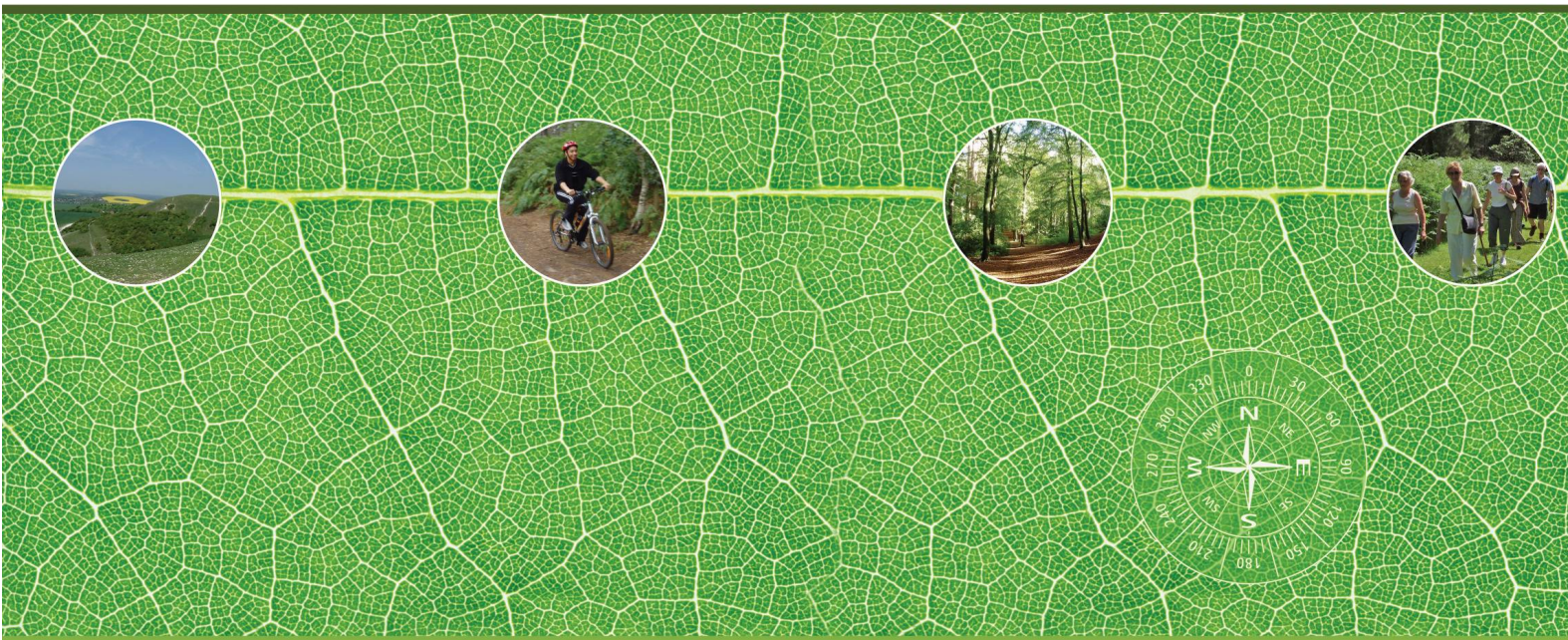




Living Networks

Wootton

Green Infrastructure Plan

September 2018



Contents

Introduction	1
Context	2
Endorsements	4
Definition of Green Infrastructure	5
GI Themed Maps and Map Information	6
Aims of this Plan	14
Links to other GI related plans	15
Methodology & Community Involvement	16
Wootton Parish GI Plan Aspirations Map	18
Wootton Parish GI Plan Aspirations Table	19
Prioritisation Activities	20
Local Green Space Designation	21
Wootton Parish GI Action Plan	23
Proposed Local Green Space Designations	Appendix 1

WOOTTON PARISH GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Introduction

The Wootton Parish Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan is one of more than 40 parish and town GI plans to have been produced across Bedfordshire.

The production of the Wootton Parish GI Plan has been funded by Wootton Parish Council / Wootton Neighbourhood Plan Group and facilitated by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC).

The production of the GI Plan was requested by Wootton Parish Council and the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group; both to be a valuable tool in its own right as a planning document and to inform policies and objectives in the emerging Wootton Neighbourhood Plan.

BRCC was appointed to facilitate the production of this Plan as it is a charity that works with local communities and landowners to conserve and enhance the landscape, wildlife and history in this area. At the heart of BRCC's work is the belief that the best results are achieved by empowering local communities, giving them a say in issues that affect them. BRCC has over 60 years experience of community development support and facilitating community consultation; and has nearly 20 years experience of planning and delivering green infrastructure projects in Bedfordshire.

The need for GI Planning has been identified at all levels, from central government, through regional bodies (the former East of England Regional Spatial Strategy and the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy, revised in 2004), to County and District levels. The Bedfordshire and Luton Strategic GI Plan was produced in 2007 by the Bedfordshire & Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium. Parish and Town GI Plans are a valuable tool for planners, committees, developers and communities themselves. They can help inform important decisions and help local people identify what is important to them, and what they would like to happen in the future. Parish and Town GI Plans have been used to support funding bids, helping people make important improvements to their local environment, and they also provide a snapshot of the local environment.

It should be acknowledged that not all of the aspirations identified will be delivered, because there are many other influencing factors, such as the views of landowners, existing planning permissions and allocations, potential future land use allocations and the cost of implementation. The value of this GI plan lies in the fact that it has been produced by local residents for their own community. It can help inform planning decisions and be used as a mechanism to identify where financial benefits from development should be directed. It cannot be used as a tool to prevent development but may influence considerations in the planning process. All aspirations which gained community support have been included; however, it remains a community owned document which, while supported by BBC, has not been formally adopted. The plan as a whole is based on a robust approach to mapping and implementing a high quality GI network for the existing, and future, residents of the parish of Wootton.

Context

Wootton is one of the largest villages within Bedford Borough – situated within the Forest of Marston Vale (one of 12 areas within England with community forest status).

Wootton or Wotton, comes from the Olde English pre-7th Century words "wudu", wood and "tun", enclosure, settlement. Later on in history, Wootton would mean a settlement by a wood. Our Wootton (Bedfordshire) was recorded as "Otone" in the Domesday Book in 1086 and "Wutton" in 1197 in the Feet of Fines. Wootton has been a popular place name through English history. In the 21st Century there are at least 18 Woottons in England and one in Australia, a few hours drive north of Sydney.

Wootton has had a long association with brickmaking with references in the 17th century to the bricks made in the tithe kiln at Wood End. In both the early and late part of the 18th century church bells were made here for several churches in Bedfordshire and adjoining counties. The early part of the 19th century saw the opening and licensing of "The Black Horse" public house, shortly followed by "The Fox and Duck" public house. The oldest remaining public house however, is the "Cock Inn". The site on which it stands first recorded a building on it in 1714. The early part of the 19th century also saw the Baptist Church built at a cost of £400. The latter part of the same century saw the opening of Wootton's first school and the Methodist Church. For sports fans, at the end of the 19th century, reference can be found to a cricket match against Kempston, which Wootton won! A few years later in 1890, Wootton Blue Cross Football club was formed.

The Domesday Book of 1086 listed Wootton as having 26 residents (20 villagers and six slaves) across ten hides. By 1901, the population had risen to 1,252. The population remained steady throughout the first half of the 20th century. However, by 1971, the population had climbed to 2,386. By 2001 that figure was 4,230. According to the 2011 Census, the area covered by Wootton civil parish had 4,156 residents who lived in 1,654 households. With the latest expansion, Sherwood Drive, Berryfields and Little Wootton, Wootton probably has close to 5,000 residents.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan survey conducted in October/November 2017 clearly demonstrate a strong communal desire to maintain the rural nature of Wootton and to enhance the Green Infrastructure, in turn protecting the local wildlife and the environment:

- The local environment should be protected for future generations (98% of respondents).
- The rural feel of Wootton should be preserved (97% of respondents).

Wootton deserves more open spaces and as part of the Neighbourhood Plan this Green Infrastructure Report embraces the overwhelming support from residents for the allocation and use of identified parcels of land for public open space in Wootton, including land between Hall End Road, Keeley Lane and Canons Close for use as:

- Wild British meadows (91% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing to the proposal);
- A country park (89% of respondents) or;
- Community orchard (79% of respondents).

In addition to the above points, the same survey placed strong emphasis on the planting of trees (93% of respondents) and improved maintenance of existing rights of way or new provision of footpaths and bridleways to improve accessibility to Wootton's distinctive landscape and to encourage healthy leisure opportunities and a sense of wellbeing for residents.

There is further recognition by Wootton residents that all future developments should fully embrace the community's distinctiveness and not strangle or encroach on the limited buffer zones that exist between neighbouring communities. Natural features such as hedgerows and small woodlands, ridge and furrow fields and ponds and streams are significant landscape components and must be protected to deter coalescence with neighbouring settlements.

Endorsements

Endorsement by Wootton Parish Council:

Wootton Parish Council is happy to endorse this Green Infrastructure Plan, which has been produced by current residents of the parish, for this and future generations. In endorsing this Plan, the Parish Council confirms its support for the concept of GI Planning and the methodology used to produce the Plan. In addition, the Parish Council will seek to be an active partner in the delivery of this Plan, leading and assisting the implementation of those actions which fall into the remit and plans of the Council.

The Parish Council will regularly review the Plan, reporting to the community activity undertaken and planned, both by the Council and others, towards implementing the Plan.

Endorsement by Wootton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:

Wootton Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is pleased to endorse this Green Infrastructure Plan. It has been produced using an agreed and well developed process involving current residents in a series of focussed working groups. As such it represents their more detailed views on how the issues previously identified can be addressed in the future. It sets a clear plan for the future that will be supported by Local Planning Policies in the forthcoming Wootton Neighbourhood Plan.

Support from BRCC:

BRCC will support the community of Wootton in implementing this Plan where appropriate and feasible, providing advice, support in securing funding and leading practical works.

Definition of Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure is the network of green spaces, access routes, wildlife habitats, landscapes and historic features which provide:

- a healthy and diverse environment
- attractive places to live and visit
- a good quality of life
- a sustainable future

Green Infrastructure assets include:

- Accessible green space
- Country parks
- Green corridors
- Urban parks and gardens, habitats for wildlife including nature reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife Sites
- Historic parks and gardens and historic landscapes
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Waterways and water bodies, including flooded quarries
- Public rights of way and cycleways
- Allotments
- Children's play space
- Formal sports facilities
- Cemeteries

It is important to plan the GI network in the same way that we plan other networks and facilities, so that we can safeguard and enhance the environment and meet the needs of a wide range of people, both now and in the future. Green infrastructure also provides social and economic benefits, including:

- Places that can be used as a focus for community activity and events
- Opportunities to keep fit and healthy
- Helps support the local economy, including village shops, pubs and B&Bs
- Links between town and country helping people in rural areas to access facilities
- Helps reduce the use of cars

Green Infrastructure Themes

Green Infrastructure is composed of 5 themes; landscape, history, biodiversity, access and open space. These themes are presented separately to enable the different elements of GI to be considered both individually in detail and as part of the integrated GI network.

GI Themed Maps and Map Information

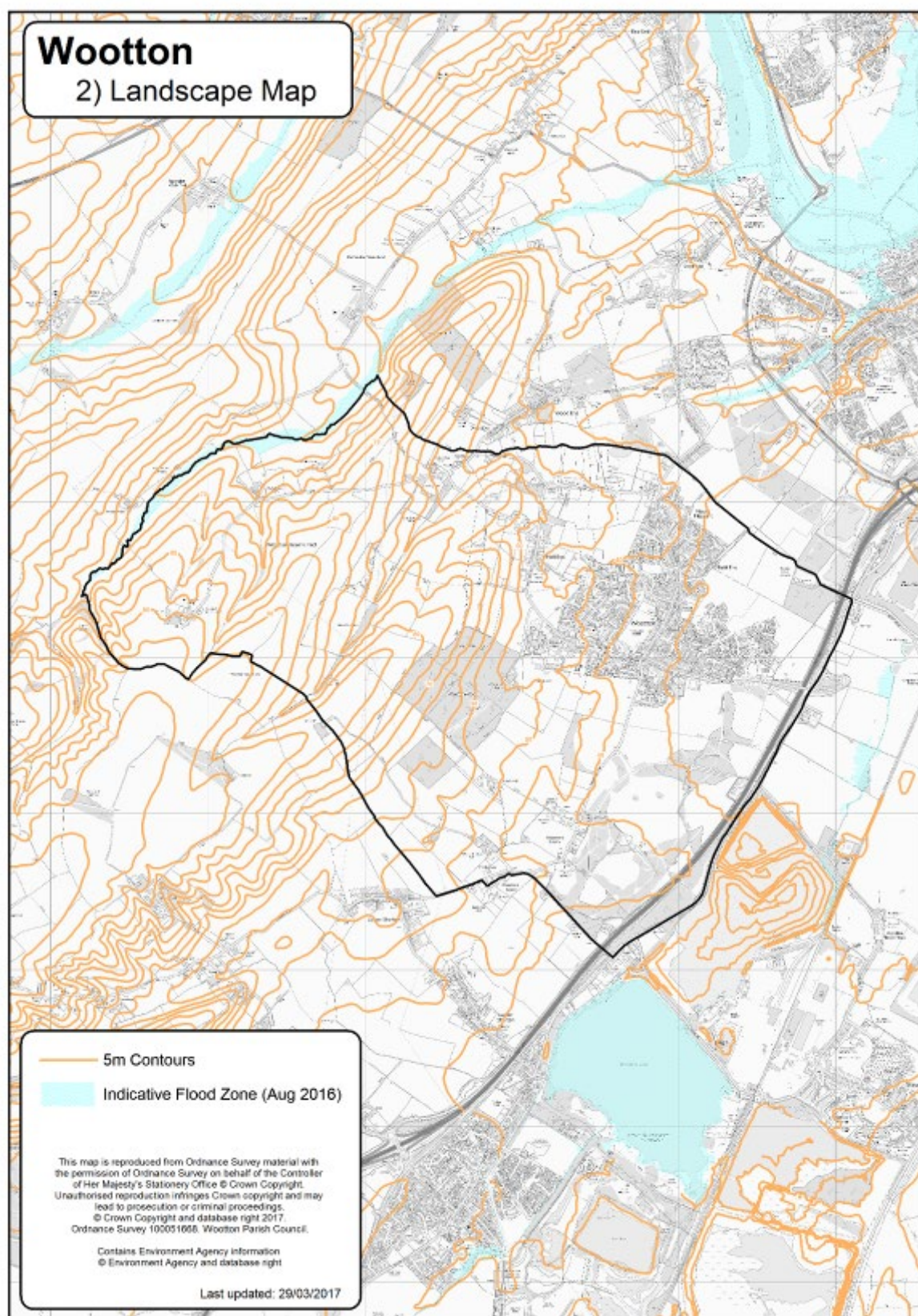
Context Map (Figure 1)

The Context map shows Wootton in relation to the villages, road routes and countryside that surround the parish.



Landscape Map (Figure 2)

The Landscape Map shows the position of contours within Wootton Parish. It also shows the areas at risk from a 1% chance flood from a river. Contours and flood zones can be useful when creating green infrastructure corridors.



Biodiversity Map (Figure 3)

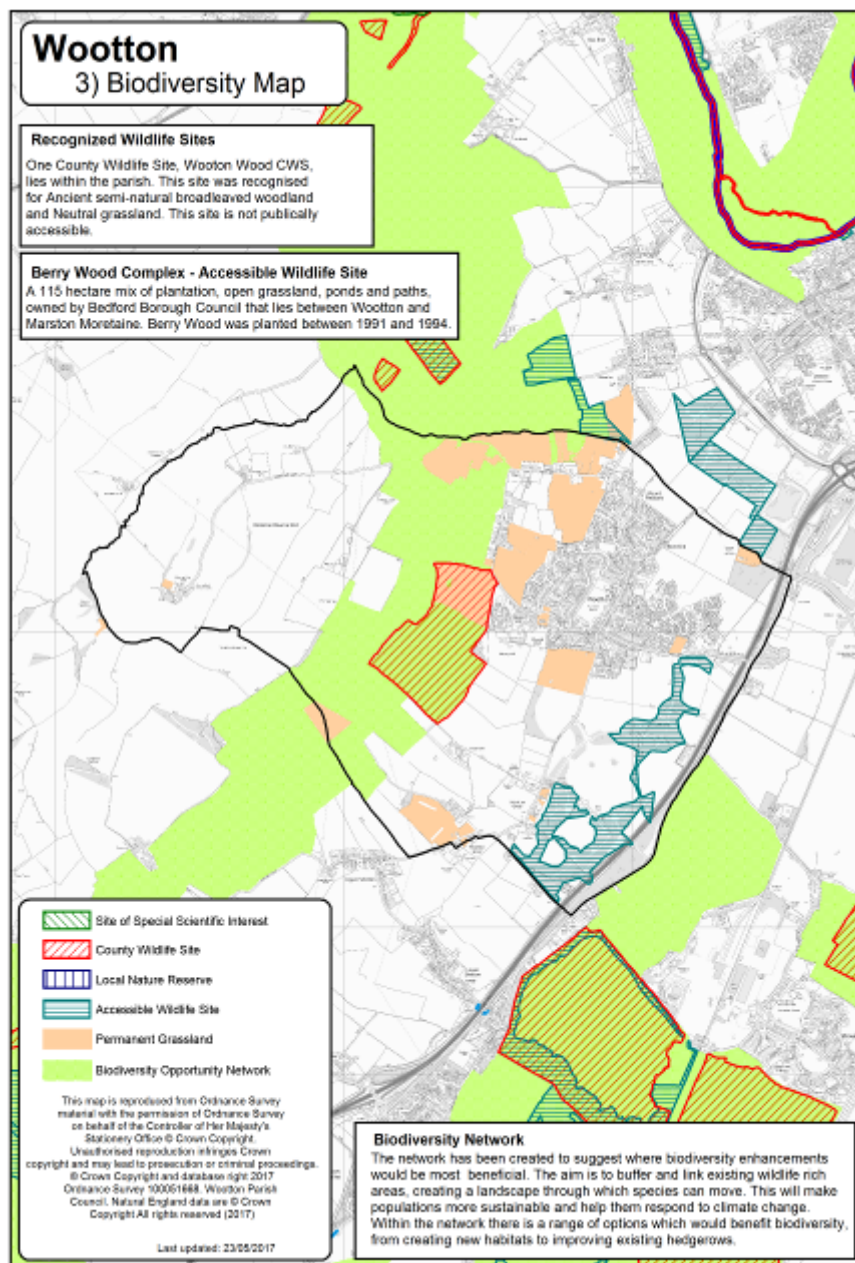
One site within the parish has been recognized as a County Wildlife Site (CWS). This site contains a mixture of plantation, open grassland, ponds and paths.

County Wildlife Sites are sites that have been recognized as important for wildlife when assessed against a set of criteria. The selection guidelines consider aspects of the site such as size, diversity, rarity, fragility, typicalness and recorded history.

Recognition as a CWS does not confer protection on the site, or right of access, however for any significant change of land use the planning authorities will expect the wildlife interest to be taken into account alongside other normal planning considerations. Local conservation organisations may comment on planning applications that could affect a CWS.

Within the parish there are approximately 89 hectares of land that may have been grassland for around 25 years or more.

Green infrastructure planning can help to link or buffer existing wildlife sites, providing them with increased protection from harmful activities and making their wildlife populations more sustainable. The Biodiversity Network suggests where this could be most beneficial.



If you would like further information or advice about the wildlife in your parish, please contact The Wildlife Trust (01234 364213 or bedfordshire@wildlifebcn.org). The Bedfordshire and Luton Biodiversity Recording and Monitoring Centre (BRMC) has a wealth of records about the species seen in your parish and is beginning to compile habitat data. If you would like to access this resource please contact them (01234 355435 or brmc@bedsbionet.org.uk).

Historic Environment Map (Figure 4)

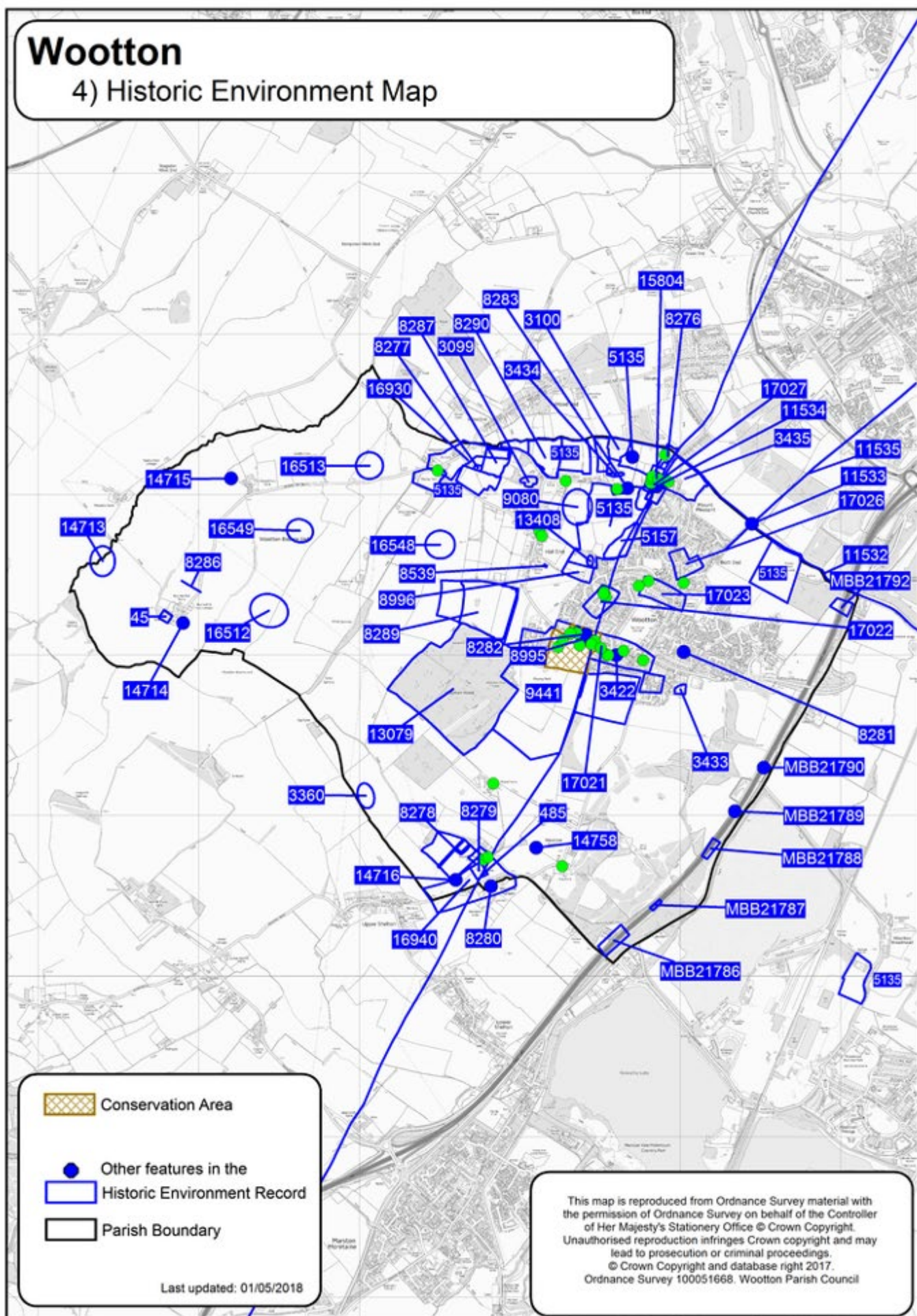
A variety of historic sites are shown on this map. Integrating these sites into green infrastructure plans can help to preserve parish history. The numbers next to most of the site boundaries represent locations in the Historic Environment Record (HER) which is maintained at Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP. The table below gives a brief summary of each numbered site; more details are available from the HER, along with historic maps of your parish. Due to the scale of this map only Listed Buildings are shown, however, there are many other historically important buildings recorded. For advice or further information about historic areas in your parish please contact the Historic Environment Information Officer at Bedford Borough Council (01234 718560 or vanessa.clarke@bedford.gov.uk or use the online Heritage Gateway <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

Number	Feature
45	MOAT, Bourne End Farm
485	ROMAN ROAD (Viatores no 173)
3099	BRICK FIELD & KILN
3100	BRICK FIELD, NW of Keeley Green
3360	CROPMARK
3422	MOAT Church End
3433	BRICKWORKS, S of Field Road
3434	EARTHWORKS, Keeley Lane
3435	MOAT & EARTHWORKS, Keeley Green
5135	RIDGE AND FURROW, Wootton historic parish
5157	GRAVEL PITS S of Keeley Green
8276	MOAT, 157 Bedford Road, Wootton
8278	EARTHWORKS & HOLLOW WAYS
8279	MOAT, Wootton Green
8280	STANDPIPE
8281	STANDPIPE
8282	STANDPIPE
8283	STANDPIPE
8286	HOLLOW WAY
8287	BRICK KILN & PITS
8289	KILN
8290	KILN
8995	ST MARY THE VIRGIN'S PARISH CHURCHYARD
8996	WOOTTON CEMETERY
9080	CROPMARKS, Tinkers Corner

Number	Feature
9441	WOOTTON HOUSE GROUNDS
11532	LANE, on Kempston/Wootton Boundary
11533	POT CROSS
11534	KEELEY GREEN
11535	PORTWAY, Kempston-Wootton
11538	DOVECOT Keeley Green
11582	BOURNE END FARM
13079	WOOTTON WOOD Ancient Woodland
13408	PREHISTORIC, ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL FINDS, West of Canons Close
14713	RING DITCHES
14714	CROPMARKS, Wootton
14715	CIRCULAR CROPMARK, Wootton
14716	CROPMARKS, Wootton
14758	CROPMARKS
15804	ROMAN OCCUPATION, 2 Keeley Lane
16512	CROPMARKS, East of Bourne End Farm
16513	ENCLOSURE CROPMARK, North of Whitworth's Farm
16548	CROPMARK, South West of Vine Cottage Farm
16549	?CROPMARK, South of Bourne End Road
16930	WOOD END MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
16940	WOOTTON GREEN MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
17021	CHURCH END MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
17022	TAGGS END MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
17023	CAUSEWAY END MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
17026	BOTT END MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
17027	KEELEY GREEN MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT
MBB21786	UNDATED FEATURES
MBB21787	LATE IRON AGE/EARLY ROMAN FEATURES
MBB21788	LATE IRON AGE/EARLY ROMAN PITS
MBB21789	UNDATED PIT
MBB21790	UNDATED DITCHES
MBB21792	UNDATED DITCHES

Wootton

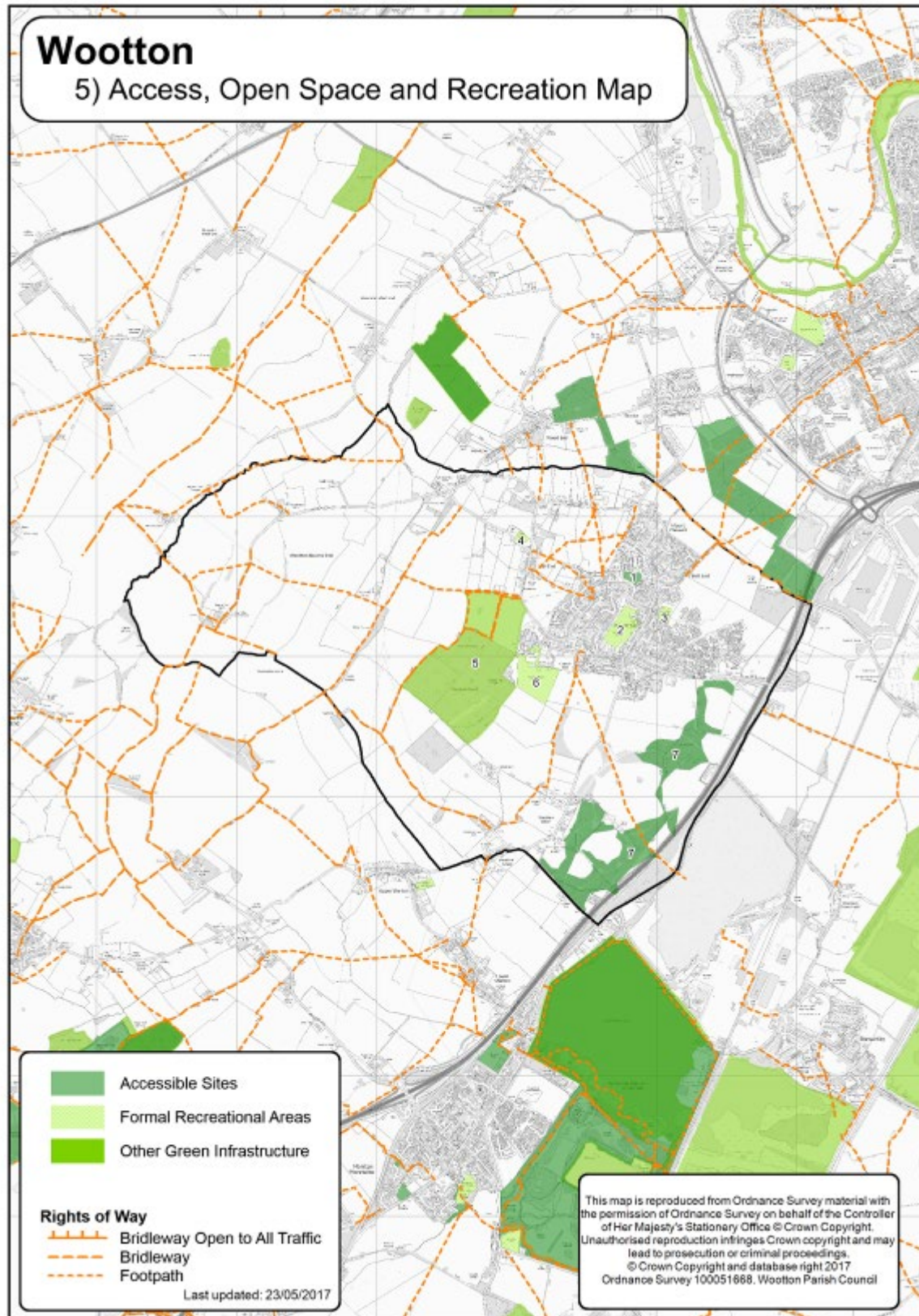
4) Historic Environment Map



Open Space, Access and Recreation Map (Figure 5)

This map shows the positions of open spaces (e.g. golf courses, recreation grounds or school playing fields) within your parish. Not all of them are accessible to the public. Rights of Way are key to providing access to open spaces within green infrastructure plans. When creating networks access barriers, such as busy roads, would need to be considered.

The main (illustrated and labelled) greenspaces are summarized below the map.



Main greenspaces in Wootton (illustrated on above map)

Ref.	Name	Grid Reference	Publicly accessible?
1	Amenity Open Space	TL008455	Yes
2	Recreation Ground	TL007452	Yes
3	Football Ground	TL010452	No
4	Allotment Gardens	TL000458	No
5	Wootton Wood CWS	SP994449	No
6	Wootton Upper School Playing Field	TL001448	No
7	Berry Wood Complex	TL011443	Yes

Aims of this Plan

To identify the key existing natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets, accessible greenspace and rights of way and to plan new features that will provide a connected network of green infrastructure for the benefit of present and future generations.

Objectives

To create a comprehensive document that will assist the local community to:

- Protect and where possible enhance the landscape, biodiversity and the historic environment
- Improve access and links for people and wildlife
- Provide a multi-functional green infrastructure network
- Provide a source of information and guidance for planners, landowners and developers in formulating land use plans
- Promote community involvement
- Identify projects and produce an action plan to implement projects.

Links to other GI related plans

The Bedfordshire & Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan

The Bedfordshire & Luton Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan (2007) identifies a broad, spatial vision for green infrastructure across the area and highlights 11 strategic GI corridors across the county. The parish of Wootton lies within the Lower Great Ouse River Valley Corridor.

The Bedford Green Infrastructure Plan

The Bedford Green Infrastructure Plan 2009 complements the Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan for Bedfordshire and Luton by identifying more detailed spatial priorities across Bedford Borough and providing detailed background information to support policies and proposals in the Bedford Borough Local Plan.

Bedford Borough Local Plan (2030)

The plan, which sets out “how much growth there should be in the borough in coming years and where it should take place”, has been drafted for consultation in Autumn 2018. One of the emerging objectives for the plan is to develop a strong and multifunctional urban and rural green infrastructure network through protecting, enhancing, extending and linking landscapes, woodland, biodiversity sites, heritages sites, green spaces and paths. This objective is interpreted within both Policy 29S – Place Making, and Policy 36S-Green Infrastructure. In addition, Policy 46 of the emerging plan deals solely with Local Green Space and states that development proposals which result in the loss of part or all of a Local Green Space or would have a negative impact on the features that make it locally significant will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Sustainable Communities Strategy for Bedford

The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Bedford Borough (2009 -2021), in its Environment and Climate Change theme states that, “We are supporting community led action to improve and care for the local environment including community woodland, allotment, orchard and heritage projects.”

There is also recognition of the importance of green infrastructure in the Strategy, which refers to the fact that, “The extent and quality of our green infrastructure contributes greatly to our quality of life, providing people with opportunities for sport, recreation or just quiet contemplation.”

Bedford Borough Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan

Policy CP 22 (Green Infrastructure) of the Bedford Borough Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (adopted 2008) states that, “Existing green infrastructure of both local and strategic importance will be protected from development. Where appropriate, development will provide green infrastructure in accordance with adopted local standards.”

Methodology & Community Involvement

A methodology for the production of Parish Green Infrastructure Plans was developed in 2007 and 2008 by the PGIP Working Group and endorsed by the Beds & Luton Green Infrastructure Consortium (now the Beds & Luton Local Nature Partnership). This standard methodology has been used to produce 40 parish-level GI Plans across Bedfordshire.

As with all GI Plans, two community workshops were held, to which local stakeholders and the wider community were invited.

At the first workshop (15 June 2017) the consultees - in 7 groups - were provided with a map pack summarising all of the information currently known about the parish's GI assets (see pages 6 – 12 above) and a large scale workshop map on which to mark their ideas and aspirations. The main headings for the mapping exercise were as follows:

Access: Existing routes that consultees felt were in need of improving or upgrading and future routes for enhancing access throughout the parish;
Sites: Existing and future provision, types of habitats and landscapes and access;
Views: Into and out of the parish;
Other features: To be created or enhanced.

Following the workshop, the marked aspirations that gained broad support among the consultees were transferred onto a new map which was then presented at the second workshop (1 November 2017) where they were reviewed, added to and prioritised by the consultees - as noted on page 20.

Between the two workshops a drop-in session for the whole community - presenting the revised map for further comments and aspirations - was held as part of the Wootton Fun Fest (8 July 2017), to increase the level and range of input into the plan. Attendance at the 3 consultation activities totalled 115.

The final aspirations map is shown on page 18 and the aspirational GI enhancements table (from the map) is repeated for ease of reading at page 19.

Across the 3 consultation activities, there were good numbers of both male and female attendees, though with a slightly higher representation of males. The gender breakdown of attendees at each activity is given below.

Workshop 1		Drop-in		Workshop 2		Totals	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
23	16	17	18	21	20	61	54
39		35		41		115	

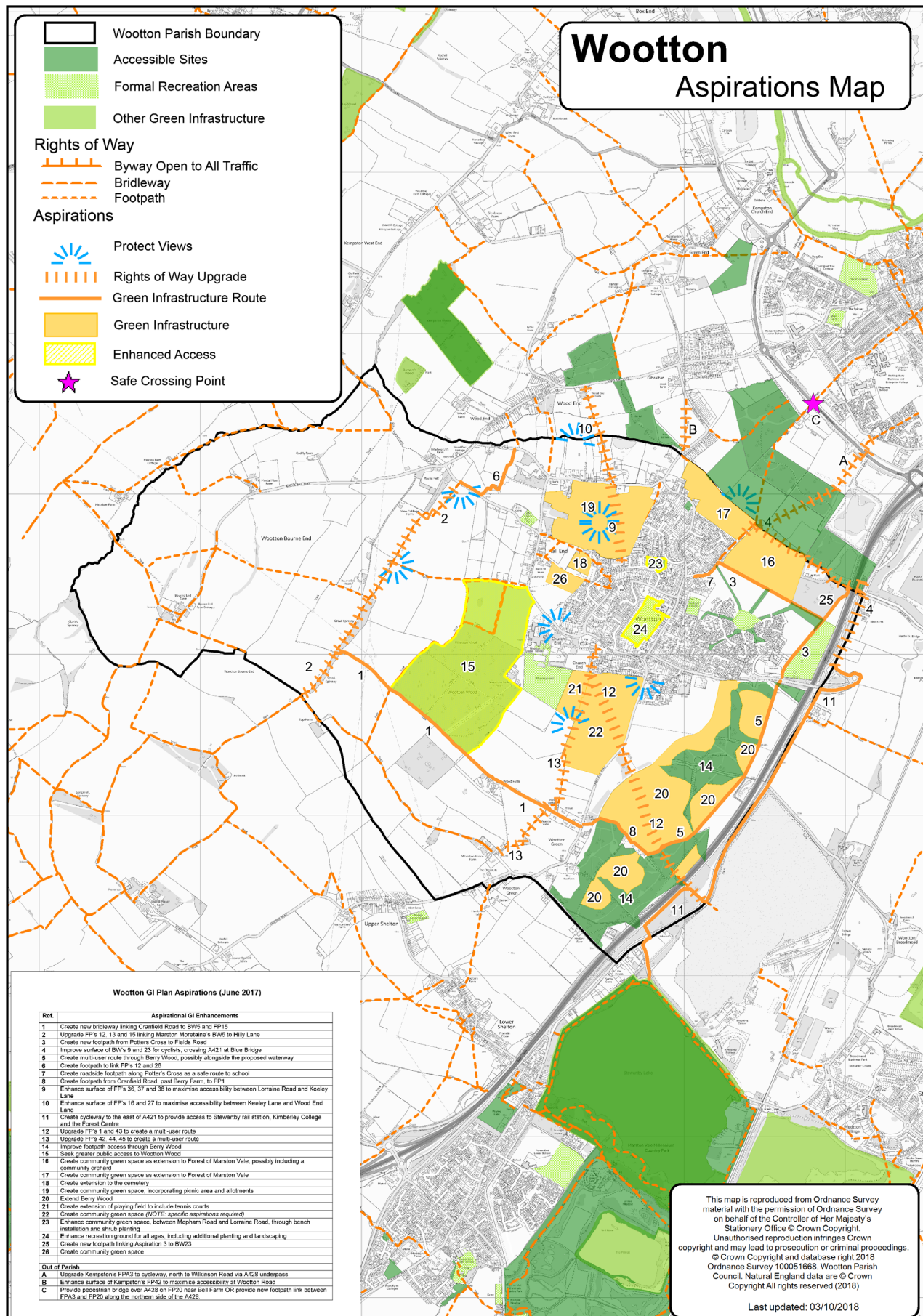
As with many PGIPs, the majority of attendees were over the age of 45. The age breakdown of attendees at the two workshops and the drop-in is given below.

	Under 18		18-24		25-44		45 -59		60-74		75+		Total
Activity	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Workshop 1	0	0	0	0	1	3	9	5	11	7	2	1	39
Drop-in	0	1	0	0	3	3	5	6	7	7	2	1	35
Workshop 2	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	6	15	13	1	0	41
													115

Also, as with many PGIP's, the majority of attendees had lived in the parish for more than 11 years. The breakdown of length of residence of attendees at the two workshops is given below.

	<1 yr		1-5 yrs		6-10 yrs		11-25 yrs		>25 yrs		Total
Activity	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Workshop 1	0	1	5	5	1	0	9	5	8	5	39
Drop-in											35
Workshop 2	2	2	0	0	1	1	5	7	13	10	41
											115

Wootton Parish Green Infrastructure Aspirations Map



The table above is enlarged on the following page for ease of use.

Ref.	Wootton Aspirational GI Enhancements (each numbered aspiration relates to a point on the previous map)
1	Create new bridleway linking Cranfield Road to BW5 and FP15
2	Upgrade FP's 12, 13 and 15 linking Marston Moreteyne's BW5 to Hilly Lane
3	Create new footpath from Potters Cross to Fields Road
4	Improve surface of BW's 9 and 23 for cyclists, crossing A421 at Blue Bridge
5	Create multi-user route through Berry Wood, possibly alongside the proposed waterway
6	Create footpath to link FP's 12 and 26
7	Create roadside footpath along Potter's Cross as a safe route to school
8	Create footpath from Cranfield Road, past Berry Farm, to FP1
9	Enhance surface of FP's 36, 37 and 38 to maximise accessibility between Lorraine Road and Keeley Lane
10	Enhance surface of FP's 16 and 27 to maximise accessibility between Keeley Lane and Wood End Lane
11	Create cycleway to the east of A421 to provide access to Stewartby rail station, Kimberley College and the Forest Centre
12	Upgrade FP's 1 and 43 to create a multi-user route
13	Upgrade FP's 42, 44, 45 to create a multi-user route
14	Improve footpath access through Berry Wood
15	Seek greater public access to Wootton Wood
16	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest, possibly including a community orchard
17	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest
18	Create extension to the cemetery
19	Create community green space, which could include wildflower meadows, country park, community orchard or designated picnic area(s)
20	Extend Berry Wood
21	Create extension of playing field to include tennis courts
22	Create community green space (<i>NOTE: specific aspirations required</i>)
23	Enhance community green space, between Mephram Road and Lorraine Road, through bench installation and shrub planting
24	Enhance recreation ground for all ages, including additional planting and landscaping
25	Create new footpath linking Aspiration 3 to BW23
26	Create community green space
Out of Parish	
A	Upgrade Kempston's FPA3 to cycleway, north to Wilkinson Road via A428 underpass
B	Enhance surface of Kempston's FP42 to maximise accessibility at Wootton Road
C	Provide pedestrian bridge over A428 on FP20 near Bell Farm <u>OR</u> provide new footpath link between FPA3 and FP20 along the northern side of the A428

Where future built developments are proposed on land where GI aspirations have been identified, consideration should be given as to whether the aspiration(s) can be delivered either as part of a potential built development, or whether an alternative location for the aspiration(s) can be found. Such developments may contribute, either financially or through direct works, to the implementation of GI aspirations.

Prioritisation activities

At the final workshop, three prioritisation activities were undertaken.

Groups were asked to discuss the aspirations and identify and rank their top 4 aspirations. Top ranked aspirations were given a score of 5 points, with the 2nd aspiration scoring 4 points, etc. The scores from the 7 groups were then collated to give an overall list of priorities. The results of this activity, identifying the clear top 4 aspirations as agreed in the groups, are shown below.

Priority Ranking	Aspiration Reference	Priority Aspirations as identified by Workshop Groups
1	16	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest, possibly including a community orchard
2	19	Create community green space, which could include wildflower meadows, country park, community orchard or designated picnic area(s)
3	17	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest
4	20	Extend Berry Wood

Individuals were also asked to identify their top priority aspirations. The purpose of this second prioritisation activity was to ensure that quieter group members, or those whose views were in a minority in their groups, had an equal say. Individuals were each given 3 'votes' and instructed to use only 1 vote per aspiration, to avoid skewed results. See below for the clear top five priorities as identified by individuals.

Priority Ranking	Aspiration Reference	Priority Aspirations as identified by Individuals
1	16	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest, possibly including a community orchard
2	17	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest
3	20	Extend Berry Wood
4	19	Create community green space, which could include wildflower meadows, country park, community orchard or designated picnic area(s)
5	11	Create cycleway to the east of A421 to provide access to Stewartby rail station, Kimberley College and the Forest Centre

It is noted that there is a very close correlation between the top four priorities of the groups and the individuals.

It is also noted that, despite the significant number of aspirations relating to rights of way and routes generally, only one of these has emerged as a priority aspiration by the consultees. Due to the nature of access routes and their integral importance within the parish – and to the other prioritised aspirations - it is recommended that a more holistic approach to creating and improving an access network is adopted.

Important Green Spaces

Similar to the above exercises, groups were also asked to identify and rank their most important green spaces in the parish.

The results of this activity, shown below in table form, provide a clear consensus as to the groups' top three most important spaces – Berry Wood, the Recreation Ground, and the Amenity Open Space.

Priority ranking	Green space reference	Site	Grid reference
1	7	Berry Wood Complex	TL011443
2	2	Recreation Ground	TL007452
3	1	Amenity Open Space	TL008455
4	5	Wootton Wood CWS	SP994449
5	3	Football Ground	TL010452
6	6	Wootton Upper School Playing Field	TL001448
7	4	Allotment Gardens	TL000458

Local Green Space Designation

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. A new designation to protect local green areas of particular importance to local communities has been introduced. The Local Green Space designation will allow communities to identify and protect areas that are of value to the community through local and neighbourhood plans.

The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

In addition to the prioritisation of the complete set of aspirations, a further over-arching priority agreed at the workshop was to propose that the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan seeks Local Green Space (LGS) designation on the parish's most important green spaces.

The following LGS assessment has been undertaken by BRCC using a pilot exercise being developed by GI Planning practitioners in Bedfordshire. The assessment tool has been developed (using local experience in Bedfordshire and best practice from elsewhere in the country) as a methodology for identifying spaces suitable for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS) according to the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and subsequent Government guidance (Planning Practice Guidance: Local Green Space designation).

Stage 1 Assessment

The stage 1 assessment is designed to filter out which sites do not meet the basic LGS eligibility criteria. Sites which have current planning permission, or have been allocated for development, or have an existing designation giving the same level of protection as a LGS designation, do not meet the criteria and are not carried forward to the stage 2 assessment.

	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
Amenity open space	N	N	N	Y
Recreation ground	N	N	N	Y
Football ground	N	N	N	Y
Allotment gardens	N	N	N	Y
Wootton Wood CWS	N	N	N	Y
Playing field	N	N	N	Y
Berry Wood (west)*	N	N	N	Y
Berry Wood (north)*	N	N	N	Y

*For the purposes of this assessment, only the individual parcels of woodland within the Berry Wood complex which are of greatest value / proximity to the community have been included.

Stage 2 Assessment – Overall Summary

The Stage 2 assessment identifies 5 sites – in bold below - to be proposed for LGS designation:

No.	Site Name	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
1	Amenity open space (Lorraine Rd)	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	Recreation ground	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Football ground	Y	Y	N	N
4	Allotment gardens	Y	Y	Y	Y
5	Wootton Wood CWS	N	N	Y	N
6	Playing field	n/a	n/a	n/a	N
7	Berry Wood (west)	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Berry Wood (north)	Y	Y	Y	Y

Full details of the Stage 2 assessment are given at Appendix 1 in the report: Proposed Local Green Space Designations for Wootton, August 2018

Wootton Parish Green Infrastructure Plan Action Plan

[1] Lead Partner	Organisation / individual taking the lead in the planning and implementation of the aspiration (See key below table)
[2] Other Partners	Other organisations to be involved in the planning and implementation of the aspiration
[3] Resourcing	Likely level of funding needed: Low (achievable with no or minimal funding), Medium (achievable with moderate new funding), High (achievable with significant new funding)
[4] Timescale	Likely date of implementation: Short 2018-20; Medium 2022-24; Long 2025+

WPC*	Wootton Parish Council	LO	Landowner
BBC*	Bedford Borough Council	IDB	Internal Drainage Board
BRCC*	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity	KRPC	Kempston Rural Parish Council
WNPSG*	Wootton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group		

Ref	Aspiration	Suggested Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
1	Create new bridleway linking Cranfield Road to BW5 and FP15	WNPSG	BBC WPC LO	M	M	Establish LO(s), was Mr Cook
2	Upgrade FP's 12, 13 and 15 linking Marston Moreteyne's BW5 to Hilly Lane	WNPSG	BBC WPC LO	M	M	Establish LO(s), was Mr Cook
3	Create new footpath from Potters Cross to Fields Road	WNPSG	BBC WPC LO (Persimmon)	M	S/M	Ascertain funding in place
4	Improve surface of BW's 9 and 23 for cyclists, crossing A421 at Blue Bridge	WNPSG	BBC IDB	L/M	S/M	Liaising with LO's
5	Create multi-user route through Berry Wood, possibly alongside the proposed waterway	WNPSG	BBC BBC (Properties)	L/M	S/M	Liaising with LO's

Ref	Aspiration	Suggested Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
			PC LO			
6	Create new footpath to link FP's 12 and 26	WNPSG	BBC LO	M	M	Establish LO's
7	Create roadside footpath along Potter's Cross as a safe route to school	WNPSG	BBC (Transport Policy) PC LO (Persimmon)	L	M	Ongoing works – liaise with BBC
8	Create footpath from Cranfield Road, past Berry Farm, to FP1	WNPSG	BBC BBC (Properties) PC	L	S	Liaise with BBC (RoW)
9	Enhance surface of FP's 36, 37 and 38 to maximise accessibility between Lorraine Road and Keeley Lane	WNPSG	BBC LO	L	S/M	Liaise with LO. Investigate type of surfacing required. Improve specific sections e.g. at pinch points.
10	Enhance surface of FP's 16 and 27 to maximise accessibility between Keeley Lane and Wood End Lane	WNPSG	BBC LO	L/M	S/M	Establish LO Investigate current surface issues
11	Create cycleway to the east of A421 to provide access to Stewartby rail station, Kimberley College and the Forest Centre	WNPSG	BBC LO's	M/H	L	Investigate - development may preclude / alter route of aspiration (outside of Parish)
12	Upgrade FP's 1 and 43 to create a multi-user route	WNPSG	BBC LO's / Developers	M/H	L	Investigate - development may preclude / alter route of aspiration.
13	Upgrade FP's 42, 44, 45 to create a multi-user route	WNPSG	BBC LO's	M/H	M	Liaise with LO
14	Improve footpath access through Berry Wood	WNPSG	BBC	M	M	Investigate need and suitability of new surfacing
15	Seek greater public access to Wootton Wood	WNPSG	LO	M	M	Establish and liaise with LO
16	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest, possibly	WNPSG	LO	M	L	Liaise with LO

Ref	Aspiration	Suggested Lead Partner [1]	Other Partners [2]	Resourcing [3]	Timescale [4]	Next Steps
	including a community orchard					
17	Create community green space as extension to Marston Vale Community Forest	WNPSG	LO	M	L	Liaise with LO
18	Create extension to the cemetery	WNPSG	LO	M	L	Continue discussions with LO
19	Create community green space, which could include wildflower meadows, country park, community orchard or designated picnic area(s)	WNPSG	LO	M	L	Liaise with LO
20	Extend Berry Wood	WNPSG	-	-	-	Development planned in this area
21	Create extension of playing field to include tennis courts	WNPSG	LO	-	-	Establish LO, investigate access issues (re. school playing field)
22	Create community green space (<i>NOTE: specific aspirations required</i>)	WNPSG	LO	-	-	Discuss access and possible future use
23	Enhance community green space, between Mepham Road and Lorraine Road, through bench installation and shrub planting	WNPSG	LO	L	L/M	Liaise with LO Investigate 'need' at this location
24	Enhance recreation ground for all ages, including additional planting and landscaping	WNPSG	LO	M	M	Noted that most facilities are already in place
25	Create new footpath linking Aspiration 3 to BW23	WNPSG	BBC LO	M	L	Liaise with LO (Dependent on Asp 3)
26	Create community green space	WNPSG	LO	M	M	Liaise with LO
A	Upgrade Kempston's FPA3 to cycleway, north to Wilkinson Road via A428 underpass	KRPC	BCC LO			Outside of parish
B	Enhance surface of Kempston's FP42 to maximise accessibility at Wootton Road	KRPC	BCC LO			Outside of parish
C	Provide pedestrian bridge over A428 on FP20 near Bell Farm OR provide new footpath link between FPA3 and FP20 along the northern side of the A428	KRPC	BCC LO	H	H	Outside of parish

Proposed Local Green Space Designations for Wootton



**This report is an assessment of sites identified, by the local community, in the
Wootton Green Infrastructure Plan to be considered for
Local Green Space Designation within the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan**



August 2018

WOOTTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – LGS ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Assessment

The Stage 1 assessment is designed to filter out which sites - proposed for LGS Designation by the 2018 Wootton GI Plan - do not meet the basic LGS eligibility criteria. Sites which have current planning permission, or have been allocated for development, or have an existing designation giving the same level of protection as a LGS designation, do not meet the criteria and are not carried forward to the Stage 2 assessment.

No.	Site Name	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
1	Amenity open space	N	N	N	Y
2	Recreation ground	N	N	N	Y
3	Football ground	N	N	N	Y
4	Allotment gardens	N	N	N	Y
5	Wootton Wood CWS	N	N	N	Y
6	Playing field	N	N	N	Y
7	Berry Wood (west)	N	N	N	Y
8	Berry Wood (north)	N	N	N	Y

The above Draft Stage 1 assessment has been undertaken to give an initial indication as to whether any of the sites - identified by the community as important and progressing through the Stage 1 assessment – do meet the LGS designation criteria.

Possible LGS's – to undergo stage 2 assessment



Site numbers relate to the table on the following page.

Indicative areas / boundaries only – see individual site assessments for more detail.

Stage 2 Assessment – Overall Summary

No.	Site Name	Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
1	Amenity open space (Lorraine Rd)	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	Recreation ground	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Football ground	Y	Y	N	N
4	Allotment gardens	Y	Y	Y	Y
5	Wootton Wood CWS	N	N	Y	N
6	Playing field	n/a	n/a	n/a	N
7	Berry Wood (west)	Y	Y	Y	Y
8	Berry Wood (north)	Y	Y	Y	Y

Stage 2 Assessment – Individual Site Assessments

The Stage 2 assessment assesses whether the proposed LGS meets the following criteria:

1. The space is not an extensive tract of land and is local in character
2. The space is within close proximity of the community it serves
3. The space is demonstrably special to the local community and holds particular local significance.

The 3rd of these criteria is sub-divided into:

- a. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its beauty
- b. The proposed space is of particular local historic significance
- c. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its recreational value
- d. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its tranquillity
- e. The proposed space is of particular local significance because of its wildlife
- f. The proposed space is of particular local significance for another reason

To meet the Stage 2 assessment criteria, a space has to fulfil criteria 1 and 2; and at least 1 a-f components of criteria 3.

Site Name	Amenity open space (Lorraine Rd)
Site Plan	
Site Area	0.80ha
Site Location	This site, on Lorraine Rd, is within a residential area towards the northern end of the settlement.
Site Description	This site is an open area of amenity grass surrounded by houses in a quiet residential area. Beauty The area, which includes x2 impressive mature trees, is attractive. Historical Significance None identified Recreational Value The area is used by local children for informal recreation; and by local dog walkers. The area provides the only informal green space recreation opportunities for residents in the northern part of Wootton. Tranquillity Given its setting in a residential area, with a quiet road forming x1 boundary, the site is peaceful.

	Wildlife Being a site of regularly mown amenity grass, there is little wildlife present. The trees do provide habitat for a number of bird and insect species. Significant for another reason None identified.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Site Name	Recreation ground
Site Plan	
Site Area	3.40ha
Site Location	The site is in the centre of the community, west of the houses along Bedford Rd.
Site Description	This site is set in the heart of the community and provides for a range of formal and informal recreation opportunities. Largely mown grass for sports pitches, the site also includes a children's play area, a MUGA and a skate-park. Beauty While not 'beautiful', the site is not unattractive. Historical Significance This site does contain trace elements of ridge and furrow earthworks (BBHER5135) showing that it was located in open fields during at least part of the medieval period. Recreational Value

	The site is at the heart of community life, providing a wide range of recreational opportunities (from informal dog walking and jogging; to organised sports). Recreational facilities include a children's play area, a MUGA and a skate park. Tranquillity The site is almost completely surrounded by houses, and has no direct road frontage. The site is relatively peaceful. Wildlife Being a site of regularly mown amenity grass, there is little wildlife present. The trees do provide habitat for a number of bird and insect species. There is a small 'wildlife garden' at the southern end of the site which acts as a habitat/ refuge area. Significant for another reason The site hosts a large and successful annual summer 'Funfest'; the largest community event during the year.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Site Name	Football ground
Site Map	
Site Area	1.16ha
Site Location	This site is near the centre of the community, to the east of Bedford Rd.
Site Description	This site is a football ground surrounded by residential dwellings. Beauty The pollarded trees forming the eastern and southern boundaries to the site provide an attractive backdrop, although the site itself is not attractive. Historical Significance This site has been home to the Wootton Blue Cross Football Club, which dates from 1887, since the 1970's.

	Recreational Value The site is a formal football ground, providing recreation for the players and entertainment for the paying public. Tranquillity The site is almost completely surrounded by houses, and has no direct road frontage. The site is relatively peaceful, apart from during training and matches. Wildlife As a formal sports pitch, the site is of limited value for wildlife, although the surrounding trees do have some habitat value. Significant for another reason None identified.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	N	N

Site Name	Allotment gardens
Site Map	
Site Area	0.55ha
Site Location	The allotments are located to the west of the main settlement at Hall End, 1km from the centre of Wootton.
Site Description	The site is a traditional allotment site with 18 full sized allotments, 12 of which have been sub-divided into half-plots. Beauty As with typical allotments, the site has an eclectic mix of structures, which although not unattractive, would not be described as beautiful. Historical Significance Historic Maps show that this site has been in allotment use since c.1900AD. Over the years, there have been other allotment sites within the parish, but this is the only remaining site. Recreational Value The allotments provide a significant level of outdoor recreation for those members of the community who hold them. However, there is no wider recreational value, with no publicly accessible paths through or around the site. The site is fully occupied.

	Tranquillity The allotment site is tranquil, with only quiet roads and a few dwellings nearby. Wildlife As an allotment site some wildlife is actively encouraged, while protection against other species is also present. The surrounding trees and hedges provide habitat for many species of invertebrate, mammal, reptiles, amphibians and birds. Significant for another reason None identified.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Site Name	Wootton Wood CWS
Site Map	
Site Area	37.75ha
Site Location	The site is located to the south west of Wootton, bordering the community at Wootton Upper School, 1.4km from the centre of the settlement.
Site Description	The site is an attractive ancient woodland bordered by pasture and arable fields. Beauty The woodland is considered beautiful, both when viewed from elsewhere in the local area and when looking into the wood from the adjacent Public Bridleway. Historical Significance The site is an ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland, although it is uncertain how far back it dates. A possible Medieval field boundary or woodland boundary is visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs and was mapped as part of the Bedford Borough NMP project. The boundary is located south of Wootton Wood and extends between SP 99171 44774 and SP 99472 44092 and is largely defined by a ditch about 4 metres wide but there is a hint of a bank on its north side.

	Recreational Value While the woodland itself does not have public access within it, a Public Bridleway runs along over 800m of its boundary, offering views into the woodland. Tranquillity The site, and the Public Bridleway along its north eastern boundaries are tranquil (with the exception of occasional shooting activities). Wildlife The site is a Woodland County Wildlife Site and adjoins a grassland County Wildlife Site. The woodland provides habitat to many bird, invertebrate and mammal species – including badgers. The site appears to be managed with conservation in mind. Significant for another reason None identified.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
N	N	Y	N

Site Name	School Playing Field		
Rationale for not undertaking full assessment.	<i>School playing fields and grounds are considered unsuitable for designation. This is because national guidance states that the space must be capable of enduring beyond the plan period. In order to address future needs for school places there may be a need to reconfigure the arrangement of school buildings and playing fields. The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools. Therefore, educational sites (grounds and playing fields) would normally be unsuitable for designation.</i> It is suggested that the Wootton Neighbourhood Plan steering group give consideration to creating a policy stating that the only future development permissible on the school grounds would be for the purposes of the school's growth.		
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
n/a	n/a	n/a	N

Site Name	Berry Wood (west)	
Site Map		
Site Area	6.45ha	
Site Location	This site lies to the south of Wootton, and adjoins a site currently being developed for housing.	
Site Description	The site is an accessible woodland with a network of glades and paths; and a pond. Beauty Although a young, rather than a mature woodland, it does have an inherent beauty. Historical Significance This woodland was planted in the early 1990's. Recreational Value The site is recorded as an Accessible Woodland site. The network of paths will become increasingly important as a site for local recreation as a large housing development is built to adjoin the wood. The pond has a dipping platform enabling quiet recreation and enjoyment of this attractive habitat. The site has a dedicated car park.	

Tranquillity In the context of its setting on the edge of a growing settlement and near a major road, the site is tranquil. Wildlife As a woodland with areas of shrubs, grassland and a pond, the site provides a range of habitats for plants, mammal, invertebrate, bird and amphibian species. It is highly probably, given the location, that the pond is an important habitat for Great Crested Newts, being present in internationally important numbers in the wider area. Significant for another reason Along with the nearby Berry Wood (north), these are the only accessible countryside sites within the parish, in walking distance of most residents.			
Site Photos  			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Site Name	Berry Wood (north)
Site Map	
Site Area	9.31ha This site is relatively large for a LGS, but given its location abutting a major development site in a growing community, its size is not considered extensive (being approx. 7% of the settlement footprint).
Site Location	This site lies to the south of Wootton, and adjoins a site currently being developed for housing.
Site Description	The site is an accessible woodland with a network of glades and paths. Beauty Although a young, rather than a mature woodland, it does have an inherent beauty. Historical Significance This woodland was planted in the early 1990's. Recreational Value The site is recorded as an Accessible Wildlife site. The network of paths will become increasingly important as a site for local recreation as a large housing development is built to adjoin the wood. Tranquillity In the context of its setting on the edge of a growing town and near a major road, the site is tranquil.

	Wildlife As a woodland with areas of shrubs and glades, the site provides a range of habitats for plants, mammal, invertebrate and bird species. Significant for another reason Along with the nearby Berry Wood (west), these are the only accessible countryside sites within the parish, in walking distance of most residents.		
Site Photos			
Not Extensive	Close Proximity	Demonstrably Special/ Locally Significant	Recommend for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y