



INSPLACE PLANNING LTD

**East Dorset District Council  
PPG17 Open Space Study**

**Section 6**

**Area Profile:  
Alderholt**

**May 2007**

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## **LOCAL NEED AREA – ALDERHOLT**

### **1.0 DESCRIPTION OF AREA - ALDERHOLT**

The village of Alderholt lies in the north-eastern part of the Plan area, adjoining the County boundary with Hampshire. The village is enclosed on its south-western, northeastern and north-western sides by roads. To the south east the village terminates at farmland that runs between the Ringwood and Hillbury Roads.

The majority of the village is situated just below the 75 m (200 ft) contour on land that rises from the valleys of the River Avon and the Ashford Water. The highest part of the village is a ridge of land approximately 75m high that runs in a south-westerly direction from Broomfield Drive towards the Cross Roads Plantation.

The siting of the present Recreation Ground is important in helping to protect the area of countryside south of Alderholt from pressure for development, as well as to provide playing space for this large village and it is important that this facility should be retained for the benefit of the community. Countryside policies would allow further open space to be provided on adjoining land if this were needed.

Many of the recent developments in the settlement have provided small amounts of incidental open space. These provide some limited opportunities for play close to residential areas. It is felt important that these should be retained for future use.

### **2.0 SUMMARY OF PROVISION AND QUALITY OF OPEN SPACE**

#### **2.1 Open Space within Alderholt**

The Map shows the location and typology of open space within Alderholt. The following sites have been mapped; many were included in the quality audit and detailed scores of the assessments are held on the GIS database and should be referred to as required.

- Additional Grounds at St James First School
- Alderholt Evangelical Congregational Churchyard
- Alderholt Recreation Ground
- Alderholt Sports & Recreation Club
- Alderholt Tennis Club
- Alderholt Village Hall
- Allotments off Hillbury Road
- Amenity greenspace adjacent to 8A Birchwood Drive
- Amenity greenspace adjacent to Saxon Way
- Amenity greenspace between Alder Drive & Earlswood Drive
- Amenity greenspace between Alder Drive and Park Lane
- Amenity greenspace between Birchwood Drive & Silver Dale Crescent
- Amenity greenspace on Birchwood Drive opposite Wren Gardens
- Amenity greenspace on Hillbury Road
- Amenity Verge at Wren Gardens

Amenity Verge, junction of Station Road and Blackwater Green  
 Basketball hoop at the Recreation Ground  
 Bonfire Hill heathland  
 LAP adjacent Recreation Ground  
 LAP off Birchwood Drive  
 LAP off Churchill Close  
 LAP off Windsor Way  
 LAP to the north of Oak Road  
 Pavilion at the Recreation Ground  
 Play Area off the Recreation Ground  
 Skate Ramp at Alderholt Recreation Ground  
 St James' CE First School Playing Fields  
 St James' First School Hall  
 Strouds Firs  
 Wolvercroft Spinney  
 Woodland adjacent to Oak Road

## 2.2 Quality of sites in Alderholt

*In the following lists 'n/s' means 'Not scored'.*

### 2.2.1 Active Sports Space

Site	Quality
Alderholt Tennis Club	58.8 %

There are no significant quality issues with the sport space within Alderholt. In addition to the above space there are also pitches at Alderholt Recreation Ground (see below). The provision is limited so significant investment should be focused on the tennis club, the surface and nets are in good condition but the fencing and surrounding environment needs improvement.

### 2.2.2 Space for Children's & Young People

Site	Quality
Basketball hoop at the Recreation Ground	n/s
Play Area off the Recreation Ground	92.0 %
Skate Ramp at Alderholt Recreation Ground	60.0 %

The sites are generally of good quality. Sites with the most potential include:

- The skate ramp at the recreation ground (60%). The Ramp is in the middle of a grassed area with no path access. There is extensive graffiti across the equipment.

### 2.2.3 Amenity Green Space

Site	Quality
Amenity greenspace adjacent to 8A Birchwood Drive	n/s
Amenity greenspace adjacent to Saxon Way	n/s
Amenity greenspace between Alder Drive & Earlswood Drive	n/s
Amenity greenspace between Alder Drive & Park Lane	n/s
Amenity greenspace between Birchwood Drive & Silver Dale Crescent	n/s
Amenity greenspace on Birchwood Drive, opposite Wren Gardens	n/s
Amenity greenspace on Hillbury Road	n/s
Amenity Verge at Wren Gardens	61.5 %
Amenity Verge, junc of Station Rd & Blackwater Gr	69.6 %
LAP adjacent Recreation Ground	0.8 %
LAP off Birchwood Drive	61.5 %
LAP off Churchill Close	50.0 %
LAP off Windsor Way	76.9 %
LAP to the north of Oak Road	55.6 %

In general, the management and maintenance of amenity green spaces across Alderholt that were assessed was adequate; all sites could benefit from improved maintenance, although a number of sites offer significant opportunity for improvement:

- Churchill Close (50%), Evidence of ball games being played, the site is secluded but could potentially offer a good informal play area with investment.
- Oak Road (55.6 %), there is evidence of bike riding on the site which highlights the lack of a BMX track in the area.

### 2.2.4 Natural & Semi Natural Space and Green Corridors

Site	Quality
Bonfire Hill heathland	54.5 %
Strouds Firs	n/s
Wolvercroft Spinney	n/s
Woodland adjacent to Oak Road	n/s

Only one natural & semi natural space was assessed in Alderholt - the Bonfire Hill heathland – which is in need of higher management and maintenance. The site is an SNCI and has a public right of way; it is well used by dog walkers and should be in better condition.

### 2.2.5 Recreation Grounds and Public Gardens

Site	Quality
Alderholt Recreation Ground	48.9 %

Alderholt recreation ground is very important within the community because it is the only formal recreation ground in the village and a key site, comprising tennis courts, pitches (one football, one rugby and one cricket), play area and teenage facilities. It

requires significant improvement to bring in line with the general quality of surrounding green spaces within Alderholt.

### Education Outdoor Sports Facilities

#### Site

St James' CE First School Playing Fields

#### Quality

n/s

The above school was not quality assessed. It has no formal dual use agreement, but it is used by junior football. School sites are generally of better quality, as they are secure and generally have a site management presence.

## 3.0 SUMMARY of ACCESSIBILITY

### 3.1 Overall access to open space

Section 5 of the report outlines access standards to different types of open space within the Local Need Area, a summary of the main standards is shown in Table 2:

**Table 2 Access standards for open space**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Access Standard</b>
Recreation Grounds and Public Gardens	450 metres
Amenity Green Space	450 metres
Natural & Semi Natural Green space	600 metres
Space for Children	450 metres
Space for Young People	450 metres
Active Sports Space	600 metres
Routeway/Green Corridor	n/a
Cemeteries and churchyards	n/a
Allotments	n/a

The accompanying Maps showing local access standards for the various typologies (i.e. Space for Children and Young People, Amenity Open Space, Natural and Semi Natural Green Space, Active Sports Space and Recreation Grounds and Public Gardens).

### 3.2 Access to different types of open space

Table 3 makes observations on access to different types of open space within the catchment area, using the adopted access standards, as shown in the Catchment Maps.

**Table 3 Access to open space in the area**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Provision against access standard</b>
Recreation Grounds and Public Gardens	Significant gaps throughout LNA, majority of central & north outside catchment
Amenity Green Space	Access standard met
Natural & Semi Natural Green Space	Access standard met
Space for Children & Young People	Gaps in access in the North of the LNA
Active Sports Space	Access standards not met, majority of north outside catchment
Routeway/Green Corridor	No standards set
Cemeteries and churchyards	No standards set
Allotments	No standards set

## 4.0 FINDINGS FROM SURVEY AND CONSULTATION

### Citizen's Panel

17 people living in Alderholt responded to the Citizen's Panel Survey, and the village is placed in the Rural Sub Area for analysis (51 in total). People living in the Rural Sub Area are more frequent (compared to the district as a whole) visitors to local playing fields, recreation footpaths, spaces to enjoy nature and wildlife and sports centres and community halls; and less frequent visitors to local recreation grounds, cycle paths, coast and beaches and swimming pools and health and fitness centres.

Respondents living in the Rural Sub Area would like to see more children's play areas and space for teenagers. For them, the most important attributes of open space are that they should be easy to get to, safe and free from noise and unsocial behaviour. The most important facilities to have in nearby open space areas are teenage facilities, trees and toilets. Around half of respondents would like to use open spaces near them more often: more information would be important in encouraging this.

### Local Areas of Open Space in Alderholt

The most used areas of open space in Alderholt are Alderholt Recreation Ground and Bonfire Hill. People also often go outside the village to the Moors Valley Country Park, Cranborne Chase and to visit the beaches at Christchurch, Hengistbury and Boscombe. Other areas visited are likely to be on the New Forest/Fordingbridge area and also Mudeford Beach. The overwhelming reasons for visiting these areas are to go for a walk, visit areas of nature interest and value and to walk the dog.

People often do not draw distinctions between different types of open space; three fifths of people in the survey in Alderholt said they lived less than 10 minutes (around 450m) from their local area of open space, which if this includes Bonfire Hill (in north west) and the Recreation Ground (in the south) is probably reasonable. People tend to walk to the areas which are less than 800m away and drive to places more than 800m. The changeover from walking to driving occurs in the 11-15 minute time band. One fifth of people travel more than 3 miles (by car) to their local area of open space.

Other comments made highlighted:

- Need for more sports facilities e.g. football, rugby
- Dog fouling identified as an issue by several people, especially at Bonfire Hill. Should be eliminated with 'high policing' and very high fines for offending owners.
- Difficulties of getting about without a car in areas where public transport is poor – more cyclepaths required from home to countryside
- Alderholt has a superb play area for young children but little for teenagers. In providing for the latter who want facilities near to home, councils must also bear in mind the needs of local residents for a peaceful environment free of litter.
- Need to make facilities vandalproof

Summary of Provision

Other than small areas of amenity open space and the allotments, there are four main open space sites in Alderholt:

- Bonfire Hill and Stroud's Firs – natural green space
- Alderholt Recreation Ground – the only (non-education) formal provision in the village with a play area, facilities for teenagers (basketball hoop and skate ramp), Alderholt Tennis Club (with 4 synthetic courts) and 1 senior football, 1 senior rugby and a cricket pitch with 3 wickets. These facilities are the home ground of Alderholt FC (2 Saturday sides); Alderholt RFC and Alderholt CC. No issues in respect of these clubs have been identified in the Study.
- St James First School which has a mini soccer pitch, grass field, small hall and a playground.

There is also a village hall which, according to the Parish Council, has no spare capacity.

*Alderholt Parish Council*

The Parish Council has identified the need for more areas for teenagers – such as skatepark, kickwall and shelter, but difficulties in financing these facilities were highlighted in the March 2004 Survey; the community (Parish Council, Local Action Group) is currently planning to extend the range of facilities but this is taking time. The most used open space in the parish is the recreation ground and play area, maintained by the parish council with 1 part-time member of staff and contractors. The public facilities at the ground could be improved i.e. toilets, public telephone. The Parish Council has stated in previous consultation that there are few amenities in the village for residents but there is also limited funding to provide these.



### Schools

The Junior football club uses the school pitch on Saturday mornings; the school states that there is probably limited scope for accommodating more community use. The Parish Council feels the school facilities are ideally suited for junior sport activities

### Community Organisations

Alderholt Local Action Group also highlights the need for equipped teenagers play space. It identifies Moors Valley, St Catherine’s Hill and Hengistbury Head as the most used and valuable open spaces in the area. Greater use of public open space in the parish could be encouraged by different or improved play equipment and better public transport. It notes that because there are no other open spaces except for the recreation ground, and the population is growing, a general open space area needs to be included in any further housing development.

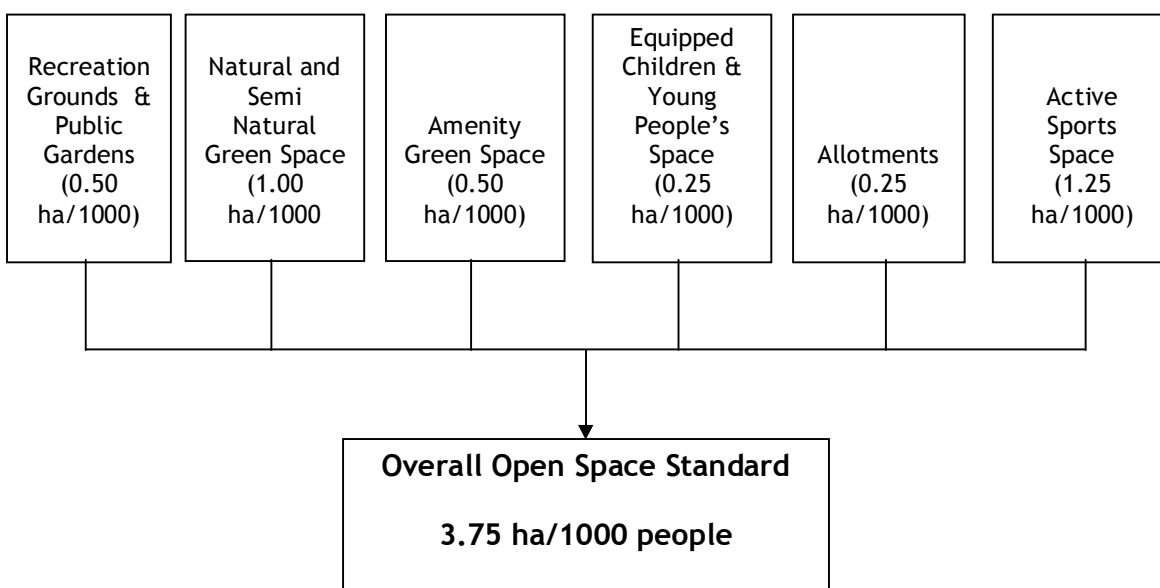
### Alderholt Parish Plan

This highlights the need for an additional local recreation areas, an equipped space for teenagers and an outdoor area for organised sport. Open space in the area is categorised as satisfactory to poor, and greater use could be encouraged by different or improved play equipment, open spaces nearer to people’s homes, new open spaces and better public transport. There are no cycle ways and some of the links are not well maintained. So many new houses have been built but no extra amenities were included.

## 5.0 QUANTITY OF OPEN SPACE

### 5.1 Quantity standards for open space

Section 5 of the report outlines the quantity standards for open space within the District; a summary of these draft minimum standards is shown below:



## 5.2 Quantities of different types of open space

These standards have been applied at a local level to determine the provision of different types of open space across the adopted minimum standard, this is summarised in Table 4 which shows:

- the existing quantity of open space (existing provision);
- the required quantity of open space for the population of the area (required provision);
- the surplus or deficiency of open space (in m<sup>2</sup> and acres);
- Supply against the standard.

**Table 4 : Quantities of open space within the area – ALDERHOLT (Pop. 3113)**

<b>Typology</b>	<b>Existing provision (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Required provision (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Area of open space above/below the recommended minimum level of provision (m<sup>2</sup>) / (ha)</b>
<b>Recreation Grounds &amp; Public Gardens</b>	36798	15560	21230m / 2.1ha
<b>Natural and Semi Natural Green Space</b>	136629	31130	105499m / 10.5ha
<b>Active Sports Space</b>	1065	38913	-37848m / -3.8ha
<b>Children &amp; Young People's Space</b>	2243	7782	-5539m / -0.55ha
<b>Amenity Green Space</b>	25297	15560	9737m / 0.97ha
<b>Allotments</b>	8065	7782	283m / 0.03ha

## 5.3 Key Points: Quantitative Provision of Open Space in Alderholt











Alderholt's stock of open space meets most of the proposed quantitative standards, apart from Active Sports Space and for Children & Young People's Space. The provision figure for Active Sports Space suggests a large under provision. However in Alderholt, as in other East Dorset settlements, the Recreation Ground has a dual purpose and is used for formal sports throughout the year. A further 0.55 ha. of land is required for Children and Young People's Space.

## 6.0 ISSUES ARISING IN ALDERHOLT

The issues in Alderholt are clear:

- Whilst technically the Local Need Area/village meets the suggested quantitative standards in most typologies apart from Active Sports Space and Space for Children and Young People, the location of the Recreation Ground to the south of the village, with the only play and teenage facilities located there, means that much of the settlement lies outside the suggested accessibility standard for recreation grounds and play provision.
- The need for more play and teenage facilities (to serve the north of the village) is a well documented issue which the Parish Council and other local action groups have been trying to address for sometime. As well as shortage of investment, the lack of suitable sites is an added difficulty.
- This Study adds weight to the need to ensure that any future residential development in Alderholt contributes to adequate new provision. This Study identifies a potential good informal play area (with investment) at Churchill Close. Natural green space is the most well provided for type of open space in the area, there is little development pressure in the area so any surplus should not result in pressure for disposal.
- Improve general management and maintenance of sites within Alderholt, particularly the tennis club: the surface and nets are in good condition but the fencing and surrounding environment needs improvement.
- Bonfire Hill heathland is extensively used by local people and is in need of a higher maintenance regime; a review of its management in order to ensure that it is able to meet the demands upon it would also be beneficial.
- The Recreation Ground also requires significant improvement to bring in line with the general quality of amenity green spaces within Alderholt.
- The possibility of providing a multi use games area for local youth, in partnership with St James School.
- Across the District, provision of allotments is low and many LNAs have no allotment sites. As set out in Section 5, this Report recommends a new look at the burgeoning interest in allotment gardening, and how new sites can be brought into use to cater for growing demand.

# EAST DORSET : ALDERHOLT

-  Local Needs Areas
-  Recreation Grounds & Public Gardens
-  Country Parks
-  Allotments
-  Amenity / Informal Green Space
-  Other Open Space
-  Children & Young People's Space
-  Education Outdoor Space
-  Natural & Semi-Natural Green Space
-  Active Sports Space

