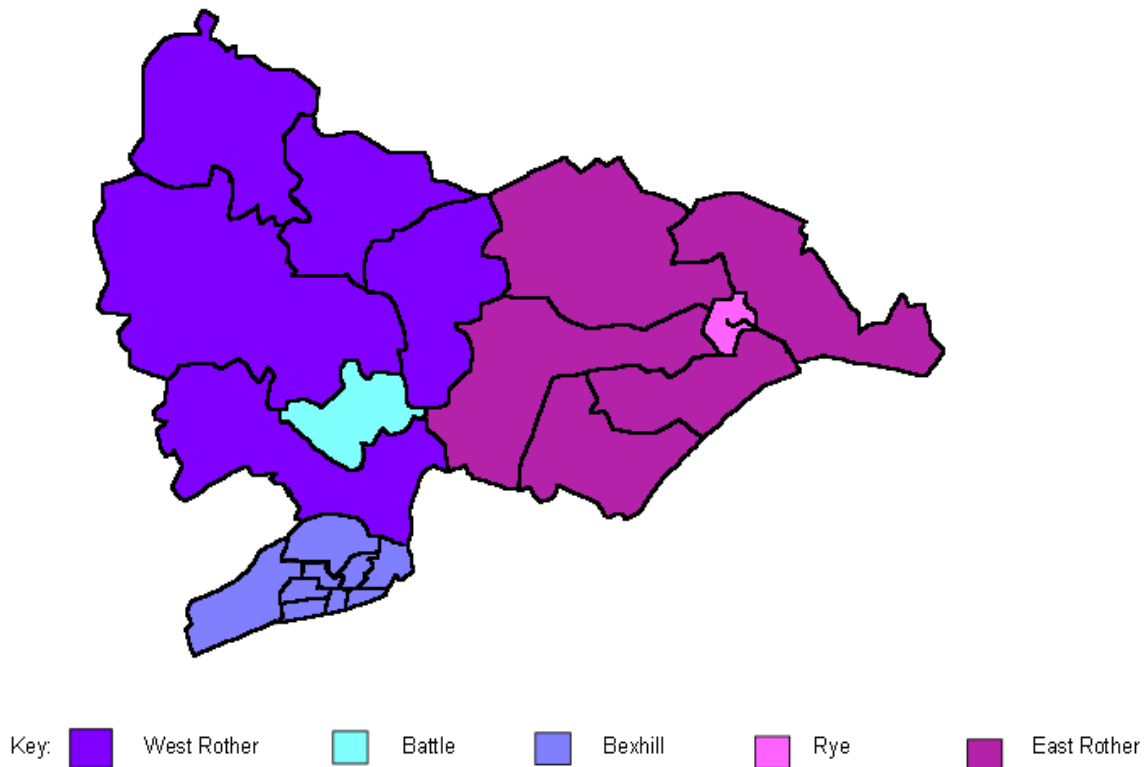


Background

- i. PMP were appointed to undertake an audit and assessment of open space across the Rother District in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation, July 2002) and its Companion Guide (September 2002).
- ii. The Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, many stages were undertaken in parallel.
- iii. The five step process is as follows:
 - Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
 - Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
 - Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
 - Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards
 - Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.
- iv. The study considers ten typologies of open space in addition to indoor sports facilities, namely:
 - parks and gardens
 - natural and semi natural open space
 - amenity greenspace
 - provision for children
 - provision for young people
 - outdoor sports facilities
 - allotments and community gardens
 - green corridors
 - churchyards and cemeteries
 - beaches and coastal areas.
- v. The analysis has therefore been undertaken by type of open space looking at different areas across the local authority boundary. These are referred to as analysis areas. The use of analysis areas allows examination of data at a more detailed local level, and provides a geographical background to the analysis.
- vi. The district has been split into five areas, specifically the three main urban areas of Battle, Bexhill and Rye, and two rural areas – termed East Rother and West Rother. These analysis areas are illustrated on Map 1 overleaf. Many of the areas audited are covered by a Town or Parish Council. Where the term “the Council” is used, it often refers to a Parish/Town Council rather than the District Council.

Map 1 – Analysis areas of Rother District



- vii. The key outputs of the study include:
- a full audit of all applicable open spaces across Rother District categorised according to the primary purpose of the site (in line with the typologies highlighted previously). This audit is stored on a GIS layer and linked Microsoft Access database
 - an assessment of the open space, sport and recreational needs of people living, working and visiting Rother derived from a series of consultations
 - production of local provision standards (quantity, quality and accessibility) for each type of open space where appropriate, in accordance with local needs
 - application of local standards to the existing open space provision, enabling the identification of surpluses and deficiencies based on quantity, quality and accessibility
 - recommendations to address the key findings and drive future policy.
- viii. Full details of the methodology can be found in Section 2 of the report and the standard setting process can be found in appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards for each typology are summarised below. In light of the overlapping roles that parks, natural areas and amenity spaces have, the application of these standards, key findings and recommendations have been considered together. This ensures a full understanding of the interaction between the typologies and an assessment of true deficiencies.

Indoor sports facilities

Swimming pools	District wide undersupply of 304m ² .
Sports halls	District wide shortfall of seven badminton courts.
Health and fitness	District wide undersupply of 118 stations.
Indoor bowls	District wide oversupply of 0.76 rinks.
Indoor tennis	District wide undersupply of 47 courts.

Provision for children and young people

Quantity Standard	Younger children - 0.20 ha per 1,000 population. Older children/teenagers – 0.20 ha per 1,000 population.
Accessibility Standard	Younger children – 10 minute walktime. Older children/teenagers – 15 minute walktime.
Quality Vision	A site providing a range of well-maintained equipment in a safe and secure location. It should be easily accessible whilst safeguarding the residential amenity of neighbouring land users. The site should have clear boundaries, be within a reasonable distance of residences, be clean, litter and dog free/controlled, and provide ancillary facilities where appropriate (eg benches, litter-bins and toilets). The planning, design and maintenance of the site should take into account the ‘Best Play’ enriched play environment criteria and complement and utilise the natural environment and landscape within which it is set.

Parks and gardens

Quantity Standard	Urban – 0.43 ha per 1,000 population. Rural – 0.71 ha per 1,000 population.
Accessibility Standard	20 minute walktime urban and 20 minute drivetime rural.
Quality Vision	Parks and gardens should be well kept with a variety of vegetation, flowers, trees and shrubs. Appropriate ancillary accommodation should be provided where appropriate (including seating, toilets and litter/dog bins) with clear signage to and within the site. Sites should be safe and secure with suitable lighting and where appropriate have a ranger/warden presence to further improve the security of the facilities. The Green Flag award is an aspiration for strategic sites throughout the District.

Natural and semi natural open space

Quantity Standard	Urban and Rural – 2ha per 1,000 population. New provision expected from large developments only.
Accessibility Standard	15 minutes walk time.
Quality Vision	A site that encourages wildlife conservation and biodiversity. Opportunities to link natural sites together with green corridors should be maximised and clear pathways and dog-walking facilities should be provided. Litter bins should be provided and management of local sites should involve the community. There should be a clear focus on balancing wildlife needs with the access and recreational needs of the public where appropriate.

Amenity green Space

Quantity Standard	1.73 ha per 1000 population.
Accessibility Standard	15 minutes walk time – urban.
Quality Vision	Amenity green spaces should have varied equipment and ancillary facilities suitable for the size of the site. A variety of vegetation should be provided to enhance the overall appearance of the local environment. Larger sites should be suitable for informal play opportunities and should be encouraged to become a community focus. Smaller sites should, as a minimum, provide an important visual amenity function. Safety and security should be considered wherever possible, including the provision of appropriate lighting.

Outdoor sports facilities

Quantity Standard	Bexhill – 0.95 ha per 1,000 population. Battle and Rye – 3.33 ha per 1,000 population. Rural – 2.10 ha per 1,000 population.
Accessibility Standard	20 minutes walk time.
Quality Vision	A clean and litter free sports facility with appropriate and well-drained good quality surfaces, and appropriate ancillary accommodation including toilets, car parking, litter and dog-fouling bins. All new sites should meet national governing body guidelines, with all existing sites aspiring to this.

Allotments and community gardens

Quantity Standard	Urban – 0.45 ha per 1,000 population. Rural – 0.17 ha per 1,000 population.
Accessibility Standard	20 minutes walk time.
Quality Vision	A well-maintained site with appropriate ancillary facilities (eg water supplies, litter bins, toilets, parking facilities), that is easy to get to and easy to get around. Sites should have appropriate boundaries, encourage sustainability and ideally be situated in areas of good soil quality.

Cemeteries and churchyards

Quantity Standard	n/a
Accessibility Standard	n/a
Quality Vision	Sites should provide an area of quiet contemplation and an opportunity to enhance biodiversity. Sites should be well kept, with a variety of flowers, trees and shrubs. Seating and litter bins should be provided where appropriate. Sites should have well defined boundaries and appropriate lighting to discourage misuse.

Green corridors

Quantity Standard	n/a
Accessibility Standard	n/a
Quality Vision	Corridors should have clear pathways, linking major open spaces together and providing ancillary facilities such as bins and seating in appropriate places with appropriate signage to aid usage. The corridor should also encourage biodiversity and wildlife habitats, enabling the movement of both wildlife and people between open spaces.

Beaches and coastal areas

Quantity Standard	n/a
Accessibility Standard	n/a
Quality Vision	A beach and seafront that is clean, safe and well managed, where litter is kept to a minimum, and provision of seating and toilets are adequate. Beaches should have in place management systems to address supervision and maintenance of quality standards and make available information regarding the site. All sites should aspire to Blue Flag status and take into account biodiversity issues.

