonable condition but is likely to need refurbishment in the next five years,</p> <p>Sites in the western area which are in need of improvement include the Bronte Close, the Gooding Avenue and Braunstone Avenue sites in Braunstone Park and Sharmon Crescent. These sites have all been identified as requiring new play equipment such as multi play units and agility trails. Hockley Farm Road, Yew Tree Drive and Ryder Road (small play area) also require various new types of play equipment.</p> <p>The ball court at Ryder Road is also in need of refurbishment and enhancement as the fencing is in a poor condition and the play surface needs to be improved alongside better lighting. Battersbee Road play area is currently in a reasonable condition despite recent incidents of vandalism.</p>
<p>9.27 Allotments</p>	<p>Bonney Road, Stokeswood, Rancliffe Crescent and Groby Road are allotment sites present within the area. Stokeswood allotment was noted as a particularly good quality site during the most recent audit. The site is well secured and also provides a variety of facilities for the allotment users. Bonney Road allotments provide the users with good quality facilities including a communal garden, picnic table and a disabled accessible compostable toilet, the site however requires improvements to its path/road infrastructure.</p> <p>Rancliffe Crescent and Groby Road provide communal areas for allotment society groups and recycling and composting facilities; however improvements could be made to the tarmac path surfaces within both sites. Fly tipping problems need to be addressed on site at Rancliffe Crescent.</p>

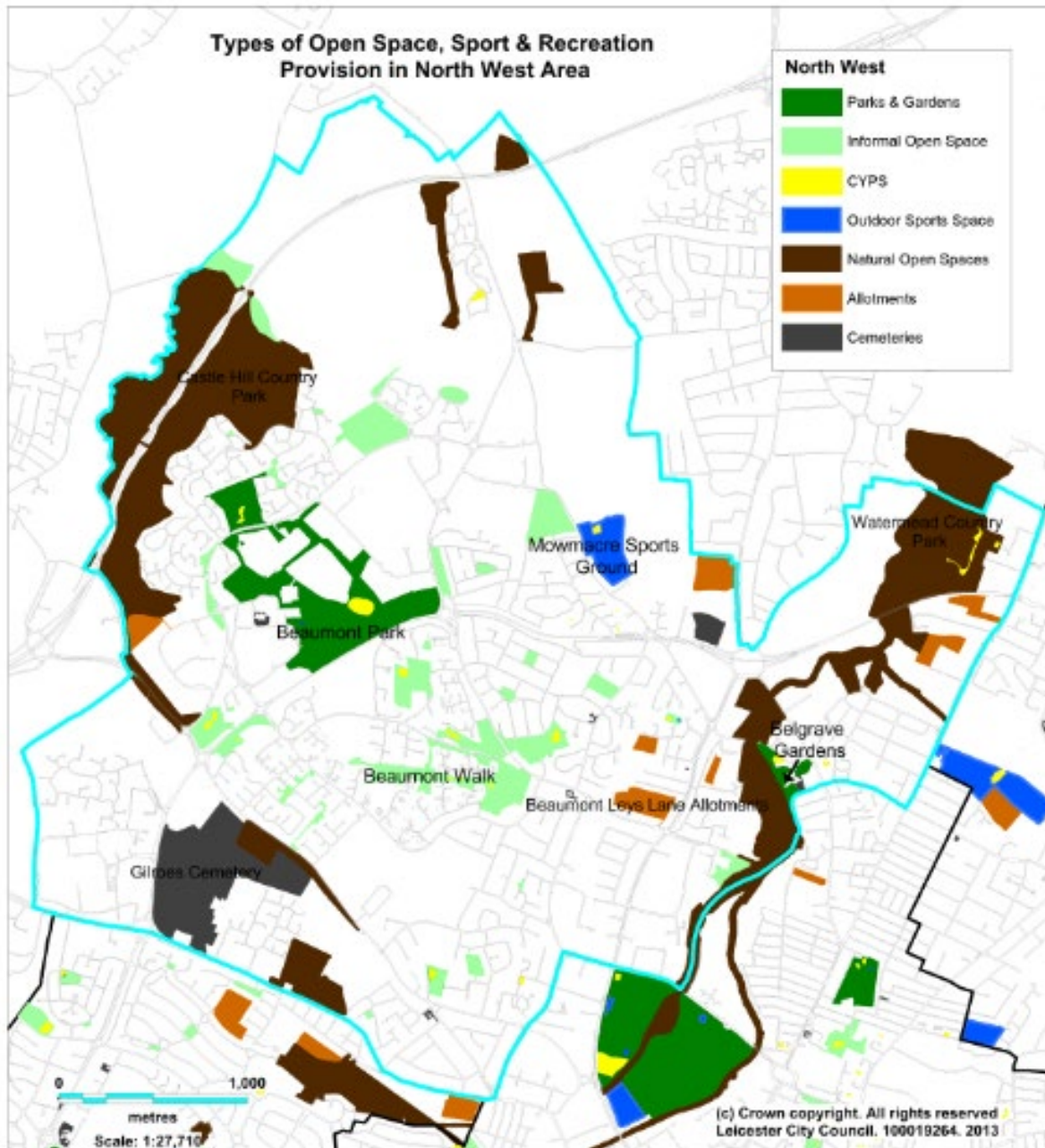
North West Area

9.28 There is a high level of open space in the north west area mainly made up of natural open space due to Castle Park. There is also a lot of informal open space. However there is an undersupply of outdoor sports facilities. The age profile is similar to that of the city average.

North West	Total Existing Quantity (Publicly Accessible) ha	Required Quantity (ha)	Sufficient/ Deficiency	
Area Totals	257.68	99.69	157.99	
TYPE	Existing Provision (ha)	Required Provision (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency (ha)	Sufficient / Deficiency
Parks and Gardens	35.20	17.31	17.90	Sufficient Supply
Informal Open Space	50.29	17.31	32.98	Sufficient Supply
Children and Young People's Space	3.73	2.77	0.96	Sufficient Supply
Outdoor Sports Space	5.86	34.62	-28.76	Under Supply
Natural Open Space	147.43	17.31	130.12	Sufficient Supply
Allotments	15.17	10.38	4.78	Sufficient Supply

Note: The figure for Outdoor Sports facilities does not include sports pitches on school/college playing fields or privately operated sports facilities e.g. five a side facilities/ University Facilities. A full picture of the playing pitch provision in and around the city will be in a separate report.





North West Quality	
TYPE	
9.29 Parks and Gardens	<p>Beaumont Park and Belgrave Gardens are the main formal parks within the North West area. Both have been subject to improvements. Dog control orders, path lighting and CCTV have been installed on site to increase safety and security at Beaumont Park. Belgrave Gardens has been enhanced with new bins and benches and also improvements to some paths.</p> <p>Both Belgrave Gardens and Beaumont Park present opportunities for improvements. Investment is required on site to improve the standards of the play area equipment and bedding at Belgrave Gardens. Whereas at Beaumont Park, attention should be given to significantly increase the signage, re-surfacing of the entrance/exit paths and increasing the management of the natural areas.</p>
9.30 Informal Open Space	<p>Bennion Pools has recently achieved Green Flag status for the first time. This reflects the good management of the site and high levels of community involvement. Ingold Avenue has recently been improved with the refurbishment of the play area; the local community was involved and consulted during the development process. Anti-social behaviour was noted as a problem during the audit of Thurcaston Road open space due to graffiti and flytipping being present throughout the site. This behaviour has also been noted in the majority of informal open spaces within this North Western area. Marketing and promotion of sites needs improving to increase the level of community involvement.</p>
9.31 Children & Young People Space	<p>Vandalism and antisocial behaviour has been an issue at a number of parks in the north west area. Glovers Walk has had play equipment removed due to vandalism and requires new equipment for younger children. Milton Crescent needs a refurbishment of a vandalised goal end and Watermead Park requires replacement totems. Vandalism has affected the Beaumont Walk site which is planned for a refurbishment in 2017 using s.106 contributions, whereas Heacham Drive Ball Court may be relocated to a more appropriate site due to anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Currently Ingold Avenue, Langley Walk and Alderton Avenue are considered to be parks in the area which are in good condition whereas Home Farm, Beaumont BMX Park, Thurcaston Road Park are in need of a full refurbishment. Following adoption of the site the planned maintenance to defects at Oakwood Road the</p>

	<p>park will be put into a good condition. The site at Chancel Road is to be refurbished as part of the Ashton Green planned play provision and although currently in reasonable condition, the site at Bewcastle Grove will need refurbishment within the next five years.</p> <p>There are currently five sites at Border Drive which are currently considered too small for enhancement, whereas Keepers Lodge could be enhanced by an agility trail, Mowmacre Sports has been identified as a site for a calisthenics area and Loughborough Road would benefit from a new toddler park. The sites at St Helens Close and Astill Lodge Park require works to their boundary fencing.</p>
9.32 Allotments	<p>There are seven allotment sites in the area. Beaumont Leys Lane, Abbey Rise, Beaumanor Road, Gorse Hill, Oakland Avenue, Uxbridge Road and Red Hill allotments</p> <p>Beaumont Leys Lane, Abbey Rise, Oakland Avenue, Uxbridge Road and Red Hill allotments are well maintained, provide a range of facilities and are in good condition. These sites are well secured however the access within these sites could be improved by clearing the encroaching vegetation.</p> <p>The Beaumanor Road allotment site requires improvement in a number of areas to increase the overall quality of the site. This includes the removal and prevention of fly-tipping on site and restoration of damaged fence line. Gorse Hill requires improvements to the path/road infrastructure within the site. There is localised flooding in some areas of the Oakland Avenue site which requires attention. Uxbridge Road requires additional maintenance to the perimeter fence to prevent further deterioration and vegetation encroachment.</p>

10. Conclusion

10.1 Following Emerging Options consultation the council will produce a draft plan, which will show areas of open space to be protected, balanced against the need for housing and employment land. There will be a period of public consultation on the draft plan, before submission to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination in Public.