

Recreation and Open Space Report



Puttenham Parish Council

December 2019

Introduction

Puttenham is a rural parish lying within the Surrey Hills in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Part of its charm is the ease of access from the village to open spaces and the countryside around it. It is without doubt that the outdoors plays as much a key to most villagers' wellbeing and lives as their homes do.

The aim of this report is to identify the recreation and open spaces in Puttenham village; to ensure that they meet the requirements of the community and to look for ideas to enhance community life and our Parish for the future.

This report has been informed by national and local policies as well as local knowledge, starting from feedback gained from the 2014 Parish Survey and continued through informal discussions/surveys with residents and at consultation meetings.

Recreation and Open Space

Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines open space as all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Green infrastructure is another common term used and the NPPF defines this as a “network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental quality of life benefits for local communities”.

Green infrastructure includes parks and open spaces, private gardens, agricultural fields and allotments, hedges, trees, and woodlands, green roofs and walls which meet a range of social needs such as exercise, sports and recreation and visual amenity. Green infrastructure has environmental and biodiversity value in providing wildlife habitat and connectivity, flood risk management, agriculture and climate change adaptation.

Puttenham

Existing Provision

Puttenham is lucky enough to have plenty of open space at its disposal. At the heart of the village are two large areas of recreation space. Within this space there is the main field which is well used by the Puttenham United Football Team, the school and a weekly exercise group. The field has also played host to many community events. Alongside the field is a sports pavilion, mainly utilised by the football team but also by the community during events and, occasionally, by the local baby and toddler group. Within this space there is also a tennis court, Skate Park and the John Green Play Area.



The Jubilee Field (otherwise known as the Bonfire Field) is well used by dog walkers, annually plays host to the village bonfire and is home to an abundance of wildlife.



The area is easily accessible from both ends of the village. There is a small area for car parking in the Jubilee Field for those that need to drive but this is not really usable without a 4x4 at times of bad weather. Any new recreational facilities in the village will need to be linked to new car parking provision.

Furthermore, the parish benefits from extensive amounts of publicly accessible greenspace providing informal recreation space. Puttenham Common is a lowland heath managed and maintained by Surrey Wildlife Trust and is accessible all year round.

The parish also plays host to an 18-hole golf course, a cricket and a bowls club, although these are not publicly accessible (i.e. for private members). Additionally, the North Downs Way – a 156 mile footpath running from Farnham to Dover in Kent – runs along the north edge of Puttenham Common and comes straight down through the village. This attracts a host of walkers and ramblers from many age groups. A national cycle route also passes directly through the village.



Puttenham has a great sense of community and sees several generations living and socialising hand in hand. There are many clubs and organisations that run throughout the year, along with annual village lunches, the church Tower Café and ad hoc village events.

Policy Framework

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Paragraph 98 states that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

Paragraph 92 of the NPPF states that plan makers should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

Paragraph 96 states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities, identifying specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of provision which should inform future provision.

Local Policy

Guildford Borough Local Plan (2003)

Some of the 2003 Guildford Local Plan policies are saved. The following are of relevance.

Policy R3 aims to prevent the loss of land and facilities for sports and recreation and to ensure new development provides an appropriate level of provision.

Policies CF1 and CF2 aim to prevent the loss of community facilities and to ensure new development provides an appropriate level of provision.

Guildford Borough Local Plan (2017)

Policy ID1 – Infrastructure and Delivery – seeks to ensure that new development provides the necessary infrastructure required which includes sport and recreational facilities and open space.

Policy ID4 – Green and Blue Infrastructure – seeks to protect land which provides opportunities for recreation and sport from development.

Guildford Open Space Assessment (2017)

The Guildford Open Space Assessment (2017) identifies the existing provision of open space by ward (with Puttenham being located within the Pilgrim Ward) as seen below and assesses the existing provision against quantity and quality standards as seen below.

Table 8: Existing provision of open space (hectares) in wards⁹

Ward	Allotments	Amenity Green Space	Park and Recreation Ground (Public Combined)	Park and Recreation Ground (Public and Private Combined)	Park and Recreation Ground	Outdoor Sport (Pitches)	Outdoor Sport (Fixed)	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Accessible Natural Green Space
Ash South and Tongham	1.35	9.71	2.8	2.95	2.55	0.09	0.16	0.15	0.11	0.03	44.33
Ash Vale	0	6.49	0.11	0.11	0	0	0.11	0	0.46	0.12	35.02
Ash Wharf	2.13	2.6	1.48	4.56	1.48	0	0	3.08	0.31	0.3	9.13
Burpham	1.77	3.35	6.26	8.94	4.31	1.5	0.45	2.68	0.14	0.03	60.62
Christchurch	1.13	8.05	29.6	33.14	23.77	5.15	0.68	3.54	0.18	0.08	34.48
Clandon and Horsley	1.33	8.49	5.69	17.04	4.55	0.92	0.22	11.35	0.36	0.15	1731.6
Effingham	0.9	1.38	9.4	10.9	5.71	3.51	0.18	1.5	0.13	0.08	1079.1
Friary and St Nicolas	1.63	1.72	2.58	6.28	1.45	1.13	0	3.7	0.1	0	36.58
Holy Trinity	2.29	5.69	9.25	16.29	5.66	3.49	0.1	7.04	0.14	0.13	469.13
Lovelace	1.04	0	5.62	11.08	4.94	0.66	0.02	5.46	0.09	0.03	415.59
Merrow	2.14	4.43	1.81	4.66	1.8	0	0.01	2.85	0.08	0.03	543.46
Normandy	0.83	1.2	0.59	9.49	0	0.57	0.02	8.9	0.62	0	134.85
Onslow	0	10.59	2.27	18.95	1.72	0.55	0	16.68	0.17	0.05	38.01
Pilgrims	0	7.42	0.47	1.57	0	0.47	0	1.1	0.15	0	309.91
Pirbright	0	6.68	1.94	2.05	1.91	0	0.03	0.11	0.28	0.06	147.15
Send	0.61	4.33	1.72	3.11	1.27	0.34	0.11	1.39	0.39	0.06	8.29
Shalford	6	7.94	5.07	10.46	4.97	0.1	0	5.39	0.21	0.01	146.18
Stoke	4.69	12.23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.22	0.05	384.32
Stoughton	0	5.39	2.36	2.36	2.36	0	0	0	0.08	0.03	34.91
Tillingbourne	0.99	6.4	2.71	5.64	1.22	1.24	0.25	2.93	0.26	0.02	1969.78
Westborough	3.18	5.95	5.03	5.31	3.7	1.29	0.04	0.28	0.4	0.04	90.11
Worplesdon	0	24.27	4.33	5.81	3.49	0.6	0.24	1.48	0.18	0.09	225.09

The Assessment identifies a shortfall in allotments, park and recreation grounds and youth provision, however it appears that the village facilities referred to above have not been recognised in the assessment.

The Open Space Assessment recognises that in some cases where a deficiency in open space is identified, improvements to the quality of open space provision may offer some form of mitigation. This has been recognised by the Parish Council and so one option for consideration through the Neighbourhood Plan is the improvement of facilities in the village.

The Open Space Assessment makes a series of recommendations including the following:

OS1 – *It is...recommended that priority is placed on protecting those open spaces where there is an existing shortfall of supply*

OS6 - *Future LDPD's and Neighbourhood Plans should consider the opportunities for creating and enhancing a network of both utility and recreation routes for use by foot and bike in both urban and rural areas. Creative application of the amenity green space/natural green space*

components of the proposed overall standard in respect of new development should be explored

OS7 - The study makes recommendations for improving the quality of open space across the study area

OS8 - Priorities for improvement include the enhancement of the rights of way network; wildlife areas/nature reserves; country parks, local countryside and woodlands; children's play areas and youth provision

The Open Space Assessment also sets out the various standards for open space and recreation facilities.

6.7 Summary of open space standards

Table 15 Summary of open space standards

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1000 population)	Access standard
Allotments	0.25	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Amenity Green Space	1.0 (see standard for Natural Green Space).	720 metres or 15 minutes' walk time
Parks and Recreation Grounds	0.8 for public provision 1.35 for public and private provision	720 metres (15 minutes' straight line walk time)
Play Space (Children)	0.05	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Youth)	0.03	720 metres (15 minutes' straight line walk time)
Natural Green Space	1.0 to include natural and amenity green space for new provision	ANGSt for analysing existing provision
Churchyards and Cemeteries	None, but sites mapped and quantity analysed	None
Education	None, but sites mapped and quantity analysed	None

An assessment of the quantity of open space types has been carried out by the Parish Council against the quantity standards set out in the Open Space Assessment.

Typology	Guildford BC Quantity Standards (ha/1000 of population)	Parish Provision	Surplus/Shortfall	Notes
Allotments	0.25	0	0	No allotments in the parish
Amenity Green Space	1.0	3 ha	Surplus - 2.56 ha	
Parks and Recreation Grounds	0.8 for public provision 1.35 for public and private provision	Public - 0.741 ha	Public – Surplus of 0.4ha Private – Surplus of	This includes publicly accessible provision including the football pitch field and tennis

		Public and Private – 19.69 ha	approximately 19 ha	court as well as private provision such as the cricket pitch, bowling green and golf course (area which falls within the parish boundary).
Play space (Children)	0.05	0.050	Surplus – 0.03ha	This includes the skate park
Play space (Youth)	0.03	0.041	Surplus – 0.03ha	This includes the play area
Natural Green Space	1.0	Approx. 189 ha	Surplus – 188.5 ha	This includes the Bonfire Field and Puttenham Common

The Parish Council’s own assessment against Guildford Borough’s standards shows that the parish is relatively well served parks and recreation grounds, play space (children’s and youth) and, in particular, natural greenspace. The assessment also identifies the lack of allotment provision in the Borough. The discrepancy between the findings of the Guildford Borough Open Space Assessment and the Parish Council’s assessment is not only as it covers the wider Pilgrims Ward but also as the Borough open space assessment appears to omit key areas of open space which serve the village, notably all of the village’s open space provision. The reasoning for the omission is unknown but makes a crucial difference in the overall assessment of the parish’s open space provision.

Guildford Borough Play Strategy (2016-2021)

The Guildford Borough Play Strategy sets a vision for the borough by promoting a range of accessible, safe and high-quality play spaces providing opportunities for a wide range of play. The Play Strategy recognises the health (both physical and mental), social and educational benefits that play space provides.

The second part of the Strategy (The Fixed Play Equipment Strategy) identifies the benchmark standards against which fixed play spaces should be assessed. This includes the Fields in Trust Standards which identify the different types of designated play spaces as well as the quantity, accessibility and quality standards. It also identifies the Play England tools for evaluating play space provision.

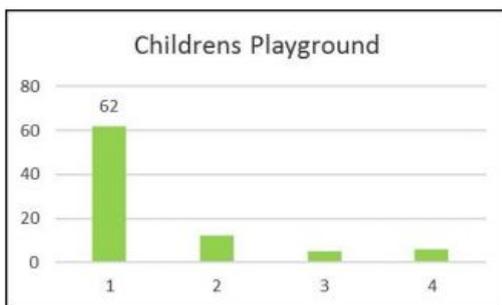
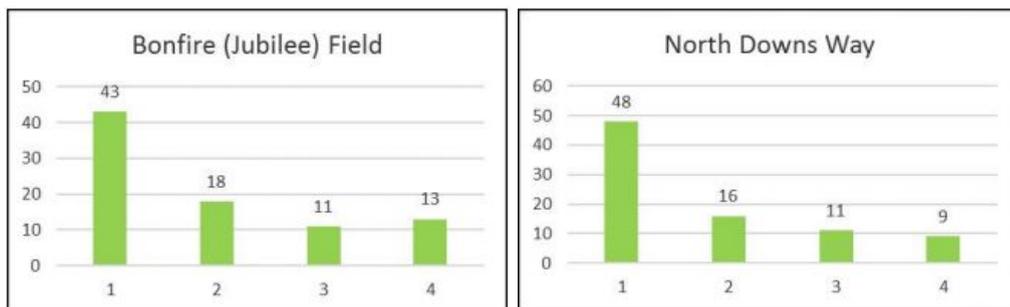
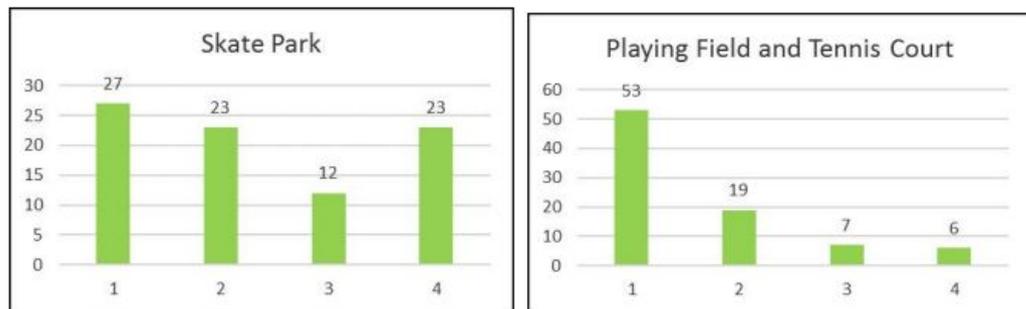
The Strategy also includes guidance on the design of play provision to ensure it is inclusive, safe and challenging. Finally, the Strategy makes a series of recommendations, namely the retention and refurbishment of existing play space and ensuring new development makes appropriate provision (either financial or on-site provision) of play space and it maintained over the long term.

The Fixed Play Strategy also assesses individual sites including the site at School Lane, Puttenham which it identifies as a LEAP (Locally Equipped Area for Play) and as scoring below the required quality standards.

Parish Survey

In 2014 the Housing and Community Needs Survey that was distributed through the village showed that most respondents thought that the majority of local recreational facilities were well regarded, particularly the primary school, the local pub and the village hall.

Question 14 of the survey asked 'On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being very important and 4 being not important, how important do you feel the following facilities are to the village?' The results are shown below:



In August 2016, we received the latest report from RoSPA with regard to the children's playground. The current playground was installed 20 years ago and has been enjoyed by many families throughout this time. The report shows that the playground is showing signs of decaying materials and as such is starting to cost more money to replace, in the long run it seems obvious that it will work out more cost effective to replace the park in its entirety.

The main points made from the latest RoSPA report are:

- Evidence of rot in many posts, both on the perimeter fencing and on play equipment
- Concrete is exposed in 'fall/impact areas'
- Safe Surfacing needs extending to comply with safety standards

- Current surfacing has become compacted/displaced
- Chain wear on swings
- Some missing parts on role play equipment

The playground is still enjoyed daily by many families from both inside and out of the parish. Additionally, the age range of children wishing to use the playground has widened out and therefore it'd be ideal to find some play equipment to appeal to all of its users.

Following conversations with parents and children in the playground, the idea of an outdoor gym for the village cropped up several times.

At the start of this year (2017) a questionnaire was sent out to all the families from Puttenham School, village families, the village youth club and an online survey posted to the Puttenham Community Facebook page. To date, there have been 43 respondents.

The principal results are as follows:

- Over half of respondents used the playground more than once a week
- More than half of respondents would like to have a zip line in the playground
- Other popular suggestions included slides, roundabouts and monkey bars
- Respondents suggested that dedicating parts of the playground to toddlers would be beneficial
- Of the existing equipment, the most popular items were identified as the trim trail, cargo net and swings
- More than 3 quarters of respondents said that they would use an outdoor gym should one be built

The questionnaire shows that the playground is well used. To back this up, during a one week period at the beginning of Spring, 16-20 families used the playground each day after school for around an hour. This number rises as the weather improves with several families staying for after-school picnic teas. The playground is also used on occasion by the toddler group, although it is obvious after speaking with the parents of the children in the younger age group that the park lacks safe equipment for them to use. At the older end of the age range (children from 7 -14) it was clear that the park also lacked fun, engaging equipment for them to use. All age ranges however, enjoyed the use of the skate park.

This more focused survey to users of the existing facilities and the safety report from RoSPA have identified a definite requirement for improvement and a potential for adding in some outdoor gym equipment.

Outdoor gyms have been a proven hit in many communities both locally and nationally and are used by all age ranges. Students at Liverpool John Moores University carried out an evaluation of the provision of outdoor gym equipment and noted that 'setting up gym equipment in green spaces provides people of all ages with opportunities to take part in physical activity in attractive environments, which is associated with positive outcomes for physical and mental health.' During discussions with a variety of age groups in the village, all expressed great intrigue and a positive attitude to installing an outdoor gym to help enhance our recreational facilities.

The benefits of an outdoor gym are that they provide free exercise equipment for all, they are designed to be simple and easy to use and are family friendly – helping to encourage exercise and healthy lifestyles from a young age. They can take up as little or as much space as desired. Various sites are currently being considered for an outdoor gym at the recreation ground.

Additionally, the need to keep public footpaths and bridleways clearly signposted (notably the North Downs Way) and in good condition has arisen. This is also an issue that has been highlighted in a 2017 survey which shows that across the Borough 43% of its respondents said that Footpaths, bridleways, and cyclepaths were average. The main concerns are the complete loss of the footpath at Butts Lane and the safety of walkers, specifically with children and dogs to access the common using the North Downs Way along Lascombe Lane.

The lack of a village shop is brought up several times in the 2014 Parish Survey and has also been mentioned repeatedly in discussions about the Neighbourhood Plan. In years gone by there has been a local shop and post office. Unfortunately, over time, the Post Office was withdrawn and the shop owners came under financial strain. The Parish Council stepped in and heavily subsidised the business in an effort to keep its doors open but to no avail. If a shop were to reopen in the village it would have to be initiated and funded privately and therefore it isn't felt appropriate to include a shop in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Delivering Recreation and Open Space

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy, (CIL) which came into force in 2010, is a tariff based method of collecting funds from development to pay for necessary infrastructure. CIL funds are capable of being used to fund local sport and recreation facilities including play. CIL will operate alongside S106 contributions. Developers will be required to contribute through either S106 or CIL depending on which is most appropriate within planning regulations. The monies raised from CIL can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure needed to support new development within the Borough, not necessarily in the location where the money is raised.

Guildford Borough Council is currently working towards introducing CIL in the Borough, which will change the way developers contribute to play facilities. The impact on the developer funds available for the provision of play is therefore a changing landscape in Guildford.

Planning Condition on planning consents (S106)

When the Guildford Borough Council grants planning permission and wishes to impose requirements on a development, this is normally secured by planning conditions. These requirements usually come in the form of infrastructure provision or a financial contribution towards that provision. This includes the provision of green spaces and facilities for children's play. Developer contributions are secured through a Section 106 (S106) Agreement [Town and County Planning Act 1980], which forms part of any planning permission granted.

Grant funding

The current play area was funded from grants aided to the Parish Council from SITA UK, whilst the skate park was funded by Surrey County Council. It is hoped that we can apply for another grant from SITA UK or from another similar company that offers funding to local communities for recreational facilities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Puttenham residents are fortunate to have a play and recreation facilities within the village as well as extensive accessible informal open space in the countryside surrounding the village. Parish residents clearly value the existing provision and facilities. Whilst the Parish Council's open space assessment against the Guildford Borough standards suggest the parish is well served by open space and identifies a small surplus in most typologies, it also identifies a lack of allotment provision. Feedback from parish residents has also identified a clear need for upgrades to existing facilities as well as potentially new facilities.

The current playground is a sufficient size to accommodate an upgrade. Therefore, it is unlikely that planning permission would be required for future improvements/additional facilities. However, the parish would need to agree design and funding.

This report therefore makes the following recommendations:

- Existing provision and facilities should be protected
- Consideration of a land use policy for improved/additional play facilities in the village.
- Consideration is given to an outdoor gym facility
- Consideration is given to improving the accessibility of existing open space and recreation provision
- Consideration is given to new allotment provision

Acknowledgements

This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared on behalf of Puttenham Parish Council. The Parish Council would like to thank the following volunteers who have dedicated a great deal of time and effort into this project:

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- David Binns
- Guy Thompson
- Verity Cassar

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