

**OPEN SPACE STRATEGY
(Report by the Head of Operations)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of creating an Open Spaces Strategy is to give Huntingdonshire stakeholders an overarching vision of what we want our parks, open spaces and other public spaces to look like over the next 10 to 15 years and to reflect the changing needs of the environment and community

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Open space within Huntingdonshire plays an important role in relation to the health and well-being of all the district's residents, providing places to meet, relax, exercise, play or learn about nature. Well maintained spaces that are regularly used can help to make a considerable contribution to the quality of life of residents and visitors.
- 2.2 Strategic work on green space has been carried out by Cambridgeshire Horizons to update the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2006). A draft of the 'Green Vision' was published for consultation from late January to March 2010. This is being substantially revised as a result of comments received and consultation on a revised document will take place early in 2011. Huntingdonshire District council's Open Space Strategy will complement work being done at the strategic level by providing local information and detailed action plans
- 2.3 Huntingdonshire District Council has never formally developed an Open Space Strategy, and recognising this gap, has now developed a strategy that looks at the wide variety of open spaces found within the district with a view to meeting the requirements of both the documents mentioned above whilst at the same time supporting the various planning policies currently under development.

3. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 Based on current guidance and best practice, this strategy includes the assessment of the following types of open spaces
- Informal Open Space to include parks and gardens, natural open space, amenity green spaces
 - Provision for Children & Young People
 - Outdoor Sports Facilities

- Allotments and Community Gardens
- Green Corridors
- Civic Spaces
- Cemeteries and Churchyards

3.2 The draft strategy was published for consultation between 26 October and 10 December 2010. Comments were sought from Parish and Town Councils as well as a range of sporting and environmental interest groups. A number of amendments have been made to the strategy to reflect priorities of other organisations where they can contribute to change. Some new sites have also been added where additional information has been provided.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 This strategy will assist in enabling the council to:

- Develop an accurate and up-to-date audit of open space provision
- Help provide a shared vision for the future of the districts open spaces
- Help make the case for funding opportunities and planning obligations
- Promote health benefits and quality of life improvements via the provision of high quality, accessible open spaces.
- Seek to protect, identify and improve locally important open spaces

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Cabinet are asked to approve the Open Space strategy and supporting actions plans.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CABE Space guidance.

Planning Policy Guidance 17, "Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation

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