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1 Introduction

1.1 An Open Space Assessment has been conducted by Pembrokeshire County Council to inform and support the preparation of its Local Development Plan (LDP). The assessment catalogues the current provision of open space, identifies areas of shortfall and recommends draft policies for the LDP that will assist the protection of existing, and delivery of new, open spaces in Pembrokeshire. This report relates to the provision of open space in towns, service centres and service villages¹ in the area of Pembrokeshire not designated as National Park.

1.2 This report contains a summary of the methodology used to undertake the assessment, the national and local policies and strategies that have informed the assessment and the detailed results of the assessment. Pembrokeshire County Council has produced other documents and reports relating to recreational and play space, including the Play Facility Plan (2010). This report is a separate but complementary report designed purposely to inform the policies and approach taken towards open space in the Local Development Plan.

2 Methodology

2.1 The assessment has primarily focused on 57 settlements identified in the LDP settlement hierarchy as towns, service centres and service villages. . The majority of development during the LDP plan period is expected to be directed to these settlements.

2.2 A comprehensive audit of open spaces in these settlements was undertaken, initially employing a desk-based mapping assessment and using information from previous similar studies. The desk-based mapping stage involved searching for all types of open space, as listed in Technical Advice Note 16, annex B. A list of 'candidate' open spaces was compiled with site visits conducted to confirm the nature of the open space and further assess their quality and accessibility.

3 Defining Open Space

3.1 TAN 16 provides a list of spaces that should be included in the Open Space Assessment. Within this report these types of spaces, which are all outdoor areas of land or water with public recreational and/or amenity value, are grouped into five categories of open space:

1. **Formal recreation space** – areas marked and laid out for organised recreation and sport. This category includes football, rugby and cricket pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs).

¹ Towns, Service Centres and Service Villages are terms used by the LDP to categorise settlements in a hierarchy. The report does not include an audit of open spaces in smaller settlements and in the open countryside.

2. **Informal recreation space** – usually grassed areas used for informal play and recreation, used predominantly by children.
3. **Equipped play areas** – areas with fixed play equipment for use by children
4. **Amenity open space** – a wide category that includes spaces such as ornamental parks and gardens, country parks, cemeteries, water bodies used for recreation, roadside verges and golf courses. This category also includes areas within built-up environments of scrub, woodland and grassland.
5. **Education land** – areas within the grounds of schools used for play and recreation principally by the school.

3.2 Many open spaces can be defined under more than one of the above categories – most commonly being formal recreational land within school grounds and playgrounds within parks or sports grounds. The audit of sites included a judgement as to the accessibility of the space and who gets the most value from the space when determining to which category spaces should be designated. For example open spaces in schools are categorised as education land rather than formal or informal recreation space, as their main function is as an area for recreational use by the school.

4 National and Local Policies and Strategies on Open Space

4.1 The Local Development Plan must have regard to legislation, national policies and guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government, including the Wales Spatial Plan, the authority's Community Plan and any other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or adjoining areas.

4.2 Planning Policy Wales, 3rd Edition (2010)

This Welsh Assembly Government policy document provides all Welsh Local Authorities with a framework for creating Development Plans and for determining planning applications. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) states the WAG's main planning objectives for sport and recreation in Chapter 11. It promotes:

- a more sustainable pattern of development, creating and maintaining networks of facilities and open spaces in places well served by sustainable means of travel, in particular within urban areas;
- social inclusion, improved health and well-being by ensuring that everyone, including children and young people, the elderly and those with disabilities, has easy access to the natural environment and to good quality, well designed facilities and open space.

4.3 Local Planning Authorities are expected to allocate land and water resources for formal and informal sport and recreation, based on assessments of current levels of provision and deficiencies.

4.4 Technical Advice Note 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009)

Technical Advice Notes (TANs) are a series of documents providing detailed guidance on topics contained within PPW. TAN 16 provides guidance on how Local Authorities may undertake their Open Space Assessments and how it

can be linked to Local Development Plan preparation. It also provides guidance for the development management process, ensuring the planning system makes provision for new, and protects existing, recreational facilities and open spaces.

4.5 Climbing Higher (2005)

The 'Climbing Higher' document prepared by the Welsh Assembly Government outlines their 20 year strategy to integrate sport and physical activity into the heart of Welsh life and Government policy. Local Authorities should be guided by the following targets for

- All public sector employees and three-quarters of all other employees will have access to sport and physical activity facilities, at or within a 10-minute walk of the workplace;
- The percentage of the people in Wales using the Welsh natural environment for outdoor activities will increase from 36% to 60%;
- 95% of people in Wales will have a footpath or cycle-path within a ten-minute walk of their homes;
- No one should live more than a six-minute walk (300m) from their nearest natural green space.

4.6 Environment Strategy for Wales (2006)

The Assembly's strategy for the environment directly links having access to parks and green spaces with beneficial effects on health and wellbeing. It states that every community should therefore have a high quality, well planned built environment with good access to green spaces, areas for recreation and that supports biodiversity.

4.7 Fields in Trust: Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play (2008)

Fields in Trust (FiT), previously known as the National Playing Fields Association, is the charitable organisation that introduced the "Six Acre Standard", which continues to be widely recognised as the aspirational standard of open space provision.

4.8 Pembrokeshire Community Plan 2010 - 2025

The Pembrokeshire Community Plan 2010 – 2025 frames "all public, private and voluntary sector activity in Pembrokeshire over the period 2010-2025". It is primarily focused on delivering better quality of life for Pembrokeshire's residents and visitors, identifying eight themes that cover the main issues for communities in Pembrokeshire. Open space is most directly linked with three of this Plan's eight themes:

- Wellbeing
- Environment
- Access

4.9 Research undertaken to provide evidence for the Community Plan by the *2007 residents survey*, indicates that 93% of people in Pembrokeshire consider themselves to have 'easy' access to a park or other similar open space.

4.10 Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority: Open Space Assessment (2009)

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) has planning jurisdiction for the areas of Pembrokeshire designated as National Park. They have also produced an Open Space Assessment as evidence towards their own Local Development Plan. This assessment holds particular relevance for 'split settlements' and communities – i.e. those located partly within the Council's planning area and partly within the National Park.

5 Setting Standards

5.1 The results of the audit of open space were collated and arranged by settlement and by type of space. In order to compare provision across the County and inform open space requirements on future developments, the assessment uses the benchmark standards proposed by Fields in Trust (FiT). The traditional 'six-acre standard' for outdoor sport and play space translates as approximately 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. This consists of 1.6 hectares for outdoor sport (of which 1.2 hectares are playing pitches) and 0.8 hectares of children's playing space (of which 0.25 hectares are equipped play spaces). The results of the audit are compared against these standards to establish where there is a quantitative scarcity of open spaces.

The FiT standards however do not incorporate all types of open space. Table 1 below shows the types of spaces defined in the assessment that contribute towards the FiT standards:

Table 1: Types of open space contributing towards FiT standards.

FiT standards (per 1000 population)	Spaces as defined in this assessment
1.6ha of outdoor sport space	1 Formal recreation spaces 2 Informal recreation spaces 3 <i>Some</i> equipped play areas
1.2 ha of playing pitches	1 Formal recreation spaces
0.8ha of children's playing space	2 <i>Some</i> Informal recreation spaces 3 Equipped play areas 4 <i>Some</i> amenity spaces
0.25ha of equipped play spaces	3 Equipped play areas

5.2 Education land normally includes space for formal recreation and children's playing space but they are not counted towards the assessment of Fields in Trust standards. The principal purpose of such land is to support the functions of a school, and so it should not be relied upon in calculating a settlement's provision of open space.

6 Audit of Open Space

6.1 The audit of open spaces has focused on those settlements within the plan area that are named in the LDP Settlement Hierarchy as Towns, Service Centres and Service Villages. The settlement hierarchy has classified settlements by size and service provision in order to distribute development at appropriate levels during the plan period. For settlements not identified in these levels of the hierarchy opportunities for development will be more limited – given that this reduces the pressures to develop land, this assessment does not include open spaces in these settlements .

6.2 Following the completion of the desk-based mapping exercise and site surveys the assessment contains a total of 336 open spaces. They have been divided into the five categories described above:

Formal recreation	60
Informal recreation	32
Equipped play areas	48
Amenity open space	148
Education land	48
Total	336

This section will evaluate separately the provision in towns and the provision in rural areas, by settlement.

Table 2: Approximate levels of open space, in hectares, in Pembrokeshire's towns

Urban Settlement	Population	Number of Open Spaces	All open space	Fields in Trust 2.4 hectare standard		1.2ha Playing pitches		1.6ha Outdoor recreational space		0.80ha Children's playing space		0.25ha Equipped play space	
			Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Fishguard	3240	17	19.00	7.78	5.12	3.89	2.60	5.18	5.34	2.59	2.56	0.81	0.36
Goodwick	2050	9	6.86	4.92	5.29	2.46	4.31	3.28	5.04	1.64	0.98	0.51	0.25
Haverfordwest	13600	46	122.21	32.64	52.21	16.32	22.48	21.76	50.83	10.88	6.65	3.40	1.38
Milford Haven	13096	42	54.90	31.43	14.59	15.72	11.15	20.95	13.54	10.48	3.44	3.27	1.39
Narberth	1868	10	13.98	4.48	9.85	2.24	6.35	2.99	9.85	1.49	3.50	0.47	0.18
Neyland	3220	13	20.06	7.73	5.91	3.86	5.56	5.15	6.50	2.58	1.32	0.81	0.35
Pembroke	7100	31	30.71	17.04	14.83	8.52	8.24	11.36	10.79	5.68	9.57	1.78	0.64
Pembroke Dock	8650	28	87.69	20.76	26.74	10.38	15.04	13.84	20.06	6.92	8.43	2.16	1.90

Open Space Provision in Towns

6.3 There are numerous open spaces in all towns in Pembrokeshire and a total provision ranging from nearly 7 hectares in Goodwick, to over 122 hectares in Haverfordwest. The ratio of *people per open space* in Pembrokeshire's towns ranges from 186:1 in Narberth to 311:1 in Milford Haven.

6.4 Using *Fields in Trust* benchmark standards, as shown in Table 2, it is apparent that towns in Pembrokeshire County Council's LDP area provide a mixed level of recreational open space to their residents, with half of towns having provision higher than the recommended 2.4hectares per 1,000 population. The provision in Fishguard, Neyland and Pembroke is only slightly below the suggested levels, but the provision in Milford Haven is more significantly below the benchmark.

6.5 There is plenty of outdoor recreational space in most towns, with the greatest surpluses at Haverfordwest and Narberth. In Milford Haven and in Pembroke the provision is below the benchmark. In Pembroke's case however, there is a significant amount of accessible recreational space at Pembroke School, which is attributed to Pembroke Dock but in reality serves both towns.

6.6 The recommended level of provision of 1.2ha of formal recreation space, or pitches, per 1,000 population is met in all towns except Fishguard, Milford Haven and Pembroke. The provision of pitches tends to be closely connected to organised sports clubs and associations and/or schools.

6.7 The *Fields in Trust* standards for children's provision recommend 0.80ha per 1,000 population of outdoor space suitable for children, of which 0.25ha should be equipped play spaces. Outdoor spaces that are suitable for use by children include playgrounds, parks, amenity grassed spaces in residential areas, land associated to leisure centres, community centres etc.

6.8 The result of the survey shows the provision of outdoor open space for children is lower than suggested in most towns, with significant shortages in Milford Haven and Neyland. There are strong provisions in Pembroke Dock, Pembroke and Narberth, which has over twice the benchmark level. However, the provision of equipped open spaces falls below the suggested levels in all towns. The provision is in fact less than 50% of the recommended level in all towns other than Pembroke Dock.

6.9 In Pembrokeshire's urban areas it is clear that the most significant weakness in provision is play areas for children. In more towns than not there is sufficient outdoor space, both formal and informal, to meet the FIT guidelines, therefore the key finding to emerge from the assessment of open spaces in Pembrokeshire's towns is to increase and improve the provision of equipped play areas.

Rural Open Space Provision

6.10 Tables 3 and 4 show detailed figures for recreational open space provision in 49 rural settlements identified in the Local Development Plan settlement hierarchy as Service Centres and Service Villages.

6.11 The table shows a mixed picture with a near-equal split of settlements with a provision above and below the *Fields in Trust* benchmarks. There are nine settlements which have a provision above the benchmark in all categories: Carew/Sageston, Cilgerran, Clunderwen, Crymych, Hermon, Hundleton, Lamphey, Llandissilio and Maenclochog. When open space in the National Park area is considered, the settlements of Cosheston and Houghton can be added to this list. This leaves 40 settlements with insufficient open space for their current population in one or more of the categories. Of these settlements, there are ten that fail to provide a benchmark level of open space in any category: Bwlchygroes, Clarbston Road, Croesgoch, Pentlepoir, Robeston Wathen, Roch, St Dogmaels, Tavernspite, Tiers Cross and Wolfscastle.

6.12 In many rural areas, informal use of the countryside provides many additional opportunities for play and recreation, which by their nature are difficult to calculate in this assessment.

Table 3: Approximate levels of open space, in hectares, in rural settlements, A - K

Settlement	Population	Number of Open Spaces	All open Space Actual	Fields in Trust 2.4 hectare standard		1.2 ha Playing Pitches		1.6 ha Outdoor sport space		0.80ha Children's Play space		0.25ha equipped play space	
				Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Abercych	170	1	0.04	0.41	0.04	0.20	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.14	0.04	0.04	0.04
Begelly	480	3	0.81	1.15	0.42	0.58	0.00	0.77	0.42	0.38	0.42	0.12	0.42
Blaenffos	205	2	1.10	0.49	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.16	0.61	0.05	0.61
Boncath	165	1	0.67	0.40	0.67	0.20	0.00	0.26	0.67	0.13	0.67	0.04	0.67
Broadmoor	245	2	0.31	0.59	0.31	0.29	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.20	0.31	0.06	0.31
Bwlchygroes	40	1	0.30	0.10	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.01	0.00
Carew / Sageston	535	2	2.64	1.28	2.30	0.64	2.30	0.86	2.30	0.43	2.30	0.13	2.30
Cilgerran	770	6	7.21	1.85	2.32	0.92	1.87	1.23	1.87	0.62	0.45	0.19	0.45
Clarbeston Road	325	3	0.28	0.78	0.12	0.39	0.00	0.52	0.00	0.26	0.12	0.08	0.05
Clunderwen	510	2	1.75	1.22	1.60	0.61	1.60	0.82	1.60	0.41	1.60	0.13	0.14
Cosheston *	425	3	3.27	1.02	2.77	0.51	2.77	0.68	2.77	0.34	2.9	0.11	0.13
Croesgoch	155	1	0.57	0.37	0.00	0.19	0.00	0.25	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.04	0.00
Crundale	575	2	1.60	1.38	1.40	0.69	1.40	0.92	1.40	0.46	1.40	0.14	0.08
Crymych	610	8	5.07	1.46	4.38	0.73	2.30	0.98	4.15	0.49	2.9	0.15	0.23
Eglwysrwr	180	2	0.96	0.43	0.66	0.22	0.00	0.29	0.66	0.14	0.00	0.05	0.00
Hermon	185	3	1.00	0.44	0.71	0.22	0.50	0.30	0.50	0.15	0.21	0.05	0.21
Hook*	695	5	2.46	1.67	1.95	0.83	1.55	1.11	1.95	0.56	1.95	0.17	0.12
Houghton *	120	2	1.09	0.29	1.09	0.14	0.90	0.19	0.90	0.10	0.19	0.03	0.19
Hundleton	325	3	2.92	0.78	2.74	0.39	2.63	0.52	2.63	0.26	2.63	0.08	0.19
Jeffreyston	230	2	0.51	0.55	0.23	0.28	0.00	0.37	0.00	0.18	0.23	0.06	0.23
Johnston	1910	7	4.49	4.59	3.95	2.29	3.6	3.06	5.09	1.53	1.63	0.48	1.19
Kilgetty	1105	5	6.40	2.65	6.00	1.33	4.46	1.77	5.40	0.88	6.00	0.28	0.04

* Denotes 'cross boundary settlements' with part of the settlement also in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Table 4: Approximate levels of open space, in hectares, in rural settlements, L - W

Rural Settlement	Population	Number of Open Spaces	All open Space Actual	Fields in Trust 2.4 hectare standard		1.2 ha Playing Pitches		1.6 ha Outdoor sport space		0.80ha Children's Play space		0.25ha equipped play space	
				Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Lamphey	540	2	5.21	1.30	4.5	0.65	1.73	0.86	4.5	0.43	2.11	0.14	0.22
Letterston	1015	6	3.90	2.44	3.14	1.22	2.70	1.62	3.14	0.81	2.73	0.25	0.12
Llanddewi Velfrey	105	2	1.37	0.25	1.37	0.13	1.30	0.17	1.30	0.08	0.07	0.03	0.07
Llandissilio	405	4	2.69	0.97	1.20	0.49	1.20	0.65	1.20	0.32	1.20	0.10	0.19
Llangwm*	725	4	3.65	1.74	2.45	0.87	1.92	1.16	2.45	0.58	0.59	0.18	0.06
Maenclochog	310	4	1.22	0.74	1.02	0.37	0.79	0.50	0.79	0.25	0.33	0.08	0.33
Martletwy	60	3	0.65	0.14	0.16	0.07	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.05	0.16	0.02	0.16
Mathry	180	4	0.76	0.43	0.17	0.22	0.10	0.29	0.10	0.14	0.07	0.05	0.07
Milton *	130	1	0.13	0.31	0.13	0.16	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.10	0.13	0.03	0.13
New Hedges *	225	5	1.22	0.54	0.83	0.27	0.00	0.36	0.83	0.18	1.06	0.06	0.00
Penally	775	3	1.19	1.86	0.96	0.93	0.91	1.24	0.91	0.62	0.96	0.19	0.10
Pentlepoir	1540	3	0.65	3.70	0.65	1.85	0.00	2.46	0.50	1.23	0.65	0.39	0.15
Hayscastle Cross / Pont-y-Hafod	205	2	0.55	0.49	0.08	0.25	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.16	0.08	0.05	0.08
Puncheston	110	4	0.93	0.26	0.13	0.13	0.06	0.18	0.06	0.09	0.13	0.03	0.07
Robeston Wathen	100	1	0.20	0.24	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.03	0.00
Roch *	450	2	1.56	1.08	0.00	0.54	0.00	0.72	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.11	0.00
Rosemarket	340	4	1.03	0.82	0.77	0.41	0.25	0.54	0.77	0.27	0.70	0.09	0.15
Simpson Cross	365	1	1.05	0.88	1.05	0.44	0.00	0.58	1.05	0.29	1.05	0.09	0.12
Spittal	300	5	1.42	0.72	0.45	0.36	0.38	0.48	0.38	0.24	0.45	0.08	0.07
St Dogmaels	1105	5	3.06	2.65	1.98	1.33	0.82	1.77	1.50	0.88	0.68	0.28	0.08
St. Florence	490	4	3.22	1.18	2.42	0.59	1.12	0.78	2.42	0.39	2.42	0.12	0.10
Tavernspite	215	1	0.71	0.52	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.17	0.03	0.05	0.03
Tegryn	140	2	0.27	0.34	0.09	0.17	0.00	0.22	0.00	0.11	0.09	0.04	0.09
Templeton	585	6	1.49	1.40	0.55	0.70	0.00	0.94	0.40	0.47	0.55	0.15	0.15
Tiers Cross	150	2	0.24	0.36	0.00	0.18	0.00	0.24	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.04	0.00
Wolfscastle	245	4	0.72	0.59	0.33	0.29	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.20	0.33	0.06	0.00

* Denotes 'cross boundary settlements' with part of the settlement also in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Cross Boundary Settlements

6.13 Tables 3 and 4 above highlight settlements that are partly located across two Planning Authority areas. Of these, the open space provision in four settlements is found predominantly in locations based within the National Park – Cosheston, Houghton, Milton, New Hedges and Roch. The following information is extracted from the National Park Authority’s Open Space Assessment²:

Table 5: Cross boundary issues

Settlement	Cross Boundary Issues
Cosheston	Recreational facilities in the National Park can meet needs arising in the settlement outside the National Park.
Houghton	Recreational facilities in the National Park can meet need arising in the settlement outside the National Park.
Milton	Insufficient facilities identified
New Hedges	Recreational facilities in the National Park can meet need arising in the settlement outside the National Park.
Roch	Recreational facilities in the National Park can meet need arising in the settlement outside the National Park.

7 Draft Local Development Plan Policy

7.1 This assessment has shown that the levels of open space provision are varied throughout urban and rural areas of Pembrokeshire. In areas where there is plenty of open space, policies should protect those spaces that provide most value and utility to the community. In areas of limited open space, it is important that the creation of new open spaces is encouraged and that existing spaces are retained and improved where possible. The policies suggested for inclusion in the Local Development Plan therefore are designed to protect valuable existing facilities and to facilitate the provision of new and improved open spaces.

7.2 The policies make a distinction between open spaces primarily used for recreational and leisure purposes from those that are defined as ‘amenity open spaces’. The purpose of having different policies is to recognise that not all types of open space can be replaced in the event of a development taking place on it. For example, while replacing a football ground or play area with a new one nearby is often feasible and usually necessary, the relocation of a roadside verge or green corridor is far less practical.

7.3 All areas of open space will be protected by the relevant policy but not all are mapped on the proposal or inset maps accompanying the Local Development Plan. All open spaces above 0.25 hectares in towns, service centres and service

² Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority – LDP Background Paper, Open Space Assessment. January 2009

villages will be shown. In all other settlements and in the open countryside the maps will not identify open spaces. The only open spaces below 0.25 hectares shown on the map are those categorised as formal recreation spaces and equipped play areas located in towns, service centres and service villages.

Protection and Creation of Outdoor Recreation Areas

A Outdoor recreational areas, which include public open spaces, leisure routes and recreational facilities are protected from inappropriate development.

Development will be permitted on outdoor recreation areas where:

- 1. It can be demonstrated by the applicant that the area has no significant public recreational value, or**
- 2. A suitable replacement facility is to be made available; or**
- 3. The recreational facilities will be enhanced through the redevelopment of part of the site.**

B New outdoor recreation area(s) will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- 1. It is well located to serve community needs;**
- 2. It is of appropriate size, design and form to meet the needs of the people it is intended to serve; and**
- 3. Provision is made for the future management and maintenance of the site/route.**

Protection of Amenity Open Space

Development which would adversely affect the appearance, character or local amenity value of areas of public and private amenity open space will not normally be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, where the proposal will bring clear social and / or economic benefits to the local community and make a positive contribution to the built environment, development may be permitted.