

APPENDIX 10 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT - NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL

Strategic Review & Policy Background – National, Regional and Local

National Policy

- 10.1 A review of relevant national policies and strategies relating to open space, sport and recreation, their role, importance, and legislation, is detailed in the appendices to this report (Appendix 2). A summary of the key influencing context relevant to this study includes:-

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17

- 10.2 **Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17)** recommends an audit and assessment of local needs in order to develop local standards that are based on local supply and demand for facilities. As mentioned earlier in this report, the PPG17 guidance provides the framework for the assessment undertaken.

Towards a Level Playing Field

- 10.3 A prescribed methodology for the assessment of playing pitch provision is detailed in **“Towards a Level Playing Field”** (Sport England, CCPR, 2002). In addition to the assessment methodology, a number of policies which oppose the loss of playing fields are detailed.

English Nature Standards

English Nature has developed and recommended a series of standards for the provision of natural and semi natural open space at local level; the standards recommended are guides to levels of provision, and set extremely high standards for provision. The majority of local authorities in the UK fail to meet these guidance standards, but they do provide a useful benchmark against which to assess existing open space in local areas.

In assessing Natural and Semi-natural open space in Harrow, consideration has been given to English Nature’s Accessible Natural Open space Standards. English Nature presents a number of recommendations in relation to provision levels, specifically:

- a) Provision of at least 2ha of accessible natural open space per 1,000 population. This equates to 413.63ha of provision within the Harrow Council
- b) No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural open space
- c) There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home
- d) There should be at least one 100ha site within 5km
- e) There should be at least one 500ha site within 10km

Government Urban White Paper

- 10.4 The Government’s **Urban White Paper** (*“Our Towns and Cities; the Future towards an Urban Renaissance”* Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) 2004) identifies the need for well laid out urban areas with quality buildings, well laid out streets and good quality public open space that is readily accessible. The Paper provides recognition of the importance of green spaces in meeting a number of wider social objectives. The Paper includes a programme for improving the quality of parks, play areas and green spaces and recommends that local authorities aim to achieve the national standard for quality green space provision ‘The Green Flag Award.’

Urban Task Force

- 10.5 The **Urban Task Force** was established by the Department of the Environment to identify the causes of urban decline in England. One of the key recommendations was for local authorities to produce and prepare strategies that dealt with design, provision, maintenance, funding and management of their public realm including open space.

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Green Spaces, Better Places

- 10.6 “**Green Spaces, Better Places**” *Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions* (DTLR 2002) is the final report of the Urban Open space Task Force. The report highlighted concern over the major decline in the quality of many urban parks.

Urban Parks Assessment

- 10.7 In the recent **Urban Parks Assessment** (2004) undertaken through the then Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR); the study illustrates the shortfall in budgets for public Green space nationally to be in excess of £1.3 billion.

Living Places – Cleaner, Greener, Safer

- 10.8 “**Living Places – Cleaner, Safer, Greener**” (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) 2002) identifies the Government’s approach to making cleaner, safer and greener public spaces. It also recognises the benefits that good parks and open space bring by making places more liveable and sustainable whilst also enriching the quality of people’s lives and local communities. A number of key priorities are stated including the need to provide good quality parks and open spaces close to where people live, and to ensure provision of a diverse range of open space.

Rethinking Open Space

- 10.9 The “**Rethinking Open Space**” research paper (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit 2001) details a number of practical methodologies for local strategic planning. A key recommendation is the need to enhance existing provision before providing more of the same.

National and Regional Sporting Context

- 10.10 **The Framework for Sport in England** and the **London Plan for Sport and Physical Activity (2004-2008)** provide the national sporting context for this study. The key drivers of the London Plan for Sport and Physical Activity are:
- Maximising opportunities for sport and physical activity through effective and sustainable partnerships
 - Resolving to overcome barriers and enable excluded or hard to reach groups to participate
 - Providing opportunities and incentives in the workplace for daily activity
 - Maximising opportunities for young people to participate
 - Developing potential within organisations and individuals to maximise personal and sporting success
 - Changing attitudes to how sport and physical activity is used

Local Strategic Context

- 10.11 There are a number of local strategies, plans and policies that provide the context for this study. These include strategies for improving the provision of parks and open space, planning policies and wider community strategies and corporate objectives. These have a common theme: the need to provide for, and address, the identified needs of the Harrow local community. Key references, links and influences are summarised briefly below in relation to:
- a) **The Harrow Unitary Development Plan (HUDP)** which identifies the current planning policy and guidance for the borough
 - b) **The Harrow Community Strategy** which details the aims and objectives of the local strategic partnership
 - c) **The New Harrow Project** (and the Harrow Vitality Profiles), which set out a framework and Vision for future delivery of HC services in the Borough
 - d) **The Harrow Cultural Strategy** which sets out the strategic framework for the future provision of cultural provision in the Borough.
 - e) **The revised Corporate Priorities**
 - f) **The Harrow Allotment Strategy**
 - g) **The changing demographic profile** of the Borough

- 10.12 A more detailed review of the local strategic context is provided in Appendix 2.

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- 10.13 A further important linking document is the Green Belt Management Plan which has been developed by Land Use Consultants in parallel with this study. Information on Green Belt issues collected as part of this study has been used to inform the Green Belt Management Strategy (GMBS).

Local Planning Context Harrow Unitary Development Plan (July 2004)

- 10.14 The HUDP was adopted in July 2004. This Plan will be replaced and revised as part of the production of the Local Development Framework upon which work is being undertaken over the next three years.
- 10.15 The key issues for producing the LDF are that it needs to reflect the requirements of PPG17; the LDF will need to inform and develop future policy, and provide the evidence to safeguard and protect local open space, and support the policies for the future provision of indoor and outdoor sports provision, and open space, to reflect the key issues identified through the audit and consultation. This study is particularly important in relation to future protection of open space, through planning policy. The assessment also considers potential uses of existing open space, where its current purpose has changed.

National, South East Regional and London Planning Context

- 10.16 Underpinning the production of individual Policy Planning Guidance notes (PPGs) is the Strategy for Sustainable Development in the UK, A Better Quality of Life (1999), which identified the following four aims:
- a) Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
 - b) Effective protection of the environment
 - c) Prudent use of natural resources
 - d) Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

South East and London Regional Context

- 10.17 Relevant Guidance is provided by the Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9 2001) and the Mayor's London Plan (February 2004).

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9 – 2001)

- 10.18 This provides the planning context for London, and identifies 12 main planning principles that should govern the continuing development of the Region. It reflects a variety of guidance related to achieving:
- a) Sustainable development
 - b) Embracing the urban renaissance
 - c) The need to concentrate development in the urban areas
 - d) Securing economy in the use of the land
 - e) Integration of land use and transport

The London Plan

- 10.19 The regional strategic planning context is provided by the London Plan (February 2004), which provides the spatial planning context for London.

Harrow's Role as part of London

- 10.20 Harrow has developed primarily as a residential area, and still provides an important contribution to the overall housing market in London. Harrow has a network of shopping centres which contribute to the overall retail activity of northwest London. As an outer suburban borough, Harrow performs many of the functions of its neighbouring dormitory boroughs. However, in respect of its economic, regeneration and employment activities, Harrow has an integral role in west London, a position reflected by its involvement in West London Leadership and the West London Alliance. In setting out the strategic framework for the future development and regeneration of London, the London Plan recognizes the important role of the West London corridors.

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10.21 Harrow also performs a number of other important strategic functions. These include:

- a) The high quality Green Belt provides important areas of accessible open space
- b) Pockets of Metropolitan Open Space also provide important areas
- c) Green Chains provide links with Hillingdon to the west of the Borough
- d) Provides open space for wider London needs

10.22 The Vision for Harrow is of a Borough which:

- a) Performs a dynamic role as part of a more sustainable world city
- b) Plays a part in securing the sustainable use of natural resources
- c) Provides a healthy and safe environment
- d) Continues to be an attractive, vibrant and enjoyable place to live and work
- e) Secures more sustainable communities with greater access to local facilities
- f) Protects open space, affords improved access to them, and facilitates their more effective use and management
- g) Uses valuable land resources and buildings as effectively as possible, including by higher density in appropriate locations
- h) Protects its rich biodiversity
- i) Protects, and where necessary, enhances its rich built and natural heritage
- j) Provides better links between activities, with a choice of transport modes both to encourage more sustainable travel patterns and reduce the demand for, and the necessity to, travel
- k) Provides a better choice of good quality housing that promotes developments with an appropriate mix of housing to cater for local needs of thereby contributing to London's overall housing provision
- l) Provides more local job opportunities thereby reducing the need to travel
- m) Fosters and promotes appropriate economic development, which may include retailing, that is efficient, innovative and competitive
- n) Contains vibrant and healthy town centres which have a wide mix of uses
- o) Promotes development that contributes to improving the overall quality of life for residents, workers, and visitors
- p) Contains a wide range of local community, educational, social and health facilities which are more accessible by sustainable means
- q) Secures development that enhances the sense of belonging through social, cultural and physical environmental links
- r) Provides good access to facilities and services for all
- s) Optimises the investment of resources in the Borough
- t) Responds positively to changing circumstances

10.23 The key plans and strategies that integrate with the HUDP are:

- a) The Housing Strategy Statement (2000 -2005)
- b) Local Transport Strategy (June 2000)
- c) Local Transport Implementation Plan
- d) Regeneration Strategy
- e) Annual Service Action Plans
- f) Community Care Plans
- g) Children's' Services Plan
- h) Education Development
- i) Community Plan

Strategic Objectives of HUDP

10.24 The strategic objectives of the HUDP are:

- a) To support and enable a more sustainable pattern of land use in the Borough
- b) To protect and enhance the natural and built environment
- c) To improve integration between land uses and the transport routes that serve them, particularly non-car routes, and reduce the need to travel
- d) To provide all new homes on previously developed land with all homes (including affordable housing) built to a good quality

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- e) To promote economic development and facilitate a balanced economy, and help contribute to the provision of a range of jobs and training opportunities
- f) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres
- g) To improve the quality of life, the health and safety of those who live, work, and spend their leisure time in the Borough
- h) To encourage community activity in the Borough, and to ensure adequate provision of community services
- i) To secure more sustainable communities by providing equality of opportunity to access facilities and services which address the diverse needs of the local community, ensure access for all to new development and improved access elsewhere
- j) To monitor effectively the performance of the Plan and in association with Harrow's partners seek the resources to implement it

10.25 Eight main areas are highlighted in the HUDP; the policies that affect the subjects of this study are summarised below:

- **Environmental Protection and Open Space**

PPG17: Sport and Recreation (1991) indicates that the Government does not consider use of open space as less important than any other land use. Open space contributes to quality of life in urban areas, regardless of whether or not it has public access. The London Plan calls for a positive approach to open space in order to enhance their characteristics and value. Due to a shortage of certain types of open space, such as allotments and playing fields, residents may rely on provision in outer London Boroughs to gain access to these facilities (PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, July 2002).

10.26 Policies include those on the use of Green Belt, use of previously-developed land, Areas of Special Character, public open space and others.

- **Recreation, Leisure and Tourism**

The Harrow Cultural Strategy provides the framework for further development of arts, recreation and leisure in the Borough. Harrow provides a variety of recreational and leisure opportunities and much of the Green Belt is public open space. Council encourages the public to make use of the countryside, footpaths and bridleways for outdoor informal recreation, such as walking and riding.

10.27 Objectives given include:

- a) To encourage provision, use and improvement, of a range of leisure and recreational facilities and participation by all sections of the community
- b) To encourage the development and availability of land and buildings for sports, arts, cultural, entertainment and social activities, and
- c) To encourage tourism development that enhances the Borough's attractions, makes the best use of cultural resources and opportunities in the Borough and contributes to a high quality environment.

10.28 Policies include those on public open space, outdoor Sports Facilities, Intensive Use pitches, informal Recreation, Play areas, Footpaths, Cyclepaths and Bridleways, Arts, Culture and Entertainment and others.

Community Strategy

10.29 The 'Community Strategy for Harrow' (May 2003), has been developed by the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP), informed by local need, and the views of local stakeholders, residents and agencies. HSP aims to 'work to make a measurable improvement to the quality of life of the people of Harrow through robust and inclusive partnership working'.

10.30 It has been identified that people would like Harrow to be:

'A borough that is safe, clean, healthy and prosperous, with equal life opportunities for all - a friendly and vibrant place to be.'

10.31 The Strategy is firmly based on the principles that it:

- Seeks to engage the local community and reflects their needs and aspirations

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- Co-ordinates the actions of agencies in the HSP to meet community needs
- Aims to develop & support cohesive communities (as defined by the Home Office, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Commission for Racial Equality).
- Focuses on Sustainable Development

10.32 There are eight focus areas for the Strategy:

1. Empowering Local Communities

Main Focus

- Community Cohesion
- Enhancing the Life of Older People

Specific objectives include:

- *Promoting principles of community cohesion*
- *Enhancing the quality of life for older people*

2. Children and Young People

Mission

- 'To ensure that the life chances of children and young people are enhanced and supported by the provision of universal and targeted services.
- To ensure that services are provided for children, young people and their families at appropriate times in their development and there is smooth transition across services, provided in an accessible, transparent and seamless fashion across all agencies.
- To ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil his or her potential by reducing levels of educational failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse and neglect, crime and anti-social behaviour.'

Specific objectives include:

- *To ensure that all children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health and live healthy lifestyles*
- *To help children and young people enjoy their lives and achieve their educational and social potential*
- *To ensure vulnerable children and young people receive help and support to build on their strengths and develop resilience*
- *To promote the economic well being of children and young people in order to minimise disadvantage.*
- *To reduce offending and re-offending by young people and to reduce the likelihood of a young person becoming the victim of crime.*

3. Greener Harrow

Mission

- To create a cleaner, greener, sustainable and more attractive Harrow in which to live, work and visit.

Specific objectives include:

- *Making open space more attractive and protecting biodiversity.*
- *Tackling transport and air pollution issues*
- *Encourage more sustainable development of Harrow.*

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4. Healthy Harrow

Mission

- To improve the health of local people by tackling health inequalities and enhancing health and social care services in Harrow.

Specific objectives include:

- *Improve life expectancy*
- *Tackling health inequalities*
- *Tackling coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer*

5. Learning for All

Mission

- To create a borough where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential through improved standards of education and wider participation in lifelong learning.

Specific objectives include:

- *Continuing to raise student achievement*
- *Regeneration and empowering the community through learning*

6. Making ICT work for Harrow

Mission

- To develop the availability and use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) across Harrow to enable better and faster access to information and services for the residents of Harrow and facilitate 'joined up' working between all partner organisations.

Specific objectives include:

- *Enhancing partnership working through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)*
- *Develop a coordinated and strategic approach to ICT to meet the government targets for electronic delivery of services and accessibility by the public.*

7. Regenerating Harrow

Mission

- To create a more vibrant and sustainable community with a diversity of employment, thriving businesses, a broad range of good quality homes, and a dynamic town centre.

Specific objectives include:

- *Improving and renewing the physical environment*
- *Economic and Social regeneration*
- *Increasing the supply and quality of housing to meet a range of needs.*
The London Housing Capacity Study 2004 will be used to inform the development of housing in future years.
- *Working with partners to build housing that achieves sustainable communities*
- *Renewing our town centres*

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8.Safer Harrow

Mission

- To promote and increase the safety of the whole community by working in partnership to reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime; to reduce the incidents of personal, home, fire and road accidents within Harrow.

Specific objectives include:

- *Reducing the rise in street crime and reducing the level of all burglary and auto-crime offences.*
- *Reducing the level of anti-social behaviour and fear of crime to improve the quality of life of Harrow residents. Reducing the level of malicious fires and hoax calls.*

The New Harrow Project

- 10.33 The New Harrow Project sets out a vision for the regeneration of the Borough, and provides a framework for the local management and provision of services to local communities, based on three main areas: West, Central, and East. The project aims to address the needs of the deprived and socially excluded areas in the Borough, to regenerate the area, and improve the quality of life for local people.

The Harrow Vitality Profiles

- 10.34 The Harrow Vitality Profiles were launched at the Harrow Strategic Partnership summit in May 2004. The profiles bring together a range of information about Harrow, its people and their needs.

- 10.35 Information is grouped under the following headings:

- People of Harrow (its demography)
- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Social Care
- Crime
- Economy
- Environment
- Deprivation

- 10.36 Over time the number and range of indicators will increase and the data collected will be used to reflect the needs of the local community in future strategies and developments.

Harrow Cultural Strategy – 2003-2008

- 10.37 The 'Harrow Cultural Strategy', produced by The Harrow Partnership, is a five year strategy providing a framework for cultural planning across the Borough. The vision is of a 'culturally vibrant and dynamic Harrow'.

- 10.38 The aims of the cultural strategy are to:

- a) Help improve the quality of life
- b) Promote the conditions for a culturally inclusive Harrow
- c) Stimulate the cultural economy and its contribution to making Harrow a vibrant and exciting place
- d) Promote Harrow's cultural assets – people, buildings, spaces and achievements

- 10.39 The key themes of the strategy are Social Inclusion, Access and Cultural Diversity, key areas for development include:

- **Strengthening Communities** - To develop a co-operative and participative approach to tackling issues that directly affect the quality of life of local residents and to provide an environment in which every individual can feel safe and secure, and develop their own self worth and sense of belonging, whether at work, home or play – Voluntary sector &

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Volunteering, Community celebrations & festivals, Harrow Arts Festival, Words Live Literature Festival, Black History Month, and Community safety.

- **Health & Social Care** – To improve the health of people in Harrow through empowering people to take control of their own lives, promoting healthy living, giving people a say in planning and service delivery, and providing good quality services that meet people's diverse needs and reduce inequalities in health - Older People, People with learning disabilities, Children in need, and Carers.
- **Environment & Economy** - To protect and improve the quality of life and environment in which the people of Harrow live, work and play for present and future generations, e.g. by ensuring that there are adequate housing and employment opportunities – Improvement of leisure facilities, maximising leisure opportunities in the parks & open space, Supporting local heritage – in all its diversity, Town centre developments, Arts centre feasibility, Public Art and Marketing and Communication.
- **Lifelong Learning** - To make Harrow a place where every individual has the opportunity to maximise their achievements and to offer high quality education services that meet the needs of the people of Harrow, enhance the richness of life, celebrate cultural diversity and raise educational achievement – Harrow Arts Academy, Harrow Sports Academy, Community and school-based development learning, Harrow Leisure Card, and Library developments

Corporate Priorities

10.40 The revised corporate priorities have been identified as:

- a. Strengthening Harrow's Communities
- b. Putting Harrow on the Map
- c. Valuing Harrow's Customers
- d. Improving through Partnerships
- e. Harrow – a true Learning Community

Draft Allotment Strategy 2003 -2008

Purpose of Strategy

10.41 The strategy will:

- a) Set standards for the provision of allotments in Harrow
- b) Increase the uptake of allotments
- c) Improve the standards of service provision
- d) Increase the benefits derived from allotments

10.42 In implementing the Allotment strategy a service will be developed in which people can expect:

- a) Good access, good security, well maintained main pathways, adequate water provision, and freedom from neglected plots;
- b) Opportunities and encouragement to individuals and communities wishing to be involved in allotment gardening
- c) Efficient and effective allotment administration
- d) Effective and appropriate allocation of resources
- e) Fair open and equitable treatment and safe tenure
- f) Opportunities for developing skills
- g) Fair charges and rents

AIM 1. Providing enough Allotments

10.43 The Harrow Council owns and manages approximately 1400 plots in 33 allotment sites.

10.44 In reviewing the amount of distribution of allotment provision the main considerations are:

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- a) There is no recognised national quantitative standard for allotment provision Local figures are required
 - b) The ability to respond to realistic possibilities for future change and growth in the need for allotments should be retained
 - c) Provision standards cannot be applied mechanically. Even when standards are agreed, in examining the status of any individual site local considerations and other policy frameworks must be involved
 - d) The national average of allotment provision is 6.3 per thousand population. Usage up to 2003 was declining by 1% per annum which reflects the national average
 - e) The distribution of allotment sites in Harrow is fairly even however occupancy varies across the borough.
- 10.45 The Council proposes to retain a level of provision significantly above the national average and where possible no lower than 7 plots per thousand population in any ward with plots no further than one mile by foot from any residential location.
- 10.46 To examine whether local deficiencies in allotment provision can be addressed within existing open space or by changing the provision of allotment plots to balance the need.
- 10.47 To examine alternative uses for sites or part sites where supply significantly exceeds uptake provided.
- There is consultation with representatives of the allotment movement as well as the existing tenants, and the local impact is considered
 - There are no tenants on the site/section of the site, or suitable alternatives can be found within the provision criteria above
 - Loss of the whole or part of the site would not lead to under provision against these criteria
- 10.48 When identifying alternative uses, to consider in particular – the potential for temporary and reversible uses e.g. wildflower meadows, open space.

AIM 2. Promoting Allotment Use

- 10.49 Local research has identified the main barriers and deterrents to allotment uptake to be:
- Poor condition of the allotment, particularly
 - overgrown plots, which spread weeds over adjacent plots create a sense of dereliction, and demand hard and prolonged work to convert into productive sites
 - Poor security (fencing, gates etc)
 - Poor condition of facilities (paths, water supply, storage etc)
- 10.50 Conventional promotional work would almost be pointless without improvement to the allotment sites. This would reflect the fact that there are good reasons to promote, as well as reinvest in, the product:
- The demographics of existing allotment users suggest a need to reach out to new groups of users. There is a need to promote the benefits and the diversity of possible approaches to allotment cultivation, which are available.
 - A high early drop out rate shows that new users need encouragement to plan and develop their plot.
- 10.51 The Council proposes:
- To retain existing and attract new users by focusing investment on 10 sites, chosen in partnership with allotment representatives. The improvements will be financed from existing budgets and from available grants to ensure the sites have effective fencing and gateways, adequate car parking, adequate and easy access to water supply, main access ways in good condition, particular facilities for particular needs e.g. plots suitable for the disabled.
 - To retain existing and attract new users by improving the quality of service including:
 - Control of weeds on vacant plots
 - Good customer service

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- Developing the role of site representatives with appropriate support and recognition
- Supporting the developments in cooperative purchasing and working

10.52 To attract new users by keeping some of the plots cultivated and ready for occupation, attractive financial terms, promotions targeted to communities and emphasising benefits.

AIM 3. Good Administration

- The Council proposes to introduce a computer system to manage the administration of the allotments to speed up the process and allow the eventual transfer of general administration work to general admin staff.
- To take advantage of the availability of computerised geographic information system in the parks department, to digitise allotment records with links to admin system and financial system.
- To investigate the options for increased allotment self-management and self-administration, by the sites and site representatives.
- To improve its network of contacts in the allotment movement and through regular meetings with site representatives, tenant and associations and in particular to consult these during the implementation of the strategy.

AIM 4. Environmental Sustainability

- The Council will encourage, and where possible support, good environmental practice including organic alternatives to fertilisers and pesticides. This will include technical advice and assistance with composting techniques and organisation.
- Achieve better management of existing natural features and also the creation of new wildlife habitats where a conscious decision has been taken to manage areas of unused allotment land for wildlife. This will usually involve a change of designation to open space, given the difficulty of returning a site to allotment use. Where possible, wildlife management will be in partnership with wildlife groups.

AIM 5. Providing enough Resources

Capital

- Throughout the preparation of this strategy, and through prior public consultation it has been constantly highlighted that there is need to upgrade the allotments in Harrow.
- In Aim 2 Promoting Allotment use it is proposed to focus existing budgets on ten selected sites to upgrade them to a suitable standard. This focused investment will be augmented by applying for grant aid from available organisations.

Revenue

- All this would be poor investment if not sustained. During consultation the allotment movement in Harrow emphasised that once on an improved physical and administrative footing, the service must be maintained and not allowed to drift back into dereliction.
- It is anticipated that revenue costs on the ten sites will actually reduce due to lower maintenance costs through improved occupancy rates and investment in facilities e.g. a new perimeter fence requires minimal maintenance and a full site requires no maintenance of empty plots.
- It is anticipated that the increase of occupancy rates will take the allotment service closer to the point where revenue break even is achieved. This would make the allotments less vulnerable to any future budget reductions.

Other links...

10.53 A review of wider strategies, plans and policies identifies the importance of, and contribution that good quality, accessible open space, sport and recreational facilities can make.

10.54 These include a number of service and sports specific plans:

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- a) Harrow Sports Development Strategy
- b) The Physical Activity Strategy for Harrow (draft only)
- c) The Best Value Review, and the self-assessment report for the CPA Inspection (due March 05)
- d) Public Health Report
- e) The emerging Sport and Active Recreation Strategy for the Borough

Local Demographic Profile and Census 2001

- 10.55 Despite the legacy and image of a leafy suburb, Harrow suffers from pockets of significant deprivation, similar to some inner London areas. Many of these pockets of deprivation are in the South of the Borough, which is also the area of densest, and most ethnically mixed, population. A detailed assessment of the local demographic profile is included at Appendix x.

Local Population – Age and Gender Profile

- 10.56 The population of Harrow as measured in the 2001 census was 206, 814, of which 48% were male and 52% female. The average age in Harrow is just under 38, which is slightly lower than the England and Wales (EW) as a whole. The population distribution is not dissimilar from EW; there is a slightly higher percentage of residents in the 20-29 age bracket and a slightly lower percentage in the 60-74 age bracket.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups

- 10.57 Harrow has a relatively very high proportion of black and minority ethnic groups. White ethnic groups make up fewer than 60% of the population compared to over 90% in EW. Of the remainder, the most populous ethnic group is the Asian group, who make up almost 30% of the population. Just over 6% are from Black ethnic groups compared to just over 2% in EW. This ethnic breakdown is also reflected in the difference in religious breakdown in Harrow compared to EW.

Health

- 10.58 Residents of Harrow consider themselves in comparatively good health compared to EW. Over 72% of the population describe their health as “Good” compared to just fewer than 69% of EW. A lower percentage also consider they suffer from a long-term illness. At the time of the Census, employment in Harrow was slightly higher than EW and unemployment was slightly lower. There is a higher proportion of full time students in Harrow than EW. Almost 30% of the population are educated to degree level or higher compared to almost 20% in EW.
- 10.59 Unsurprisingly for a London Borough, house prices are on average almost double that of the average for EW. Crime rates are not significantly different to that of EW as a whole, although local perceptions differ from this statistic.

Indices of Deprivation*

- 10.60 The average rank for a ward in Harrow in the 2000 Indices of Deprivation for Wards in England is 4735. There are a total of 8414 wards nationally. The highest ranked ward is Headstone North at 7714 whereas the lowest is Greenhill at 2920. Seven categories make up the index of multiple deprivation (IMD). It is worth noting that looking solely at the IMD may mask other high or low scores in individual categories. Harrow scores highly in education and access to services, but poorly in housing.

Changing Demographic Profile

- 10.61 The changing demographic profile of the Borough is an important influence and factor in developing a strategic approach to the future provision of open space, indoor and outdoor sport and recreational provision, because changes in the type and cultures of communities, plus the numbers of older and younger people affect the level and nature of demand for provision.

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Ethnicity

- 10.62 There is limited data available on the changing ethnicity of Harrow, but it is clear from the figures below that the percentage of ethnic minorities in Harrow is increasing.

	1991	2001*	Percentage Of Total Population 1991	Percentage Of Total Population 2001
Total Population	200,100	206,184	n/a	n/a
White	147,669	121,236	73.80%	58.80%
Black Caribbean	4,411	6,186	2.20%	3.00%
Black African	1,699	5,567	0.85%	2.70%
Indian	32,145	45,154	16.06%	21.90%
Pakistani	2,339	4,330	1.17%	2.10%
Bangladeshi	546	1,031	0.27%	0.50%
Other	11,291	22,680	5.64%	10.99%

*The 2001 totals were calculated from the percentage figures; therefore the actual total may differ slightly.

- 10.63 This table shows the percentages and total numbers of a sample of minority ethnic groups in Harrow. It is clear that minority ethnic groups are making up an increasing percentage of the population of Harrow in 2001 when compared to the 1991 census.

Youth Population

- 10.64 Between 1991 and 2001 there was a sharp decline in the numbers of children aged 0-4 in Harrow. This decline was almost 9%. A similar decline of over 9% was evident in the 16-29 age group, however there was an increase in the percentage population between 5 and 15. Overall there is a slight decline in residents aged under 29 in Harrow between the 1991 and 2001 census, but a slight increase in the percentage aged over 15.

	Age 0-4	Age 5-15	Age 16-29
1991	13,075	26,942	43,075
2001	12,019	29,672	39,344
% Change	-8.79%	9.20%	-9.48%

Demographic Summary

- 10.65 Harrow is one of London's outer Boroughs. It has a population of 207,000 with 41% belonging to a minority ethnic group. Harrow is an ethnically diverse Borough, with one of the largest Indian communities in the UK.

Key headline facts concerning the area and its population include:

- The Borough's population is rising steadily
- 25% of the population are under 18
- Over 50% of all over-16s are married
- Over 33% of all households have dependent children (above the London average)
- 41% of the population are from Black and Minority Ethnic, and 30% of the overall population are Asian
- 22% of the population do not own a car
- 48% male, 52% female gender split in the current population
- 37.6% unemployment, of which 27% is long term
- There is a growing number of asylum seekers, often young people in the Borough
- There are a significant number of 'looked after' young people in the Borough (varies between 160 – 180 per month)
- The proportion of under 18s in the local population is set to increase – a key factor to be reflected in future provision for leisure, given that younger people have a high propensity to participate in sport and physical activity
- The proportion of over 65s in the local population is set to decline in the future

APPENDIX 10 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT - NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL

Other Local Issues

Transport Links

- 10.66 The local road infrastructure is adequate, but can become very congested. This affects local accessibility to a range of services and facilities including leisure. Public and private transport to leisure facilities and particularly the main central Harrow Leisure Centre is affected by local congestion issues, particularly travelling from the South to the North of the Borough.

Crime

- 10.67 Harrow has good links by rail (main line and tube) and road both in and out of London. Its location at the end of Bakerloo line does, however result in some issues of anti-social behaviour. Both the station and the Harrow and Wealdstone bus station are also convenient access points for individuals involved in petty crime e.g. mugging for mobile phones, and drug misuse (Reference: Crime at Harrow Town Centre Bus Station Report, June 2003). The fear of this type of crime affects local mobility, particularly for young and older people. This perception can affect ability to access leisure provision, particularly in different areas of the Borough; this is identified in the recent Needs Assessment for the Youth Crime Reduction Strategy 2004/2004.