

EPPING UPLAND – OPEN SPACE AUDIT**JUNE 2009****CONTENTS**

Chapter 1 – Introduction	Page 2
Chapter 2 – Allotments	Page 3
Chapter 3 – Cemeteries and Graveyards	Page 5
Chapter 4 – Formal Playing Pitches	Page 7
Chapter 5 – Alternative Sites For Sport And Recreation	Page 9
Chapter 6 – Informal Recreation Grounds	Page 9
Chapter 7 – Children’s Playgrounds	Page 10
Chapter 8 – Indoor Facilities For High Levels Of Use	Page 12
Chapter 9 – Community Centres and Village Halls	Page 13
Chapter 10 – Managed Open Space With Public Access	Page 14
Chapter 11 – Woodland And Semi-Natural Open Space With public access	Page 17

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

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
AT1	Epping Green Allotment	Epping Road, Epping Green,	0.46	Epping Upland Parish Council



Epping Green Allotment, Site AT1

EPPING GREEN ALLOTMENT (AT1)

- 2.0** Located to the north of the parish, within Epping Green, this is the sole allotment in Epping Upland. It can be accessed via a gravel track to the east of the B181 (Epping Road) just before the junction with Elm Close. At the time of auditing in June 2009 the allotment appeared to be largely unused, however the Parish Council states that all plots have since been taken up with a further waiting list now existing for future vacancies. Since the initial audit conducted in August 2008, the site has been tidied and the boundary fencing around the site has been completed. All the plots on the site are now fenced and are easily identifiable whilst the remainder of the site is made up of wild grass and shrubs.
- 2.1** The allotment is accessible via a clearly signed gated entrance which leads onto a grassy public footpath, which visitors can use to access the rest of the site and the open countryside beyond. This pathway is very popular with dog walkers, and other members of the public who use it to access Millennium

Gardens located adjacent to the rear of the allotment. Whilst the pathway running through the allotment is not hard surfaced, it is possible for pushchair users to travel along it, and it is set to be enhanced further with the assistance of Epping Forest Countrycare Team. The site contains many good facilities, such as a dog waste bin to the west.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is a generally well maintained allotment which is well fenced and offers an adequate number of good sized allotment plots.
- The site offers good access, and is often used by members of the public to access the Millennium Gardens to the rear.
- The allotment is generally clean and tidy although there is some horticultural waste lying around the site such as wood and empty plastic bags.
- A number of wild areas of long grass are located between many of the individual plots positively adding to the overall image of the site.
- Given the fact that there is now a waiting list for allotment plots on the site, it could be argued that there demand for further provision of this type of open space facility within this local area of the parish.

CHAPTER 3 - CEMETERIES AND GRAVEYARDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CG1	Epping Upland All Saints Church Burial Ground	Epping Road, Epping Upland	1.07	The Church Commissioners
CG2	Epping Upland Parish Council Burial Ground	Epping Road, Epping Upland	0.61	Epping Upland Parish Council



Epping Upland All Saints Church, Site CG1

EPPING UPLAND ALL SAINTS CHURCH (CG1)

- 3.0** Located along the B181 (Epping Road), close to the T-junction opposite Walton Lodge and near the centre of the parish, this site sits directly to the east of Epping Upland Parish Council Burial Ground (CG2). Set within attractive grounds predominantly made up of well maintained grassland, a variety of mature trees are spread throughout the site particularly to the south and along the northern perimeter facing the roadside. A gravel track encircles the church which is located just to the east of the sites centre and leads southwards, where it forms a gravel car park which can accommodate approximately 30 cars. The site is clean and very tidy and is obviously very well maintained.

EPPING UPLAND PARISH COUNCIL BURIAL GROUND (CG2)

- 3.1** Situated to the west of Epping Upland All Saints Church, this burial ground can be accessed on foot via a grass pathway leading from Epping Upland All Saints Church, or from its main entrance by Epping Road located just around the bend from the main entrance to the Church. This northern section, closest to the roadside entrance, is predominantly made up of open grass. Here there are a large number of graves, as well as a local war memorial. A number of smaller trees line the roadway entrance whilst further trees cover the entire southern section of the site. This burial ground is evidently very well kept, and is free from litter and vandalism. It is also well sign posted, encouraging passers by to access it.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- These are two very clean and tidy sites which are smart in appearance and well maintained.
- Despite location of both sites alongside a relatively busy country road, users experience peaceful surroundings, due to the natural screening separating them from the roadside.
- Access between the church and the burial ground would be made easier for wheelchair users and those with pushchairs through the implementation of hard surfaced footpaths, instead of a grass path.

CHAPTER 4 - FORMAL PLAYING PITCHES

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
FP1	Doorstep Green	Epping Road, Epping Green	1.77	Epping Green Community Association



Doorstep Green, Site FP1

DOORSTEP GREEN (FP1)

- 4.0** This site is positioned towards the southern edge of Epping Green, and offers a number of playing pitches and a decent range of sporting facilities, all in good order. To the north eastern corner of the site, a hard surfaced footpath runs from the roadside which runs along the eastern perimeter of Doorstep Green directly to the entrance of Epping Upland playground to the north of the Doorstep Green.
- 4.1** This footpath, whilst technically belonging to the playground, also provides access into Doorstep Green itself via a well signed wooden gate entrance. The northern perimeter to Doorstep Green is made up of wire mesh fencing with a further metal barred fence also present at the roadside end of the pathway, to ensure that young children do not run out into the road. A large bin is also provided here.
- 4.2** The majority of the site itself is grassland, and is dominated by a bowl shaped circular area of grass with a hard surfaced foot path around it. This can

either be used for informal play, or for specific sports such as rugby and football, as indicated by the goal posts present at the time of auditing in June 2009.

- 4.3** To the south of this circular area lies a large section of hard standing, which adjoins the surrounding footpath. To the north of the site lies a hard surfaced court area, where activities including basketball and tennis can be played. To the north east corner of the ground are four picnic tables, which can be reached by a gravel pathway joins the main hard standing footpath. However, unlike other hard standing pathways here, this may be more difficult for wheelchair users those with pushchairs to negotiate. The remaining perimeter is predominantly marked out by wire mesh fencing, and by medium sized hedgerows which screen it effectively from the road.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is the only site of its type within the parish.
- When the sports pitches are not in use, the site can be used to provide informal recreational space for the local population.
- The facilities on the site appear to be mostly very new, especially the hard surface court, which at the time of auditing (June 2009) was undergoing a significant upgrade.
- This site is clean and very well maintained.
- The site offers a good range of sporting amenities.
- Adequate seats and bins are provided.
- The site is accessible to all members of the public, due to the hard standing pathway which surrounds it.
- The four picnic tables to the north east may be more difficult for pushchairs and wheelchairs to reach, as the pathway leading up to them is gravel rather than hardstanding.

CHAPTER 5 – ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR SPORT FOR RECREATION

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are no alternative sites for sport located within Epping Upland.
- Given its very rural nature and small local population, the Parish Council does not indicate a demand for the provision of any new alternative sites for sport within the parish.
- Residents wishing to use this type of open space, such as golf courses and tennis clubs, will need their own vehicles or access to public transport to travel to the neighbouring parishes such as Epping and North Weald as well as Harlow, where such facilities are located.

CHAPTER 6 – INFORMAL RECREATION GROUNDS

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are no sites in the parish which are specifically regarded as informal recreation grounds.
- Doorstep Green (FP1) primarily acts as a site for formal playing pitches, however when these are not in use the site can be used as an informal recreation ground.
- Given the location of the parish, bordering Harlow and Epping parish, there does not appear to be a demand for further informal areas of recreational space within Epping Upland however residents wishing to access such facilities will need their own vehicles or access to public transport.

CHAPTER 7 – CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUNDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CY1	Epping Upland Playground	Epping Road, Epping Green	0.07	Epping Upland Parish Council



Epping Upland Playground, Site CY1

EPPING UPLAND PLAYGROUND (CY1)

- 7.0** Situated directly north of Epping Upland Recreation Ground, this site is again located towards the southern edge of Epping Green, along the same footpath that leads to Doorstep Green (FP1). A large wooden gate stands at the entrance, which appears to be in good condition, although the sign on it has been vandalised and should be replaced or repaired.
- 7.1** There is a wide range of facilities available in the playground which are all well maintained. The perimeter is chiefly formed from a very tall thick hedgerow, which is well tended to. Only the northern perimeter is different, where a large wooden fence separates the site from Epping Upland Church of England Primary School.
- 7.2** The majority of the playground has a surface of wood chippings, with the wide hard surfaced pathway allowing easy pushchair and wheelchair access

through the centre. The children's facilities are spread throughout the area, as are plenty of wooden seats and litter bins.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This playground is very secure, and generates a feeling of seclusion.
- An excellent range of high quality children's facilities is provided.
- The site is neat and clean, with adequate seating and litter bins present.
- It is easily accessible from Epping Road for all members of the public, including wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.
- The entrance sign has been vandalised and needs to be replaced or repaired.
- This is the only children's playground in the parish, however the parish council as of June 2009 has not indicated a need for further provision.

CHAPTER 8 - INDOOR FACILITIES FOR HIGH LEVELS OF USE

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are no indoor facilities for high levels of use within Epping Upland.
- The local parish council has indicated that there is no demand for a facility of this type within the parish given its small population.
- Such a facility would require large turnover in terms of use in order for it to be financially sustainable and given the very rural nature of this parish it is highly unlikely that such a facility would achieve this if it were located in this parish.
- Those residents wishing to access indoor facilities for high levels of use will need access to personal transportation or local public transport to reach neighbouring parishes such as Epping and Waltham Abbey as well as Harlow where such facilities are provided.

CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY CENTRES AND VILLAGE HALLS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CV1	Epping Green Chapel	Epping Road, Epping Green	0.04	Epping Upland Parish Council

EPPING GREEN CHAPEL (CV1)

9.0 Situated along Epping Road to the north of Epping Green Village, this small site not only runs an annual service every Sunday but also plays a significant role in supporting the local community. This it does by providing a venue for various local clubs and societies to base themselves as well as somewhere for local parish council and private external meetings to take place. Over the last few years its popularity has continued to grow however given its small size and limited car parking the Parish Council is keen to eventually provide its own facility specifically for the local community.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is the only facility of its type within the parish and plays a vital part in staging local community events and providing a base for local clubs and societies.
- Epping Upland Church of England School to a lesser extent also hosts some local meetings and events however it is predominantly used for its primary function.
- A second village hall existed in the village roughly 10 years ago however it was converted into a private home following a change of ownership. The local parish council ultimately hopes to one day build a new village hall in the parish to replace it.
- The existing chapel appears to be in good condition and is well maintained by those who use it.
- It is however rather small and offers only a limited amount of parking facilities.

CHAPTER 10 - MANAGED OPEN SPACE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
MO1	Epping Green Village Green	Epping Green	0.14	Epping Upland Parish Council
MO2	Land to south east of Elm Close	Elm Close, Epping Green	0.06	Epping Upland Parish Council
MO3	Land to the north east of Elm Close	Elm Close, Epping Green	0.05	Epping Upland Parish Council



Epping Green Village Green, Site MO1

EPPING GREEN VILLAGE GREEN (MO1)

- 10.0** Epping Green Village Green is a linear shaped area of amenity green space surrounded by Epping Road and Green Close located towards the centre of the village. The site provides ample amounts of wooden seating and litter bins, all of which are in good repair.
- 10.1** The sites eastern perimeter is bordered by a low standing hedgerow whilst a small bus stop is situated about half way along the perimeter. A small pedestrian footpath travels from here to the northern edge of the site enabling pedestrians to access the bus stop more safely. To the west of the site

meanwhile, wooden fencing runs along the perimeter to prevent cars from parking on the grass verges. Six trees and a variety of bushes run down the centre of the site and these add to the overall visual amenity of the site.

LAND TO THE SOUTH EAST OF ELM CLOSE (MO2)

- 10.2** Situated to the north of Epping Green Village Green, this is a linear shaped piece of land predominantly made up of grassland with five mature trees spaced along it. The site is well maintained and is generally clean and tidy however residential bin bags appear to be left for collection on the site which can detract from its overall appearance.
- 10.3** The site is signed to prevent members of the public from parking on the grass however this request appears to have gone unheeded as each time the site has been visited for auditing cars have been parked on it. A suggestion therefore would be to place bollards along the eastern perimeter of the site to make sure that vehicles have no access onto the site. Given the sites small size and proximity to a busy road, this site is likely to be unsuitable for children who instead should use Doorstep Green (FP1) and Epping Upland Playground (CY1) just to the south.



Land to the south east of Elm Close, Site MO2

LAND TO THE NORTH EAST OF ELM CLOSE (MO3)

10.4 Found to north of Epping Green, along the western verge of Epping Road, this relatively small linear site is bordered by residential housing to the west and has a pedestrian footpath running along its eastern border. The site is predominantly made up of well maintained grassland with four mature trees located in a line to the north. Much like its counterpart (MO2), this site also suffers from residential parking. It is therefore recommended that bollards are also placed along the roadside of this site to address this issue. Given its small size and close proximity to a busy road, this site is therefore not likely to be suitable for young children to use.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- All three sites are generally well preserved and in good order.
- The provision of seating, dog waste bins and litter bins is very good.
- The site appears to have a history of unwanted parking along its verges, which has caused damage, and which seems to be continuing.
- In response to this issue, wooden fencing has been placed around parts of the sites perimeter.
- These are the only open spaces of their type within the parish.
- Given the close proximity of Epping Forest to the parish, not to mention the existence of a variety of public footpaths offering good access throughout parts of the local countryside, there does not appear to be a need for any further open space of this type in the parish.

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

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
SO1	Epping Forest	Various areas throughout the parish	Around 2400 across district	Corporation of London
SO2	Millennium Garden	Epping Road, Epping Green,	0.50	Epping Green Allotment



Epping Forest (Long Green), Site SO1

EPPING FOREST (SO1)

11.0 The most dominant areas of open space within the Epping Upland parish are the various parts of Epping Forest. These include Epping Thicks, Bell Common and Epping Long Green, which can be found to the north, south and east 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 2400 hectare total area which Epping Forest covers.

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 are

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.

MILLENNIUM GARDEN (SO2)

- 11.2** Situated to the east of Epping Green Allotment, this site is the result of much hard work by Epping Upland Parish Council and Epping Forest District Council Countryside Team. Formerly an area of overgrown land, volunteer work and lottery funding has helped clear this site of bramble and replace it with 400 new trees to form a new 100m hedge western boundary. Shortly after this a wildflower area and pond were created and a year later a further 100 trees were planted in the existing hedges.
- 11.3** From 2002 onwards, work on the site has concentrated on establishing a wildflower meadow which was formerly part of the allotment site. Today, work continues on the ongoing maintenance of this site which has become an extremely valuable asset to the local population.

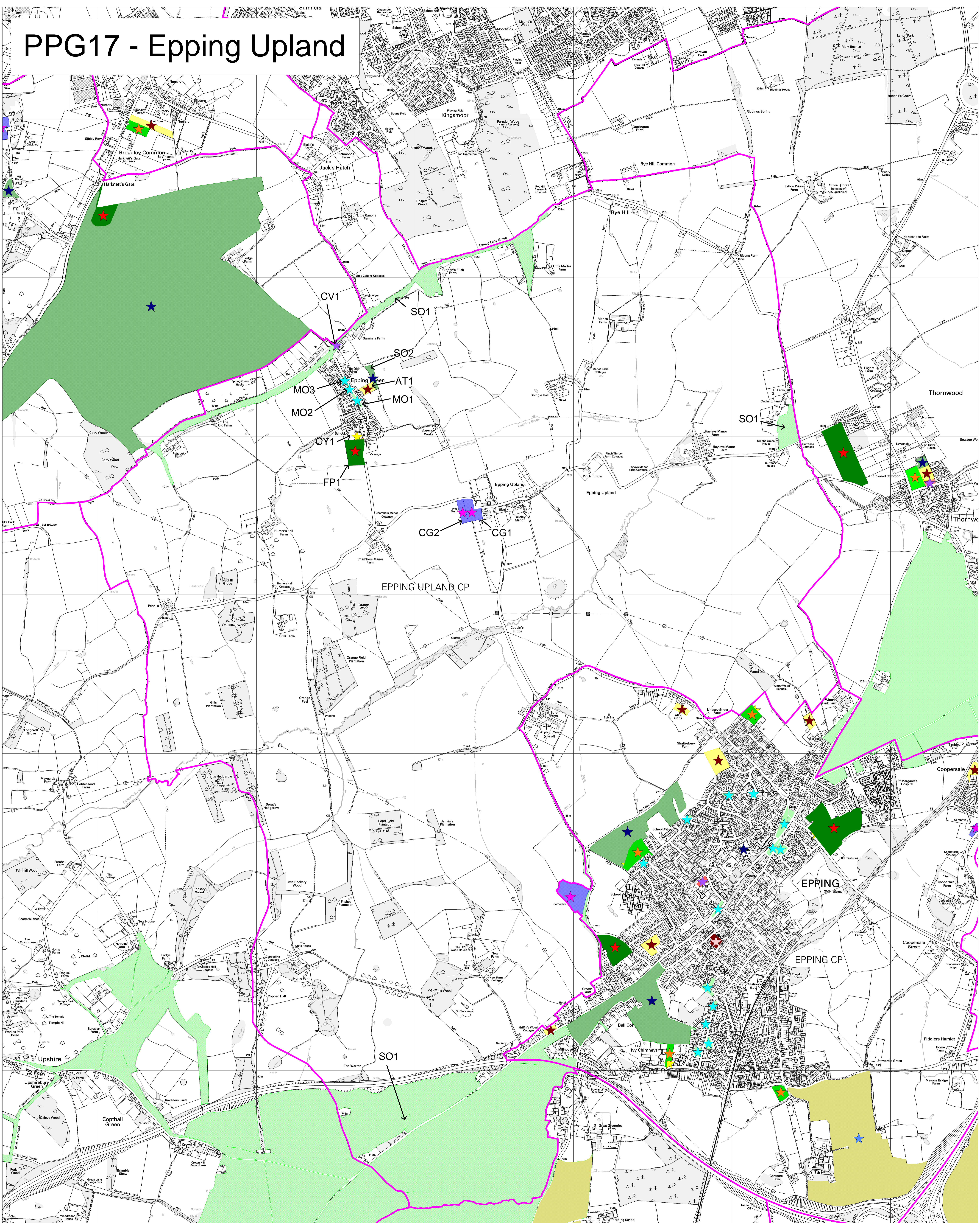


Millennium Garden, Site SO2

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- The various sites which form part of Epping Forest located within the parish provide good opportunities for residents 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.
- As well of this a number of public footpaths throughout the parish allow locals and visitors alike further access into the surrounding countryside.

PPG17 - Epping Upland



Parish: Epping Upland

Area: 1768 Hectares Scale: 1:75,000 @ 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