

**BUCKHURST HILL – OPEN SPACE AUDIT****JUNE 2009****CONTENTS**

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## **CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION**

**1.0** The audit process, described in this report, is designed to generate comparative information on different sites across the district for the following purposes:

- to provide an overview of the quality and value of spaces and facilities within each of the district's parishes;
- to influence the production of new planning policies essential in determining planning applications, guiding new development and resolving conflicts of demand or use; and
- to enable the Council to demonstrate a continuous improvement in the quality of open spaces, sport and recreational facilities in its district.

**1.1** It is believed that all areas of open space, formal recreational space, and sports facilities have been identified by the audit. These have been surveyed and assessed, and conclusions reached on their value to the local community and the environment of the district.

**1.2** For convenience the audit is split into the following categories, although it is recognised that some of these allow for a range of uses:

- allotments (AT);
- cemeteries and graveyards (CG);
- formal playing pitches (FP);
- alternative sites for sport (AS) ;
- informal recreation grounds (RG);
- children's playgrounds (CY);
- indoor facilities for high levels of use (IF);
- community centres and village halls (CV);
- managed open space with public access (MO);
- semi-natural open space and woodland with public access (SO);

## **CHAPTER 2 - ALLOTMENTS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
AT1	Forest Edge Allotment	Forest Edge, Buckhurst Hill	0.19	Epping Forest District Council
AT2	Hornbeam Road Allotment	Hornbeam Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.95	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council
AT3	Hornbeam Close Allotment	Hornbeam Close, Buckhurst Hill	0.09	Privately Owned
AT4	Lower Queen's Road Allotment	Lower Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill	1.61	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council
AT5	Boxted Close Allotment	Boxted Close, Buckhurst Hill	1.19	Epping Forest District Council
AT6	Palace Gardens Allotment	Palace Gardens, Buckhurst Hill	0.15	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council



Forest Edge Allotment, Site AT1

### **FOREST EDGE ALLOTMENT (AT1)**

- 2.0** Situated between the back gardens of the homes along Forest Edge and the Central Line railway, this is a pleasant, isolated allotment which is well screened from external view by heavy vegetation. The boundary comprises dense bushes, hedgerows and medium to large sized trees,

particularly to the north. The main access to the site is to the north, and links to a footpath which travels between Forest Edge and Buckhurst Way over the Central Line. The site is secured by a metal gate which remains padlocked when it is not in use, with each plot holder holding their own key. Tall wire mesh fencing with rows of barbed wire above prevent access from the north. The remaining sides are equally well secured, by a combination of tall wire fencing and heavy vegetation.

- 2.1 Inside, the allotment is divided into a number of plots, and is clearly well used by locals. There is little evidence of any litter, and none of vandalism, although the entrance gate fencing appears to have been slightly damaged. Some parts of the allotment perhaps appear a little overgrown, however this contributes to the green and peaceful.



Hornbeam Road Allotment, Site AT2

### **HORNBEAM ROAD ALLOTMENT (AT2)**

- 2.2 Located to the east of Hornbeam Road, and close to the western bank of the river Roding, this large allotment can be accessed via entrances to north and west. These are linked by a public footpath which runs across the site from the south west to the north west. A further entrance to the south can be accessed from the playing fields adjacent. The allotment appears well used by nearby residents, although approximately one third has been left unmanaged and has consequently become overgrown with tall weeds and brambles that reach in excess of 8-10 feet.



- 2.3** This overgrowth has had a knock on effect on accessibility, with the smaller metal gateway to the west now completely impassable, and that to the south partially blocked. The presence of a third entrance gateway to the north however ensures that visitors can still gain access. This gateway however does appear to be rather worn, and shows some evidence of vandalism.
- 2.4** Through the main entrance, there is a reasonably large area of hard standing, big enough for approximately 5 to 6 cars, along with a small shed. From here, a concrete pathway runs all the way to the partially overgrown southern entrance, thereby allowing both vehicles and perhaps users with disabilities to travel more easily through the site. Overall, those parts of the allotment which are in use appear well maintained, and are clean, tidy and pleasant.



Hornbeam Close Allotment, Site AT3

### **HORNBEAM CLOSE ALLOTMENT (AT3)**

- 2.5** Situated to the north of Hornbeam Road Allotment (AT2), this site is separated from its neighbour by a thick line of bushes and trees. The remainder is surrounded with a combination of fencing and thin hedgerow. Unlike its neighbour however, this allotment has no gated entrances, which renders it accessible to any passer by from the south east or west.
- 2.6** Despite this, those parts of the site which are in use appear well cared for, with little indication of litter or vandalism. Although it is in places a little overgrown, this lends to the relaxed and natural feeling of the allotments.



Lower Queens Road Allotment, Site AT4

### **LOWER QUEENS ROAD ALLOTMENT (AT4)**

- 2.7** Located just to the south of Lower Queens Road, this is the largest allotment in the parish and is another extremely pleasant, isolated site. It is well screened from external view by the heavy vegetation which encircles it. Adequate fencing also surrounds the entire site, effectively securing it from any would be trespassers. Unusually for an allotment, much of the perimeter appears to be raised in relation to the rest of the site, particularly at the north along Lower Queens Road, presenting passers by with an occasional view through the site. The main entrance is located along Lower Queens Road and is further complimented by a public footpath access along the eastern boundary.
- 2.8** The main entrance is a large well-signed metal gate which appears to be well maintained. Beyond it, site users can access the well surfaced road heading into the centre, where there is a small car park large enough for 6 to 8 vehicles, and several small sheds. The allotments are clearly heavily used, and extremely well kept, with no apparent litter or vandalism.





Boxted Close Allotment, Site AT5

### **BOXTED CLOSE ALLOTMENT (AT5)**

- 2.9** Situated to the east of Boxted Close, and adjoining Roding Valley Playing Fields, this is the second largest allotment garden in Buckhurst Hill. It can be accessed from both the north and south via a wide dirt track and footpath respectively, which both lead from Boxted Close. A further footpath runs along the east, providing access to members of the public walking through Roding Valley Playing Fields. The site is entirely surrounded by dense hedgerows and smaller trees, which effectively screen it from external view.
- 2.10** The smaller southern entrance is a small metal gate, which remains padlocked when not in use with all plot owners having their own key. The main entrance is to the north, and comprises a corrugated iron gate which has been covered in graffiti. On the other side, a small concrete car park has been established, large enough for approximately 4 to 6 vehicles. From here, a pathway leads directly to the smaller entrance to the south.
- 2.11** Beyond the car park lie a large number of allocated plots, clearly demonstrating the popularity of the site. Despite this however, approximately one third, particularly to the west, remains unused and overgrown. Of particular note is a large tree to the south, which very much adds to the overall visual amenity of the site.



Palace Gardens Allotment, Site AT6

### **PALACE GARDENS ALLOTMENT (AT6)**

**2.12** Located to the south of Palace Gardens, this small enclosed allotment can be accessed via a small gap in the fencing, dense shrubs and medium sized trees which surround it. This entrance is not gated, although the potential security risk is largely countered its location in a relatively quiet cul-de-sac . Furthermore, the entranceway is largely screened from view by the surrounding trees and shrubs. The allotments are well presented and clearly very well maintained, whilst also being free of any litter or vandalism. Overall this is a very pleasant place, offering a peaceful and relaxed environment.

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- Considering its small area, Buckhurst Hill has a substantial amount of allotment space.
- Parts of Boxted Close Allotment (AT5) and Hornbeam Road Allotment (AT2) are heavily overgrown and clearance of these could create more plots.
- The quality of allotment provision is amongst the best in the District. All sites enjoy pleasant settings and appear to be very clean and tidy with little evidence of vandalism.
- This is in part due to the good security measures in place, particularly the secure perimeter fencing around all of the sites.



- Whilst no evidence of vandalism was noticed within Hornbeam Close allotment (AT3) or Palace Gardens allotment (AT6), the lack of security fencing and entrance is a potential security risk for these sites.
- The entrance gateway to Boxted Close Allotment (AT5) is unattractive and covered in graffiti, and should therefore either be replaced or refurbished.
- Forest Edge Allotment (AT1), Palace Gardens Allotment (AT6) and Hornbeam Close Allotment (AT3) do not offer any car parking.
- Buckhurst Hill Parish Council does not indicate a local demand for further provision of similar facilities in the area.

## **CHAPTER 3 - CEMETERIES AND GRAVEYARDS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
CG1	St John the Baptist Church	High Road, Buckhurst Hill	1.52	Diocese of Chelmsford



St John The Baptist Church, Site CG1

### **ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH (CG1)**

- 3.0** Lying to the north west of the junction between High Road and Church Road, this is a large, enclosed, attractive and well signposted site. It can be accessed by a variety of entrances which open into the churchyard from both the High Road and Church Road. The churchyard's perimeter is clearly defined by medium sized hedgerows, whilst each entrance is securely gated. Towards the centre is the church itself, whilst to the south, there is a car park which appears to be used jointly with adjacent neighbours houses. Further parking is available along some of the wider hard surfaced paths throughout the site, although this may be due to the lack of car parking elsewhere.
- 3.1** The grounds, are very well maintained, with no litter or graffiti present. Adequate seats and litter bins have been provided. Several large, attractive trees dominate much of the area, particularly to the south and west, adding very much to the overall visual amenity. To the west, the grounds extend out towards the backs of the residential properties along Church Road. This part

of the site is of a much lower level than the remainder, although it is still easily accessible, courtesy of the network of hard surfaced paths which travel throughout.

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- This is the only site of its type within the parish.
- The site is very well maintained and is visually pleasing, particularly in the wooded areas.
- Adequate provision of seats, signs and litter bins has been made, the latter clearly having contributed to the cleanliness of the site.
- Security is good, with the boundaries well fenced and all main entrances effectively gated and in good condition.
- Space for parking cars may be an issue, depending on how many people use the site during service times.
- The network of hard standing footpaths make the churchyard both accessible and suitable for those persons less mobile, with wheelchairs or those with pushchairs.
- Buckhurst Hill Parish Council does not believe there to be a demand for the provision of further facilities of this type in the area.



## **CHAPTER 4 – FORMAL PLAYING PITCHES**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
FP1	Roding Valley Cricket Club	Boxted Close, Buckhurst Hill	4.41	Epping Forest District Council
FP2	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Roding Lane, Buckhurst Hill	3.66	Privately Leased
FP3	Buckhurst Hill Cricket and Lacrosse Club	Roding Lane, Buckhurst Hill	2.21	Privately Leased
FP4	Land South of Roding Valley Playing Fields	Roding Lane, Buckhurst Hill	1.70	Epping Forest District Council
FP5	Buckhurst Hill Football Club	Roding Lane, Buckhurst Hill	4.21	Epping Forest District Council
FP6	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Roding Lane, Buckhurst Hill	0.73	Privately Leased
FP7	Loughton Rugby Ground	Hornbeam Road, Buckhurst Hill	3.57	Epping Forest District Council
FP8	Buckhurst Hill Cricket Club	Hawsted, Buckhurst Hill	1.45	Privately Owned

### **RODING VALLEY CRICKET CLUB (FP1)**

- 4.0** Situated to the east of Bradwell Road, the site is one part of the network of sites which form Roding Valley Playing Fields. This particular section is used by Roding Valley Cricket Club, and is dominated by a single large cricket pitch, with practice nets and a clubhouse by its northern perimeter. The site can be accessed from the playing fields adjacent to the north and south. The area to the north lies in Loughton parish, where the northernmost parts of Roding Valley Playing Fields are located. To the east is Lake Roding, and Boxted Close Allotment is to the west.
- 4.1** A series of hard surfaced footpaths and gravel tracks provide access around the site, and allow pedestrians access to Greensted Road and Bradwell Road, as well as the neighbouring allotment and playing fields. A variety of trees and some shrubbery help to define the boundaries, as well as adding to the overall visual amenity. Adequate seats, signs and bins have been provided, although there are signs of litter and dog fouling present. Furthermore, the clubhouse to the north is in need of repainting.



Roding Valley Cricket Club, Site FP1

### **RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP2)**

- 4.2** This site lies to the north of Roding Lane. It is an attractive area, bordered on three sides by dense trees and shrubs, with Roding Valley Lake to the north and the River Roding to the east. A single footpath runs from the north to the north east of the site, providing good access between the various sections of the playing fields of Roding Valley, and the indoor sports facility to the east. The site primarily comprises two rugby pitches used by Woodford Rugby Club, which appear to be used only during the rugby season, given their relatively overgrown state at the time of auditing (June 2009).
- 4.3** There is an emergency access to the south, directly accessible from Roding Lane, which can be used by ambulances should anyone be injured whilst playing on the rugby fields. Unlike the vast majority of the areas making up the Roding Valley Playing Fields, this site contains few seats or bins, although this may be because it is not used quite so often. There is very little evidence of any litter or dog excrement.



Roding Valley Playing Fields, Site FP2

### **BUCKHURST HILL CRICKET AND LACROSSE CLUB (FP3)**

- 4.4 Accessible from Roding Valley Playing Fields to the north, and Roding Lane to the south, this site is dominated by a large area of grassland which serves as both a cricket and lacrosse pitch. To the south east lies the clubhouse. There are practice nets, storage for the pitch covers, and a car park large enough for around 20 vehicles close by, which can all be directly accessed from the main entrance to the south off Roding Lane. Whilst the site is located off a busy road, it is very well signposted, and so is easy to spot when driving past. The perimeter is formed from thick hedgerows, shrubs and a variety of trees, which together effectively screen it from external view, and help to create a very secluded feel. Furthermore, the area is clearly very well maintained, showing no sign of any litter, graffiti or any other type of vandalism.





Buckhurst Hill Cricket and Lacrosse Club, Site FP3

#### **LAND SOUTH OF RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP4)**

- 4.5 Found to the south of Roding Lane, this site has in recent times played host to football matches. It comprises a single football pitch at the centre, with a small changing room to the west, and a small clubhouse at the north eastern corner. The site is accessed directly from Roding Lane and is secured by a blue metal gate preventing vehicle access. From here, a hard surfaced path leads into the site, although the surrounding grass is gradually encroaching onto the surface. The site is bordered by trees and shrubbery which largely obscure it from external view, and give it a pleasant, private feel. However, both of the buildings have been heavily covered in graffiti, which should be removed.

#### **BUCKHURST HILL FOOTBALL CLUB (FP5)**

- 4.6 Lying to the south of Roding Lane directly opposite Buckhurst Hill Cricket and Lacrosse Club (FP3), this is the home of Buckhurst Hill Football Club. It comprises a large expanse of grass converted into five football pitches. The main entrance, a well signed and well maintained metal gate, is off Roding Lane, and remains locked when the site is not in use. Directly through the gates is a part hard surfaced and part gravel surfaced car park, which has enough room for approximately 12-15 vehicles. To the south of this lies the main clubhouse, comprising two buildings, both of which appear new and well maintained. The northern and western perimeters of the site are marked out with bushes, whilst the southern and eastern perimeters are open, offering

attractive views of the surrounding countryside. The site appears to be very well looked after, with no evidence of litter or vandalism.



Buckhurst Hill Football Club, Site FP5

### **RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP6)**

- 4.7 This small area of informal recreational space lies to the south east of Boxted Close allotment (AT5), at the heart of Roding Valley Playing Fields. It is almost entirely surrounded by a perimeter of dense shrubbery and tress. A couple of small gaps around this perimeter allow pedestrians access between Buckhurst Hill Cricket and Lacrosse Club (FP3) and the playing fields used by Woodford Rugby Club (FP2), although there is no hard surfaced pathway along this route. The site appears very clean and tidy, although this may be down to its rather secluded location, away from more frequently used pedestrian routes.

### **LOUGHTON RUGBY GROUND (FP7)**

- 4.8 Accessible from Hornbeam Road to the east, and adjacent to the south of Hornbeam Road allotment, Loughton Rugby Ground comprises a large area of green space, roughly two thirds of which has been marked out as rugby pitches. These two pitches are on an artificial plateau, which then slopes quickly downwards as it heads north. A clubhouse, which appears to be well maintained and in good condition, is to the west, alongside a gravel car park

with space for approximately 15 vehicles. This in turn is accessible via a hard standing road leading to Hornbeam Road.

- 4.9** There is an apparently disused playground (CY2), to the west of the ground, whilst the River Roding runs along the eastern perimeter, and the central line underground runs along the southern perimeter. The latter two are obscured from view by the dense trees and shrubs surrounding all but the western perimeter, which instead borders residential dwellings along Hornbeam Road. The presence of a large amount of litter needs to be tackled. This could be addressed effectively by the provision of some litter bins, particularly by the main entrance to the south west, and also to the north east where a footpath travels northwards to the playing field sites.



Loughton Rugby Ground, Site FP7

### **BUCKHURST HILL CRICKET GROUND (FP8)**

- 4.10** Buckhurst Hill cricket ground is situated to the north west of the junction between High Road and Hawsted, surrounded on three sides by part of Epping Forest known as Powell's Forest. To the south, the ground is overlooked by the flats located on Hawsted, whilst the main entrance is in the south eastern corner. From here, visitors can access a wide gravel track which doubles up as a car park, with enough space for around ten vehicles. There is a small clubhouse to the west, which appears very well kept and in excellent condition, as is the rest of the site. There is no sign of litter, and adequate seats are provided.





Buckhurst Hill Cricket Ground, Site FP8

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- There is an excellent number of formal playing pitches on offer in the parish.
- Many of the sites have secluded, attractive settings, particularly those within Roding Valley Playing Fields to the east of the parish.
- The vast majority of sites are clean, tidy and well maintained.
- There is a particular issue with graffiti on the buildings within the small football ground to the south of Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP5).
- Litter is also a small issue in some sites, most notably within Loughton Rugby Club (FP7) and Roding Valley Cricket Club (FP1).
- Whilst there are plenty of signs within Roding Valley Playing Fields as a whole, many of them are so small that they are barely noticeable.
- Where necessary, those sites which require on site car parking do provide it, and these car parks are all of a reasonable size and surface quality.
- There is an uneven distribution of this type of open space facility within the parish, with the east of the parish having many more formal playing pitches than the west.
- The local parish council however does not indicate a demand or desire to provide further formal playing pitches in the local area.

## **CHAPTER 5 – ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR SPORT**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
AS1	Buckhurst Hill Bowling and Lawn Tennis Club	Brook Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.68	Privately Owned

### **BUCKHURST HILL BOWLING AND LAWN TENNIS CLUB (AS1)**

- 5.0** Lying to the north west of the junction between Brook Road and Epping New Road, this site has two entrances, one small pedestrian access to the east along Epping New Road, and one gravel track forming a vehicle access to the west of Brook Road. Both entrances are gated and well-signposted, with a hard surfaced car park large enough for around 25 vehicles lying just through the vehicle access. Residential and commercial units border the site to the north and south respectively, whilst to the west a perimeter of trees overlooks the car park. Epping New Road runs alongside the eastern perimeter. The site itself offers four Astroturf tennis courts and two bowling greens, as well as clubhouse to the south, all of which appear well maintained and in good condition.



Buckhurst Hill Bowling and Lawn Tennis Club, Site AS1

## **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- This is the only alternative site for sport in the parish.
- Coupled with the formal playing pitches, and informal recreation grounds in the parish however, there is an excellent range of different facilities on offer in the parish allowing people of all ages to enjoy some sort of outdoor activity.
- Buckhurst Hill Parish Council however does not indicate a demand for further provision of alternative sites for sport in the local area.
- This particular site offers good facilities and appears to be well maintained and is clean, tidy and in good condition.
- The site provides adequate amounts of on site car parking and those using the site are protected from the very busy Epping New Road by secure perimeter fencing.



## **CHAPTER 6 – INFORMAL RECREATION GROUNDS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
RG1	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Rous Road, Buckhurst Hill	5.78	Epping Forest District Council



Roding Valley Playing Fields, Site RG1

### **RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (RG1)**

- 6.0** Surrounded on three sides by Boxted Close, Rous Road and Roding Lane to the north, west and south respectively, with Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP6) to east, this is a large square shaped area which forms part of Roding Valley Playing Fields. It is a combination of informal recreational space and woodland, which slopes downwards from west to east. A single hard surfaced footpath crosses the site from Roding Lane, dissecting it diagonally before entering an adjacent area (FP1). This footpath also provides access to a children's playground (CY1) at the heart of the site.
- 6.1** A further footpath runs along the northern boundary, providing access between Rous Road and the Boxted Close Allotment to the north east. The south east of the site, in particular, is dominated by woodland, whilst the perimeter is mostly delineated by various trees and large shrubs, which help

to generate a very peaceful and secluded feel. This area offers adequate seats, signs and bins, although evidence of litter was still fairly noticeable in some areas, whilst some of the signs were covered in graffiti.

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- This is the only informal recreation ground in the parish.
- Coupled with the formal playing pitches, and alternative sites for sport in the parish however, there is an excellent range of different facilities on offer in the parish allowing people of all ages to enjoy some form of outdoor activity.
- This particular site offers good facilities and appears to be well maintained and is clean, tidy and in good condition.
- There is however a particular issue with graffiti in the site, particularly on walls along the northern boundary which backs on to residential homes along Bosted Close.
- Those wishing to access the site by car will need to park on one of the neighbouring residential roads or use one of the car parks frequently used in conjunction with the large number of sports pitches located to the north and east of the site.
- Given that the formal playing pitches located throughout Roding valley Playing Fields are not used around the clock, local children therefore also frequently have the chance to use these sites as informal recreation grounds. Consequently Buckhurst Hill Parish Council however does not indicate a demand for further provision of informal recreation grounds in the local area.

## **CHAPTER 7 – CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUNDS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
CY1	Roding Valley Playing Fields Playground (North)	Rous Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.04	Epping Forest District Council
CY2	Roding Valley Playing Fields Playground (South)	Hornbeam Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.03	Epping Forest District Council
CY3	Kings Place Playground	Kings Place, Buckhurst Hill	0.05	City of London Corporation



Roding valley Playing Fields Playground North, Site CY1

### **RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS PLAYGROUND NORTH (CY1)**

- 7.0** This playground lies at the centre of Roding Valley Playing Fields (RG1), and is accessible via a footpath which runs diagonally across the playing fields. The site was recently upgraded (Summer 2009) and new children’s facilities have now installed to replace the old facilities which were old and run down. The playground’s single pedestrian entrance is a yellow metal gate to the north, whilst the perimeter is marked by green metal railings. Both the gate



and perimeter fencing appear well kept, effectively protecting children using the site.

- 7.1** A variety of new seating and litter bins are also now available within the site whilst the whole playground is now covered with rubber surfacing which as well as making the playground safer for children also makes it more accessible for pushchair users. The site is very clean, tidy and is free from any vandalism or graffiti and hence effectively contributes to the parish's local open space provision.



Roding Valley Playing Fields Playground South, Site CY2

### **RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS PLAYGROUND SOUTH (CY2)**

- 7.2** Perhaps in complete contrast to (CY1), this playground to the west of Loughton Rugby Ground (FP7) has an uncertain future. Owing to frequent vandalism, Buckhurst Hill Parish Council indicate that all play equipment was consequently removed. Consequently all that is left is the metal perimeter fencing, metal gateways to the east and west, and the hardstanding. Two benches and a bin also remain, although these are now rather worn and unused, as is the rest of the playground, which has become overgrown.
- 7.3** Given its good location within the grounds of Loughton Rugby Club (FP7) and adjacent to a relatively large residential area, it is hoped that this site can be reinstated as a playground, or alternatively redeveloped to the benefit of the local community. Whilst Buckhurst Hill Parish Council currently manages the

site on behalf of Epping Forest District Council however, due to various legal issues the site has not been formally transferred.

### **KINGS PLACE PLAYGROUND (CY3)**

- 7.4** Located within a part of Epping Forest known as Lords Bushes, and accessible via a short hard surfaced footpath at the end of Kings Place, this is an attractive playground set in a beautiful location. It is surrounded by a strong metal perimeter fence, with a secure metal kissing gate entrance. Inside there is a good variety of children's play equipment, all of which is surrounded by adequate rubber surfacing.
- 7.5** The remainder of the area is hard surfaced, therefore making it easy for those with wheelchairs and pushchairs to negotiate. Adequate benches and bins are available, although the bins in particular seem very worn and should be repaired or replaced. There is also some evidence of graffiti on some of the facilities. However these are only a minor issues, in a playground which is largely free of any litter and is kept in good condition.



Kings Place Playground, Site CY3

## **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- The number of playgrounds in the parish is small in comparison to the population of the parish.
- This is not helped by the fact that Roding Valley Playing Fields Playground South (CY2) has had all of its play equipment removed and its future remains uncertain.
- There are no playgrounds to the west of the parish, however Buckhurst Hill Parish Council have not indicated a demand for a facility from this part of the parish.
- All of the playgrounds have secure perimeter fencing and gated entrances.
- The majority of the facilities available are surrounded by good surfacing.
- Both of the playgrounds with play equipment are clean and free of litter, although some traces of graffiti are visible at Kings Place Playground (CY3).
- All of the playgrounds provide adequate seats and litter bins, although the bins in Kings Place Playground (CY3) are rather worn and should be either repaired or replaced.
- The range of children's facilities in the two playgrounds is very good.



## **CHAPTER 8 – INDOOR FACILITIES FOR HIGH LEVELS OF USE**

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- There are no indoor facilities for high levels of use within Buckhurst Hill.
- Buckhurst Hill Parish Council has indicated that there is no demand for a facility of this type within the parish given that it is situated between Loughton parish and the London Borough of Redbridge which both offer provision of this type of facility.
- Those wishing to access indoor facilities for high levels of use should find doing so relatively easy regardless of whether or not they have a car, given the good public transport in the local area.

## **CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY CENTRES AND VILLAGE HALLS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
CV1	Roding Valley Hall	Station Way, Buckhurst Hill	0.19	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council
CV2	Woollards Centre	50, Loughton Way, Buckhurst Hill	0.14	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council

### **RODING VALLEY HALL (CV1)**

**9.0** Situated just to the east of the junction between Station Way and Walnut Way, this building is very well used by a variety of clubs and for various social activities. Local sports clubs which are run in the hall include those for karate, yoga and gymnastics. The hall is also used by various societies including the Bengali Cultural Association, the Scottish Association and Jewish Groups. In addition to this the hall is also used for antenatal classes, preschool classes including Tumble Tots and annual children's summer activities. The site is very well maintained and managed and is clean, tidy and in good working order when not in use.

### **WOOLLARDS CENTRE (CV2)**

**9.1** Originally built in 1993 and owned by Essex County Council, and used as a drill hall for the Territorial Army, this building was bought by Buckhurst Hill Parish Council in 2008 and has since been refurbished for the benefit of the local community. Today the centre is used by a variety of different sports groups, cultural societies and various functions as it continues to grow in popularity with the local community.

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- With a village hall and community centre now located within the parish, Buckhurst Hill Parish Council is now satisfied with the amount of local provision for this type of facility.
- Both sites are in very good condition, are very well maintained and cater for a variety of different groups, clubs and societies.
- The popularity of the sites appears to be growing however the local parish council does not anticipate a need for a further facility in the near future.

## **CHAPTER 10 - MANAGED OPEN SPACE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
MO1	Land between Felstead Road and Loughton Way	Felstead Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.39	Epping Forest District Council
MO2	Land surrounded by Pentlow Way	Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill	0.06	Epping Forest District Council
MO3	Land between Roebuck Lane and Russell Road	Roebuck Lane, Buckhurst Hill	0.12	Epping Forest District Council
MO4	Green Walk	Green Walk, Loughton/Buckhurst Hill	0.64	Epping Forest District Council
MO5	Land between the junction of Chestnut Avenue and Hornbeam Road	Chestnut Avenue, Buckhurst Hill	0.10	Privately Owned



Land between Felstead Road and Loughton Way, Site MO1

### **LAND BETWEEN FELSTEAD ROAD AND LOUGHTON WAY (MO1)**

**10.0** This site is a reasonably-sized rectangular area of amenity green space which runs from Felstead Road to Loughton Way. The space is predominantly well kept grassland with a small number of large trees. A hard surfaced footpath runs along the northern perimeter, whilst a second footpath crosses it from



north to south providing access from Kirby Close to Blackmore Road. Whilst the site does not offer any seating or litter bins, it is nonetheless very clean and tidy and is obviously very well maintained. Although the site is of a decent size, it is still unadvisable for use as anything more than a local visual amenity, given its proximity at the eastern and western ends to busy roads, particularly Loughton Way.

### **LAND SURROUNDED BY PENTLOW WAY (MO2)**

- 10.1** Entirely surrounded by Pentlow Way, this a small oval shaped area of well maintained grassland. There are three large trees in a line through the centre, which very much add to the overall visual effect. There does appear to a small issue with litter, which could perhaps be tackled through the provision of a bin. Again, it is not advisable that the site is used as anything other than as a local visual amenity, particularly as young children could be endangered by cars encircling it.



Land between Roebuck Lane and Russell Road, Site MO3

### **LAND BETWEEN ROEBUCK LANE AND RUSSELL ROAD (MO3)**

- 10.2** This site lies directly to the south of the junction between Roebuck Lane and Russell Road. It is a small triangular shaped piece of amenity green space, dominated by a variety of different sized trees spread throughout. It slopes gently downwards from west to east. The southern border is a combination of hedgerows, shrubs and another relatively large tree, beyond which lies residential housing. To the south of the site is a small privately owned brick building, owned by the local electricity provider.

**10.3** The site offers a dog waste bin as well as some signs, although some of the signs appear badly vandalised and need replacing. Aside from this, this is a rather attractive site which appears generally well maintained. Given its location near busy roads, however, its use should be restricted to dog walking and similarly informal activities. It should not be used by young children, particularly those who are unsupervised.

#### **GREEN WALK (MO4)**

**10.4** This site is essentially an access route allowing pedestrians and cyclists passage between Greensted Road and Valley Hill. It is divided into two sections lengthways by the boundary line between the parishes of Loughton and Buckhurst Hill. The main feature is the wide and well surfaced footpath which runs along its entirety, with two turn offs allowing access onto Pentlow Way and Roydon Close.

**10.5** The site appears well maintained and is attractive in appearance. It is clean, despite the absence of litter bins. The trees and bushes which flank the footpath add significantly to the amenity value. Being an important access route, however, this site requires adequate lighting to encourage pedestrians to use both during the night and the day. The lighting along the path is currently minimal, making it a rather unattractive to use at night. The information signs at each end are very worn and need to be replaced.



Land between the junction of Chestnut Avenue and Hornbeam Road, Site MO5

### **LAND BETWEEN THE JUNCTION OF CHESTNUT AVENUE AND HORNBEAM ROAD (MO5)**

- 10.6** Lying at the junction of Chestnut Avenue and Hornbeam Road, this triangular area of amenity green space has recently been subject to planning applications and subsequent appeals for residential development. However, following an application made by local residents the land has now been designated a village green by Essex County Council.
- 10.7** The site is entirely surrounded by pedestrian footpaths, with residential properties beyond. It is largely grassy, with a large bush dominating the eastern part. A variety of trees of different sizes run along its northern and western perimeters. One other noticeable feature is the small privately owned shed located towards the centre, which although undoubtedly important, does detract slightly from the overall natural appearance of the space.
- 10.8** A single wooden bench is at the western corner, whilst a wooden public footpath sign can be found to the north east, both of which appear to be in good condition. At the time of auditing, much of the grass on the site had been allowed to grow wild, making the site look rather untidy. It is understood however that the area is periodically serviced by private contractors, thereby preventing it from becoming too out of control.

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- The majority of audited sites are very clean, tidy and well maintained.
- The only exception to this, at the time of auditing, was the land surrounded by Pentlow Way (MO2) which had a noticeable amount of litter.
- Many of these sites may look attractive for recreational use, especially to children, however their small scale coupled with their close proximity to frequently busy roads make all of them unsuitable for such a use.
- Those sites which require some form of signage do so.
- Those sites which are large enough to warrant the provision of seating, such as Land Between Chestnut Avenue and Hornbeam Avenue (MO5), do have seats on them. These appear to be in good condition.
- Evidence of graffiti and vandalism was noticeable at the Land Between Roebuck Lane and Russell Road (MO3).
- Buckhurst Hill Parish Council does not indicate a need for further provision of this type of open space in the local area.



## **CHAPTER 11 - WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL OPEN SPACE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS**

<b>Site Number</b>	<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Ownership</b>
SO1	Epping Forest	Various areas throughout the parish	Around 2400 across district in total	Corporation of London
SO2	Linder's Field Local Nature Reserve (And Surrounding Land)	Roebuck Lane, Buckhurst Hill	3.88	Epping Forest District Council



Epping Forest, Site SO1

### **EPPING FOREST (SO1)**

- 11.0** The most dominant areas of open space within Buckhurst Hill parish are the various parts of Epping Forest. These include Powell's Forest, St John's Pond and Lord's Bushes, which can be found to the north, west and south of the parish respectively. Together with many other sites spread across the district and beyond, Epping Forest forms the largest area of public open space in the London region. The designated Forest land located within this parish, therefore, forms just a small percentage of the 6000 acre total.
- 11.1** As well as being a popular area for recreation, Epping Forest is of national and international importance in terms of conservation. Around two thirds of



the area is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest or a Special Area of Conservation. Epping Forest is carefully managed by the Corporation of London, and is fully publicly accessible. Therefore residents of, and visitors to, this parish are free to access all those sites which fall within its boundaries, as well as those beyond.

### **LINDER'S FIELD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (SO2)**

- 11.2** This local nature reserve is accessible via a turnoff to the east of Roebuck Lane. It is a reasonably large size, and is a combination of ancient woodland, grassland and ponds. The main entrance has a specifically designed wrought iron gate, and there are some good signs nearby. From here, a 200 metre long hardened footpath leads to viewing platform, from which one can appreciate the variety of natural features. Whilst there is no specific car parking, users should be able to park along Roebuck Road.



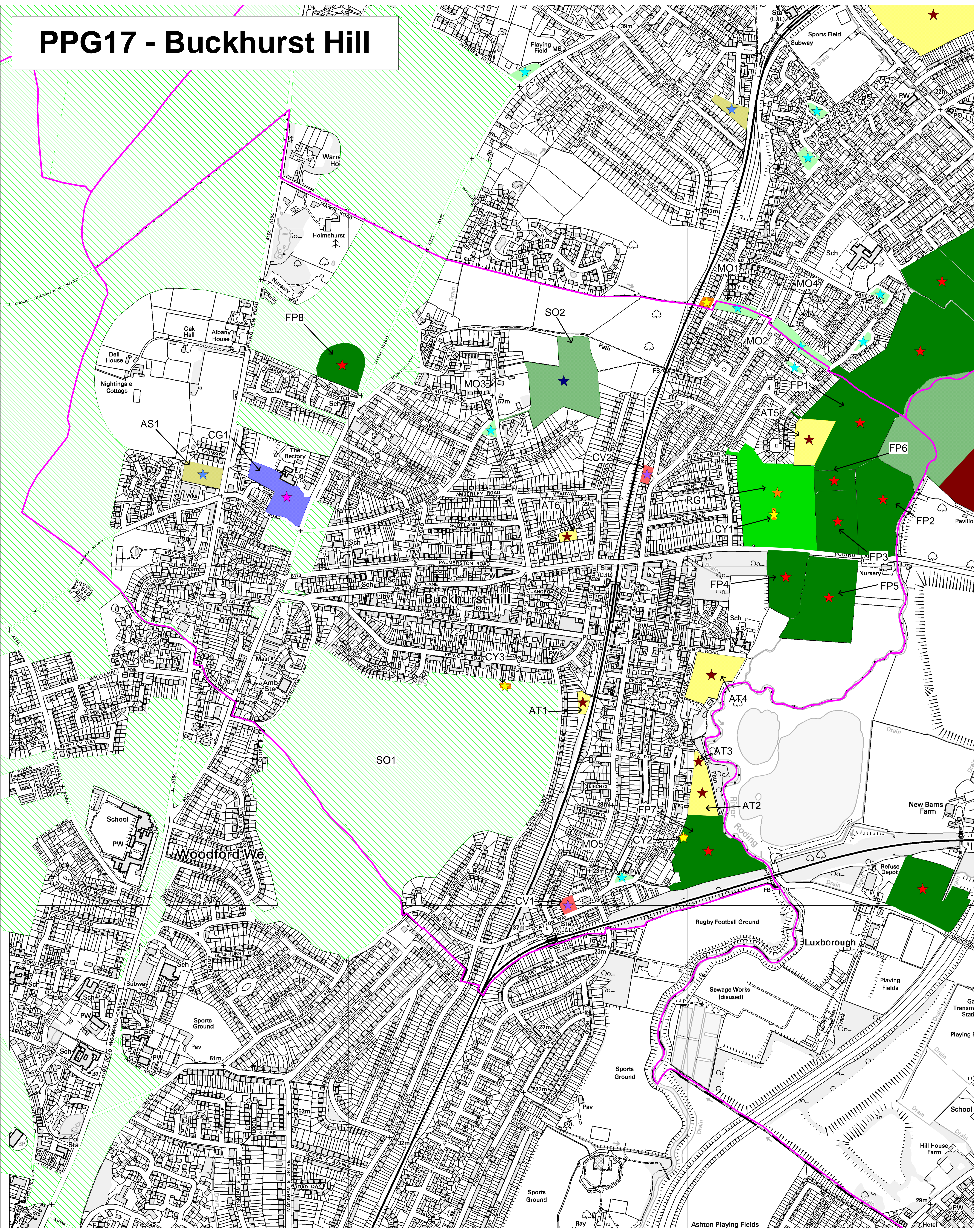
Linder's Field Local Nature Reserve, Site SO2

### **ISSUES AND QUESTIONS**

- The various sites within this parish provide good opportunities for locals to access some of the district's most important and attractive areas of open space, which also provide important habitats for local species of flora and fauna.
- A variety of public footpaths and bridleways grant locals and visitors alike further access to the surrounding countryside.



# PPG17 - Buckhurst Hill




**Epping Forest District Council**

Parish: Buckhurst Hill

Area: 384 Hectares      Scale: 1:35,000 @ A0

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**Key**

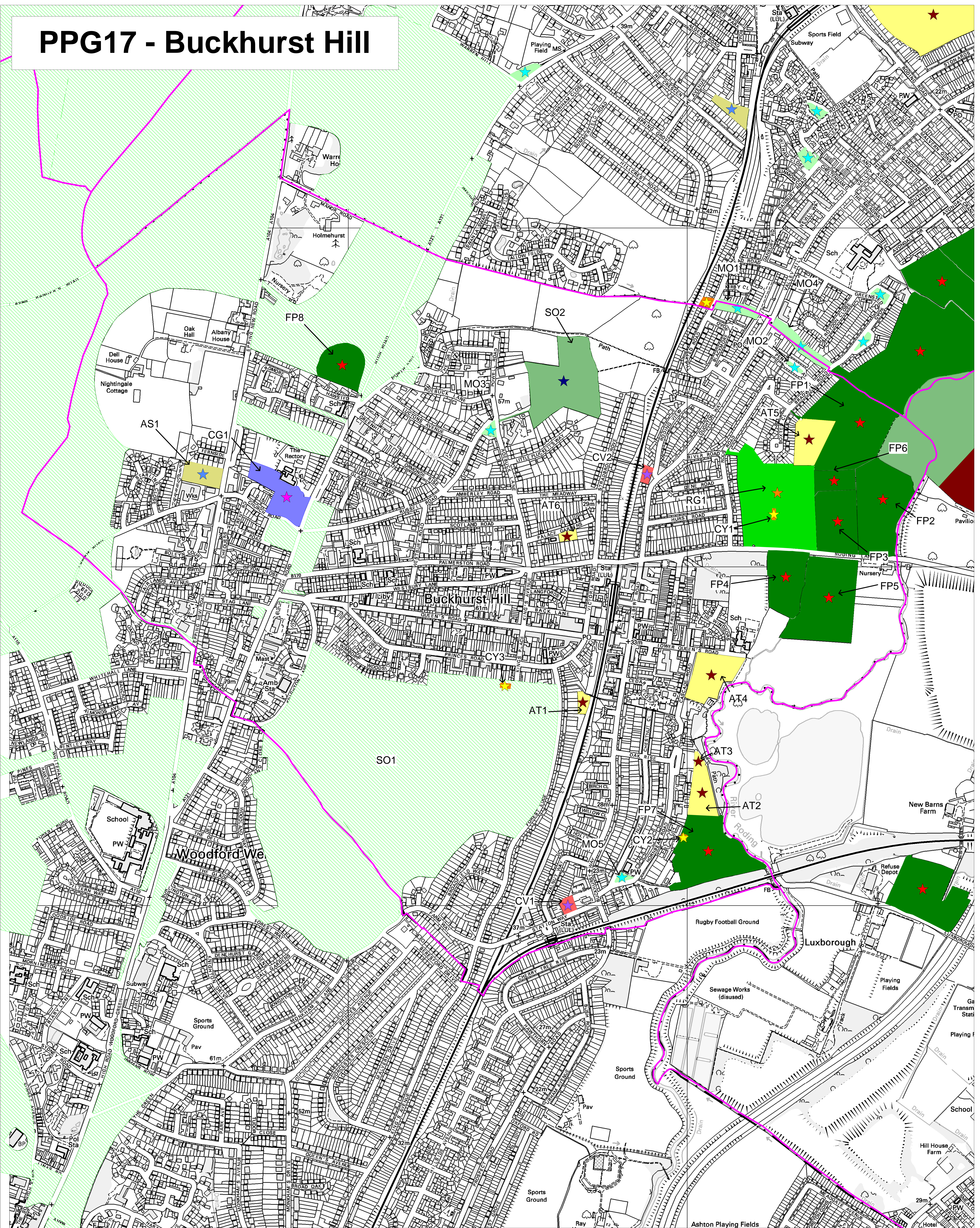
★ Allotments (AT)	★ Informal Recreation Grounds (RG)	★ Woodland and Semi-Natural Open Space with Public Access (SO)
★ Cemeteries and Graveyards (CG)	★ Children's Playgrounds (CY)	★ Managed Open Space with Public Access (MO)
★ Formal Playing Pitches (FP)	★ Indoor Facilities For High Levels of Use (IF1)	★ Epping Forest
★ Alternative Sites For Sport (AS)	★ Community Centres and Village Halls (CV)	★ Parish Boundary

★ Denotes Membership Only Facilities

**Date: 4th January 2010**



# PPG17 - Buckhurst Hill



Parish: Buckhurst Hill

Area: 384 Hectares

Scale: 1:35,000 @ A0

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|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Allotments (AT)                  | Informal Recreation Grounds (RG)               | Woodland and Semi-Natural Open Space with Public Access (SO) |
| Cemeteries and Graveyards (CG)   | Children's Playgrounds (CY)                    | Managed Open Space with Public Access (MO)                   |
| Formal Playing Pitches (FP)      | Indoor Facilities For High Levels of Use (IF1) | Epping Forest  |
| Alternative Sites For Sport (AS) | Community Centres and Village Halls (CV)       | Parish Boundary  |
|                                  |  | Denotes Membership Only Facilities                           |



Date: 4th January 2010