



Allotments, Cemeteries and Church yards
Needs Assessment:
Supplement to the Open Space Needs Assessment (July 2006)

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Outdoor Facilities Team and Planning Policy
Waveney District Council
Town Hall
High Street
Lowestoft
NR32 1HS
Tel: 01502 523029

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1. Allotments and community gardens

1.1 Definition

A piece of land rented for the primary purpose of growing produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

1.2 Strategic Context

Allotments have been an integral part of the urban landscape in the UK for over a century. Allotment gardening reached its zenith in the 1940s when people were urged to 'Dig for Victory' during the war.

Recently, there has been an upsurge in interest in allotments, especially from people concerned about good quality, sustainably grown, local food. A new generation of plot holders has emerged, including increasing numbers of women, families, and gardeners from ethnic minorities.

The UK Government has recognised the potential of allotments and many local authorities are now producing formal allotment strategies. These contribute to many different agendas including healthy eating, healthy activity, community links and green spaces. Allotments tap into all the criteria for Local Agenda 21. The benefits that allotments can bring are at the heart of sustainable community development and include:

- Bringing together different cultural backgrounds
- Improving mental and physical health
- Providing a source of recreation
- Wider contribution to green and open space
- Providing an educational resource
- Providing an important biodiversity habitat for native flora and fauna
- The reduction of 'food miles'

"Allotments are valuable assets to communities and play a vital role in improving the quality of life for people in urban areas. The Allotment Regeneration Initiative has come at an important time for urban green spaces of all types and I will follow its progress with interest."

Tony McNulty, Parliamentary Under Secretary, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

"Allotments can help to address a number of important issues ranging from our policy on open spaces to the promotion of healthy living."

Cllr Derek Bateman, LGA Environment and Regeneration Executive

1.3 The Need for Allotments

Allotments have a vital role to play in the provision of green space in an urban environment. Allotments improve the well-being and quality of life of communities by providing a cheap source of good food, healthy outdoor exercise and social interaction. They can benefit all groups in society, from those on limited income, to those who are financially secure but take pleasure in growing their own food. They provide a setting for those with mental health problems and physical disability to interact, achieve and succeed. By also providing an environmental input allotment gardening addresses all three aspects of well-being – social, economic and environmental.

Planning policy represents an opportunity to ensure an adequate supply of land for allotments and to protect those sites that already exist. This ultimately depends upon a realistic appraisal of current and future demand for allotments. Current demand was assessed as part of the audit for allotments within Waveney and contributed to the final value score for each site (unless this information was unavailable). Current trends show an increase in the demand for allotments at both a local and regional level and the trend for local, sustainably grown food is set to continue as concerns about health and the environment continue to move up the agenda.

Local authorities have a statutory duty under section 8 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 to provide a sufficient number of allotments when they consider that there is demand. In their assessment of demand an authority must take into consideration any representations made to them by six parliamentary electors or council taxpayers resident in the area. They also have powers to acquire land for the provision of allotments.

In setting local standards for provision of allotments there is a need to take into account any national or local standards, current provision, other Local Authority standards for appropriate comparison, site assessments and consultation on local needs.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners provide a suggested benchmark of 20 allotment plots per 1,000 households (i.e. 20 allotment plots per 2,200 people (2.2 people per house) or 1 allotment plot per 200 people. With an average allotment plot of 250 sq/m this equates to 0.125 ha per 1,000 population. The 1970 Thorpe Report suggested 0.2 ha per 1000 population.

There are no existing local standards.

The Interim Waveney Local Plan (May 2004) seeks to ensure that “New residential development should include public open space of a nature compatible with the development and the surrounding area.”

Policy OS2 requires that:

‘Proposals for residential development of one or more dwellings will only be permitted where provision is made for an appropriate level of open space to serve the development. The appropriate amount to be provided will be dependent on the proposed density. Where on site provision is inappropriate or impractical, then developers will be expected to provide off-site facilities or contribute to improving existing open space in the vicinity.’

If statutory allotment land is considered surplus to requirements it may only be sold with the consent of the Secretary of State under section 8 of the 1925 Act. If plot holders are displaced by that action then adequate provision must be made for them unless he is satisfied that such provision is unnecessary or unreasonably practicable.

1.4 Consultation – Key Findings in Relation to Allotments

1.4.1 General

Nearly a third of respondents to the survey think there is not enough provision of allotments within Waveney, citing ‘demand exceeding supply’ and a growing interest in growing your own food as reasons. The vast majority (60%) say that allotments are an important resource and consider the quality to be of an average (28%) or good standard (45%).

Generally respondents were satisfied with the accessibility of sites, though access for disabled people was highlighted by some as unsatisfactory (42%).

1.4.2 Quantity of Provision

Allotment catchments are by and large local, and are significantly accessed mostly on foot, so there is an expectation in the community that allotments should be sufficiently commonplace to be accessed by a short walk. However, demands of allotment gardening determine that

vehicular access is necessary to ensure that deliveries and collections from site of goods and produce can be made, and therefore the expectation for allotments to be close is decreased (although this may raise other concerns about the provision of vehicular access onto sites).

Just under a third (31%) of respondents say that allotment provision is about right, but the majority of respondents (39%) say that the quantity of provision is not enough. The main reason cited for this is the perception that demand exceeds supply (34%) and an increasing interest in growing your own food (18%). A minority of people say that supply either equals (7%), or exceeds demand (7%). Where data is available, records show that demand does far exceed supply.

1.4.3 Quality

The key issues highlighted were the desire for quality fencing and hedging (49%) with quality soil (46%) and good access (38%). More than a third of respondents (35%) would like to see toilet facilities on site, which are currently not provided anywhere.

The importance of quality boundaries was again highlighted in terms of improving safety on site, with 40% of respondents saying it would make them feel safer on site.

1.4.4 Accessibility

The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site. Generally residents were happy with the accessibility of sites with the vast majority satisfied or very satisfied by accessibility by walking (83%) and cycle ways (61.7%). However, opinions about disabled access were divided, with 42% feeling satisfied or very satisfied, but the same amount (42%) felt dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with disabled access.

1.5 Audit

1.5.1 Quantity

The total area of allotments has been calculated on the basis of the information available from the Council's GIS. Table 1 shows that the total amount of allotments is 32.96 hectares, representing 0.09% of the total area of the borough. The table also breaks down the amount of allotments per settlement and demonstrates some variation between sub areas.

Table 1: Allotments by Sub Area with Hectares per 1000 and Population per Hectare of Allotments

Sub-Area	Population (2001 Census)	Allotments (Ha)	Ha per 1000	Persons per Hectare
Beccles	14005	6.21	0.44	2255
Bungay	4904	0.46	0.09	10661
Halesworth	4637	1.27	0.27	3651
Kessingland	4760	1.61	0.34	2957
North Lowestoft	35581	9.27	0.26	3838
Rural	11418	5.61	0.49	2035
South Lowestoft	33030	4.2	0.13	7864
Southwold	4009	4.33	1.08	926
Waveney	112344	32.96	0.29	3408

For Waveney as a whole the average quantity of allotments per 1000 population is 0.29 ha.

Looking at variations across the district, areas with the highest provision in terms of hectares per 1000 population are Southwold (1.08), the rural area (0.49) and Beccles (0.44). Kessingland (0.34) is just above the average and close to the average for the district as a

whole are Halesworth (0.27) and North Lowestoft (0.26). Poorest levels of provision are in Bungay (0.09) and South Lowestoft (0.13)

1.5.2 Quality

The average score for quality across the district was 64%, classified as medium quality. Generally, rural sites scored medium to high scores, although a number of the medium scoring sites came in at below the average. Wangford, Somerleyton, Reydon and Oulton, all have just one allotment site and they were all deemed to be of high quality. Halesworth and Southwold both had high and medium scoring sites and Buss Creek in Southwold was the highest scoring site of the whole district.

In Lowestoft the picture was more mixed. In South Lowestoft more than half of the sites were above average, three getting high quality scores and just one site, Blackheath Rd, receiving a low quality score. In North Lowestoft only one out of the ten sites scored above average and three received low quality scores. Beccles also had a mixed result, with four of the sites getting some of the lowest scores of the district and three sites scoring highly. The poorest sites overall were in Beccles and Lowestoft.

1.5.3 Value

The average value score across the district was higher than that for quality at 66%, classified as medium value. Generally, the sites that score highly in terms of quality also score highly on value terms. There were also a few sites of high and medium value where an increase in quality would considerably increase their attractiveness and use; notably, four sites in North Lowestoft and two in South Lowestoft, and in the rural areas, four in Beccles and all three of the sites in Westhall. In total 19 sites scored below average in terms of value, compared to 27 scoring below average for quality.

Buss Creek in Southwold, the highest scoring site in terms of quality, also received the highest value score. Rear of Napier Terrace in Beccles received the lowest scores for both quality and value.

Table 2: Location and Quality / Value for Allotments

SITE	Sub Area	HECTARES	QUALITY % SCORE	VALUE %	
				RANKING SCORE	RANKING
Opp 20-46 South Road	Beccles	0.79	76	High	76 High
Airey House Estate	Beccles	0.40	77	High	75 High
Common Lane South	Beccles	1.32	73	High	79 High
Sibleys	Beccles	0.55	46	Low	63 Medium
Marsh 25	Beccles	0.67	57	Medium	65 Medium
Adj Common	Beccles	0.12	48	Low	41 Low
Adj Railway	Beccles	0.06	54	Low	47 Low
Aeroplane	Beccles	0.69	62	Medium	70 High
Gasworks	Beccles	0.32	61	Medium	70 High
Puttock Hill	Beccles	0.70	62	Medium	68 Medium
Rear of Napier Terrace	Beccles	0.15	43	Low	34 Low
Hillside Rd West / Flixton Rd	Bungay	0.46	69	Medium	67 Medium
Swan Lane	Halesworth	0.51	70	High	70 High
Bedingfield Crescent	Halesworth	0.18	57	Medium	55 Low
Loam Pit Lane	Halesworth	0.58	77	High	73 High
Adj Water Tower	Kessingland	0.37	73	High	73 High
Church Road	Kessingland	0.47	69	Medium	70 High
Coopers Lane	Kessingland	0.49	62	Medium	59 Medium
14 - 15 St Edmunds Crescent	Kessingland	0.12	68	Medium	66 Medium
18 - 19 St Edmunds Crescent	Kessingland	0.16	68	Medium	66 Medium
Fir Lane	North Lowestoft	1.53	61	Medium	63

Sand Pits	North Lowestoft	0.20	62	Medium	57	Medium
Clarkson Road	North Lowestoft	0.05	63	Medium	55	Low
Normanston Park	North Lowestoft	1.30	54	Low	58	Medium
Sussex Road	North Lowestoft	0.56	54	Low	66	Medium
St Margarets Road	North Lowestoft	2.08	63	Medium	70	High
Rotterdam Road	North Lowestoft	0.49	58	Medium	59	Medium
Somerleyton Road	North Lowestoft	0.63	70	High	75	High
Water Lane	North Lowestoft	1.43	44	Low	68	Medium
Newsons Meadow	North Lowestoft	0.69	56	Medium	68	Medium
Fowlers Crescent	Rural	0.19	64	Medium	68	Medium
Bowling Green, Church Lane	Rural	0.14	69	Medium	67	Medium
Earth Lane	Rural	1.11	58	Medium	61	Medium
Between Hillcrest & The Haven	Rural	0.59	OUT OF USE			
Mill Lane	Rural	0.44				
Union Lane	Rural	0.12	78	High	62	Medium
Rissemere Lane East	Rural	0.29	74	High	70	High
Cr of Rumburgh St & New Rd	Rural		66	Medium	68	Medium
Blacksmiths Loke	Rural	1.56	73	High	70	High
Norfolk Road	Rural	1.32	72	High	78	High
Cr of Wangford Rd / Locks Rd	Rural	0.42	58	Medium	70	High
Mill Common	Rural	0.41	66	Medium	75	High
Cox Common	Rural	0.39	56	Medium	65	Medium
Kirkley Fen	South Lowestoft	0.21	73	High	75	High
Newark Road	South Lowestoft	0.13	77	High	74	High
Stradbroke Road	South Lowestoft	0.94	68	Medium	79	High
Kirkley Cemetery (Wilmington)	South Lowestoft	0.58	67	Medium	72	High
Kirkley gardens	South Lowestoft	1.31	77	High	68	Medium
Kirkley cemetery	South Lowestoft	0.51	63	Medium	61	Medium
Saxon Road	South Lowestoft	0.14	60	Medium	61	Medium
Long Acre	South Lowestoft	0.32	59	Medium	57	Medium
Blackheath Rd	South Lowestoft	?	53	Low	57	Medium
Buss Creek	Southwold	3.61	79	High	79	High
Rope Walk	Southwold	0.43	60	Medium	66	Medium

32.44

Table 3: Summary of Quality and Value Rankings

Quality Ranking	Value Ranking	Number of Sites
High	High	9
High	Medium	2
High	Low	0
Medium	High	8
Medium	Medium	19
Medium	Low	2
Low	High	0
Low	Medium	5
Low	Low	3

1.5.4 Accessibility

Sites were assessed in terms of access for vehicles, cycles, and pedestrians and for disabled access. The average score across the district was 52%, with nearly all sites receiving bad scores for disability access, which reduced the general score considerably.

Generally the rural sites score better, averaging at 60%. Napier Terrace in Beccles received a score of just 8%, the access of this site being very poor indeed.

1.6 Standards

1.6.1 Quantity

Allotments are very much a demand-led typology and need to be quantified in the context of existing provision, waiting lists and local demand. Consultation from the household survey show that just under a third (31%) of respondents say that allotment provision is about right, but the majority of respondents (39%) say that the quantity of provision is not enough. The main reason cited for this is the perception that demand exceeds supply (34%) and an increasing interest in growing your own food (18%). A minority of people say that supply either equals (7%), or exceeds demand (7%). Where waiting list data is available it confirms that demand far exceeds supply.

There are no existing local standards for quantity of provision. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners recommend 20 allotment plots per 1000 households (i.e. 20 allotment plots per 2200 people (2.2 people per house) or 1 allotment per 200 people). With an average allotment plot of 250sq metres this equates to 0.125 ha per 1000 population. The 1970 Thorpe report suggested 0.2 ha per 1000 population.

For Waveney as a whole the average quantity of allotments per 1000 population is 0.29 ha.

Looking at variations across the district, areas with the highest provision in terms of hectares per 1000 population are Southwold (1.08), the rural area (0.49) and Beccles (0.44). Kessingland (0.34) is just above the average and close to the average for the district as a whole are Halesworth (0.27) and North Lowestoft (0.26). Poorest levels of provision are in Bungay (0.09) and South Lowestoft (0.13).

It is recommended that the local quantity standard for allotments is 0.3 ha per 1000 population (just above the current median).

This standard is above both the National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners suggested standards and the Thorpe report standards, reflecting the identified importance of allotments and high, increasing demand.

QUANTITY STANDARD 0.3 ha per 1000 people

1.6.2 Quality

There are no existing national or local standards for the quality of allotments. User aspirations from the household survey were good quality fencing/hedging, clean sites, quality soils, good access to and within the sites and provision of toilet facilities. The highest rated safety factors included sufficient boundaries and adequate lighting.

Most of the allotments in Lowestoft are, or soon will be, under the management of the Lowestoft Allotments Association; the town or parish councils manage those outside Lowestoft. It is therefore suggested that no quality standard is set, as the council can only encourage the other bodies to improve facilities as resources allow. Of the three sites remaining in council control, Kirkley cemetery will eventually be taken back as burial space; the other two, Blackheath Road and Normanston Park have existing agendas of improvement in terms of access and boundaries. It is also recognised that the management of the sites should involve the local community where possible.

1.6.3 Accessibility

The local standard provides a realistic travel time / distance threshold, based on local needs that can assist in highlighting areas of deficiency, as well as ensuring that any new provision is placed in priority areas that are outside the recommended local accessibility catchment.

Walking was the preferred method of transport (identified from the household survey) by users and potential users, with the calculated travel time being 15 minutes, applied to the whole of the district.

LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD
15 minute walk time – (720m)

A straight-line distance of 720m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 1200m. This is based on PMP's average walking distances and uses a factoring reduction of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in a straight line to access their open space facilities. This 40% factoring is based on the National Playing Fields Association Six Acre Standard (See table 3, page 25 of NPFA Six Acre Standard), which has been worked out from a trial of 4-14 year olds and the distance they travelled. It is recognised however that this typology is not a specific facility for children however the factoring is applied to ensure consistency with other typologies and so that they are accessible to all.

1.7 Deficiencies

1.7.1 Quantity

Table 4: Allotment Deficiency in terms of Quantity

Sub-Area	Population (2001 Census)	Allotments (Ha)	Ha per 1000	Amount of allotment space required to meet 0.3 hectare per 1000 people standard	Deficiency
Beccles	14005	6.21	0.44	4.20	+2.01
Bungay	4904	0.46	0.09	1.47	-1.01
Halesworth	4637	1.27	0.27	1.39	-0.12
Kessingland	4760	1.61	0.34	1.43	+0.18
North Lowestoft	35581	9.27	0.26	10.67	-1.4
Rural	11418	5.61	0.49	3.43	+2.18
South Lowestoft	33030	4.2	0.13	9.9	-5.7
Southwold	4009	4.33	1.08	1.20	+3.13
Waveney	112344	32.96	0.29	33.69	-0.73

Table 2 above shows that four of the sub areas in Waveney are deficient in terms of quantity provision. The greatest deficiency is in South Lowestoft (5.7 hectares), followed by North Lowestoft (1.4 hectares) and Bungay (1.01 hectares). There are also four sub areas considered to have good quantity provision, notably Southwold (3.13 hectares above the suggested standard) and Beccles (2.01) and the rural area (2.18).

The audit highlighted that the take up of allotments is very good across the district (not taking into account any latent demand as allotments are poorly advertised). Also, where data is available, waiting lists are very high in numbers, currently averaging a 2-year wait in Lowestoft.

1.7.2 Accessibility

The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site, as well as ensuring that any new provision is placed in priority areas that are outside the recommended local accessibility catchment.

The local accessibility standard maps for each of the areas clearly shows areas that lie outside the recommended catchment.

1.8 Summary and Recommendations

1.8.1 Applying the Provision Standards – Identifying areas of unmet demand

In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas where there is potential unmet demand we apply both the quantity and accessibility standards together. The quantity standards identify whether areas are quantitatively above or below the recommended minimum standard and the accessibility standards will help to determine where those deficiencies are of high importance.

- Bungay has a quantity deficiency of 1.01 hectares and the accessibility map (Page 15) shows that significant areas in the north and east of the town that fall outside the recommended catchment area.
This is of particular significance as the privately owned St John's Road site has been taken out of use as allotments, despite being designated as public open space. This is a substantial site of 0.91 hectares located centrally to town and could significantly make up for the town's deficiencies in terms of quantity and accessibility. There is also a waiting list for allotments, despite the perception that there are none available. It is recommended that efforts be made to bring this site back into use as allotments.
- Halesworth has a quantity deficiency of 0.12 hectares and the Waveney accessibility map (Page 16) shows that western parts of the town fall outside the recommended catchment.
- North Lowestoft has a quantity deficiency of 1.4 hectares and the accessibility map (Page 18) clearly shows a deficiency in the Gunton area. In addition it is worth noting that one of the larger sites, Water Lane, has a large area unused due to continual flooding of the land making it unsuitable for allotment use. South Lowestoft has a quantity deficiency of 5.7 hectares, the largest in the district and the accessibility map shows that the west of south Lowestoft falls outside of the recommended catchment. Waiting lists for Lowestoft are very high, at the time of writing 153 people are held on the council's waiting list for Lowestoft as a whole. In addition a waiting list is held by the Lowestoft Allotments Ltd. who manage a number of additional sites in the town (included in the survey).
- Beccles scores well in terms of quantity provision. However, most of the sites are located in the northern part of the town and the accessibility map (Page 14) shows a clear deficiency in the south of the town. At the time of writing Waveney Community Forum officers, local councillors and officers are investigating the development of land behind Nicholson Drive in Beccles into allotments. This is a 2-acre site and would serve the south of Beccles well, fulfilling the gap in terms of accessibility to allotments for the town. In addition the Grove Road site in the north of town requires investment in order that the plots be rented as it has sat unused for many years due to problems identifying ownership of the site. However, recently a land registry search shows that it is council-owned land and there is a Cllr led effort to have the site returned to full usage.
- Kessingland, Southwold and the rural areas have good results in terms of both quantity and accessibility.

1.8.2 Recommendations

To include the consideration of provision of allotments at the development stage of new developments alongside play, amenity greenspace and parks.

To examine the option of changing the primary function of some greenspace sites into allotments in areas of deficiencies.

To support the efforts of town and parish councils and community groups in their efforts to bring sites back into use as allotments – notably St John's Road in Bungay and Grove Road in Beccles.

2. Cemeteries and closed churchyards

2.1 Definition

Churchyards are encompassed within the walled boundary of a church and cemeteries are burial grounds outside the confines of a church. The primary purpose of this type of open space is for burial and quiet contemplation but also for the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

2.2 Strategic Context

Cemeteries and closed churchyards can be a significant open space provider in some areas, particularly in urban areas. In other areas they can represent a relatively minor resource in terms of the land, but are able to provide areas of nature conservation importance and areas for local residents to visit.

Cemeteries and churchyards are an important asset. As well as the value placed upon them by families of the deceased they offer many benefits, for example providing sanctuary for wildlife and places for people to reflect undisturbed. They are cherished for the historic value they can provide, often respected for their part in creating a historic landscape.

2.3 Current Position

There are eight cemetery sites and eight closed churchyards in Waveney covered by this needs assessment.

2.4 Standards

2.4.1 Quantity

Generally quantity standards are not set for cemeteries and closed churchyards. In relation to churchyards, the PPG 17 Annex states: "As churchyards can only exist where there is a church, the only form of provision standard which will be required is a qualitative one"

In relation to cemeteries, the PPG 17 Annex states "every individual cemetery has a finite capacity and therefore there is a steady need for more of them". However, predicting the future demand for burial ground is complex and this is being dealt with as part of the Local Development Framework

QUANTITY STANDARD No standard to be set
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2.4.2 Quality

There are no national or existing standards for the quality aspect of churchyards and cemeteries.

The household survey highlighted that cleanliness, soft landscaping features and the provision of seating and toilets were of importance to respondents.

Problems with anti-social behaviour, vandalism and dog-fouling are not perceived to be major, though clearly respondents note evidence of them.

QUALITY STANDARD No standard to be set

2.4.3 Accessibility

With regards to accessibility there are no definitive national or local standards. It is recommended that a formal accessibility standard is not set for cemeteries and closed churchyards. PPG17 states that the only form of provision standard required for them is a qualitative one. This reflects the nature of supply led facilities i.e. there may be few realistic opportunities for additional provision.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD
No standard to be set

2.5 Summary

2.5.1 Applying Provision Standards

Since local quantity, quality and accessibility standards have not been set it is not possible to state areas of deficiency or need. However, as indicated above, the quality of cemetery and churchyard provision is important.

2.5.2 Quality Benchmarking

Table 5 below shows that all the sites involved in the survey scored well in terms of quality, with an average of score of 78.1, equating to high quality ranking.

Table 5: Quality Scores for Cemeteries and Closed Churchyards

CEMETERIES & CLOSED CHURCHYARDS

REF	SITE	QUALITY SCORE	QUALITY RANK
CEMETERIES			
	Beccles	72.5	High
	Bungay	76.3	High
	Halesworth	82.5	High
	Belle Vue	68.8	Medium
	Kirkley	82.5	High
	Southwold	85	High
	Wrentham (Old)	80	High
	Wrentham (New)	77.5	High
CLOSED CHURCHYARDS			
	Kilbrack	69.3	Medium
	St. Michaels	78.7	High
	Trinity	81.3	High
	St. Marys	81.3	High
	St. Margarets	74.7	High
	St. Peters	77.3	High
	St. Edmunds	93.3	High
	St. Nicholas	69.3	Medium

Cemeteries and closed churchyards can be a significant open space provider in some areas. In the urban area they are able to provide areas of nature conservation and are often among the few areas of green space, which can be accessed by the local community.

In general the quality of the sites is very good. The quality of the sites is due to be assessed as part of the Best Value Review and from this quality standards will be set.