

THEYDON BOIS - OPEN SPACE AUDIT**APRIL 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

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
AT1	Theydon Bois Parish Allotments	Red Oaks Mead, Theydon Bois	1.59	Theydon Bois Parish Council



Theydon Bois Parish Allotments, Site AT1

THEYDON BOIS PARISH ALLOTMENTS (AT1)

- 2.0** Situated at the end of Red Oaks Mead, this is the only allotment located within Theydon Bois. It borders a cricket ground to the north and residential housing to the east, with the remainder facing Redoak Wood. The site can be accessed via two separate entrances, the first of which is from the cricket ground to the north, which allows pedestrian access only. The second is located to the east, at the end of a short turn off from Loughton Lane, along which users may park their vehicles. It is also possible to drive onto the site from this entrance. Further parking provision is available in the form of an area of flat grassland, located towards the south.
- 2.1** Of the two entrances, only the eastern one is suitable for wheelchair users and those with pushchairs, as the northern entrance lacks a hard surfaced path. Similarly, accessibility within the site is difficult given the lack of any hard surfaces, with only a network of grass paths present. The allotment is very well signposted however, and is one of only a few in the district which is covered by surveillance cameras.

2.2 The allotment's perimeter is a combination of wire mesh fencing to the north and east, and a variety of dense shrubs and trees to the south and west. These trees, in a wide range of sizes, mark the beginning of Redoak Wood. The allotment itself is divided into at least twenty plots, the vast majority of which seem well used and maintained. In general, the allotment is neat and clean, with only a small amount of litter or waste present. The site overall adds much to the visual amenity of the local area.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is an smart and attractive place, which is clearly one of the better used allotments in the district, given the absence of any vacant plots
- Accessibility is only good but for able bodied persons. Visitors with wheelchairs or pushchairs users would find access onto and within the allotment difficult, due to the lack of any hard surfaced paths.
- Whilst this is the only allotment in the Theydon Bois, the local parish council has not indicated a need for any further provision.

CHAPTER 3 - CEMETERIES AND GRAVEYARDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CG1	St Mary's Church	Coppice Row, Theydon Bois	0.97	Diocese of Chelmsford
CG2	Theydon Bois Cemetery	Abridge Road, Theydon Bois	1.72	Theydon Bois Parish Council



St Mary's Church, Site CG1

ST MARY'S CHURCH (CG1)

- 3.0** Found to the north west of the junction between Piercing Hill and Coppice Row, this is a quiet and secluded site. It which is predominantly hidden from view of the road, within in an area of forest known as the Coppice, except for the area to the south by the main pedestrian entrance on Coppice Row. This traditional wooden entranceway is in excellent condition, is very well signed and leads onto a hard surfaced pathway up to the church itself, to the north. This pathway enables easy access to all members of the public, including wheelchair users and those with pushchairs.
- 3.1** Two further entrances exist. The first is to the north east of the site, off Piercing Hill. This acts as the main vehicle entrance, and leads directly onto a small car park to the north of the church. This entrance is, however, quite difficult to spot when driving along Piercing Hill, despite the presence of signage along the road, as it is on a bend. Larger signs may make this easier,

thus reducing the potential for accidents caused by visitors stopping too quickly when spotting the church too late.

- 3.2** The final entrance is located to the south, and is largely hidden from view by the mature trees in this area. A small metal gate leads into the churchyard here, along a small dirt path. This path is not suitable for visitors with wheelchairs and pushchairs, but is unlikely to be used by pedestrians anyway given that the larger, more accessible main entrance is nearby. Overall, this churchyard is very clean and tidy, and offers adequate seats and litter bins. The surrounding forest helps to create a tranquil site.



Theydon Bois Cemetery, Site CG2

THEYDON BOIS CEMETERY (CG2)

- 3.3** This cemetery lies along Abridge Road, just before it passes under the M11 bridge. It is both neat, clean, and very well cared for. The eastern half is dominated by a small forest, which effectively screens it from the road. The remaining area has a perimeter of tall dense hedgerows and a variety of trees, giving the site a very peaceful and sheltered feel.
- 3.4** From the main entrance off Abridge Road, a hard surfaced road with a turning circle at the end leads into the cemetery, allowing easy vehicular access onto the site. Given the out of town location, there is no easy pedestrian access available, unless members of the public choose to walk along Abridge Road.

However, the lack of a pavement here makes doing so potentially very dangerous.

- 3.5** The cemetery itself is predominantly grass covered, and is very well set out with even rows of graves across the western half of the site. To the far west, an adequately surfaced track leads from the access road to a mostly gravelled area. This section has a number of plants and smaller graves distributed throughout. From here, a public footpath leads out into the open countryside.
- 3.6** Throughout the site, adequate seats and litter bins have been provided, and signage appears to be fairly good. One minor issue, however, is that the entrance is quite hard to spot, which, coupled with the national speed limit of Abridge Road, could lead to potential visitors accidentally driving past. To prevent this from happening, signs placed further along the road, warning of the imminent entrance could be installed.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- Both sites are attractive, smart and very well presented, to the benefit of those who use them.
- They are both well screened from the nearest roads, adding to the tranquil atmospheres they provide.
- Adequate car parking facilities are provided, with good general, and wheelchair, access.
- Plenty of seats, litter bins and signs have been installed, all in reasonable repair.
- Further signs could be placed on the roads leading up to the main entrance of each site, so that visitors do not pass them by accidentally.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council has not indicated any demand for further provision of this type of open space in the local area.

CHAPTER 4 - FORMAL PLAYING PITCHES

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
FP1	Buxton Trust Playing Field	Sidney Road, Theydon Bois	1.86	Buxton Trust



Buxton Trust Playing Field, Site FP1

BUXTON TRUST PLAYING FIELD (FP1)

- 4.0** Accessible by car from Sidney Road and Loughton Lane and on foot from Avenue Road and Red Oaks Mead, this recreation ground is an attractive area of open grassland, set in the heart of Theydon Bois Village. The site is owned and managed by the registered charity Buxton Trust and consists of a single cricket pitch and practice nets. The ground is surrounded by residential housing to the north and east, by Theydon Bois Parish Allotments to the south, and by Theydon Bois Cricket Club to the west. A combination of hedgerows of various sizes form the boundaries, which provide it with an element of seclusion, although it remains visible from the surrounding residential area.
- 4.1** The main entrance is to the east, from which site users can access the gravel surfaced Cricket Club car park, and the Cricket Club pavilion just to the south. The pitch itself appears to be maintained to a very high level and is in excellent condition, as are all the facilities surrounding it. Adequate seating,

litter bins and dog waste bins are spread around the ground, which has helped keep levels of dog excrement and rubbish to a minimum.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is the only formal playing pitch of its type within the parish.
- When not in use by the local cricket team, the site can be used in its secondary role as an informal recreation ground.
- The facilities within the site appear to be in good repair and the site is clean, tidy and very well maintained.
- The sites level of accessibility is generally good with wheelchair access and adequate car parking provided.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council has not indicated a demand for further provision of this type of open space within the local area.
- This is largely due to the rural nature of the parish, its relatively small population and the fact that further facilities of this type are located close by in Epping, Loughton and Waltham Abbey.
- Residents wishing to access alternative sites will need access to their own personal vehicles or local public transport.

CHAPTER 5 – ALTERNATIVE SITES FOR SPORT

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
AS1	Buxton Trust Lawn Tennis Club	Sidney Road, Theydon Bois	0.50	Buxton Trust
AS2	Theydon Bois Golf Course	Theydon Road, Theydon Bois	27.16	Privately Owned



Buxton Trust Lawn Tennis Club, Site AS1

BUXTON TRUST LAWN TENNIS CLUB (AS1)

- 5.0** Theydon Bois Lawn Tennis Club, lying to the west of Theydon Bois Cricket Ground, consists of six all weather synthetic grass tennis courts with a Swiss chalet style clubhouse. To the north and west, it is surrounded by residential housing, whilst to the south it backs onto Redoak Wood. The main entrance is to the west, and can be accessed from Sidney Road. Visitors can park their vehicles in the small hard surface car park here, which has approximately 10-12 spaces. The tennis courts themselves appear well maintained, and are all surrounded by high wire mesh fencing, which also enhances security.

THEYDON BOIS GOLF COURSE (AS2)

- 5.1 Situated to the north of the parish, Theydon Bois Golf Course is over 100 years old, having been founded in 1898. It offers a full 18 hole golf course, and is surrounded in part by areas of Epping Forest. As such, the long views from the course are quite striking. The course also features a practice ground with covering bay, putting green, pro shop and clubhouse, together forming a very pleasant, and well cared for, site.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- These are the only alternative sites for sport in the parish.
- The sites facilities appear to be in excellent condition whilst both are also clean, tidy and clearly well maintained.
- Site accessibility for both sites is good with wheelchair access and car parking both provided.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council has not indicated a demand for further provision of this type of open space within the local area.
- This is largely due to the rural nature of the parish, its relatively small population and the fact that further facilities of this type are located close by in Epping, Loughton and Waltham Abbey.
- Residents wishing to access alternative sites will need access to their own personal vehicles or local public transport.

CHAPTER 6 – INFORMAL RECREATION GROUNDS

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are sites within the parish which primarily act as informal recreation grounds.
- When not in use by the local cricket team, Buxton Trust Playing Field (FP1) can be used in its secondary role as an informal recreation ground.
- The former playing fields behind Theydon Bois underground station are in private ownership and are no longer used for as an informal recreation ground.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council has not indicated a demand for further provision of this type of open space within the local area.
- This largely because of the rural nature of the parish, its small local population, and the fact that further facilities of this type are located close by in neighbouring parishes such as Epping and Loughton.

CHAPTER 7 – CHILDREN’S PLAYGROUNDS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CY1	Theydon Bois Playground	Poplar Row, Theydon Bois	0.08	Playground at Theydon Committee



Theydon Bois Playground, Site CY1

THEYDON BOIS PLAYGROUND (CY1)

- 7.0** Located along Poplar Row to the east of Theydon Bois Village Green, this is a clean tidy and very well maintained playground which offers an excellent range of children’s facilities. The playground also offers very good amounts of seating and litter bins facilities all of which appear to be in very decent condition. To the north, south and east the site borders residential housing whilst to the west it faces Theydon Bois Village Green. The perimeter meanwhile is made up of dense hedgerow around three quarters of the site, with wooden fencing to the east which together effectively screen much of it from external view.
- 7.1** The site has two entrances, one to the west which is wide enough to be used by maintenance vehicles and one to the south east corner which acts as the main pedestrian access into the site. Both of these entrances are very well signed although one of the signs by the main pedestrian entrance appears to have been vandalised and is in need of replacement. The site itself is well

surfaced, with all the children's facilities surrounded by rubber surfacing whilst the remainder of the site is hard surfaced to ensure that it is fully accessible to all members of the public including those with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is a very well maintained site which offers an excellent range of children's facilities as well as seating and litter bins.
- The site is secure and well fenced with two well signed entrances.
- The site is very easily accessible to all members of the public who may wish to use it.
- One of the signs by the main pedestrian entrance which has been badly damaged and needs to be replaced.
- This is the only children's playground in the Parish.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council have not indicated a requirement for further playground provision within the parish.

CHAPTER 8 – INDOOR FACILITIES FOR HIGH LEVELS OF USE

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There are no indoor facilities for high levels of use within Theydon Bois.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council has indicated that there is no demand for a facility of this type within the parish given that it is situated very close to Epping, Loughton and Waltham Abbey which all offer provision of this type of facility.
- Residents wishing to access indoor facilities for high levels of use will therefore need access to personal transportation or to local public transport.

CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY CENTRES AND VILLAGE HALLS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
CV1	Theydon Bois Village Hall	Coppice Row, Theydon Bois	0.70	Theydon Bois Village Association
CV2	Theydon Bois Scout Hut	Loughton Lane, Theydon Bois	0.13	Local Scout Association
CV3	Theydon Bois Former Youth Centre Building	Loughton Lane, Theydon Bois	0.26	Theydon Bois Parish Council
CV4	St Mary's Church Village Hall	Coppice Row, Theydon Bois	0.24	Diocese of Chelmsford

THEYDON BOIS VILLAGE HALL (CV1)

- 9.0** Situated along Coppice Row facing Theydon Green this is one of the largest village halls in the district and is clean tidy and very maintained. Completed in October 2001 it replaces the original village hall which was built in 1966. The hall is used by a large variety of groups locally including Theydon Bois Women's Institute, the local art and singers groups, and a variety of societies including the local Music Society, Debating Society, Wine Society and the Horticulture Society.
- 9.1** Further to this a variety of sports and activities are run at the site including indoor bowls, badminton, keep fit, yoga and country dancing. The Theydon Bois Drama Society also puts on four productions a year at the site whilst various Theydon-based committees of Charities such as Imperial Cancer Research Fund. The NSPCC and Save the Children Fund often use the hall for fundraising events.

THEYDON BOIS SCOUT HUT (CV2)

- 9.2** Found directly to the south of Buxton Trust Playing Field (FP1), this hall is primarily used by the 1st Theydon Bois Scouts, Cub and Beavers Group but is also the home of the well established Loughton Astronomical Society, an amateur astrology group who meet there on a weekly basis. In addition to this the hut is used every weekday morning by the morning playgroup and further art and dancing groups. The site is very well maintained in conjunction with its consistent use, and looks to be in very good condition.

THEYDON BOIS FORMER YOUTH CENTRE BUILDING (CV3)

- 9.3** Situated directly to the south of Theydon Bois Scout Hut, this site was originally used as the villages youth centre but is currently being bought by Theydon Bois Parish Council and turned into a local community facility. The main reasoning behind this move was due to the sites good potential but lack

of use which the parish council wishes to address through acquiring the site. The local parish council hope that the finalising of the handover and any refurbishments which may be required should be completed by Spring 2010.

ST MARY'S CHURCH VILLAGE HALL (CV4)

- 9.4** Located to the west of Theydon Bois Village Hall (CV1) the church hall is used by a wide variety of groups including the local girl guides and brownies groups as well as the junior section of the Loughton Astronomical Society known as the Astro Kids. The facility also caters for a variety of mother and baby groups and is also home to the slimming society, karate club.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- There is clearly a good level of provision for this type of facility within the parish.
- Currently however, only three of the four above named sites are in use. As a result, many groups are waiting to gain a slot in any of the available sites and it is likely that they will not be able to gain one until the former youth centre building (CV3) is reopened.
- Theydon Bois Parish Council believes that once the former youth centre is up and running once more, all local needs and demands for the variety of different clubs and societies waiting to find a home will be addressed.
- Those sites which are currently in use are all in very good condition and are very well looked after.

CHAPTER 10 - MANAGED OPEN SPACE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Area (Hectares)	Ownership
MO1	Theydon Bois Village Green	The Green, Theydon Bois	6.50	Corporation of London



Theydon Bois Village Green, Site MO1

THEYDON BOIS VILLAGE GREEN (MO1)

- 10.0** Located at the heart of Theydon Bois village and divided into two separate sections by Loughton Lane, this site is a large area of amenity green space, which is part of Epping Forest. It gives a strong sense of local identity for those living in the village, and is well used as a result. The green is predominantly grassland, with a variety of medium to large trees dotted around, particularly near the eastern and western perimeters. The most dominating feature, however, is the impressive avenue of tall Oak trees (as shown above) which line both sides of Loughton Lane, which divides the green into two halves.
- 10.1** A large duck pond sits at the tip of the eastern half of the green, mostly surrounded by trees and shrubs. Accessibility to, and around, the green is good, with hard surfaced footpaths surrounding the entire site, although visitors with pushchairs or wheelchairs may find it difficult to cross the green itself. Sufficient seats, litter bins and dog waste bins have been provided, all of which appear to be in good condition. Disappointingly, however, quite a lot of litter and dog excrement can still be found here.

10.2 The green appears to be very popular with locals of all ages, and caters for a variety of activities. However, visitors should be aware of potential dangers, particularly for young children, as the site is popular with dog walkers, and is entirely surrounded by relatively busy roads. With no fencing to prevent them from running out into the road, young children playing here should be supervised by an adult at all times.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- This is an agreeable site which is very popular with local residents, and is for the most part neat and clean.
- The green is clearly well kept, as are the various facilities within it, such as the seats, litter bins and dog waste bins. However, more of all three should ideally be provided.
- The trees lining Loughton Lane, and those near the pond to the east very much add to the overall visual amenity of the area.
- Accessibility around the site is good, with hard standing footpaths enabling wheelchair and pushchair users to circumnavigate the two sections of the green.
- Given that the roads surrounding the green are busy, and that many dogs are walked there, young children should be accompanied by an adult at all times.

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 within the whole District	Corporation of London
SO2	Theydon Bois Wood	Abridge Road, (by M11)	37.77	The Woodland Trust

EPPING FOREST (SO1)

11.0 The largest open space within the parish is Epping Forest, which dominates much of the north west of Theydon Bois. Epping Forest is the largest public open space in the London area; the parts of it located in Theydon Bois form just a small percentage of its 2400 hectare total. As well as being a popular area for recreation, Epping Forest is of national and international importance for conservation, with around two thirds being designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, or a Special Area of Conservation. The Forest is carefully maintained by the Corporation of London, and is fully publicly accessible, therefore Theydon Bois residents and visitors are free to access all those sites which fall within its boundaries, as well as those lying beyond.

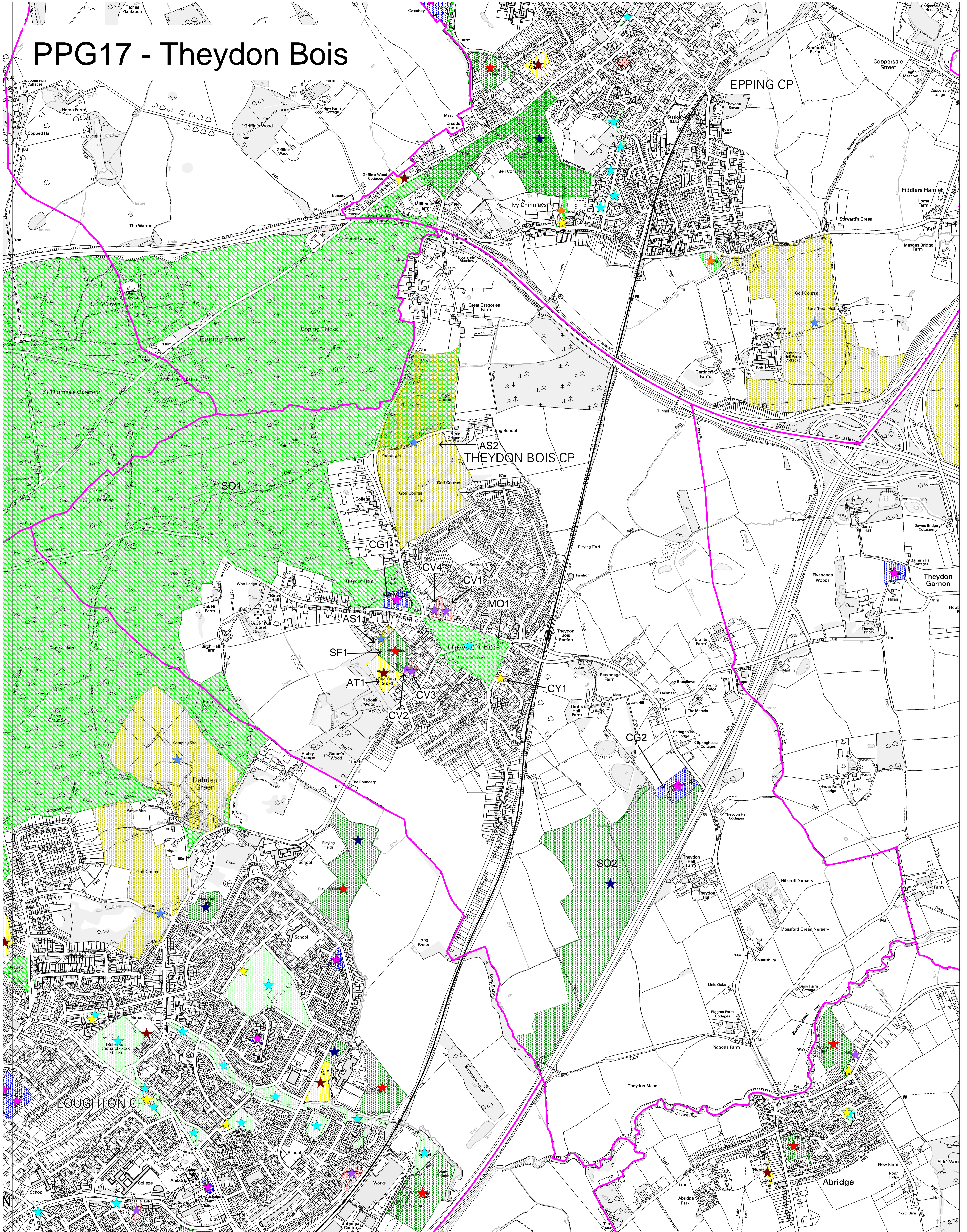
THEYDON BOIS WOOD (SO2)

11.1 Situated on what, until recently, used to be grade III agricultural land immediately to the west of the M11 near Theydon Bois, this site is believed to have once been a part of Epping Forest. The site was bought by the Woodland Trust in 2005 and since then has been planted with 35,000 native samplings to act as a buffer zone to the M11. In time it is hoped that the trees planted will grow to once again form a forested region which will be openly accessible for all members of the local population. The site is regarded by the GreenArc as a highly important strategic landscape link between Epping and Hainault Forest.

ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

- The various areas belonging to Epping Forest located within the parish allow locals and visitors 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.
- Once fully matured, it is hoped that Theydon Bois Wood will also be of significant local value.

PPG17 - Theydon Bois













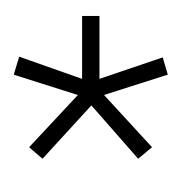



Epping Forest District Council

Parish: Theydon Bois
 Area: 829 Hectares Scale: 1:55,000 @ 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 (IF)	 Epping Forest
 Alternative Sites For Sport (AS)	 Community Centres and Village Halls (CV)	 Parish Boundary
		 Denotes Membership Only Facilities

Date: 4th January 2010