

LOUGHTON – OPEN SPACE AUDIT**MARCH 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 districts 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	Loughton Potato Ground	Stony Path, Loughton	2.34	Loughton Parochial Charities
AT2	Pyrles Lane Allotment	Pyrles Lane, Loughton	0.08	Loughton Town Council
AT3	Willingale Road Allotment	Willingale Road, Loughton	1.44	Loughton Town Council
AT4	Roding Road Allotment	Roding Road, Loughton	5.18	Loughton Town Council

LOUGHTON POTATO GROUND (AT1)

- 2.0** Located to the north of Stony Path this site can also be accessed from Monkchester Close and Whitakers Way. It is one of two large allotments in Loughton and is very accessible despite its enclosed nature. The site is generally well looked after by its users who have kept it clean and attractive. The site is well used, and those few plots which are currently uncultivated provide a good biodiversity resource.
- 2.1** There are however a few areas where the site could be improved. The fencing along the sites entrance to the north of Whitakers Way has been forced down in places and needs to be repaired. The information signs by each of the entrances are also rather degraded. Access throughout the site is provided by a network of grass paths. These however are particularly slippery to walk on especially where the site is sloped.



Loughton Potato Ground, (Site AT1)

PYRLES LANE ALLOTMENT (AT2)

- 2.2** Found to the north east of Millennium Remembrance Grove (MO3) and also accessible from a junction off Pyrles Lane, this is a very small site which formerly consisted of just three plots. According to the Town Council the site was abandoned by its last users who felt too vulnerable using the site following repeated vandalism and anti-social behaviour towards them. The site hence now in very poor condition and is entirely overgrown and inaccessible, whilst there is significant evidence of vandalism, dumping and litter. The main entrance gate is extremely rusty and has been vandalised, whilst the wire mesh fencing around the site is in a similar state. The site is surrounded on three sides by overgrown shrubbery where a significant proportion of litter can also be seen. The Town Council are now planning to develop the site into a community allotment although plans to achieve this are in the very early stages.



Pyrles Lane Allotment, Site AT2

WILLINGALE ROAD ALLOTMENT (AT3)

- 2.3** Located towards the south east of Willingale Road adjacent to Debden Park High School, this site is reasonably well maintained by the members of Debden Horticultural and Allotment Society. The site offers easy access from Willingale Road although this is the only route into the site. There is some evidence of litter, as well as dumping on the site and there are no public bins. There are a number of plots on the site which are unkempt, and these have a particularly negative visual impact as they are the areas where the vast

majority of litter and dumping can be found amongst the overgrown shrubs and brambles. There are also a number of sheds and outbuildings including a port-a-loo on the site, which whilst being in a reasonable condition do not add to the overall appearance of the site.

RODING ROAD ALLOTMENT (AT4)

This site is located to the east of Roding Road and can also be accessed from Stonards Hill to the south whilst the London Underground Central Line runs along its northern border. It is by far the largest allotment in the parish but considering its size, the site is still reasonably well used and only has a few sections which are overgrown with brambles. The majority of these can be found to the east of the site.

- 2.5** One major concern with the site is the amount of litter that can be found within it, including horticultural waste and dumping. This issue is heightened by a lack of waste bins on site. Both of the main entrance gates to the west and south east corner are in poor condition, whilst the information signs on them are unreadable. The driveway leading up to the south west entrance meanwhile is particularly uneven and bumpy.



Roding Road Allotment, Site AT4

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- Roding Road Allotment (AT4), Willingale Road Allotment (AT3) and Loughton Potato Ground (AT1) are all well used by members of the public which is particularly impressive given the size of these sites.
- There are still a variety of empty plots on all of the sites whilst Pyrles Lane Allotment (AT2) is not in use at all.
- Where plots have been left unused, these have become overgrown and then attracted significant amounts of litter, horticultural waste.
- Significant amounts of dumping also appears to be taking place where individual plots have been left unmaintained.
- A lack of bins can be partly blamed for the various amounts of litter and waste found on each of the sites.
- Signage on Loughton Potato Ground (AT1), Roding Road Allotment (AT4) and Pyrles Lane Allotment (AT2) is particularly poor.
- The standard of entrance ways to all of the sites could be improved through new entrance gates and the resurfacing of the entrance driveways.
- Parking facilities to all but Loughton Potato Ground (AT1) are poor.
- Where individual plots have been left unused, these have in some places become a good biodiversity resource, particularly on the allotments closer to Epping Forest such as Loughton Potato Ground (AT1).
- The Town Council has not indicated a demand for further allotment provision within the parish.

CHAPTER 3 - CEMETERIES AND GRAVEYARDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CG1	St. Johns Church Yard	Church Lane, Loughton	0.80	Chelmsford Diocese
CG2	Loughton Cemetery	Church Lane, Loughton	1.83	Loughton Town Council
CG3	Trinity Church	Mannock Drive, Loughton	0.22	Chelmsford Diocese
CG4	St. Thomas More Church	Willingale Road, Loughton	0.50	Ownership Unknown
CG5	St. Nicholas's Church Yard	Rectory Land, Loughton	0.25	Chelmsford Diocese



St John's Church Yard, Site CG1

ST. JOHNS CHURCH YARD (CG1)

- 3.0** This site, found to the south east of Church Lane's junction with Church Hill and St. John's Road, is generally in a good condition. There are an adequate number of bins and benches on the site whilst access for the disabled is made possible by hard surfaced paths. The only potential issue with the site regards the pathway which leads to Loughton Cemetery to the south. This is only a

narrow grass track which becomes very muddy during wetter weather therefore making access between St. Johns Church and Loughton Cemetery particularly difficult for disabled persons.

LOUGHTON CEMETERY (CG2)

- 3.1 This is a particularly well maintained site which is very clean with no litter or graffiti present. There are a large number of benches and bins throughout. Movement around the site is made easy through a network of wide, hard surfaced paths which also allow for vehicular access to large parts of the site. There are a number of particularly attractive trees on the site which make a very positive visual impact, whilst the main entrance to the site is in good condition and is very well signed. The only issue regards the pathway within St. Johns Church Yard (CG1) that leads into Loughton Cemetery which is a narrow grass track. This therefore potentially makes accessibility between the two sites very difficult for less able bodied persons.

TRINITY CHURCH (CG3)

- 3.2 This site, located to the north west of Mannock Drive adjacent to St. John Fisher Junior Catholic School, can be accessed either from Burney Drive to the west, or Willingale Road to the east. Made up predominantly of amenity green space with no burial space, the site itself is well maintained and appears to have no major concerns which require addressing.

ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH (CG4)

- 3.3 Situated at the junction between Willingale Road and Collard Avenue, this site is a churchyard that instead of containing any burial grounds, contains a small amount of amenity green space. The site is clean and tidy, although to the north there is a significant amount of shrubs and trees which appear to unmaintained and are slightly out of keeping with the remainder of the site.

ST. NICHOLAS'S CHURCH YARD (CG5)

- 3.4 This site can be found to the west of Rectory Lane opposite Parsonage Court. The site is well maintained and is clean, tidy and very inviting in appearance. The sign at the main entrance is particularly informative, clear, well placed for the public to see and in good condition. There are also some particularly attractive trees on the site which significantly add to the site's overall appearance.
- 3.5 The site contains a number of burial grounds which range from very good to poor condition, depending on how overgrown with shrubs and brambles they have become. Another issues regards the internal pathway to the church, which starts with a number of concrete steps that disabled persons may find

difficult to use. Accessibility to the site meanwhile is difficult due to the site's location next to a busy road where parking spaces are usually taken up by members of the public shopping at the Broadway. The site's wooden boundary to the west has also been damaged and is in need of repair.



St. Nicholas's Church Yard, Site CG5

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- All of the sites are attractive, clean and tidy with very little litter or graffiti present.
- The burial grounds of St. Nicholas's Church, St. John's Church Yard and Loughton Cemetery are particularly attractive owing to their high maintenance and diverse range of plant species.
- The sites all provide high numbers of good quality benches and rubbish bins.
- There are issues of poor accessibility for disabled persons within St Nicholas's Church and St. John's Church Yard.
- Despite the fact that there are no cemeteries or graveyards to the south and west of the parish. The Town Council has not indicated that there is a current demand for further provision of this type of open space facility within the parish.

CHAPTER 4 - FORMAL PLAYING PITCHES

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
FP1	Debden Park High School	Willingale Road, Loughton	3.84	Essex County Council
FP2	Loughton Cricket Ground	Trap's Hill, Loughton	1.84	Loughton Cricket Club
FP3	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Greensted Road, Loughton	8.14	Epping Forest District Council
FP4	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Avondale Close, Loughton	2.93	Essex County Council
FP5	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Cranleigh Gardens, Loughton	7.39	Epping Forest District Council
FP6	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Roding Road, Loughton	10.33	Epping Forest District Council
FP7	Roding Valley Playing Fields	Highwood Lane, Loughton	9.37	Epping Forest District Council
FP8	Debden Sports Club	Chigwell Lane, Loughton	2.92	Epping Forest District Council
FP9	The Academy	Langston Road, Loughton	6.10	Bank of England
FP10	Willingale Road Playing Field	Willingale Road, Loughton	4.50	Loughton Town Council

DEBDEN PARK HIGH SCHOOL (FP1)

- 4.0** Located at the junction between Jessel Drive and Willingale Road, this site is owned by Debden Park High School and consists of the school's playing fields. There are a wide number of high quality facilities on the site, including football and rugby pitches as well as a floodlit all weather court, which are used by members of the public outside of school hours.

LOUGHTON CRICKET GROUND (FP2)

- 4.1** Located to the west of Loughton Bowls Club, this site is privately owned by Loughton Cricket Club. The site is popular amongst both younger and older generations both to play and watch cricket. The cricket ground provides a valuable green space in the town and is very important visually. The pitch and facilities on the site are all maintained to a high standard, whilst the dense hedgerows give site users a feeling of segregation from the busy streets that surround the site. The only issue with the site is the large amount of graffiti that can be seen behind some of the outbuildings.



Loughton Cricket Ground (FP2)

RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP3)

- 4.2** This site is the southernmost of five sites which are linked together through a network of well surfaced pathways, forming the largest outdoor recreation space in the parish known as Roding Valley Playing Fields. The site can be accessed from Greensted Road to the west and from adjacent sites to the north and south in Buckhurst Hill parish. Predominantly made up of a number of football pitches, the site also doubles up as informal recreational space which is well maintained and attractive to look at. The issues affecting the site are the small amounts of litter, and the significant amount of graffiti on the boundary fencing to the west of the site. The signs by the entrance by Greensted Road meanwhile are worn and need to be replaced.

RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP4)

- 4.3** Located north of site FP3, this site can be accessed off Avondale Close and is used exclusively by Loughton Football Club. The site contains two football pitches which are both in good condition, and fit in well with the remainder of the site which is segregated from the rest of the park through a perimeter of dense trees and bushes. This gives the site a particularly secluded feeling which adds to its attractiveness.
- 4.4** There are however a number of issues which need addressed on the site. The clubhouse is run down and in very poor condition whilst evidence of dumping and littering can be seen around the clubhouse as well as a significant amount

of graffiti. The metal fencing to the south of the site, meanwhile, is also in poor condition and has clearly been vandalised by people forcing access onto the site.



Roding Valley Playing Fields, Site FP4

RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP5)

- 4.5** Situated between sites FP4 and FP6, this site is the third of the five sites which make up Roding Valley Playing Fields. The site can be accessed from Elmhurst Way, Drayton Avenue, and Cranleigh Gardens to the north and north west as well as from the footpath which runs along the east of the site and connects all five of the playing field sites running from Greensted Road to the junction between Oakwood Hill and Lower Alderton Hall Lane. The site is predominantly made up of informal grass space, which doubles up as a number of football pitches. At the time of auditing there were five football pitches on the site. It is well maintained and relatively clean with only some instances of litter and dog excrement visible.
- 4.6** There is a small car park located to the north which joins Cranleigh Gardens, and gives users of the playing fields an alternative area to park. The boundaries with site FP5 and FP7 to the south west and north east respectively are bordered by trees and shrubs which add to its attractiveness and secluded feel. One concern is the relatively fast flowing river which runs along the east side of the playing fields and is particularly close to the eastern footpath. The proximity of the river to the footpath is at its closest on this site and there is nothing to prevent an individual, especially a child, from falling.

This is particularly dangerous during periods of heavy rainfall where the river level is high.

RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP6)

- 4.7** Located between site FP5 to the south and site FP7 to the north, this site is accessible from Roding Road and South View Road to the north west, as well as via the adjoining playing fields. There is a relatively steep hill located towards the centre but despite this, there is still enough room for two football pitches, as well as a playground and a hard surfaced court area for six tennis courts, all of which are in good condition.
- 4.8** As with the other playing fields, the perimeter is dominated by trees and hedges, which give it a feeling of containment as well as adding to its attractiveness. There are also a number of notable hedgerows which run through the site and add to its overall charm. The facilities in terms of the seats, bins and dog bins are sufficient and all in a good condition, and there are a number of signs warning against dog fouling. These signs have been designed not to stand out within the park, but they are so small that in many incidences they are very hard to spot. Even so, there is very little evidence of dog fouling, and the site is clean, tidy and attractive.

RODING VALLEY PLAYING FIELDS (FP7)

- 4.9** This is the northern most site of Roding Valley Playing Fields, and is again predominantly informal grass space, containing two football pitches, a cricket pitch and a sports pavilion which all appear to be in good condition. Some graffiti, however, is evident on the sports pavillion. Towards the north easterly and north westerly boundaries, the site is dominated by trees and bushes, whilst the River Roding runs along the entire eastern side. A number of small trees and shrubs can also be found dotted around the site, which add to the visual amenity of the area.
- 4.10** Access can be gained from the main entrance to the north east off Oakwood Hill, whilst there is another entrance from Roding Meadows Nature Reserve which is located to the north east, on the other side of the River Roding. The facilities on the site are sufficient and maintained to a good standard, however the signs by the entrance to Roding Meadows Nature Reserve have been covered in graffiti. Despite this the site is maintained to a high level and is clean, tidy and attractive.

DEBDEN SPORTS CLUB (FP8)

- 4.11** Located to the east of Roding Valley Nature Reserve (SO5) and to the west of Chigwell Road, this is a small area of grass land which has been sub divided into two football pitches with a third practice pitch. The site is entirely surrounded by a perimeter of trees and hedgerows which give the site a very secluded feel, whilst there is also a relatively large pavillion located to the

north east. The site is generally clean and tidy, although there are no litter bins present. Parking for the site is located to the north east corner, where there is enough parking for at least 25 cars.

THE ACADEMY (FP9)

- 4.12** Formerly known as the Britannia Sports Club and situated at the very end of Langston Road adjacent to the M11, this site has recently been opened as a new community-based football academy for both playing and coaching football. The site is open seven days a week and offers ten state of the art five-a-side football courts, two full sized grass football pitches, a fully equipped fitness centre and boxing gym. There is also a car park big enough for 170 cars and a special hard court area where football coaching can take place. The site appears to be in excellent condition and is very clean and tidy with twelve wooden benches and six bins all of which are in excellent condition.

WILLINGALE ROAD PLAYING FIELDS (FP10)

- 4.13** Situated adjacent to Davenant School to the north of Willingale Road, this site is made up of two full sized football pitches, an astro-turf pitch and six hard surface tennis courts. This site is owned by Loughton Town Council and is used during the winter season for a variety of different pitch sports. It is only accessible through the school grounds and therefore authorisation from the school is required to get into the site via vehicle. Alternatively, pedestrians can access the site from Willingale Road car park opposite Colebrook Lane. The site is almost entirely surrounded by trees and shrubs around its perimeter, giving it an extremely private and secluded feeling.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There is an excellent amount of formal playing field provision space within the parish.
- When not in use for formal pitch sports, all the sites in Roding Valley Playing Fields can be used as informal recreation grounds.
- The standard of these informal playing sites is very good, with the vast majority being easily accessible, clean, tidy and very well maintained.
- Where necessary, adequate amounts of seating, litter bins and dog waste bins are provided.
- The secluded setting of many sites increases their amenity value and their attractiveness. Primary examples of this include The Academy (FP9) and Debden Sports Club (FP8).
- A large number of sites such as Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP3-FP7) and Loughton Cricket Ground (FP2) however have a noticeable issue with graffiti.
- Some of the facilities on some other sites such as the club house on Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP4) meanwhile show evidence of vandalism and heavy use.

- The proximity between the footpath to the east of Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP3-FP7) and the River Roding is at times very close and there is a lack of rescue equipment should anybody fall in.
- Given the excellent amount of provision of this type of open space facility, the Town Council have not identified any current demand for the implementation of further facilities of this type within the parish.

CHAPTER 5 – ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR SPORT AND RECREATION

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
AS1	Loughton Golf Club	Clay's Lane, Debden, Loughton	15.68	Privately Owned
AS2	Debden House Adult Education Centre and campsite	Debden Road, Loughton	23.43	London Borough of Newham
AS3	Loughton Bowls Club	Trap's Hill, Loughton	0.63	Privately Owned
AS4	Avenue Tennis Club	Lower Park Road, Loughton	0.45	Privately Owned

LOUGHTON GOLF CLUB (AS1)

- 5.0** Situated to the north of the junction between England's Lane and Clay's Lane, this nine hole golf course is privately owned and is therefore only open to members. The site is well maintained.

DEBDEN HOUSE ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE AND CAMPSITE (AS2)

- 5.1** This site, located to the north of the junction between Border's Lane and Debden Road, is more unusual in that it is divided into two primary uses. The southern section of the site houses the training centre of Debden House which is used for a variety of functions and events and is set in large, very well kept and attractive gardens. The remainder of the site is set up as a camping facility divided up into seven well kept fields, which provide opportunities for private camping and use by groups via set camp facilities. The campsite also contains well maintained toilet facilities and play equipment.

LOUGHTON BOWLS CLUB (AS3)

- 5.2** Found to the north of the junction between Trap's Hill and Eleven Acre Rise, this site is privately owned by Loughton Bowls Club and is well used by its members. There are also tennis facilities on the site however it is unclear how often these are used as they also appear to be used as a car park. The site itself appears to be well maintained and looks attractive.

AVENUE TENNIS CLUB (AS4)

- 5.3** Located between The Avenue and the end of Lower Park Road, this site is privately owned by Avenue Tennis Club. It contains four artificial grass courts and a children's half-court which also has a basketball net. All the facilities including a club house, appear to be maintained to a high level and are in good condition.



Loughton Bowls Club, Site AS3

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There is a good amount of provision of this type of open space within the parish.
- In addition to these sites, Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP3, FP5-FP7) also provides six hard surfaced tennis courts.
- All of these sites are very clean, tidy and maintained to a very good level with adequate provisions of bins and seating where necessary.
- Given the good amount of facilities already located within the parish, the Town Council does not believe there is a current need for the provision of further facilities of this type.

CHAPTER 6 – INFORMAL RECREATION GROUNDS

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are no sites in the parish whose primary use is as an informal recreation ground.
- Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP3, FP5-7) however can all be used as informal recreation grounds when they are not in use for formal pitch sports.
- There is therefore a good amount of informal recreation ground provision within the parish.
- One potential issue however is that this means all informal recreational space is located to the south of the parish, with no provision to the north.
- The Town Council has not indicated there is a current demand for any additional facilities of this nature.

CHAPTER 7 – CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUNDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CY1	Hillyfields Playground	Hillyfields, Loughton	0.01	Epping Forest District Council
CY2	Newman’s Lane Playground	Newman’s Lane, Loughton	0.08	Epping Forest District Council
CY3	Westall Road Playground	Westall Road, Loughton	0.06	Epping Forest District Council
CY4	Colebrook Lane Playground	Colebrook Lane, Loughton	0.05	Epping Forest District Council
CY5	Monksgrove Playground	Monksgrove, Loughton	0.01	Epping Forest District Council
CY6	Trap’s Hill Playground	Trap’s Hill, Loughton	0.04	Loughton Town Council
CY7	Felstead Road Playground	Felstead Road, Loughton	0.10	Loughton Town Council
CY8	Roding Valley Playground	Roding Valley, Roding Road, Loughton	0.05	Loughton Town Council

HILLYFIELDS PLAYGROUND (CY1)

- 7.0** Situated close to the junction between Hillyfields and Rectory Lane and within a reasonably sized amenity green space, this is one of the smallest playgrounds in the parish at only 0.01 hectares in area. As a result the facilities for the children here are very small, and are therefore only really suitable for the very young. It is clear of litter but a number of the facilities including the only bench, have a significant amount of graffiti on them. Due to its size there is only a small number of facilities for children. It is unlikely that this site is as well used as some of the other playgrounds in the local area.

NEWMAN’S LANE PLAYGROUND (CY2)

- 7.1** Located to the north of the junction between Newman’s Lane and Rectory Lane, this playground is situated within a large amenity green space (MO11) and also has a footpath running through it which acts as a short cut across the junction of Newman’s Lane and Rectory Lane. There are two metal gate entrances, one to the north and one to the south, both of which are both in good condition. There is one bench and one bin and these are also in decent condition. The playground is clean with only a small amount of graffiti noticeable on the facilities. The metal fenced perimeter is also in good condition, which is particularly important given the location next to a very busy road.



Monksgrove Playground, Site CY5

WESTALL PLAYGROUND (CY3)

- 7.2 Situated within an area of amenity green space just north of the junction between Westall Road and Sandford Avenue, this playground is in a relatively poor condition. The site is run down in appearance and there is clear evidence of vandalism and degradation of some of the facilities. There is also a significant amount of litter and graffiti, whilst the single bin and bench on the site are in a very poor condition and should be considered for replacement.

COLEBROOK LANE PLAYGROUND (CY4)

- 7.3 This site, located to the east of Jessel Green adjacent to Colebrook Lane is in a poor condition and needs in improving in a number of areas. The playground is the only one in the parish with no seats. It does however have a dog bin situated at its entrance, which raises the risk of young children using the playground coming into close proximity with dogs. The information signs on the single entrance meanwhile, are in a poor condition due to vandalism. There is also a significant amount of litter and graffiti whilst the main entrance has dog excrement around it despite the presence of the dog bin.



Trap's Hill Playground, Site CY6

MONKSGROVE PLAYGROUND (CY5)

- 7.4** Located in between Monks Grove and Longcroft Rise, this site is located in a courtyard surrounded by flats. As a result it is unlikely that this site is used by anyone other than those living very locally, as it is very well hidden from public view. The site has recently been resurfaced and has also had new metal fencing erected around its perimeter. It is also very clean and tidy, with the single metal bench located within it being in good condition. The site however only has one piece of equipment, and this is only suitable for very young children owing to its very small size.

TRAP'S HILL PLAYGROUND (CY6)

- 7.5** Situated to the south of Trap's Hill opposite Loughton Bowling Club, this is one of the most modern playgrounds in the parish. There is a wide range of children's facilities on the site as well as four metal benches and four litter bins, all of which are in very good condition. The site is located directly adjacent to a car park to the south, which provides members of the public with easy access. This main entrance is double gated to prevent young children from running out into the car park. The only issues with the site regard the small amount of litter and graffiti discovered, and the information sign located at the entrance which has faded and needs replacing.

FELSTEAD ROAD PLAYGROUND (CY7)

- 7.6 This site is located to the west of Felstead Road and is situated next to the parish boundary with Buckhurst Hill parish. The site offers a good range of children's facilities, whilst the two seats and two bins present are also in a very good condition. The rear of the site backs onto a steep verge leading up to the London Underground Central Line. The site also has four large trees located on it, which add to its visual amenity. The only issue regards the small amount of graffiti on the fencing to the north and south of the playground.

RODING VALLEY PLAYGROUND (CY8)

- 7.7 Situated within Roding Valley Playing Fields, this site can be accessed from two gates to the north east and south east corners. A pathway runs from the south east entrance joining to the network of footpaths within the playing fields. This allows easy access onto the site for young children and parents with buggies. The playground is entirely surrounded by metal fencing which is in excellent condition. There are also a number of new facilities which have recently been installed. It is generally very clean and tidy although it is a little muddy and there is a small amount of graffiti. There is also a lack of any information signs whilst one of the two metal bins located on the site is badly damaged but will not be replaced owing to the consistent vandalism being inflicted on this particular facility.



Roding Valley Playground, Site CY8

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- Generally the playgrounds situated in this parish are clean and free of litter.
- Despite often being located around large areas of informal recreational space usually made of grass, the vast majority of sites are also relatively mud free.
- One of the main strengths of the playgrounds located in the parish is their security. The perimeter fencing around all of the sites is very secure. This is made even more important given that many are situated close to busy roads or railway links.
- One concern relates to the varying quantity and quality of children facilities within the playgrounds of the parish. Whereas sites such as Trap's Hill Playground and Felstead Road Playground offer a wide range of good quality children's facilities, others such as Hillyfields Playground and Monksgrove Playground have only a limited amount.
- There is also a stark contrast between sites in terms of the amount of bins, seats and information signs they provide. Whilst some sites such as Felstead Road Playground and Newman's Lane Playground offer all of these, all of which are in a good condition, others such as Colebrook Lane Playground and Westall Playground provide only some of these.
- There is an issue with graffiti which can be found on even the best kept playgrounds.
- The Town Council has not identified any current demand for the implementation of further playgrounds within the parish.

CHAPTER 8 – INDOOR FACILITIES FOR HIGH LEVELS OF USE

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
IF1	Loughton Leisure Centre	Traps Hill, Loughton	1.42	Epping Forest College

LOUGHTON LEISURE CENTRE (IF1)

Situated to the south east of the junction between High Road and Traps Hill, this leisure centre offers a wide range of facilities including a swimming pool, fitness suite, movement studio, as well as a crèche and café. The site is also the base for local walking and running clubs and also used for martial arts and belly dancing training sessions. A range of kids activities including activities for birthday parties at also run at the centre.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is the only facility of its type within the local parish.
- Further facilities of this type are only be available in some of the neighbouring parishes such as Waltham Abbey and Chigwell.
- Even then, some of these facilities is privately run and requires membership which not everyone will be able to afford.
- In order to access these, locals will need access to their own vehicle or public transport.
- There are no immediate plans to add further facilities of this type within the parish.

CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY CENTRES AND VILLAGE HALLS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CV1	Murray Hall Community Centre	Borders Lane, Loughton	0.31	Privately Owned
CV2	Kingsley Hall	Kingsley Road, Loughton	0.70	Privately Owned
CV3	Lopping Hall	High Road, Loughton	0.06	Lopping Hall Endowment Trust

MURRAY HALL COMMUNITY CENTRE (CV1)

Found along Borders Lane directly opposite Epping Forest College, this is a large, attractive and relatively new community hall which caters for a wide range of activities, events and functions. This includes private and public meetings, parties, wedding receptions, as well as numerous shows by the local theatre company. The site is also used by a variety of societies including local religious groups whilst various classes for range of activities are based on the site varying from dance classes to karate.

KINGSLEY HALL (CV2)

Situated just off The Broadway and accessible either from Kingsley Road to the north or Torrington drive to the south, this is a relatively small hall set in a large green and attractive grounds. The hall caters for a variety of activities including daily pre-school groups on weekdays, local church groups and various sports clubs in the evenings, and is available for hire for private functions over weekends.

LOPPING HALL (CV3)

Built in 1884, this building located in the centre of Loughton High Road, was built to compensate the villagers of Loughton for the loss of their traditional rights to lop trees in Epping Forest. Lopping Hall is made up of a large hall with a stage and lighting system that is currently used by three performing arts groups. In addition to this, two further rooms provide space for meetings and exhibitions and also act as the base for a variety of other clubs, including the Top Hat School of Dancing and Loughton Camera Club. The site is in need of some major refurbishment, including improved access for the disabled. The Trustees of the Lopping Hall Endowment Trust are therefore planning a restoration programme funded by a variety of money raising events.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- All three of these facilities are well maintained and appear to be in good condition although plans are currently being made for major refurbishments to take place at Lopping Hall (CV3).
- All three halls are very well used and cater for a wide range of activities, events, and occasions.
- The Town Council has pointed out the heavy use of the existing halls and the fact that this level of provision will need to be added to in the not too distant future.

CHAPTER 10 - MANAGED OPEN SPACE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
MO1	Land to the south of Hillyfields	Hillyfields, Loughton	0.27	Epping Forest District Council
MO2	Hillyfields Open Space/Millennium Remembrance Grove	Rectory Lane, Loughton	4.16	Loughton Town Council and Corporation of London
MO3	Land to the south of Burney Drive	Burney Drive, Loughton	0.49	Epping Forest District Council
MO4	Land to the south of Burney Drive	Burney Drive, Loughton	1.63	Epping Forest District Council
MO5	Land to the north of Rectory Lane	Rectory Lane, Loughton	0.76	Epping Forest District Council
MO6	Land to the south of Mannock Drive	Hannock Drive, Loughton	1.38	Epping Forest District Council
MO7	Land to the north of Rectory Lane	Rectory Lane, Loughton	0.75	Epping Forest District Council
MO8	Land to the west of Rectory Lane	Rectory Lane, Loughton	1.28	Epping Forest District Council
MO9	Land to the east of Westall Road	Westall Road, Loughton	1.17	Epping Forest District Council
MO10	Jessel Green	Colebrook Lane, Loughton	8.08	Epping Forest District Council
MO11	Land adjacent to Rookwood Gardens	Rookwood Gardens, Loughton	0.90	Epping Forest District Council
MO12	Land to the north of Rookwood Avenue	Rookwood Avenue, Loughton	1.49	Epping Forest District Council
MO13	Land to the east of Colson Road	Colson Road, Loughton	0.14	Epping Forest District Council
MO14	Land adjacent to Deepdene Road	Deepdene Road, Loughton	0.29	Epping Forest District Council
MO15	Colson Green	Colson Road, Loughton	0.31	Epping Forest District Council

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
MO16	Land south of the junction between Border's Lane and Alderton Hill Lane	Border's Lane, Loughton	0.11	Epping Forest District Council
MO17	Hanbury Park Green	Roding Gardens, Loughton	0.14	Epping Forest District Council
MO18	Land to the south of Lancaster Drive	Lancaster Drive, Loughton	0.23	Epping Forest District Council
MO19	Land to the north of Greensted Road	Greensted Road, Loughton	0.12	Epping Forest District Council
MO20	Land to the east of Greensted Road	Greensted Road, Loughton	0.10	Epping Forest District Council
MO21	Green Walk	Green Walk, Loughton	0.64	Epping Forest District Council
MO22	Buffer Land at the junction between High Road and Warren Hill	High Road, Loughton	0.22	Corporation of London
MO23	Land to the north east of Langston Road	Langston Road, Loughton	1.26	Bank of England
MO24	Linden Green North	The Lindens, Loughton	0.16	Loughton Town Council
MO25	Linden Green South	The Lindens, Loughton	0.23	Loughton Town Council
MO26	Land between Felstead Road and Loughton Way	Felstead Road, Buckhurst Hill	0.39	Epping Forest District Council

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF HILLYFIELDS (MO1)

10.0 This site is in a good condition and is clean, tidy and pleasant to look at. It contains Hillyfields Playground, and forms an important area of amenity green space. The site is dominated by three willow trees to the north which greatly add to its visual amenity. There is a tall wire mesh fence along the northern perimeter along Hillyfields, preventing children from running out onto the road.

HILLYFIELDS OPEN SPACE/MILLENNIUM REMEMBRANCE GROVE (MO2)

10.1 Located to the north of Rectory Lane, this is a valuable area of amenity green space, and is largely open and accessible in nature. The centre of the site is

dominated by a steep hill, upon which sit five large and extremely attractive trees which add enormously to the visual amenity. The Remembrance Grove itself is located to the south, and is made up of a variety of different species and sizes of tree, which also add to the site's amenity value.

- 10.2** At the time of auditing however a vast amount of rubbish could be found on the site whilst there is also evidence of dumping with the site having a history of such incidences from time to time. Evidence of criminal damage can also be found along the north east and south west boundaries where neighbouring residential fences and walls have been vandalised. Another issue is the lack of adequate footpaths, which make it virtually impossible for those persons with disabilities to access the site.



Hillyfields Open Space/Millennium Remembrance Grove, Site MO2

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF BURNEY DRIVE (MO3)

- 10.3** This site is the first of four separate sites (MO3, MO4, MO6, MO12) which join one another, and are dissected by a small stream which joins the River Roding. The site is clean, tidy and well maintained, and is attractive to look at. Trees and bushes which run along the entirety of the stream hide it from view, and significantly add to the visual amenity of the site. There are four prominent trees, three of which are located to the west and one to the east. The site is surrounded on three sides by Burney Drive, Colebrook Lane and Pyrles Lane, all of which are relatively busy. This makes using the site potentially dangerous.

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF BURNEY DRIVE (MO4)

10.4 The second of four adjoining sites, this site is very similar in appearance to those with which it links to. The stream running through the length of the site is again hidden from view by shrubs and trees which have grown on its verges, some of which are reasonably large in stature. This verge is significantly higher on the northern half of the site. The site is well maintained, pleasant, and is clean and tidy in appearance. The view of the stream is obscured by trees and shrubs which potentially could unsight those using it, whilst Etheridge Road, Burney Drive, Colebrook Lane and Westall Road surround the it on all sides which also adds to the potential hazardousness of the site.

LAND TO THE NORTH OF RECTORY LANE (MO5)

10.5 This is another well maintained and attractive site which is made up almost entirely of grass, with a number of trees of varying sizes and ages running through the middle of it. Towards the west these trees increase both in size and number, and several hedgerows appear which run along the roadside. Although it would be possible to participate in informal recreation on this site, doing so would be unadvisable as the site is surrounded to the north and south by Lawton Road, and Rectory Lane respectively, both of which are busy roads.

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF MANNOCK DRIVE (MO6)

10.6 This is the third of four sites which are dissected by a stream that leads to the River Roding. The site is physically very similar to those adjoining it and is well maintained and smart in appearance. As with the adjoining sites, the verges of the stream are entirely covered by bushes, small and medium sized trees whilst there is a particularly large and attractive tree to the west. As with the adjacent site to the west, it is also surrounded by roads on all sides, namely Westall Road, Etheridge Road, Burney Drive, Hannock Drive and Willingale Road.

LAND TO THE NORTH OF RECTORY LANE (MO7)

10.7 This site directly adjoins site MO5 to the south, beginning where Newman's Lane meets Rectory Lane, and ending where Rectory Lane meets Westall Road. It is predominantly covered with grass, and is dominated by a large mature tree to the south which significantly boosts the visual amenity. A further fifteen trees of various sizes and species are spread around the perimeter whilst there is also a small sparse woodland area to the north. It is well maintained and pleasant to look at, however there is some evidence of litter, whilst one the younger trees appears to have been vandalised.

LAND TO THE WEST OF RECTORY LANE (MO8)

10.8 Located opposite the junction between Lawton Lane and Conyer's Way this is a large area of grass, in the middle of which sits Newman's Lane Playground (CY2). A footpath dissects this site, which runs through the playground itself and acts as a short cut for pedestrians between Newman's Lane and Rectory Lane. The southern half of the site is dominated by a variety of trees of different sizes and species which are attractive in appearance and add to the visual amenity of the area. The site is clean, tidy and in a good condition and is pleasing to look at.

LAND TO THE EAST OF WESTALL ROAD (MO9)

10.9 Surrounded almost entirely by Sandford Avenue, Rochford Green, Rochford Avenue, and Westall Road, this is a reasonably large area of grass land. To the south west corner lies Westall Road Playground (CY3). To the south lie five large trees which significantly increase its visual amenity. A further ten smaller trees scattered around the perimeter make a similar impact.

10.10 There is however only one dog bin on the entire site, despite it being ideal for dog walking. This bin furthermore has been vandalised, and is covered in graffiti, and needs to be replaced. There is also a large amount of litter, which is not helped by a lack of any litter bins there. No seating is available, and the surrounding roads are busy which provides some risk to users.

JESSEL GREEN (MO10)

10.11 This the largest area of amenity green space in the parish, and is entirely surrounded by Goldingham Avenue, Burney Drive, Jessel Drive, Colebrook Lane and Brady Avenue. The site is largely open in nature, and comprises of well maintained grass land with a number of small trees and shrubs around its perimeter, particularly to the west and south west. The site is dominated by a relatively steep slope which moves down from north to south, making it potentially slippery during wet weather. The south east of the site is flat and particularly popular with children enjoying informal recreation.

10.12 Users of the site should be careful as it is entirely surrounded by a network of relatively busy roads. There are also problems with widespread litter and dog excrement, while the litter and dog bins intended to tackle these issues have been vandalised and need repairing or replacing. There are also no benches present on the site.

LAND ADJACENT TO ROOKWOOD GARDENS (MO11)

10.13 Encircled by Rookwood Avenue and Rookwood Gardens, this site is a relatively small area of grass. Around thirty trees of varying species and size are distributed throughout it, predominantly along the north, east and western boundaries. There is also evidence of some formal flower beds, as well as a

number of small bushes which are scattered around the site. It is clearly well maintained owing to its good condition, and furthermore is pleasant to look at.



Land adjacent to Rookwood Gardens, Site MO11

LAND TO THE NORTH OF ROOKWOOD AVENUE (MO12)

10.14 This is the last of the four adjoining sites dissected lengthways by a stream which eventually leads out to the River Roding. This site, which runs to the north of Rookwood Avenue, is physically very similar to the sites it adjoins. The verges of the stream are largely hidden by trees and bushes whilst it appears to be well maintained and in good condition. There are also a small number of fairly large trees growing on the grassland on either side of the stream which add to the visual amenity of the site.

LAND TO THE EAST OF COLSON ROAD (MO13)

10.15 Located at the junction between Border's Lane and Colson Road, this is a small area of amenity green space, with a number of trees and shrubs around its northern and western perimeters. The southern and eastern sides of the site, meanwhile, face onto the residential dwellings off Border's Lane. It is predominantly used by the students at Epping Forest College which is situated directly opposite. The site appears to be in a reasonable condition however there is a significant amount of litter visible, whilst the lone wooden bench to the north of the site is very worn and covered in graffiti.

LAND ADJACENT TO DEEPDENE ROAD (MO14)

10.16 This site is small, triangular in shape, and runs alongside Bushfields to the north, whilst its southern side faces Parkmead to the west. The site is dissected by Deepdene Road, which runs through it from north to south. The western half features two large trees with a dominating presence, whilst the eastern half, in contrast, contains fifteen smaller trees. Both sides also have five formally planted areas dispersed throughout them. The eastern side also harbours a post box and a telephone booth. Each side also has a sign near the centre stating that no ball games are allowed. The site is clearly well maintained and is in very good condition, with no litter or graffiti visible.



Land adjacent to Deepdene Road, Site MO14

COLSON GREEN (MO15)

10.17 Triangular in shape and dissected by Chequers Road, the northern boundary runs alongside Colson Road whilst the remaining two sides face the residential homes on Colson Road. The larger, western section of the site contains five small trees, which add significantly to its amenity value. The eastern section contains two larger trees which likewise add to the visual amenity of the site. Overall it is an attractive site that is well maintained and nice to look at however there is a small amount of litter present, which could arguably be due to the fact that there are no bins present.

LAND SOUTH OF THE JUNCTION BETWEEN BORDER'S LANE AND ALDERTON HILL LANE (MO16)

10.18 Located to the south of the junction between Trap's Hill, Sparelease Hill, Borders Lane and Alderton Hill Lane, this is a small area of amenity green space. It is dominated by one very large mature tree, located just north of the centre which significantly adds to the site's visual amenity. Towards the eastern and southern perimeters there are a number of conifer trees, which provide cover to the neighbouring residential back gardens. There is also a single bench to the north west corner which is in good condition, although no litter bins are present, which may explain the small amount of visible rubbish.



Land south of the junction between Border's Lane and Alderton Hill Lane, Site MO16

HANBURY PARK GREEN (MO17)

10.19 Situated opposite the junction between Roding Gardens and Aragon Close, this is a small area of amenity green space surrounded by hedges and shrubbery. A significant number of smaller trees can also be found around the perimeter. It is well maintained and attractive in appearance, although its small size prevents it from being ideal for informal recreation.

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF LANCASTER DRIVE (MO18)

10.20 Found at the southern end of Lancaster Drive to the north of the junction between Witham Close and Danbury Road. This is a small area of amenity

green space, with a cluster of small trees which travel along its eastern and southern boundaries. The site is entirely surrounded by a tall spiked metal fence, with the only access available being from the road to the north. There is a small amount of litter, which perhaps could be avoided by the installation of a litter bin.



Land to the south of Lancaster Drive, Site MO18

LAND TO THE NORTH OF GREENSTED ROAD (MO19)

10.21 Situated to the north of Greensted Road opposite Whitebridge Junior and Infant School, this is a small area of amenity green space with three small trees placed at its centre, along with a number of telegraph poles. There is a sign present indicating that no ball games are permitted. The site is generally in a good condition and is pleasant in appearance. There is however some evidence of dog fouling.

LAND TO THE EAST OF GREENSTED ROAD (MO20)

10.22 Entirely surrounded by Greensted Road and its lay-by, this site is a narrow area of grass with three reasonably large trees running down its centre. It is generally well maintained, although its grassy edges, particularly around the site's corners, have been undercut and badly damaged by vehicles entering and exiting the lay-by.

GREEN WALK (MO21)

- 10.23** This 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 Loughton and Buckhurst Hill parishes. The main feature of the site is the wide and well surfaced footpath which runs along the entirety, with two turn offs along the way allowing pedestrian access onto Pentlow Way and Roydon Close.
- 10.24** The site is well maintained and is attractive in appearance. It is clean, despite the absence of litter bins. Furthermore, the trees and bushes which flank either side of the footpath along its perimeter, add significantly to its visual value. Being an important access route however, this site requires adequate lighting in order to encourage pedestrians to use it both night and day. The lighting along the path is minimal, making it an unattractive pathway to use at night. The information signs at each end of the site meanwhile need to be replaced.



Green Walk, Site MO21

BUFFER LAND AT THE JUNCTION BETWEEN HIGH ROAD AND WARREN HILL (MO22)

- 10.25** The dominant feature of this site is the pond to the north west, which covers well over a third of its area. The remainder is made up of grassland, with a variety of trees spread throughout, but particularly along its western boundary. This boundary is partly fenced, preventing entry into Oakland's School. There is one bin and one bench present, which are both in a reasonable condition,

whilst the site as a whole is clean and tidy. An unofficial path has been trodden in which cuts across the south western corner. This path however, is rather muddy and unsuitable for everyday public access.

LAND TO THE NORTH EAST OF LANGSTON ROAD (MO23)

- 10.26** Situated at the very end of Langston Road this site is a relatively large area of grassland with a number of small trees along its western perimeter. The Academy (FP9) is situated directly adjacent to the south east and is separated by a public footpath which runs along the south eastern perimeter. There are seven large wooden benches, all of which are in very good condition. There are no bins present, however the site remains clean and tidy. The boundaries to the north east and south east are fenced with a variety of shrubs and small trees whilst the western boundary runs alongside Langston Road.

LINDEN GREEN NORTH (MO24)

- 10.27** Entirely surrounded by The Lindens and close to the roads junction with Alderton Hall Lane, this irregular shaped site is predominantly made up of well maintained grassland which clean and litter free. The western perimeter of the site is dominated by a line of medium sized trees which significantly add to the overall visual amenity of the site. Given the small size of the site and the fact that it is entirely surrounded by The Lindens, this site is only really appropriate as a visual amenity and is not suitable for unaccompanied children.

LINDEN GREEN SOUTH (MO25)

- 10.28** Located further south along The Lindens, this triangular shaped site is another area predominantly made up of grassland. This site is slightly larger than Linden Green North (MO24) and not entirely surrounded by roads with the northern perimeter of the site leading directly onto residential housing. A variety of trees and shrubs are spread throughout the site, but particularly around its boundaries. The site appears to be very well maintained and is free of any obvious litter. Whilst this site is more suitable for use than its smaller counterpart, the fact that roads run past it on two sides still makes it unsuitable for unaccompanied children to use.

LAND BETWEEN FELSTEAD ROAD AND LOUGHTON WAY (MO26)

- 10.29** 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.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- The majority of sites are clean and tidy, with low levels of litter and graffiti, making them attractive to use and visualise.
- There are some particularly outstanding natural features on many of the sites. Some of the best of examples include the five large trees at the top of the hill at Hillyfields Open Space/Millennium Remembrance Grove (MO3), the five trees to the south west corner of site MO12, and the pond to the north west of site MO29.
- Those sites large enough to warrant the presence of bins and benches have them, and these are generally maintained to a good standard.
- Most of the sites are located adjacent to busy roads being used by vehicles travelling at fast speeds. Users of these sites should therefore take great care. This is particularly an issue on the sites which are smaller in size, many of which are not intended for informal recreation.
- There are some sites which have a variety of issues which clearly need to be addressed. Jessel Green (MO14) has problems with litter, dog fouling and vandalism, Hillyfields Open Space/Millennium Remembrance Grove has issues with dumping (MO3), whilst site (MO25) contains a steeply sloping ditch full of stagnant water and rubbish.
- The grassy perimeter edges of sites (MO15) and (MO27) have been cut up and degraded by large vehicles travelling past or parking on them.
- The Town Council have not indicated a demand for further managed open spaces within the parish.

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

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
SO1	Home Mead Local Nature Reserve	East of England's Lane	1.82	Epping Forest District Council
SO2	Land north of Willingale Allotments	East of Willingale Road, Loughton	0.61	Loughton Town Council
SO3	Epping Forest College	South of Borders Lane, Loughton	4.72	Epping Forest College
SO4	Lady Whitaker's Mead	North of Davenant Foundation School	3.54	Loughton Town Council
SO5	Roding Valley Nature Reserve	Oakwood Hill, Loughton	18.46	Epping Forest District Council
SO6	Epping Forest	Various areas throughout the parish	Around 2400 across district	Corporation of London

HOME MEAD LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (SO1)

11.0 Located between England's Lane and Grosvenor Drive, this area is dominated by small and medium sized trees. Through these trees a circular path has been constructed, allowing members of the public to walk around the area. This path can be accessed by entering through the kissing gate to the east of the site, along England's Lane. To the south, meanwhile, there is a small pond/bog, around which many of the trees have been cut down and replaced with newly planted ones. A couple of wooden benches are located within the site, as well as a litter bin and a dog bin, all of which are in decent condition. Despite the existence of these, however, there is still evidence of litter and dog fouling. The main sign at the entrance of the site is particularly colourful, attractive and new, although it has been positioned in such a way that it is very difficult to see it from the road side. Parking in order to use the site is also difficult as there is no on site parking. Users must instead park on Cleland Path to the south of the site.



Home Mead Local Nature Reserve, Site SO1

LAND NORTH OF WILLINGALE ALLOTMENT (S02)

- 11.1** Formerly a part of Willingale Allotment, this site was recently turned over to Loughton Town Council subject to a 21 year covenant for return to EFDC. The Town Council however now plans to turn this site into a local nature reserve and as a result, it has been allowed to revert to a wild state, and can only be accessed via Willingale Allotment (AT3). Whilst ownership of the site has been disputed, the site has been neglected and has been subject to the dumping of both horticultural and other waste. Much of the area is also now full of weeds and brambles, which are not particularly attractive.

EPPING FOREST COLLEGE (SO3)

- 11.2** This site is located to the south of Borders Lane, running alongside Ladyfields to the north east. To the east and the south, it leads on to the back gardens of the residential dwellings of Colson Road and Ladyfields. To the west, it runs alongside a pathway which allows pedestrian access from Colson Road to Borders Lane, which itself backs onto more residential dwellings at Bryony Close. Aside from the boundaries facing the residential dwellings to the south and west, the site is surrounded by a wire mesh fence. There are gates at the south east and north west corners to allow locals access between Colson Road and Ladyfields. Both the gates and the fencing, however, have become very run down, and have been vandalised in a number of places. The information signs meanwhile have also been badly vandalised and need replacing.

11.3 Parking near the site is very difficult, as Ladyfields and Colson Road are both very congested, with cars often parked up on the kerb on both sides. One of the biggest issues with the site regards its cleanliness, which is poor. There are significant amounts of litter, dog excrement, and some evidence of dumping visible throughout the site. This is made more dangerous by the unmaintained nature of the site which makes it difficult to see what you could tread on. Litter can even be found in the trees which surround the perimeter of the site. Many of these trees are either dead or dying.



Epping Forest College, Site SO3

LADY WHITAKER'S MEAD (SO4)

11.4 Situated to the east of Debden Lane, this site sits directly to the north east of Willingale Road Playing Fields (FP10), and is largely made up of unmaintained grassland, bordered on all sides by shrubs and small trees. It is clean and tidy, although the north western boundary in particular is dominated by thick brambles. Vehicular access meanwhile has been prevented by the installation of two concrete cylinders in front of the main entrance, off Debden Lane. It currently offers no facilities such as any benches or bins.



Lady Whitaker's Mead, Site SO4

RODING VALLEY NATURE RESERVE (SO5)

- 11.5** Situated to the south of Oakwood Hill, and adjacent to the north east of Roding Valley Playing Fields (FP3-7), this is the second of two nature reserves located in the parish. It follows the River Roding for around 1.5 miles between Chigwell Lane in Chigwell, and Roding Lane in Buckhurst Hill, and is regarded as one of the largest surviving areas of traditionally managed river-valley habitat in Essex. The site contains over 250 species of wildflower, 150 species of bird and other wildlife, while some of the hedgerows and woodland areas date back over 1000 years. The site therefore is extremely important and is therefore well maintained, clean and tidy.
- 11.6** One issue to address regards the entrance located to the east of the site, which provides access from Chigwell Lane. Just beyond the gate of this entrance lie two large piles of concrete, which appear to have been dumped on the footpath. This is restricting access for pedestrians, and particularly for wheelchair users. The presence of this material also significantly detracts from the overall visual amenity of the site. Furthermore, the hard standing path which continues beyond this dumped material soon turns into a gravel track, and then into nothing more than a well trodden path, making access yet more difficult for less able bodied users. The signs at the entrance from Chigwell Lane meanwhile are damaged and need to be repaired.



Roding Valley Nature Reserve, Site SO5

EPPING FOREST (SO6)

11.7 The most dominant open space within the parish is Epping Forest, which runs from the north of the parish and travels all the way down its western side. Epping Forest is the largest public open space in the London area, and the land designated as part of it located in Loughton forms just a small percentage of its 1729 hectare total. As well as being a popular area for recreation, Epping Forest is also of national and international importance in terms of conservation, with around two thirds designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or Special Area of Conservation.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- Home Mead Local Nature Reserve, Roding Valley Nature Reserve and Epping Forest are particularly beautiful, and act as vital green lungs to the area whilst also providing an important habitat for local species of flora and fauna.
- Sites Lady Whitaker's Mead and Roding Valley Nature Reserve have both had their main entrances onto main roads blocked. While there may be good reasons for blocking these entrances, this could perhaps be achieved in a way which does not detract as much from the overall appearance of the site.
- Land North Of Willingale Allotments and Epping Forest College are particularly run down, and appear to have particular problems with litter and vandalism.