



RUGBY BOROUGH
OPEN SPACE STUDY REPORT
DECEMBER 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

- 1.1. This Report sets out the findings of an open space study conducted by Rugby Borough Council's Development Strategy team that was concluded in December 2025.
- 1.2. The study aims to provide robust evidence that can inform the creation of a new local plan, and particularly any policies or strategies relating to open space. To achieve this, the study seeks to:
 - a) Summarise the latest national policies and guidance regarding open space;
 - b) Develop a clear understanding of the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing open space provision in the Borough;
 - c) Formulate updated open space standards; and
 - d) Apply these standards to identify deficiencies and surpluses in provision within each of the Borough's sixteen electoral wards.
- 1.3. The qualitative aspect of the study (auditing the quality of sites and recommending quality standards) was conducted by The Environment Partnership on behalf of the Council. The full findings of their audit are available in a separate report¹, however, they are also summarised here (chapter six) for ease of reference.
- 1.4. There are three key reasons why the study has been conducted.
- 1.5. Firstly, the social and environmental benefits of open space are well documented, and, if these are to be realised, it is important that the Council has a clear understanding of the current state of open space provision across the Borough.
- 1.6. Secondly, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)² advises planning authorities to implement policies that will accommodate the open space needs of their communities, as measured through robust and up-to-date assessments of existing provision.
- 1.7. Finally, as the most recent study of the Borough's open space provision³ is nearly a decade old, and considering that significant developments have occurred since that time, there is a clear and pressing need for an up-to-date assessment.

¹ The Environment Partnership (2025) Open Space Assessment, Rugby: Quality Audit Report

² MHCLG (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Available online:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

³ Nortoft (2015) Open Space, Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Study. Available online:

<https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/open-space-playing-pitch-and-sports-facilities-study-2015> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

SCOPE

1.8. The scope of this study is all open space within the Borough, defined as: all publicly accessible open space of public value, including land and areas of water (such as rivers and canals) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation or contribute to visual amenity.

1.9. For the purposes of this study, open space is categorised within five typologies:

Typology	Definition
Allotments	Allotments provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce. They can improve well-being and the quality of life of communities by providing a cheap source of good food, healthy outdoor exercise, social interaction, and enhancement of the biodiversity and green infrastructure in an area. Examples include the Bilton Poor Lands Allotments and the Wolston and Brandon Allotments.
Amenity green space	Amenity green spaces are public open spaces whose primary purpose is to enhance the local environment and improve the well-being of residents, employees and visitors. Amenity green spaces are not typically laid out or managed for a specific function and are less likely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences than parks and recreation grounds. Examples include the grassed areas within Coton Park and Shakespeare Gardens.
Parks and recreation grounds	Parks and recreation grounds provide open space to be enjoyed by all and facilitate a range of formal and informal activities. At a minimum they should contain a formal planting area, community growing area, memorial, playing pitch, outdoor sports facility or space that caters to children or young people. As opposed to amenity green space, parks and recreation grounds are likely to be physically demarcated by fences, walls or shrubs and have identifiable entrance points and paths. Examples of parks and recreation grounds include Caldecott Park and GEC Recreation Ground.
Natural and semi-natural green space	Natural and semi-natural green spaces are areas which have natural characteristics and biodiversity value but which are also open for public use and enjoyment. Examples include the Oxford Canal and Cock Robin Wood.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for children and young people to play and socially interact. Examples include Houlton Children’s Park and the Whitehall Skatepark.

Table 1: Definitions of typologies of open space.

1.10. Churchyards and cemeteries are identified and mapped in the study, but standards are not set for them.

1.11. Playing pitches and sports facilities are recognised as vital areas of open space, however they are excluded from the scope of this study given that they have already been assessed by a separate study conducted in 2023⁴.

⁴ KKP (2023) Rugby Borough Council Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy Assessment Report, July 2023.

REPORT STRUCTURE

- 1.12. Following this introduction (chapter one) the report provides an overview of the context in which the study has been conducted (chapter two). This includes the key characteristics of the study area (Rugby Borough), the relevant national policy and guidance as determined by the UK government, and current local policies.
- 1.13. The report then proceeds to outline the methodology of the study (chapter three). As the current NPPF and corresponding Planning Practice Guidance does not mandate a specific framework to follow, the chosen methodology broadly follows the approach outlined in the superseded PPG17 and its companion guide⁵. This is a tried and tested approach which remains in-line with the principles of current government guidance and is widely applied by local authorities when undertaking studies of open space.
- 1.14. The next five chapters of the report (four to eight) broadly follow the stages of the aforementioned methodology, namely:
- a) Identification of local needs
 - b) Audit of existing open space provision
 - c) Setting local standards
 - d) Applying local standards
- 1.15. After the concluding chapter (nine) two appendices are provided which contain maps showing the open space for each electoral ward and access buffers applied to open space typologies.

⁵ Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17 (2002) ISBN 1851125906

2. STUDY CONTEXT

STUDY AREA

2.1. The Borough of Rugby covers an area of 138 square miles located in central England, within the County of Warwickshire. It is on the eastern edge of the West Midlands Region, and borders the counties of Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, both of which are in the East Midlands Region. The Borough is predominantly rural in character, with the built-up area consisting of only around 20% of the total land area, over half of which is designated Green Belt.

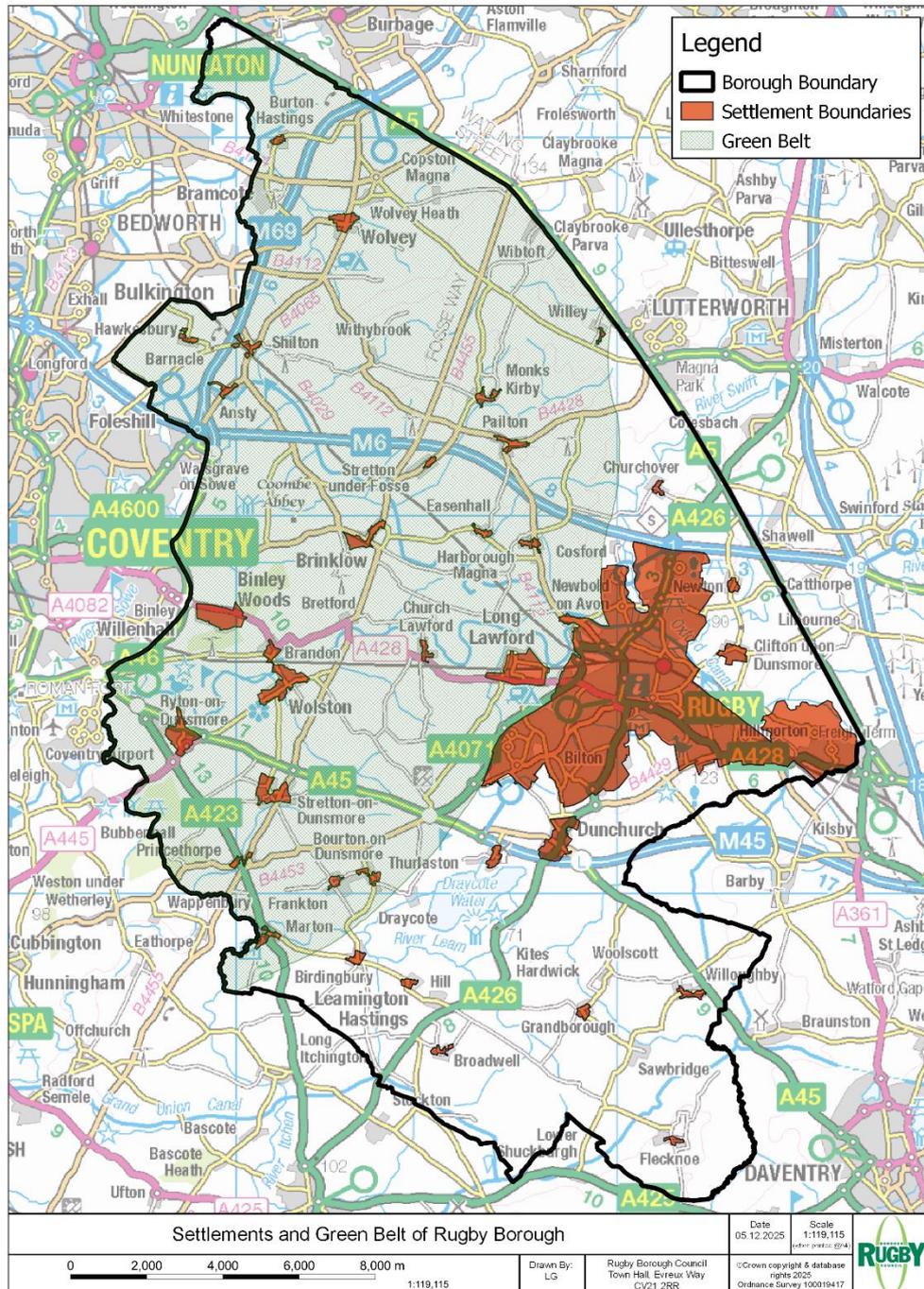


Figure 1: Diagram of Rugby Borough.

- 2.2. Per the 2021 Census⁶, Rugby Borough has a population of 114,357, around two-thirds of which reside in the Borough's only town, Rugby. The remaining third of the population reside in rural areas including 34 designated rural settlements - nine of which are designated as 'Main Rural Settlements' and 25 of which are designated as 'Rural Villages'.
- 2.3. The population of Rugby has grown significantly since the last open space study was completed and a high rate of growth is projected to continue over the coming years⁷. This trend has been accompanied by substantial residential development, such as that seen in Cawston and Houlton, as well as commercial development, primarily in the form of new industrial estates to the north of the town.
- 2.4. The geographical areas chosen for the purposes of analysis are the Borough itself and its sixteen electoral wards, the boundaries and populations of which are shown in Figure 2 and Table 2 below.

Electoral Ward	Number on Map	Population (2021)	% of Total
Admirals and Cawston	1	9,847	8.6%
Benn	2	9,343	8.2%
Bilton	3	6,550	5.7%
Clifton, Newton and Churchover	4	2,946	2.6%
Coton and Boughton	5	8,108	7.1%
Dunsmore	6	8,591	7.5%
Eastlands	7	8,583	7.5%
Hillmorton	8	7,748	6.8%
Leam Valley	9	2,445	2.1%
New Bilton	10	8,166	7.1%
Newbold and Brownsover	11	9,276	8.1%
Paddox	12	7,358	6.4%
Revel and Binley Woods	13	6,407	5.6%
Rokeby and Overslade	14	7,700	6.7%
Wolston and the Lawfords	15	8,351	7.3%
Wolvey and Shilton	16	2,938	2.6%
Total	NA	114,357	100.0%

Table 2: Population of Rugby Borough by electoral ward.

⁶ Office for National Statistics (2025) Rugby Local Authority 2021 Census Area Profile. Available online: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E07000220#section_4 [Accessed 04/12/2025].

⁷ Office for National Statistics (2025) Subnational population projections for England: 2022-based. Available online: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?mode=construct&dataset=2006&version=0> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

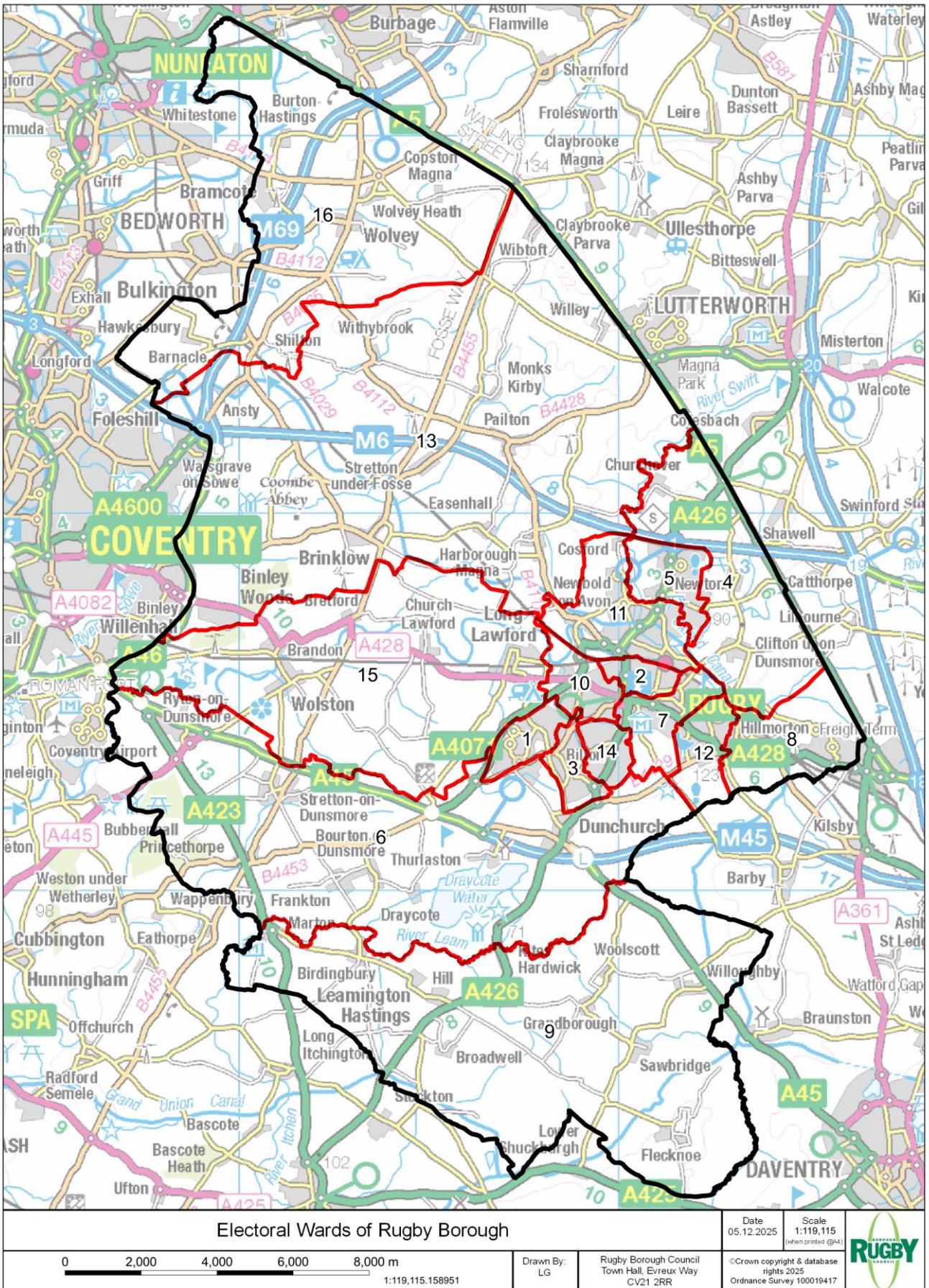


Figure 2: Electoral wards of Rugby Borough.

NATIONAL POLICY

2.5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines open space as “all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.” The framework primarily addresses the topic in the sub-chapter “Open space and recreation”, which is reproduced in-full below.

Promoting healthy and safe communities: Open space and recreation (NPPF, pp.30)

102. Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

103. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

104. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

105. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

106. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) 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
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

107. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with national policy for Green Belts set out in chapter 13 of this Framework.

2.6. This NPPF sub-chapter and its complementary planning practice guidance⁸ are clear about the importance of open space, the need for planning authorities to conduct assessments of their open space provision, and the measures necessary for the protection of such provision, but do not provide any detailed guidance on how an open space assessment should be carried out. As such, there is a wide remit for the Council to design its assessment as it sees fit, to suit local circumstances, as long as it leads to “robust and up-to-date” results.

LOCAL POLICY AND PRIOR STUDIES

- 2.7. Rugby Borough Council’s current approach to the provision of open space is laid out in policy HS4 of the local plan⁹. In brief, this policy specifies that:
- a) residential developments of 10 dwellings and above shall provide or contribute towards the attainment of open space;
 - b) that this open space shall meet quantitative standards (measured in hectares per 1,000 population) and a list of descriptive qualitative standards;
 - c) that contributions shall be sought where proposed developments shall increase an existing deficit in provision or result in provision standards not being met;
 - d) that the provision of open space may be required on-site, or may form part of a contribution towards off-site provision;
 - e) that open space shall not be built upon unless it can be clearly shown to be surplus to requirements, or the loss of open space shall be replaced by equivalent or better provision, or the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs of which clearly outweigh the loss.
- 2.8. The primary evidence base for policy HS4 is the open space study undertaken by Nortoft on the Council’s behalf published in November 2015. This study supersedes the comprehensive open space audit that was undertaken by Alliance Planning on the Council’s behalf, published in August 2008¹⁰.
- 2.9. The scope of the 2015 open space study was much reduced in comparison to the 2008 study. It excluded certain spaces that had previously been assessed, such as private land with no public access and very small incidental open spaces such as road verges and roundabouts. The 2015 study also excluded civic spaces, cemeteries and churchyards, all of which had previously been given consideration, and made a clear distinction between open spaces, playing pitches and sports facilities (each of which were assessed as separate topics). This approach has been further cemented by the Council in recent years; in 2023 an assessment of playing pitches and sports facilities was conducted separate from any assessment of other typologies of open space.
- 2.10. Notably, policy HS4 of the adopted local plan does not fully align with the recommendations of the 2015 study. Although HS4 includes the recommended quantitative standards (hectareage

⁸ MHCLG (2014) Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space. Available online: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

⁹ Rugby Borough Council (2019) Local Plan 2011-2031. Available online: <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/w/local-plan-2011-2031> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

¹⁰ Alliance Planning (2008) Rugby Open Space Audit. Available online: https://www.rugby.gov.uk/documents/20124/6571478/Open_Space_Audit.pdf [Accessed 04/12/2025].

per 1,000 residents), it does not include the recommended accessibility standards (metre distances). Furthermore, policy HS4 only specifies that residential developments of 10 dwellings or above shall provide or contribute to open space, whereas the study recommends a threshold size of six dwellings or 0.2ha.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

2.11. There are currently seven made neighbourhood plans within the Borough. It is essential that the open space assessed in this study is inclusive of the Local Green Spaces designated by these plans, as listed in the table below.

Neighbourhood	Date Adopted	Local Green Spaces
Brandon and Bretford	Jun 2019	1. Brandon War Memorial
Brinklow	Dec 2022	1. The Crescent 2. The Playing Field 3. The Peace and Reconciliation Memorial 4. The Allotments 5. Field adjacent to the Tump 6. Church Field 7. Brinklow Cemetery
Coton Forward	Dec 2015	1. Land between Coton Park Drive and Lancut Hill 2. Copse Area/Stone Circles (behind Shortwheat Hill) 3. Badger Sett (off Coton Park Drive) 4. Land to the East and West of Tuthill Furlong 5. Open space between Shortwheat Hill and Short Fishers Walk
Monks Kirby	Jun 2023	1. Churchyard of St Edith's church 2. The Fishponds community park
Ryton-on-Dunsmore	Jul 2021	1. St Leonard's churchyard and Parish burial ground 2. Steetley Meadows Conservation Area 3. Ryton Community Orchard 4. The Dell
Willoughby	Dec 2019	None
Wolvey	May 2022	1. St John the Baptist churchyard 2. Wetland Reserve 3. Anker meadows

Table 3: Local Green Spaces designated in made Neighbourhood Plans.

3. METHODOLOGY

OVERALL APPROACH

- 3.1. The starting point for this study is the NPPF sub-chapter 'Open space and recreation' and its accompanying planning practice guidance 'Open space, sports and recreation facilities'. Given that neither of these documents provide detailed guidance on how to conduct an open space assessment, the overall methodology of the study instead broadly follows that outlined in the superseded PPG17 and its companion guide, the validity of which stems from its tried and tested nature, and the fact that it does not differ significantly in principle from the new guidance.
- 3.2. Given the above, the overall approach of this study is as follows:
 1. Identify local needs
 2. Audit local provision
 3. Set provision standards
 4. Apply provision standards

IDENTIFYING LOCAL NEED

- 3.3. Local need has been estimated through: a review of pre-existing consultation data; an assessment of the Borough's current and forecast demographics; and, a review of additional relevant data, such as allotment waiting lists.
- 3.4. The data from these sources has been collected and analysed by the Development Strategy team with the assistance of other relevant Council officers, with findings summarised in chapter four of this report.

AUDIT OF LOCAL PROVISION

- 3.5. The audit of the current local open space provision consisted of two stages, a quantitative audit undertaken in-house, and a qualitative audit undertaken by a consultancy (The Environment Partnership).
- 3.6. The quantitative audit was conducted as follows. Firstly, updated maps of all open space in the Borough were produced using QGIS software. Existing GIS open space data stemming from the 2015 study was reviewed, cleaned and amended as necessary – for example by correcting miscategorised sites and excluding mapped spaces that fall outside the scope of the new study. Additional areas of open space, including sites that were missed during the mapping stage of the prior study and sites that have been newly developed since 2015, were then identified and mapped according to their primary typologies through a review of aerial photography, the Ordnance Survey Greenspace GIS layer, and other relevant datasets sourced from bodies such as Natural England and Warwickshire County Council. The task of identifying the newly mapped sites was aided by reference to the Council's annual monitoring reports and the knowledge of Council officers regarding major developments.

- 3.7. Once current provision had been identified and mapped, analysis of this data was undertaken to determine the provision of open space (expressed in hectares, and hectares per 1,000 residents) within each of the Borough's wards, to compare provision between the wards, and compare the current provision with that identified by the prior 2015 study. The findings of this quantitative audit can be found in chapter five of this report, while maps of open space provision in each ward are attached as Appendix I.
- 3.8. The qualitative audit was undertaken by The Environment Partnership (TEP) between November 2024 and February 2025. Adopting a proportionate approach to evidence gathering, a total of 279 sites were selected for TEP to visit and audit. The audits were carried out using a consistent and standardised methodology that drew on the criteria of Natural England's 'Green Flag Award'. The findings of the qualitative audit are summarised in chapter six of this report, and the full quality audit report produced by TEP is available separately on the Councils' website¹¹.

SETTING AND APPLYING PROVISION STANDARDS

- 3.9. Recommended open space provision standards have been set for the Borough which encompass quantity, quality and accessibility.
- 3.10. These standards have been set through a consideration of: a) the findings of prior studies; b) the needs of the local population; c) the existing quantity, quality and accessibility of provision as determined by this study's audit; d) the existing local standards as laid out in policy HS4; and e) the latest guidance and benchmarks provided by national bodies.
- 3.11. The recommended standards are then applied to each of the Borough's electoral wards, with the findings presented in chapter eight.

¹¹ TEP (2025) Open Space Assessment, Rugby: Quality Audit Report. Available online: <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/documents/20124/0/Open+Space+Quality+Audit+Report.pdf> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

4. IDENTIFYING LOCAL NEED

OVERALL NEED

- 4.1. The population of the Borough increased by 14.3% between the two most recent Censuses, growing from around 100,100 in 2011 to 114,400 in 2021¹². Furthermore, the population is forecast to grow by a further 17.3% between 2025 and 2043¹³. Should the Council wish to ensure that current quantitative levels of provision are not diminished, then, at a minimum, new areas of open space will need to be provided that are proportionate with population growth.

NEED FOR PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 4.2. Per the latest available Office for National Statistics population projections, the Borough's population of children (those aged up to 18 years) is estimated to marginally increase from 34,600 in 2025 to 35,600 in 2043. However, as a proportion of the total population, the Borough's population of children will fall from 28.4% to 24.9%.
- 4.3. Excluding other factors, this projected demographic shift would suggest that, although population growth will necessitate an absolute increase in open space provision, the relative need for the provision of open space for children and young people (as a proportion of new open space) may lessen over the course of the emerging plan.

NEED FOR ALLOTMENTS

- 4.4. In January 2025, nine allotment associations in the Borough were asked to provide information regarding their occupancy rate and waiting lists. All were contacted by email, except for the Bilton Poor Lands Allotment Association who were contacted by phone.
- 4.5. Responses were received from seven associations (Bilton Poor Lands, Eden Park, Hillmorton and Paddox, The Kent, Lansdowne, Whinfield, Wolston and Brandon), six of whom provided relevant information (Bilton Poor Lands, Eden Park, Hillmorton and Paddox, Lansdowne, Whinfield, Wolston and Brandon).
- 4.6. All those associations which provided information reported that they were fully occupied and that there was a greater demand for allotments than they were able to supply. Most reported that they maintain waiting lists (ranging from 5 to 55 people), although some reported that, in response to high demand, they had ceased to do so, in favour of operating on a first-come-first-served basis when plots are periodically released.
- 4.7. This survey of allotments associations would suggest that there is unmet demand for allotments in the Borough.

¹² Office for National Statistics (2021) How life has changed in Rugby: Census 2021. Available online: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000220/> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

¹³ Office for National Statistics (2025) Population projections for local authorities by single year of age and sex, England. Available online: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandz1> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

5. QUANTITATIVE AUDIT OF OPEN SPACE

PROVISION ACROSS THE STUDY AREA

- 5.1. The existing provision of open space has been determined by desktop mapping undertaken using QGIS mapping software. A full explanation of the approach taken can be found in the methodology section of this report. Detailed maps showing the open space provision of each electoral ward are provided in Appendix I.
- 5.2. A total of 625 open spaces were identified and mapped. 11 spaces were subsequently deleted as, upon visits, they were found to be inaccessible, thereby bringing the total number of mapped open spaces in the Borough down to 614.
- 5.3. As seen in the table below, the number of spaces counted increased for all typologies compared with the 2015 study. The reason for these increases varies:
 - 5.3.1. For allotments, some new sites (e.g. Eden Park Allotments) have been created since the last study, and some long-standing sites that were previously overlooked (e.g. Willoughby Allotments) have been recorded this time around.
 - 5.3.2. The increase in the amenity space count is largely due to a difference in method between the two studies. The 2015 study only sought to map amenity space over 0.2ha, whereas this study applied a smaller threshold of 0.05ha.
 - 5.3.3. The increased count of natural and semi-natural spaces is partly because new spaces have become accessible alongside contemporary developments (such as the space at Ansty Park and Houlton), and partly due to certain spaces being included in the 2024 study that were excluded from or overlooked in the 2015 study (the largest of which is Cawston Spinney at 22.33ha).
 - 5.3.4. The increased count of parks and recreation grounds is because a more inclusive typology definition has been adopted, meaning that some spaces previously counted solely as amenity space have now been recorded as parks and recreation grounds.
 - 5.3.5. The increased counts of provision for children and young people are due to the creation of spaces in new residential developments, such as Houlton and Rugby Gateway.

2025 vs 2015	2025 Count	2015 Count	2025 Area (ha)	2015 Area (ha)
Allotments	42	35	42.6	38.6
Amenity space	250	105	145.0	137.6
Churchyards and cemeteries	65	NA	41.9	NA
Natural & semi-natural space	77	55	1,009.3	761.3
Parks & recreation grounds	62	29	339.0	294.9
Provision for children and young people – LEAP/NEAP	88	71	8.6	7.6
Provision for children and young people - Other	30	19	1.4	1.0
Total	614	314	1,587.9	1,241.0

Table 4: Counts of open space sites mapped in the 2025 and 2015 studies.

5.4. A more detailed summary of the existing open space provision for the Borough can be found in the following table which includes site counts, total hectareage (ha), and hectares per 1000 population (ha/1000), as well as minimum, maximum and average sizes.

2025 Expanded Summary	No. of Sites	Ha	Ha/1000	Min Size	Max Size	Avg Size
Allotments	42	42.6	0.37	0.02	6.18	1.01
Amenity space	250	145.0	1.27	0.02	16.81	0.58
Churchyards and cemeteries	65	41.9	0.37	0.05	11.60	0.64
Natural & semi-natural space	77	1,009.3	8.83	0.08	245.04	13.13
Parks & recreation grounds	62	339.0	2.96	0.04	199.10	5.47
Provision for children and young people – LEAP/NEAP	88	8.6	0.08	0.01	0.83	0.10
Provision for children and young people - Other	30	1.4	0.01	0.01	0.26	0.05

Table 5: Quantitative summary of open space by typology as mapped in the 2025 study.

5.5. As may be expected, the site size range for the provision for children and young people typologies is relatively tight, with no such spaces being over a hectare in size. Conversely, the ranges for the other typologies are much larger, particularly so for the typologies of natural and semi-natural space and parks and recreation grounds.

5.6. The largest sites for each typology are as follows:

- 5.6.1. Bilton Poor Lands Allotments (6.2ha) are the largest allotment site in the Borough, comprising almost 15% of the Borough’s provision by hectareage.
- 5.6.2. Cawston West AGS (16.8ha) is the largest amenity green space site in the Borough, comprising nearly 12% of the Borough’s provision by hectareage.
- 5.6.3. Draycote Water reservoir and its surrounding grounds are recorded as the largest site of natural and semi-natural space in the Borough (245ha), consisting of almost a quarter of the total hectareage of this typology.
- 5.6.4. Coombe Abbey country park is the largest park in the Borough (199ha) and makes up close to 60% of the Borough’s provision by hectareage.
- 5.6.5. Cawston Grange Drive Play Area (0.8ha) is the largest single Provision for Children and Young People site in the Borough. However, given that the boundaries of some sites of this type are nebulous, this measurement is more contestable.

PROVISION ACROSS THE WARDS

5.7. As shown in the table and chart below, there are significant inequalities between the Borough's electoral wards when it comes to quantitative provision of open space.

Ward	No. of Sites	% of Sites	Hectareage	% of Hectareage
Dunsmore	64	10.1%	449.9	28.3%
Revel and Binley Woods	61	9.6%	379.5	23.9%
Wolston and the Lawfords	65	10.3%	204.2	12.9%
Newbold and Brownsover	71	11.2%	101.1	6.4%
Paddox	24	3.8%	99.5	6.3%
Coton and Boughton	31	4.9%	64.8	4.1%
Admirals and Cawston	41	6.5%	53.1	3.3%
Eastlands	38	6.0%	48.5	3.1%
Clifton, Newton and Churchover	38	6.0%	46.9	3.0%
Hillmorton	39	6.2%	33.3	2.1%
New Bilton	35	5.5%	25.1	1.6%
Wolvey and Shilton	26	4.1%	21.8	1.4%
Bilton	23	3.6%	21.3	1.3%
Rokeby and Overslade	28	4.4%	17.8	1.1%
Leam Valley	31	4.9%	13.8	0.9%
Benn	19	3.0%	7.3	0.5%

Table 6: Counts and hectareage of open space per electoral ward.

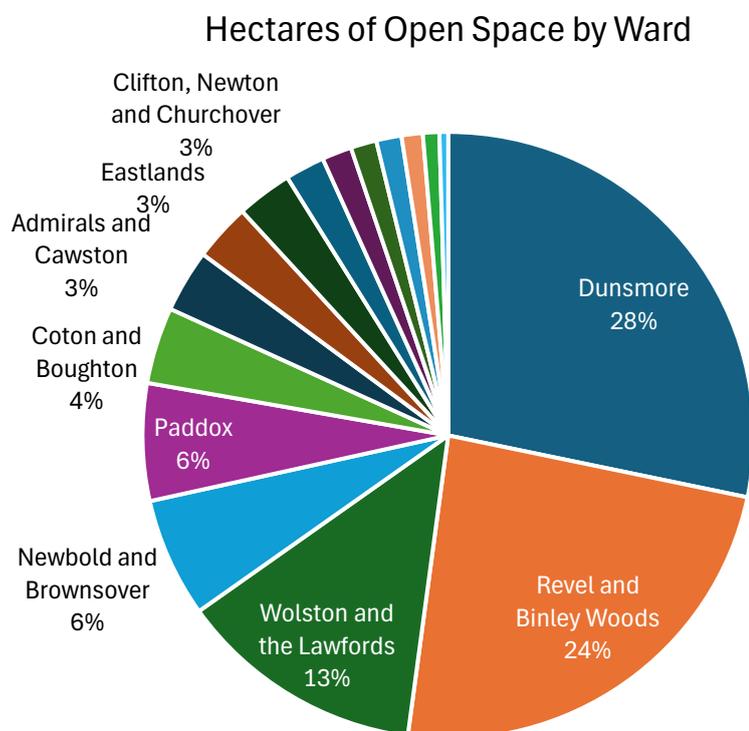


Figure 3: Hectares of open space by electoral ward.

- 5.8. Together the three rural wards of Dunsmore, Revel and Binley Woods, and Wolston and the Lawfords have over 30% of the recorded sites of open space in the Borough, and over 65% of the hectareage of open space. Conversely, Clifton, Newton and Churchover has average provision, while the remaining two rural wards of Leam Valley and Wolvey and Shilton have relatively few sites, and together only account for 2.3% of the Borough’s open space hectareage.
- 5.9. All of the urban wards have little open space relative to the leading rural wards, but between them, a further distinction can be made. With around 100ha each, Newbold and Brownsover and Paddock have the best urban provision by hectareage. Conversely, Benn stands out as having by far the worst provision, both in terms of the number of sites and hectareage.
- 5.10. These ward assessments change slightly once population size is accounted for, as seen in the table below which shows the hectares of open space per 1,000 residents for each typology.

Electoral Ward	Allotments	Amenity space	Churchyards & cemeteries	Natural & semi-natural space	Parks & recreation grounds	Provision for children and young people - LEAP	Provision for children and young people - Other	Total
Revel and Binley Woods	0.50	0.38	0.57	25.69	32.00	0.07	0.01	59.23
Dunsmore	0.45	0.63	0.34	46.15	4.67	0.12	0.01	52.37
Wolston and the Lawfords	0.62	0.74	0.31	21.76	1.29	0.09	0.06	24.87
Clifton, Newton and Churchover	0.61	2.01	0.32	12.03	0.79	0.14	0.01	15.91
Paddock	0.49	0.42	1.58	9.14	1.81	0.08	0.00	13.52
Newbold and Brownsover	0.22	2.14	0.13	7.44	0.88	0.07	0.02	10.90
Coton and Boughton	0.10	2.25	0.00	4.79	0.79	0.05	0.00	7.99
Wolvey and Shilton	1.87	3.15	0.70	0.00	1.63	0.07	0.00	7.41
Eastlands	0.69	0.61	0.96	1.65	1.65	0.07	0.02	5.65
Leam Valley	0.55	0.92	1.01	1.94	1.03	0.16	0.03	5.64
Admirals and Cawston	0.01	3.31	0.00	1.10	0.85	0.12	0.00	5.39
Hillmorton	0.05	1.33	0.35	1.73	0.78	0.07	0.00	4.30
Bilton	0.94	0.71	0.16	0.61	0.80	0.03	0.00	3.25
New Bilton	0.34	0.35	0.30	0.91	1.12	0.04	0.02	3.07
Rokeyby and Overlade	0.00	2.02	0.00	0.08	0.13	0.06	0.01	2.32
Benn	0.01	0.13	0.01	0.07	0.54	0.03	0.01	0.79

Table 7: Hectares of open space per 1,000 residents by electoral ward.

- 5.11. With the second highest population of any ward, the disadvantage of Benn is compounded. The ward only has 0.79ha of open space per 1,000 people, around 75 times less than the ward with the highest provision, Revel and Binley Woods.
- 5.12. The rural wards of Dunsmore, Revel and Binley Woods, and Wolston retain the three highest rankings, while the rankings of the other three rural wards all improve due to them having small populations relative to the urban wards.
- 5.13. The only significant shift in ranking of the urban wards that occurs once population size is accounted for is that Admirals and Cawston falls several places, owing to the fact that it has the largest population of any ward.
- 5.14. Broadly speaking, a trend can be identified whereby the urban wards closest to Rugby town centre tend to have the least provision, with provision increasing for the urban wards that stretch to the outer reaches of the town, and the rural wards outside of the town tending to have the greatest provision.
- 5.15. Nevertheless, there are exceptions and caveats to this trend. For example, lacking the large country parks or publicly accessible nature reserves that characterise the other rural wards, Leam Valley and Wolvey and Shilton have levels of provision comparable to the typical urban wards. Despite this, it is probable that, in these rural wards, some benefits similar to those of public open space can be gleaned from access to public rights of way across countryside that is otherwise private and inaccessible.
- 5.16. Furthermore, comparisons of total open space provision can be nuanced by examining provision of specific typologies. For example, while the total provision relative to population size in Bilton is poor, the ward has the second highest level of provision of Allotments in the Borough.

ELECTORAL WARD SUMMARIES

- 5.17. **Admirals and Cawston** – This is an urban ward on the southwestern edge of Rugby town which has the largest population of any of the Borough’s wards. It is characterised by large swathes of amenity space, most of which is concentrated in the newer Cawston housing developments to the southwest. Nine children’s play areas are embedded within these areas of amenity space and the four parks and recreation grounds which lay within the ward, however only a single site is present which specifically provides for the needs of older children/young people (Nelson Way MUGA). A reasonable amount of natural and semi-natural space is available due to the Cawston Greenway which spans the ward’s northwestern boundary. No full-scale allotments are located in the ward, with the only provision of this sort being a very small community garden at Ophelia Crescent.
- 5.18. **Benn** – This is an urban ward located in the centre of Rugby town in which there is a clear deficiency of all types of open space. Around 60% of the ward’s provision is composed of Caldecott Park, immediately to the north of the town centre, near to which are also the ward’s only substantial areas of amenity space. The eastern half of the ward contains streets of dense terraced housing where the only areas of open space are the Millennium Green Recreation Ground and the recently constructed Charolais Gardens Park (within the site of the former cattle market). On the eastern boundary a sliver of the Great Central Walk protrudes into the ward and a small set of unofficial allotments are to be found.
- 5.19. **Bilton** – This is an urban ward located on the southern edge of Rugby town. It is home to the largest single site of allotments in the Borough, the Bilton Poor Lands Allotments, located close to the ward’s western boundary on Alwyn Road. Reasonably large parks and recreation grounds (Alwyn Road Recreation Ground), natural and semi-natural spaces (Cock Robin Wood), and amenity spaces (Deepmore Road) can also be found, yet the total hectareage of these is quite low relative to the ward’s population. Perhaps the greatest weakness of the ward is that it has the least open space provision for children and young people relative to its population.
- 5.20. **Clifton, Newton and Churchover** – This is a rural ward with relatively good open space provision across nearly all typologies. Around three quarters of the total provision in the ward is composed of natural and semi-natural space, mainly concentrated in the space between Brownsover and Clifton upon Dunsmore, and the northern section of the Great Central Walk. The ward’s main weakness is its fairly poor provision for children and young people. Substantial sites can be found in Clifton upon Dunsmore, and another small site (newly constructed since the last study) is to be found in Newton. However, Churchover is completely lacking in any such provision, as appears to also be the case for the new development around Coton House.
- 5.21. **Coton and Boughton** – This is an urban ward located on the northern edge of Rugby town. It is composed of the Coton Park residential area to the southeast, the partially completed Rugby Gateway estate to the southwest, and employment land across the north. One of the ward’s key strengths is its large expanses of amenity space spread across the southern residential areas. Another is its reasonably high level of natural and semi-natural space due to the presence of the Swift Valley Nature Reserve. Seven children’s play areas are located in the ward, yet relative to the population, this provision is below average. The provision targeted at older children is particularly poor, with the only site dedicated to this purpose being the MUGA located off Central Park Drive. Another weakness of the ward is its low level of allotment provision, despite the recent establishment of the Eden Park allotments.

- 5.22. **Dunsmore** – This is an extensive rural ward covering the main rural settlements of Dunchurch, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Stretton-on-Dunsmore and a handful of small villages. The level of open space provision is reasonably good across all typologies, but is exceptionally high in terms of natural and semi-natural space due to the presence of Draycote Water in the southeast of the ward and Ryton Woods to the west. At 245ha, Draycote Water is the largest single site of natural and semi-natural space in the Borough. Perhaps the only significant weakness of the ward is its minimal provision for older children. A skatepark is located in Stretton and a MUGA in Ryton, yet no provision of this sort is to be found in Dunchurch or any of the smaller rural villages.
- 5.23. **Eastlands** – This is a predominantly urban ward which covers parts of Rugby town centre, but also contains a rural area to the south (along Barby Lane). One of the ward’s most prominent features is the presence of Whinfield Recreation Ground, which at 10ha is the third largest park and recreation ground in the Borough. Another key strength is the ward’s allotment provision, which is the third highest relative to population amongst all of the Borough wards. However, the ward is less well off when it comes to amenity space, which is largely absent in the areas of high density terraced housing, and is also lacking in natural and semi-natural space.
- 5.24. **Hillmorton** – This ward is a composite of urban and rural areas, although the latter element has been heavily reduced by the Houlton housing development. Relative to its population, the hectareage of open space provision in the ward is quite low. One of the weaknesses contributing to this is the relative paucity of parks and recreation grounds. The Featherbed Lane recreation ground is the only site of great substance within Hillmorton itself, and although they appear to be well equipped, the newly developed park and recreation ground in Houlton are not expansive in area. The ward is also well below the Borough average in terms of allotment provision, with the only site present being the relatively small Houlton Allotments. Perhaps the only strength of the ward when it comes to the quantitative assessment of open space is its provision of amenity space, of which a wide range of sites are distributed throughout the built-up areas.
- 5.25. **Leam Valley** – This is an expansive rural ward which has the lowest population (2,445) of any of Rugby’s electoral wards. The clearest strength of the ward when it comes to quantities of open space (relative to population) is its provision for children and young people. The spaces in Birdingbury, Marton and Willoughby mean that the ward has the highest provision for children and the second highest provision for older children/young people. Leam Valley also has high quantitative provisions of churchyards and cemeteries, and reasonably good levels of provision when it comes to all other typologies of open space. Nevertheless, the ward is likely to perform more poorly when it comes to accessibility standards given that all of the rural villages are each missing at least one typology of open space.
- 5.26. **New Bilton** – This is an almost exclusively urban ward. The eastern section is residential and borders Rugby town centre, whereas the western section is occupied by employment uses and also features a small rural area which sits outside the town boundary. New Bilton has the third worst quantitative level of open space provision amongst Rugby’s electoral wards, relative to their populations. The typologies where the ward performs particularly poorly are amenity space, natural and semi-natural space, and provision for children. The lack of amenity space is consistent with other areas of the town which primarily feature streets of historic terrace housing. By contrast, the ward benefits from the presence of six parks and recreation grounds that are well distributed throughout the residential areas of the ward, three of which include

provision for older children/young people (MUGAs and a parkour area). As such, the ward performs relatively well on both these typologies.

- 5.27. **Newbold and Brownsover** – This ward contains a mix of urban and rural areas. To the southeast are the residential areas of Brownsover and Technology Drive and to the southwest is the residential area of Newbold on Avon (a former village). The centre of the ward is dominated by the Swift Valley employment site and the Elliot’s Field and Junction One retail parks. Considerable amounts of open space have been identified across the ward, and, relative to its population, the total quantity of provision is good. Key strengths include the large amounts of amenity space which are interspersed throughout Brownsover and Newbold, as well as the provision of natural and semi-natural space, including the Newbold Quarry Nature Reserve (8.7ha). Conversely, with only two sets of allotments, both located close to Newbold, the ward’s provision of this typology is relatively poor. The quantitative provision of churchyards and cemeteries (one in Newbold and one in the historic village of Brownsover) is also relatively very low.
- 5.28. **Paddox** – The northern half of the ward is urban and predominantly occupied by residential properties, while the southern half is rural and contains the Rainsbrook cemetery and crematorium and some agricultural land. The total quantity of open space relative to the ward’s population is relatively good. Aside from having the highest level of churchyard & cemetery space in the Borough (due to the sizeable Rainsbrook cemetery), the ward’s key strength is its natural and semi-natural space, including Bluebell Woods to the far north of the ward, and the Great Central Walk and Diamond Wood to the south. The two typologies where the ward performs poorly are amenity space, for which there is only a smattering of small spaces, and provision for older children and young people.
- 5.29. **Revel and Binley Woods** – This is a large rural ward which includes the Main Rural Settlements of Binley Woods and Brinklow, as well as nine small rural villages. Out of all of Rugby’s 16 electoral wards, Revel and Binley Woods has the highest overall quantity of open space relative to population. This is primary due to the presence of Coome Abbey Country Park on the western boundary of the ward, which at 199ha is by far the largest park in the Borough. Revel and Binley Woods also has the second highest quantity of natural and semi-natural space relative to population, primarily accounted for by spinneys and woods located to the southwest of the ward. The provision of all other typologies, barring amenity space, is relatively good. However, despite the high levels of quantitative provision, the ward is likely to perform poorer in terms of accessibility standards, given that all of the rural villages are missing at least one typology each within their vicinities.
- 5.30. **Rokeby and Overslade** – This is an urban ward located to the southwest of Rugby town which features several modern housing estates. Rokeby and Overslade has the second lowest quantitative provision of open space relative to ward population in the Borough. The ward has no allotments, churchyards or cemeteries. The only park is the one located on Buchanan Road in the centre of the Borough. One strength of the ward when it comes to the quantitative provision of open space is its relatively high levels of amenity space, notably the Burnside (6.3ha) and Shakespeare Gardens (2.5ha) amenity spaces, both of which are amongst the top ten largest amenity spaces in the Borough.

- 5.31. **Wolston and the Lawfords** – This is a rural ward located directly to the west of Rugby town which includes the Main Rural Settlements of Long Lawford and Wolston, as well as a handful of small rural villages. Wolvey and the Lawfords has the third highest total quantity of open space relative to population size amongst the 16 electoral wards of Rugby. One of the ward's key strengths is its provision for older children/young people (for which it is the best ward), and its provision of natural and semi-natural space (for which it is the third best ward). The latter is concentrated in the far west of the ward, where Brandon Woods and Brandon Marsh Nature Reserve are located in close proximity to each other. On all other typologies the ward's provision is relatively good. However, similar to other rural wards, Wolston and the Lawfords is likely to be judged less favourably in terms of accessibility, due to the lack of provision in close proximity to some of the smaller rural villages.
- 5.32. **Wolvey and Shilton** – This is a rural ward located to the far north of the Borough which includes the Main Rural Settlement of Wolvey, as well as a handful of small rural villages and the military barracks at Bramcote (which is exempted from this study). The total quantitative provision of open space relative to population is level with the median for Rugby Borough as a whole, however, Wolvey and Shilton is notable for having the lowest provision amongst the six rural wards. This is because, opposed to these other rural wards, Wolvey and Shilton does not have any large areas of publicly accessible natural and semi-natural space or a country park. Nevertheless, there are some strengths. The ward has the highest quantitative provision of allotments relative to population, almost exclusively due to the presence of a 5.2ha site on Shilton Lane abutting the ward's southwest boundary. Wolvey and Shilton also has the second highest quantitative provision of amenity space relative to population in Rugby Borough, again, largely thanks to a single site which is designated as Local Green Space, Anker Meadows (7.8ha), to the north of Wolvey. Aside from the aforementioned deficiency of (accessible) natural and semi-natural space, perhaps the most obvious weakness is the lack of any provision for older children/young people (such as MUGAs, or skateparks).

6. QUALITATIVE AUDIT OF OPEN SPACE

BACKGROUND

- 6.1. An Open Space Quality Assessment was concluded by The Environment Partnership on behalf of the Council in February 2025. This assessment comprised an audit of 267 sites of open space, the development of recommended open space quality standards, a review of existing provision based on these standards, and recommendations for improvements to open space quality and value.
- 6.2. This assessment is available in full on the Council’s website, however, for ease of reference, its key findings are also summarised here.

KEY FINDINGS

- 6.3. Across all typologies, 164 of the audited sites (61%) achieved a quality score of good or above. Only nine sites (3%) received a quality score of poor, however 94 (34%) received a score of fair, indicating ample opportunity for improvement.

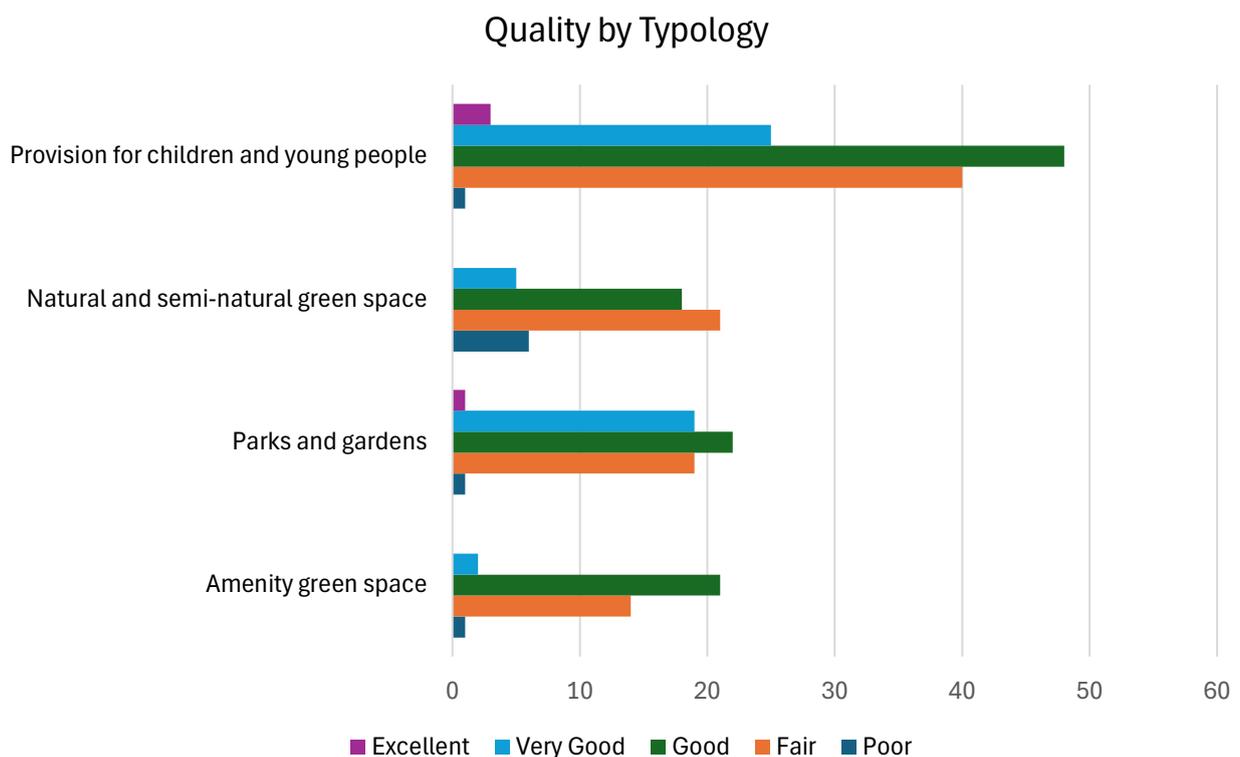


Figure 4: Quality of audited sites by typology.

- 6.4. Sites were also assessed on their value, with 147 (55%) recorded as having low value. Provision for children and young people performed particularly poorly in this regard, with 93 audited sites (79%) being assigned a low value score.

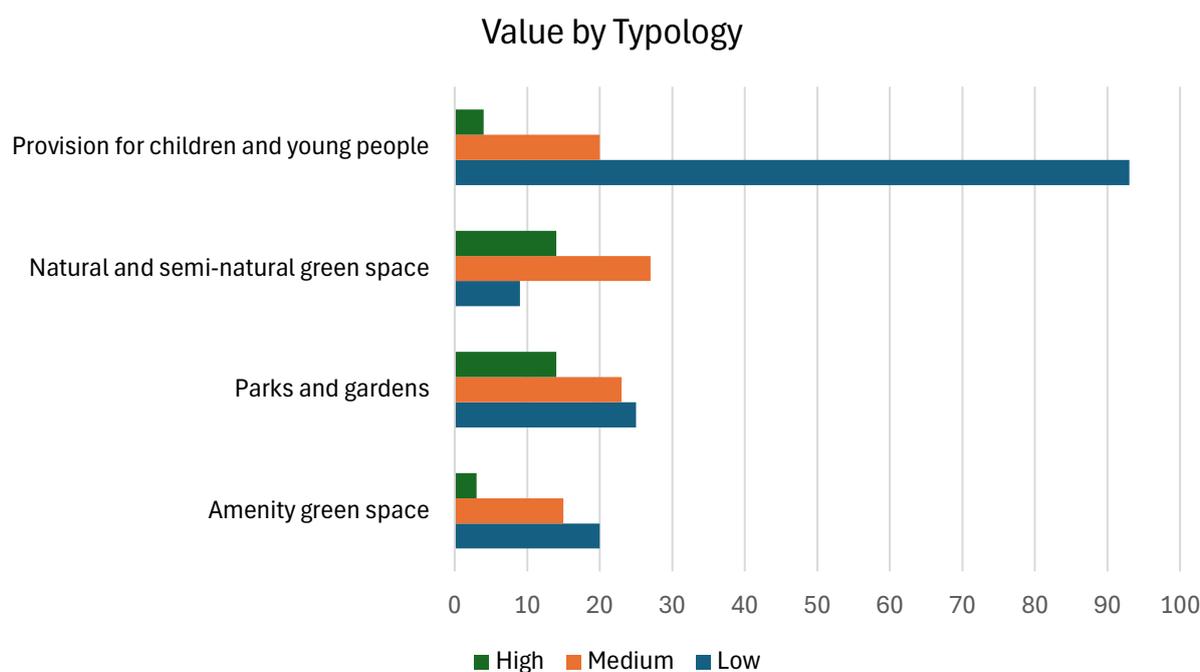


Figure 5: Value of audited sites by typology.

6.5. The Assessment recommended that the Council adopt the following standards for all typologies of open space:

- Good quality score (based on Green Flag Award Criteria)
- Medium value score (based on Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17)

6.6. Judged against these recommended standards, the Assessment found that 61% of audited sites meet the quality standard, with average quality audit scores indicating that five electoral wards fall short of the standard (Admirals and Cawston; Clifton, Newton and Churchover; Coton and Boughton; New Bilton; and Newbold and Brownsover).

6.7. The Assessment found that 45% of audited sites meet the value standard, with average value audit scores indicating that nine electoral wards fall short of the standard (Admirals and Cawston; Benn; Bilton; Eastlands; Hillmorton; Leam Valley; New Bilton; Paddock; and Rokeby and Overslade).

6.8. Identified opportunities to uplift quality included:

- Installing lighting, benches and litter bins;
- Improving signage and navigational aids;
- Undertaking litter picking; and
- General cleaning and maintenance of walkways and play equipment.

6.9. Identified opportunities to uplift value included:

- Introducing wildflower meadows;
- Clearing glades within woodland; and
- Installing natural play.

7. SETTING OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

OVERVIEW

- 7.1. Following the completion of the audit of local open space provision, new standards of provision for open space have been set below. This section explains how the standards for the study area have been developed and provides specific information and justification for each of the typologies where standards have been developed.
- 7.2. Standards comprise the following components:
- 7.3. **Quantity standards:** These are determined by the analysis of the Borough’s quantitative provision, consideration of existing local and national standards and benchmarks, and evidence gathered from the local needs assessment. It is important that quantity standards are locally appropriate and are realistic and achievable. The recommended standards need to be robust, evidence based and deliverable through contributions (on-site or off-site provision) made by new developments.
- 7.4. **Accessibility standards:** These reflect the needs of all potential users including those with physical or sensory disabilities, and younger and older people alike. Spaces likely to be used on a frequent and regular basis need to be within easy walking distance and have safe access. Other facilities where visits are typically longer in duration but less frequent can be further away. Consideration is also given to existing local or national standards and benchmarks.
- 7.5. **Quality standards:** These are as recommended by The Environment Partnership (TEP), based on the quality audits conducted on behalf of the Council, as well as existing best practice and national guidelines.

OVERALL PROVISION COMPARED TO CURRENT STANDARDS

Typology	Provision in the Borough per 1,000 population	Current RBC Standards	Fields in Trust Standards ¹⁴
Allotments	0.37	0.65/0.8	NA
Amenity Space	1.27	1.1/0.5	0.6
Natural and Semi-Natural Space	8.83	2.5	1.8
Parks and Recreation Grounds	2.96	1.5/1	0.8
Play Space	0.09	0.2	0.55

Table 8: Open space provision in the Borough compared to current standards.

¹⁴ Fields in Trust (2024) Fields in Trust Standards: Creating great spaces for all. Available online: <https://fieldsintrust.org/content/images/FIT-Standards-2024-Accessible-version.pdf> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

ALLOTMENTS

Existing National and Local Standards

- 7.6. Per the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908¹⁵, local authorities are duty bound to provide allotments for use by their residents if they consider there to be a demand.
- 7.7. The National Allotment Society argue that as ‘need’ is not static, it cannot easily be captured by a fixed standard. They advise that local standards should be set using ‘plots per household’, unless plot sizes are not fixed, in which case ‘hectares per household’ is preferable¹⁶.
- 7.8. The current Rugby Borough local plan sets out a standard of 0.65ha of allotments per 1,000 residents for urban areas and a standard of 0.8ha of allotments per 1,000 residents for rural areas.
- 7.9. The standards adopted by the other Warwickshire local authorities are as follows:

Local Authority	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000 population)	Access Standard
North Warwickshire	0.4	Straight line distance 1km
Nuneaton & Bedworth	0.244	NA
Stratford-on-Avon	0.4	NA
Warwick	0.38/0.42	NA

Justification of a New Quantity Standard for Allotments

- 7.10. The audit revealed that the current average level of provision across the Borough is 0.37ha per 1,000 residents – well below the current standards of 0.65ha and 0.8ha. Provision varies considerably across the wards, with Rokeby and Overslade having no provision at all, and Wolvey and Shilton having 1.87ha per 1,000 residents.
- 7.11. Only two wards (Bilton and Wolvey and Shilton) meet the higher local standard of 0.8ha per 1,000 residents, and only three meet the lower local standard of 0.65ha per 1,000 residents. Furthermore, the current local standards are much higher than those of other Warwickshire authorities.
- 7.12. Allotment associations in the Borough have reported that they have waiting lists or are receiving regular requests for plots which they cannot fulfill, which would suggest that there is unmet demand.
- 7.13. Allotments contribute towards the Council’s priority of promoting healthy communities, through providing opportunities for outdoor recreation/physical activity, community cohesion, and the production of healthy locally grown food.
- 7.14. The propensity for new housing to have relatively smaller gardens is only likely to increase demand.

¹⁵ The National Allotment Society (2025) Are There Laws Governing Allotments? Available online: <https://thenas.org.uk/Allotment-Laws> [Accessed 04/12/2025].

¹⁶ National Allotment Association (2010) A place to grow: a supplementary document to Growing in the community.

7.15. With the above in mind, a new Borough-wide standard of **0.65 ha per 1,000 residents** (i.e. the lower existing standard) is proposed. A standard above the existing level of provision (0.37ha) is justified given the likelihood that there is existing unmet demand, the potential for such demand to grow as new housing delivered, and the propensity for allotment use to support the Council’s planning priorities.

Justification of a New Access Standard for Allotments

7.16. It is considered that the availability of allotments is more important than having them very close to home, nevertheless facilities should be relatively nearby.

7.17. The current local plan does not set an access standard, however, the previous open space study recommended one of 700m. If this standard is applied to current provision, then large swathes of Rugby town are below standard, as are 14 out of the 34 designated rural settlements.

7.18. Achieving an access standard of 700m seems an unrealistic goal and is far more ambitious than the only other allotment access standard applied within Warwickshire (1km in North Warwickshire).

7.19. Given the above points, a slightly higher Borough-wide access standard of **800m** is proposed for Allotments.

AMENITY SPACE

Existing National and Local Standards

7.20. Fields in Trust (previously the National Playing Fields Association) recommend that a minimum of 0.6ha of amenity green space should be provided per 1,000 people.

7.21. The current Rugby Borough local plan sets out a standard of 1.1ha of amenity green space per 1,000 residents for urban areas and a standard of 0.5ha of amenity green space per 1,000 residents for rural areas.

7.22. The standards adopted by the other Warwickshire local authorities are as follows:

Local Authority	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000 population)	Access Standard
North Warwickshire	0.5	100m
Nuneaton & Bedworth	0.6	NA
Stratford-on-Avon	NA*	NA
Warwick	0.93	NA

*A standard of 1.15ha per 1,000 people is set for parks & gardens and amenity space combined.

Justification of a New Quantity Standard for Amenity Space

- 7.23. The audit revealed that the current average level of provision across the Borough is 1.27ha per 1,000 residents – above both the current standards of 1.1ha and 0.5ha. Provision varies considerably across the wards, with Benn having only 0.13ha per 1,000 residents, and Admirals and Cawston having 3.31ha per 1,000 residents.
- 7.24. Only four wards (Benn, New Bilton, Revel and Binley Woods, and Paddock) fail to meet the lower standard of 0.5ha, whereas nine fail to meet the higher standard of 1.1ha.
- 7.25. A new Borough-wide minimum standard of **1.27ha per 1,000 residents** is proposed. This would mean that the minimum standard expected of new developments would be no less than the existing average provision across the Borough.

Justification of a New Access Standard for Amenity Space

- 7.26. It is considered to be important that amenity space is located close to homes, given its role in providing open space that can be used frequently on a day-to-day basis for informal recreation.
- 7.27. Amenity green space is likely to play an essential role in meeting the Fields in Trust recommendation that all homes be within 200-300m walking distance of open space.
- 7.28. The current local plan does not set an access standard for amenity space, however, the previous open space study recommended one of 500m. If this standard is applied to current provision, then there are only a very small number of homes within settlement boundaries that are sub-standard: c.3 ha centred on Murray Road in Rugby town, and the villages of Flecknoe, Harborough Magna, Leamington Hastings, Stretton-under-Fosse, and Thurlaston.
- 7.29. Given the above points, a more ambitious Borough-wide access standard of **300m** is recommended for amenity space.

NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL SPACE

Existing National and Local Standards

- 7.30. Fields in Trust recommend that a minimum of 1.8ha of natural and semi-natural space should be provided per 1,000 people.
- 7.31. The current Rugby Borough local plan sets out a standard of 2.5ha of natural and semi-natural space per 1,000 residents for both urban and rural areas.
- 7.32. The standards adopted by the other Warwickshire local authorities are as follows:

Local Authority	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000 population)	Access Standard
North Warwickshire	0.5	450m
Nuneaton & Bedworth	1.8	NA
Stratford-on-Avon	0.75 – 5.24	NA
Warwick	1.91	NA

Justification of a New Quantity Standard for Natural and Semi-Natural Space

- 7.33. The audit revealed that the current average level of provision across the Borough is 8.83ha per 1,000 residents – far above the current standard of 2.5ha. However, provision varies considerably across the wards, with Wolvey and Shilton having no provision at all, and Dunsmore having 46.15ha per 1,000 residents.
- 7.34. Seven out of 16 wards (Coton and Boughton; Newbold and Brownsover; Paddock; Clifton, Newton and Churchover; Wolston and the Lawfords; Revel and Binley Woods; and Dunsmore) meet the current standard.
- 7.35. Therefore, although the current standard (2.5ha) is well above the standard set by Fields in Trust (1.8ha) and most of the standards set by other Warwickshire authorities, it appears to be reasonably appropriate to local conditions.
- 7.36. The importance of natural green spaces (along with other open spaces) is recognised not only for their contribution to recreation and health and wellbeing, but also in terms of nature conservation, biodiversity and climate change mitigation/adaptation.
- 7.37. Given the above points, it is proposed that the Borough-wide quantity standard for natural and semi-natural space remain static at **2.5ha per 1,000 residents**.

Justification of a New Access Standard for Natural and Semi-Natural Space

- 7.38. Fields in Trust recommend that all homes should be within 200-300m walking distance of open space and that everyone should have access to the full range of open space types within 1,000m.
- 7.39. The current local plan does not set an access standard for natural and semi-natural Space, however, the previous open space study recommended one of 700m. If this standard is applied to current provision, then there are some considerable areas within settlement boundaries that fail to meet it. Within Rugby town this includes much of the town centre, parts of Hillmorton, and parts of the Hillside residential area. In the rural areas, it includes most of Dunchurch, and 14 of the smaller rural villages (Ansty, Barnacle, Broadwell, Burton Hastings, Churchover, Easenhall, Flecknoe, Grandborough, Harborough Magna, Marton, Pailton, Princethorpe, Shilton, Willey).
- 7.40. Nevertheless, this access standard is deemed to remain appropriate as, with the possibility of new areas of natural and semi-natural space becoming publicly available alongside new developments, it may help ensure that existing gaps in access to provision are addressed.
- 7.41. It is therefore proposed that a Borough-wide access standard of **700m** be adopted for natural and semi-natural space.

PARKS AND RECREATION GROUNDS

Existing National and Local Standards

- 7.42. Fields in Trust recommend that a minimum of 0.8ha of parks and gardens should be provided per 1,000 people.
- 7.43. The current Rugby Borough local plan sets out a standard of 1.5ha of parks and gardens per 1,000 residents in urban areas, and 1ha of parks and gardens per 1,000 residents in rural areas.
- 7.44. The standards adopted by the other Warwickshire local authorities are as follows:

Local Authority	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000 population)	Access Standard
North Warwickshire	0.5	450m
Nuneaton & Bedworth	0.8	400-1,000m
Stratford-on-Avon	1.15*	NA
Warwick	1.91	NA

*inclusive of amenity green space

Justification of a New Quantity Standard for Parks and Recreation Grounds

- 7.45. The audit revealed that the current average level of provision across the Borough is 2.96ha per 1,000 residents – far above the current standards of 1.5ha and 1ha. However, provision varies considerably across the wards, from Rokeby and Overslade with 0.13ha per 1,000 residents, through to Revel and Binley Woods which has 32ha per 1,000 residents.
- 7.46. Half of the wards (Revel and Binley Woods; Dunsmore; Paddock; Eastlands; Wolvey and Shilton; Wolston and the Lawfords; New Bilton; Leam Valley) meet the current lower standard of 1ha, while five out of 16 wards (Revel and Binley Woods; Dunsmore; Paddock; Eastlands; Wolvey and Shilton) meet the higher standard of 1.5ha.
- 7.47. Ideally, the standard should not be considerably lower than the current average provision across the Borough, yet a standard of 2.96ha would patently be unachievable for the vast majority of wards. If Revel and Binley Woods is excluded as an outlier, then the average provision of parks and recreation grounds across the Borough is 1.25ha per 1,000 residents.
- 7.48. Given the above, it is proposed that a Borough-wide quantity standard for parks and recreation grounds be set at **1.25ha per 1,000 residents**.

Justification of a New Access Standard for Parks and Recreation Grounds

- 7.49. Fields in Trust recommend that all homes should be within 200-300m walking distance of open space and that everyone should have access to the full range of open space types within 1,000m.
- 7.50. The current local plan does not set an access standard for parks and recreation grounds, however, the previous open space study recommended one of 800m for parks and gardens. If this standard is applied to current provision, then the only residential areas of Rugby town that

fail to meet it are the far-eastern area of Hillmorton, and the southeastern section of the Rokeby estate (close to Rugby Free Secondary School). Furthermore, 16 rural villages fail to meet the standard: Barnacle, Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Brandon, Broadwell, Burton Hastings, Churchover, Easenhall, Flecknoe Frankton, Grandborough, Leamington Hastings, Newton, Princethorpe, Stretton-under-Fosse, Thurlaston, and Willey.

7.51. Given the above points, it is proposed that a slightly more ambitious Borough-wide access standard of **700m** be set.

PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Existing National and Local Standards

7.52. Fields in Trust recommend that a minimum of 0.25ha of equipped designated play areas should be provided per 1,000 people, and that a further 0.3ha of informal play provision should be provided per 1,000 people. Combined, their recommendation is that a minimum of 0.55ha of play space should be provided per 1,000 people.

7.53. The current Rugby Borough local plan sets out a standard of 0.2ha of children’s play space per 1,000 residents for both urban and rural areas.

7.54. The standards adopted by the other Warwickshire local authorities are as follows:

Local Authority	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000 population)	Access Standard
North Warwickshire	0.06 - 1	250-600m
Nuneaton & Bedworth	0.55	NA
Stratford-on-Avon	0.25	NA
Warwick	0.33	NA

Justification of a New Quantity Standard for Provision for Children and Young People

7.55. The proportion of the Borough’s population that is 18 or below is projected to fall from 28.4% in 2025 to 24.9% in 2043.

7.56. The audit revealed that the current average level of provision for children and young people across the Borough is 0.09ha per 1,000 residents – less than half the current standard of 0.2ha.

7.57. Provision varies considerably across the wards, from Bilton with 0.03ha per 1,000 residents, through to Leam Valley which has 0.19ha per 1,000 residents. Provision of facilities suitable for young people (MUGAs, skateparks, BMX tracks etc.) is particularly poor, with six wards having no provision of this sort at all.

7.58. None of the wards meet the current local standard, and the chances that some have of meeting it over the course of a new plan period are unrealistic given how considerable the gap is. Nevertheless, setting a lower standard would not be supportable, given that the current local standard is already far below that recommend at a national level (by FIT), and is also generally lower than those set by other Warwickshire authorities.

7.59. Given the above points, it is proposed that the Borough-wide quantity standard for provision for children and young people remain static at **0.2ha per 1,000 residents**.

Justification of a New Access Standard for Provision for Children and Young People

7.60. Fields in Trust recommend that all homes should be within 100m of Local Areas of Play (LAPs), 400m of Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs), 1,000m of Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs), and 700m of informal play provision.

7.61. The current local plan does not set an access standard for provision for children and young people, however, the previous open space study recommended the following: 400m for LEAPs, 1,000m for NEAPs, and 1,000m for teenage facilities.

7.62. If the standard of 400m is applied to current provision for children, then there are substantial parts of the Bilton, Hillmorton, Overslade and Rokeby, and Paddox wards within Rugby town that are sub-standard. Furthermore, 12 rural villages would fail to meet the standard: Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Broadwell, Burton Hastings, Churchover, Easenhall, Flecknoe, Frankton, Grandborough, Leamington Hastings, Stretton-under-Fosse, Thurlaston, and Willey.

7.63. If the standard of 1,000m is applied to the current provision for young people, then the areas within Rugby town that are sub-standard include parts of Hillmorton, much of Cawston, and the southern sections of the Bilton and Overslade and Rokeby wards.

7.64. It is proposed that the access standards proposed in the last open space study (400m for LEAPs, 1,000m for NEAPs, and 1,000m for teenage facilities) are adopted.

COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED STANDARDS

Quantity Standards

Typology	Current Provision per 1,000 population	Current RBC Standard	FIT Standard	Proposed RBC Standard
Allotments	0.37	0.65/0.8	NA	0.65
Amenity Space	1.27	1.1/0.5	0.6	1.27
Natural and Semi-Natural Space	8.83	2.5	1.8	2.5
Parks and Recreation Grounds	2.96	1.5/1	0.8	1.25
Play Space	0.09	0.2	0.55	0.2

Table 9: Comparison of existing and proposed quantity standards.

Access Standards

Typology	Recommended by Last Open Space Study	FIT Standard	Proposed RBC Standard
Allotments	700m	Max 1,000m	800m
Amenity Space	500m	Max 1,000m	300m
Natural and Semi-Natural Space	700m	Max 1,000m	700m
Parks and Recreation Grounds	800m	Max 1,000m	700m
Play Space	400-1,000m	100-1,000m	400m (LEAP) 1,000m (NEAP) 1,000m (Provision for young people)

Table 10: Comparison of existing and proposed access standards.

Quality Standards

Typology	Recommended by Last Open Space Study	Proposed RBC Standard
Allotments	Allotments should be secure with gates and fencing providing suitable areas for growing, and where applicable an adequate water supply and car parking.	Quality score of 70%, determined by audits based on the Green Flag Award. Value score of 40%, determined by audits based on the methodology set out by 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17' (2002).
Amenity Space	Green Flag Standard	
Natural and Semi-Natural Space	Green Flag Standard	
Parks and Recreation Grounds	Green Flag Standard	
Play Space	New LEAPs and NEAPs should meet FIT standards. New youth provision should reflect best practice the needs expressed by local young people.	

Table 11: Comparison of existing and proposed quality standards.

8. APPLYING RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

8.1. This chapter of the report applies the newly proposed open space standards to current open space provision across the Borough. The aim is to provide an understanding of where the supply of open space is exceeding expected standards and where there are shortfalls which the Council may wish to seek to address through planning, green space management practices or investment.

QUANTITY ANALYSIS

8.2. The table below shows the balance of supply (in hectares) of open space for each of the electoral wards. This balance is calculated using the following formula. Firstly, the ward population (2021 Census) is divided by 1,000, then multiplied by the proposed open space standard. This gives the quantity of open space required for the ward to meet the standard. Secondly, the quantity of open space currently provided in the ward is subtracted from the quantity required, thereby arriving at a surplus or a deficit. Positive figures show where the proposed quantity standard has been met, while negative figures show where there is a deficit in provision.

8.3. Although these figures will help highlight where new provision should be sought, it is important that they are considered in tandem with the subsequent access analysis, as some areas may readily have access to provision in neighbouring wards.

Ward	Allotments	Amenity space	Natural & semi-natural space	Parks & recreation grounds	Provision for Children and Young People (Combined)
Admirals and Cawston	-0.64	2.04	-1.40	-0.40	-0.08
Benn	-0.64	-1.14	-2.43	-0.71	-0.16
Bilton	0.29	-0.56	-1.89	-0.45	-0.17
Clifton, Newton and Churchover	-0.04	0.74	9.53	-0.46	-0.05
Coton and Boughton	-0.55	0.98	2.29	-0.46	-0.14
Dunsmore	-0.20	-0.64	43.65	3.42	-0.07
Eastlands	0.04	-0.66	-0.85	0.40	-0.11
Hillmorton	-0.60	0.06	-0.77	-0.47	-0.13
Leam Valley	-0.10	-0.35	-0.56	-0.22	-0.01
New Bilton	-0.31	-0.92	-1.59	-0.13	-0.14
Newbold and Brownsover	-0.43	0.87	4.94	-0.37	-0.11
Paddox	-0.16	-0.85	6.64	0.56	-0.12
Revel and Binley Woods	-0.15	-0.89	23.19	30.75	-0.12
Rokeby and Overslade	-0.65	0.75	-2.42	-1.12	-0.13
Wolston and the Lawford	-0.03	-0.53	19.26	0.04	-0.05
Wolvey and Shilton	1.22	1.88	-2.50	0.38	-0.13

Table 12: Supply of open space against proposed quantity standards by ward.

8.4. Should the proposed standards be adopted, then all wards will have a quantitative deficit of some kind. Only one ward (Wolvey and Shilton) will meet the quantity standard of at least three of the typologies, while a majority will only manage to meet the quantity standards of one or two typologies. Three wards will fail to meet the quantity standards of any of the typologies, two of which are inner town wards with large populations (Benn and New Bilton), and one of which is the rural ward with the smallest population in the Borough (Leam Valley). It is notable that none of the wards achieve the proposed standard for Provision for Children and Young People, potentially indicating a high priority area for open space strategy moving forward.

ACCESS ANALYSIS

8.5. This section analyses how the Borough performs when the proposed access standards for open space are applied. The focus is on identifying residential areas of the Borough which are not within ranges of open space that meet the standards and can therefore be considered to have deficient access to open space.

8.6. The analysis is based on the application of straight-line distance buffers to all open spaces identified as part of this study. Maps showing the extent of these buffers (see Appendix II) have been reviewed and the areas that lay outside them are identified. The key access issues for each typology and each ward are summarised below.

Summaries by Typology

Typology	Areas not meeting access standard
Amenity Green Space	<p>Rugby Town: Almost all of the town has adequate access to Amenity Green Space. The only sizeable area which does not is the area of Benn Ward around Murray Road. Areas of Eastlands Ward (the western part of Lower Hillmorton Road, Pytchley Road, Boundary Road) and areas of Paddox Ward (northwestern part of Hillmorton Road; south of Percival Road) are also lacking in Amenity Green Space – although in these instances the proximity of other typologies may compensate.</p> <p>Main Rural Settlements: Most of the Main Rural Settlements have good access to Amenity Green Space. Those that have larger areas lacking in adequate access include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Binley Woods: properties to the north of Rugby Road and on the eastern and western fringes. ● Ryton-on-Dunsmore: east and north of the A45. ● Stretton-on-Dunsmore: Squires Road and northern part of School Lane. ● Wolvey: most of the area to the south of Bulkington Road and The Square. <p>However, in these instances, the lack of coverage may be compensated for by access to Public Rights of Way across open countryside.</p>

Allotments	<p>Rugby Town: A considerable portion of the town lacks adequate access to allotments, with the largest areas being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas either side of Dunchurch Road in the south of the town. • An area stretching northwards from the town centre, past Technology Drive and Boughton Road, along Crow Thorns, and ending in the northeast of Coton Park. • An area in the east of Hillmorton, within the vicinity of Hillmorton Primary School. <p>If the small community garden plots at Ophelia Gardens in Cawston are discounted, then all of Cawston also lacks adequate access.</p> <p>Main Rural Settlements: Most of the Main Rural Settlements have good access to allotments, but a handful have large areas that don't including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brinklow: northern section around the intersection of Ell Lane and The Crescent/Lutterworth Road. • Dunchurch: northern section comprising the residential areas of Bilton Lane and Earle Gardens . • Stretton-on-Dunsmore: the eastern part of the village concentrated along Fosse Way and Rugby Lane. • Wolvey: all of the village barring its eastern edge.
Natural & Semi-Natural Green Space	<p>Rugby town: Most of the town has adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space. By far the largest area lacking adequate access stretches from where Benn, Eastlands and New Bilton wards converge in the centre of town, along Lawford Road out to the west. The second largest area is in Hillmorton, concentrated around High Street. Other smaller areas without adequate access include the eastern section of Rokeby and Overslade Ward, near Rugby Free Secondary, and the centre of Bilton Ward, between the Crescent School and Alwyn Road.</p> <p>Main Rural Settlements: All of the main rural settlements have adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space, except for Dunchurch.</p>
Parks & Recreation Grounds	<p>Rugby town: Almost all of the town has adequate access to Parks & Recreation Grounds. The only residential areas that fall outside of the access buffers are sections of the Rokeby estate to the east of Dunchurch Road, and the east of Hillmorton, around Crick Road and West Coast Lane.</p> <p>Main Rural Settlements: All of the Main Rural Settlements have adequate access to Parks & Recreation Grounds.</p>

<p>Provision for Children & Young People</p>	<p>Rugby town: Several areas of the town are lacking in adequate access to Provision for Children (LEAPs and NEAPs), with the most significant locations being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area spanning across Bilton and Rokeby and Overslade between Deepmore Road in the west to Rugby Free Secondary in the east. • An area to the south/southeast of the town centre, comprising parts of Church Street, Clifton Road, Lower Hillmorton Road, Murray Road, and Railway Terrace. • Part of Paddox ward comprising Dunsmore Avenue, Eden Road, Fisher Avenue, Kingsley Avenue, and Shenstone Avenue. • The area of Hillmorton Ward centred around Bucknill Crescent and Hillmorton Primary School. <p>All of the town has adequate access to Provision for Young People (MUGAs, skate parks, bike tracks etc.) except for the southern parts of the Admirals and Cawston, Bilton and Rokeby and Overslade wards, and the eastern part of Hillmorton (between the primary school and the canal).</p> <p>Main Rural Settlements: All of the Main Rural Settlements have some Provision for Children (LEAPs/NEAPs) in their boundaries, and therefore, although there are some areas which fail to meet the access standard, generally speaking access to this typology is reasonably good. Most of the villages also have some form of Provision for Young People too, except for Dunchurch and Wolvey.</p>
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Summaries by Ward

Ward	Access Issues
Admirals and Cawston	<p>This ward has good access to open space, partly due to provision within the ward (particularly large amounts of amenity space), but also because significant provision is located close to its borders (e.g. Freemantle Park to the north and Cawston Spinney to the south). The only area that lacks sufficient access is the southwestern section of the ward where there is inadequate access to Provision for Young People, and to Allotments (if the small Ophelia Crescent community garden plots are discounted).</p>
Benn	<p>This ward has two areas with access issues. Firstly, the eastern part of the ward concentrated around Murray Road lacks adequate access to Amenity Green Space and Allotments (the latter of which is worsened if the unofficial Bridge Street allotments are discounted). Secondly, the southwestern section of the ward lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space – though, as much of this area is occupied by town centre uses rather than residential dwellings, this may be considered less problematic. The ward’s overall quantitative deficits are eased somewhat by the presence of substantial areas of open space close to its borders (e.g. Whinfield Recreation Ground to the east and the Viaduct Nature Walk to the north).</p>
Bilton	<p>This ward has several relatively minor access issues. Despite having a high quantitative provision of Allotments, this is concentrated in a single site, which results in the southernmost part of the ward (around Montague Road) lacking the expected standard of access. Secondly, to the west, a section of Alwyn Road, and to the east, the area between Arbour Close and Edyvean Close, lack adequate access to amenity green space. However, in both instances, the proximity of Parks and Recreation Grounds which can serve similar functions may lessen the issue. Lastly, the southern section of the ward (near Rugby High School and Cock Robin Wood) lacks sufficient access to Provision for Young People.</p>
Clifton, Newton and Churchover	<p>This ward contains the villages of Clifton-upon-Dunsmore, Newton and Churchover, and the easternmost section of the Coton Park development. Each area differs in terms of its performance against the access standards.</p> <p>All areas of Clifton-upon-Dunsmore have adequate access to open space, except for the northwestern corner of the settlement (North Road) which technically has insufficient access to Amenity Green Space. This is likely to be offset by readily available access to PRowS and other types of open space.</p> <p>Newton lacks sufficient access to Parks and Recreation Grounds, and although it has gained a play area since the last study, it still lacks adequate access to Provision for Young People.</p> <p>Churchover lacks adequate access to all types of open space except Amenity Green Space. The impact of the lack of nearby designated Natural and Semi-Natural Space may be lessened by access to PRowS across countryside.</p> <p>The eastern section of Coton Park lacks adequate access to Allotments.</p>
Coton and Boughton	<p>This ward has good access to open space. The only area which falls short of the proposed access standards is the eastern section of the ward (around Crow Thorns) which lacks adequate access to allotments.</p>

Dunsmore	<p>This ward is comprised of three Main Rural Settlements (Dunchurch, Stretton-on-Dunsmore and Ryton-on-Dunsmore) and four rural villages (Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Frankton, Princethorpe and Thurlaston).</p> <p>Most of Dunchurch lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space and Provision for Young People, and the north of the village also doesn't meet the standard of access for Allotments.</p> <p>Stretton-on-Dunsmore has good access to all typologies, barring its eastern part (around the Fosse Way and Rugby Lane) which lacks adequate access to Allotments. Likewise, Ryton-on-Dunsmore is characterised by good access to open space. An area to its east (around Holly Drive and Cedar Avenue) is lacking in Amenity Green Space, but that is likely compensated for by the presence of other typologies (such as the play area and natural space).</p> <p>The smaller rural villages (Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Frankton, Princethorpe and Thurlaston) all lack the expected standard of access to Parks and Recreation Grounds and Provision for Young People. Except for Princethorpe, they also lack adequate access to Allotments. No types of open space have been recorded in Thurlaston at all, although the proximity of Draycote Water, accessible via PROW, may partially offset the negative impact of this.</p>
Eastlands	<p>Most of this ward had good access to all typologies of open space, but two small areas are shown to have access issues. Firstly, the western area of the ward close to the town centre (Barby Road, Lawrence Sheriff Street, north of Dunchurch Road) lacks adequate access to both Allotments and Natural and Semi-Natural Space. Secondly, some of the terraced streets that junction off Hillmorton Road and Lower Hillmorton Road (The Arbours, Paradise Street, Temple Street, Queen Victoria Street) are lacking in adequate access to Amenity Green Space.</p>
Hillmorton	<p>This ward's quantitative deficits in open space are somewhat alleviated on its western side by access to significant areas of open space just outside its borders (e.g. Bluebell Woods, The Kent Allotments and Hillmorton Paddock Allotments). Access to open space is good across most of the ward. The only part with notable access issues is the area between Bucknill Crescent/Hillmorton Primary School and the western boundary of Houlton which lacks adequate access to Allotments, Natural and Semi-Natural Space and Provision for Young People. However, the presence of PROWs leading into the Rainsbrook Valley may compensate for this to some degree.</p>
Leam Valley	<p>This ward is comprised of seven rural villages (Birdingbury, Broadwell, Flecknoe, Grandborough, Leamington Hastings, Marton and Willoughby), none of which entirely meet the proposed open space access standards. The access issues for each village are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birdingbury: the southern section of the village lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space. • Broadwell: lacks access to all typologies except Amenity Green Space. • Flecknoe: lacks access to all typologies except Allotments. • Grandborough: lacks access to all typologies except Amenity Green Space. • Leamington Hastings: lacks access to all typologies. • Marton: lacks access to Allotments, Natural and Semi-Natural Space, and Provision for Young People

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willoughby: lacks access to Amenity Green Space (likely offset by the recreation ground). <p>As with other rural villages, the impact of deficiencies in access to Amenity Green Space and Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space may be diminished by the readily available access to countryside PRowWs.</p>
New Bilton	<p>Despite having quantitative deficits across all open space typologies, this ward performs reasonably well against the proposed access standards. In part, this is because the ward's open space is dispersed, and because many additional areas of open space are located just outside its boundaries (such as Caldecott Park to the northeast). The part of the ward that performs poorly is an area concentrated around Lawford Road (roughly between Oliver Street and Glebe Crescent). Here there is inadequate access to both Amenity Green Space and Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space.</p>
Newbold and Brownsover	<p>All areas of the ward meet the proposed access standards, except for an area to the east (around Boughton Road, Crow Thorns, and Technology Drive) which lacks the expected level of access to Allotments.</p>
Paddox	<p>Generally speaking this ward has good access to open space. However, a substantial part of the ward (centred around Kingsley Avenue and Dunsmore Avenue) lacks adequate access to Provision for Children (LEAPs). Furthermore, the residential area between Hillmorton Road and Ashlawn Road has some small pockets that fail to meet the access standards for Amenity Green Space, Natural and Semi-Natural Space, and Provision for Young People.</p>
Revel and Binley Woods	<p>This is a large rural ward which contains the Main Rural Settlements of Binley Woods and Brinklow, and seven rural villages (Ansty, Easenhall, Harborough Magna, Monks Kirby, Pailton, Stretton-under-Fosse, and Willey).</p> <p>Binley Woods benefits from being in close proximity to two expansive areas of Natural and Semi-Natural Space. The only access issue is that the northern, eastern and western fringes of the village fail to meet the proposed access standard for Amenity Green Space, although this is likely offset by ready access to nearby PRowWs.</p> <p>Brinklow benefits from a large centrally located Park and Recreation Ground and area of Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space ("the Tump"). The only minor access issue is that its eastern fringe fails to meet the proposed access standard for Allotments.</p> <p>The rural villages have varying access issues. Perhaps the most significant issue is a lack of access to Parks and Recreation Grounds and Provision for Young People. These villages mostly also lack adequate access to Allotments and Natural and Semi-Natural Space, however this may be offset by the rural setting of these settlements (larger gardens and access to PRowWs).</p>

<p>Rokeby and Overslade</p>	<p>The ward has two main open space access issues. Firstly, all of the ward, barring its northwestern section (around Lytham Road, Ferndown Road and St Anne’s Road), doesn’t meet the proposed standard for access to Allotments (there are none located in the boundaries of the ward itself). Furthermore, the area between Rugby Free School and Dunchurch Road (“the Leys”) lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space, Parks & Recreation Grounds, and Provision for Young People.</p>
<p>Wolston and the Lawfords</p>	<p>This is a rural ward containing two Main Rural Settlements (Long Lawford and Wolston) and two Rural Villages (Brandon and Church Lawford).</p> <p>Long Lawford and Wolston both have good access to open space with no substantial areas that fall short of the proposed access standards.</p> <p>Although Brandon has little open space identified within its settlement boundary, it benefits from its proximity to areas of open space in Wolston. Nevertheless, it lacks adequate access to both Allotments and Parks and Recreation Grounds.</p> <p>Church Lawford lacks adequate access to Provision for Young People.</p>
<p>Wolvey and Shilton</p>	<p>This is a rural ward containing a single Main Rural Settlement (Wolvey) and three Rural Villages (Barnacle, Burton Hastings and Shilton).</p> <p>Wolvey has three open space access issues. Firstly, the village lacks adequate access to Provision for Young People. Secondly, all but the easternmost part of the village fails to meet the proposed access standard for Allotments. Thirdly, the south of village lacks adequate access to Amenity Green Space – although the effects of this may be offset by the close proximity of a recreation ground and access to countryside PRoWs.</p> <p>Barnacle lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space, Parks and Recreation Grounds, and Provision for Young People.</p> <p>Burton Hastings lacks adequate access to all types of open space except Amenity Green Space.</p> <p>Shilton lacks adequate access to Natural and Semi-Natural Space and Provision for Young People.</p>

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1. This study has provided an assessment of the current status of open space within Rugby Borough (audit of quantity and quality), formulated new open space standards (quantity, quality and accessibility), and applied these standards to identify deficiencies in provision.
- 9.2. The study has focused on five typologies of open space:
- Allotments;
 - Amenity Green Space;
 - Natural and Semi-Natural Space;
 - Parks and Recreation Grounds; and
 - Provision for Children and Young People.
- 9.3. Although they have been mapped, the Borough's provision of Churchyards and Cemeteries has not been analysed, and standards have not been recommended for this typology. Furthermore, the study has not considered Playing Pitches and Outdoor Space, given that this typology of open space has already been covered in a separate study.
- 9.4. The key findings of the audit of provision are:
- 9.4.1. There are significant inequalities between the Borough's electoral wards when it comes to quantitative provision of open space (hectares) relative to their population size. Broadly speaking, a trend can be identified whereby the urban wards closest to Rugby town centre tend to have the least provision, with provision increasing for the urban wards that stretch to the outer reaches of the town, and the rural wards outside of the town tending to have the greatest provision. For example, Benn ward only has 0.79ha of open space per 1,000 people, around 75 times less than the ward of Revel and Binley Woods. Nevertheless, there are exceptions and caveats to this trend. For example, lacking the large country parks or publicly accessible nature reserves that characterise the other rural wards, Leam Valley and Wolvey and Shilton have levels of provision comparable to the typical urban wards.
- 9.4.2. Across all typologies, 164 of the audited sites (61%) achieved a quality score of good or above. Only nine sites (3%) received a quality score of poor, however 94 (34%) received a score of fair, indicating ample opportunity for improvement. The audited sites were also assessed on their value, with 147 (55%) recorded as having low value. Provision for children and young people performed particularly poorly in this regard, with 93 audited sites (79%) being assigned a low value score.
- 9.5. Accounting for current adopted standards, national guidance (such as the standards recommended by Fields in Trust), audited local provision, and comparisons with the practices of neighbouring authorities, new open space standards were recommended (chapter seven). These are summarised in table 13 below.

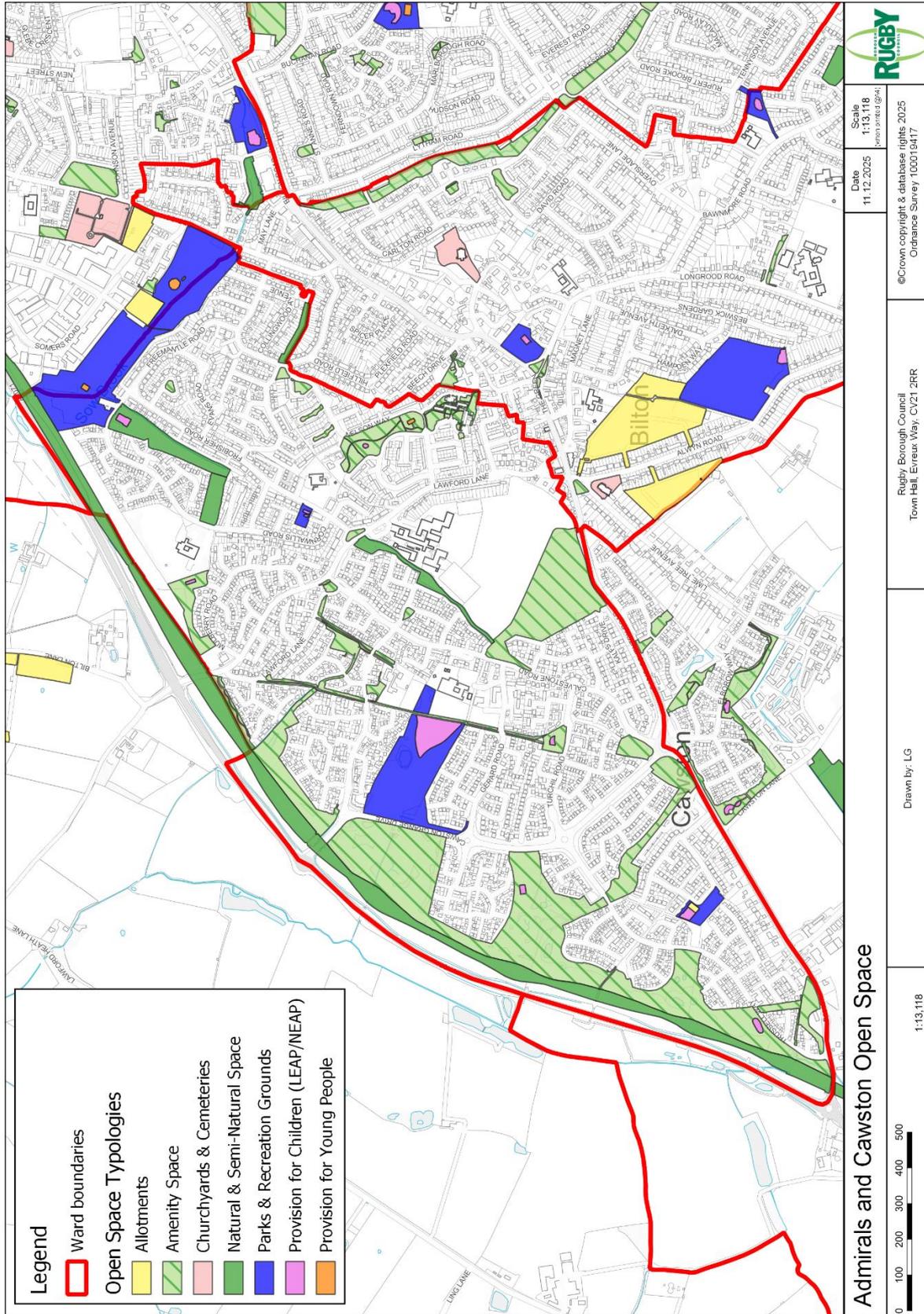
Typology	Quantity Standard (ha per 1,000)	Access Standard	Quality Standard
Allotments	0.65	800m	Quality score of 70%, determined by audits based on the Green Flag Award. Value score of 40%, determined by audits based on the methodology set out by 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to Planning Policy Guidance 17' (2002).
Amenity Space	1.27	300m	
Natural and Semi-Natural Space	2.5	700m	
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.25	700m	
Provision for Children and Young People	0.2	400m (LEAP) 1,000m (NEAP) 1,000m (Provision for young people)	

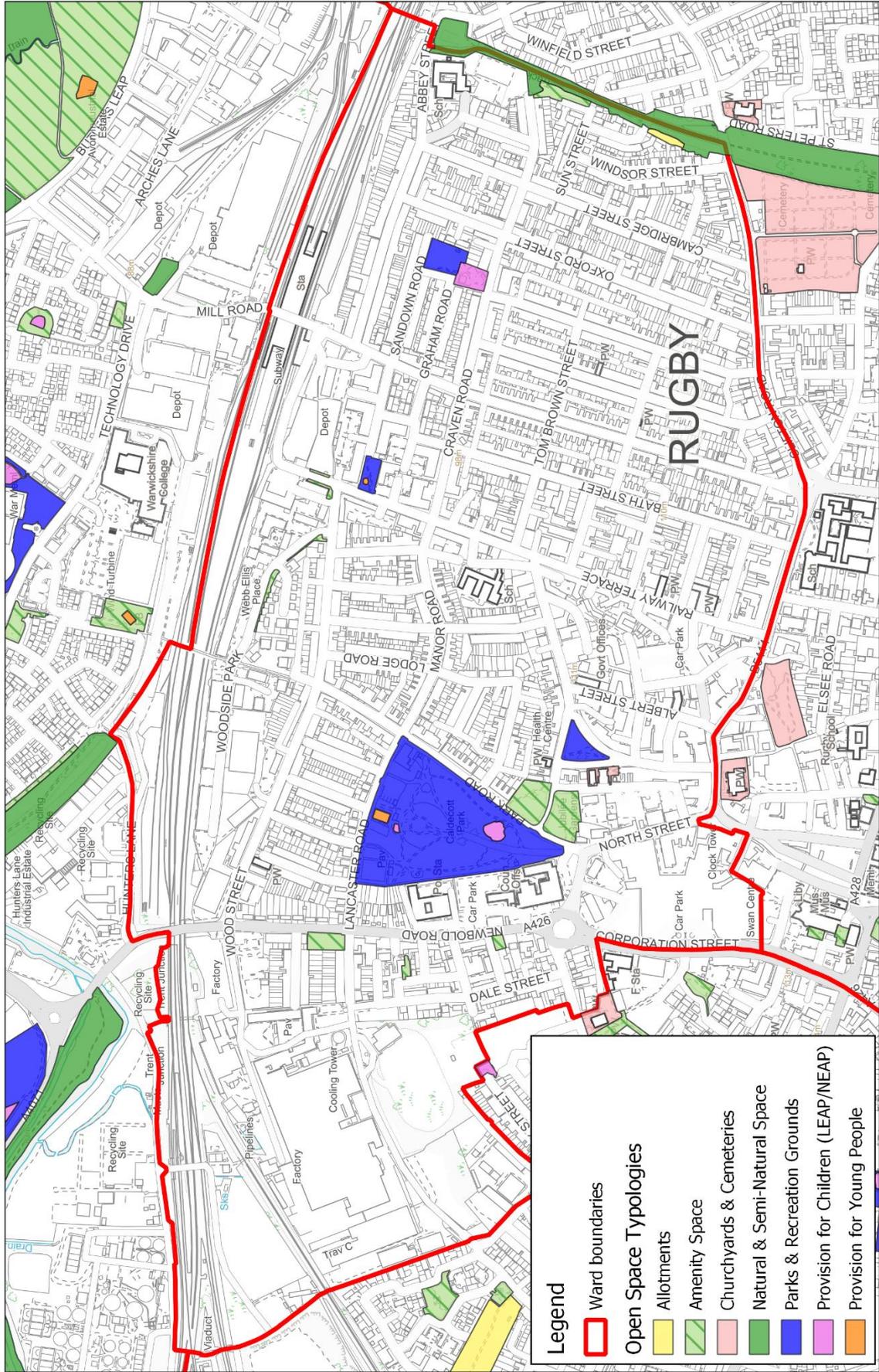
Table 13: Recommended standards for open space in Rugby borough.

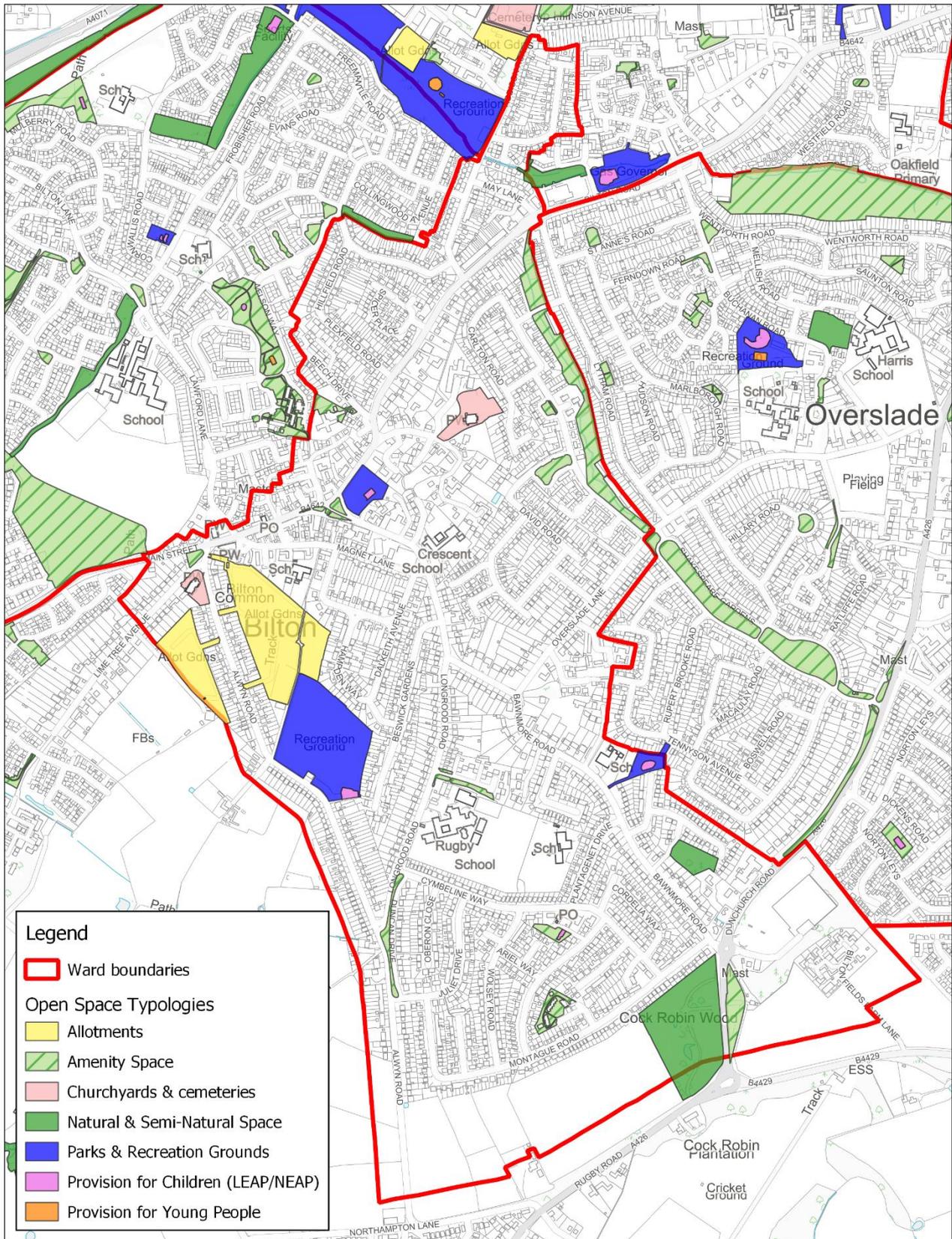
9.6. Upon applying these standards to audited provision it was found that:

- 9.6.1. All wards have a quantitative deficit of some kind. Only one ward (Wolvey and Shilton) meets the quantity standard of at least three of the typologies, while a majority only manage to meet the quantity standards of one or two typologies. Three wards (Benn, Leam Valley, and New Bilton) fail to meet the quantity standards of any of the typologies. None of the wards achieve the proposed standard for provision for children and young people, potentially indicating a high priority area for open space moving forward.
- 9.6.2. Although there are some areas that are found to be deficient, much of the town has adequate access to open space (i.e. separate from considerations of quantity and quality). The central urban Wards that perform poorly on quantitative provision tend to perform better when it comes to access, partially due to the presence of open space provision outside but in close proximity to their boundaries. By contrast, rural wards that have very large areas of open space (such as country parks), and therefore perform well in terms of overall quantitative provision, tend to have settlements (villages) with inadequate access across several typologies.
- 9.6.3. 61% of audited sites meet the quality standard, with average quality audit scores indicating that five electoral wards fall short of the standard (Admirals and Cawston; Clifton, Newton and Churchover; Coton and Boughton; New Bilton; and Newbold and Brownsover).
- 9.6.4. 45% of audited sites meet the value standard, with average value audit scores indicating that nine electoral wards fall short of the standard (Admirals and Cawston; Benn; Bilton; Eastlands; Hillmorton; Leam Valley; New Bilton; Paddock; and Rokeby and Overslade).

10. APPENDIX I: WARD MAPS





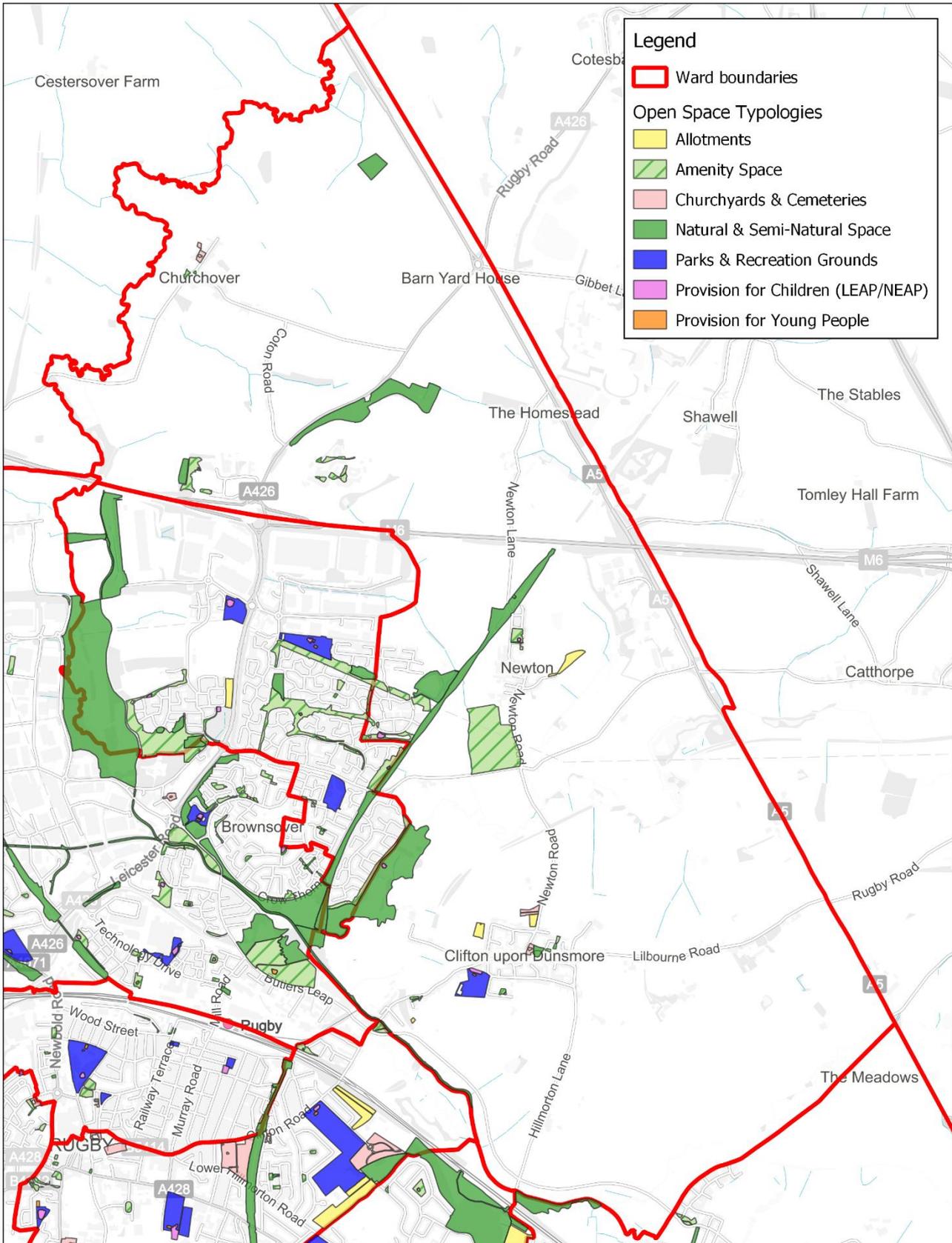


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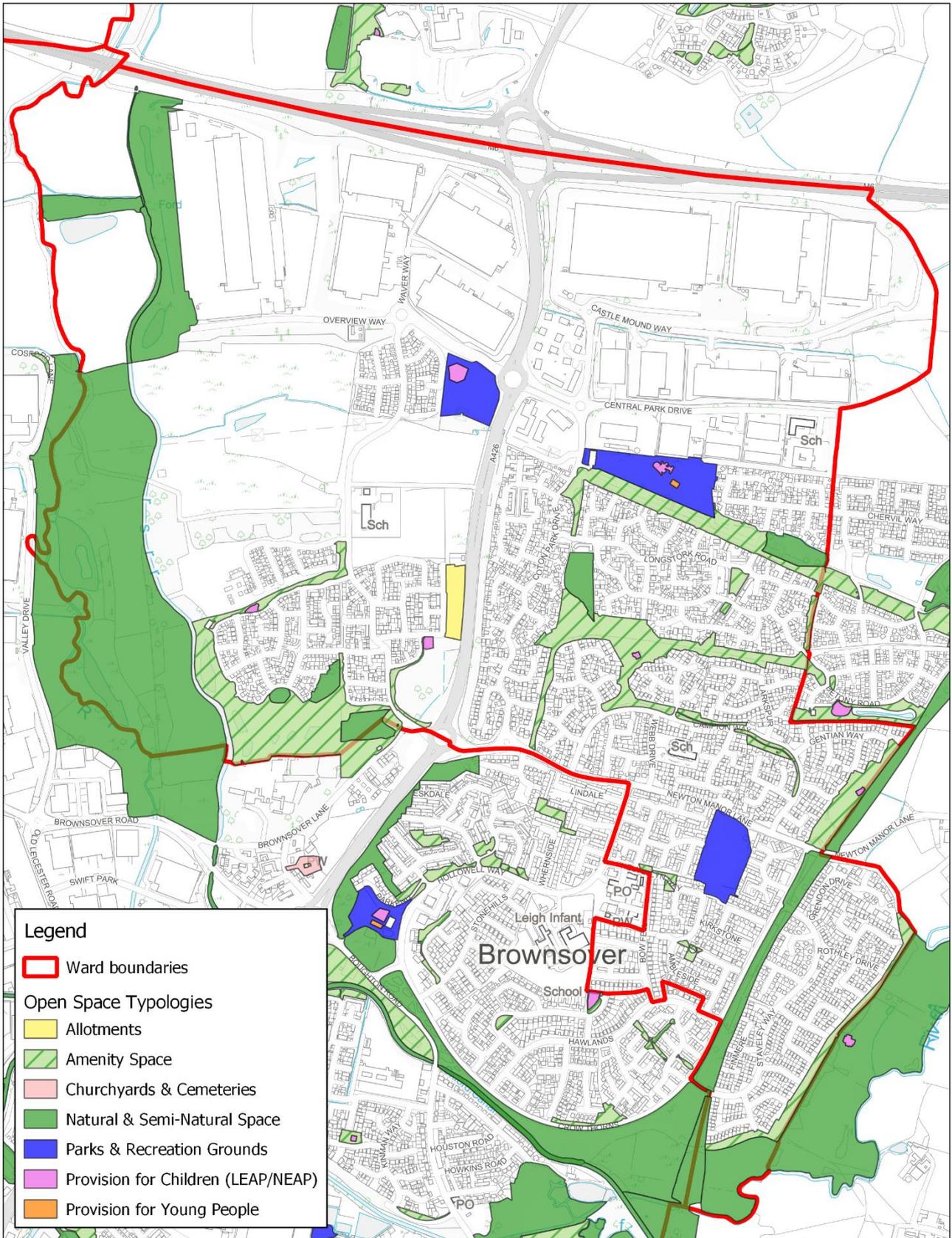
- Ward boundaries
- Open Space Typologies**
- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

Bilton Ward Open Space

<p>0 200 400 600 800 m</p> <p style="font-size: small;">1:10,999</p>	<p>Drawn By: LG</p>	<p>Rugby Borough Council Town Hall, Evreux Way CV21 2RR</p>	<p>Date 11.12.2025</p>	<p>Scale 1:10,999 <small>(on here printed @A4)</small></p>	<p>©Crown copyright & database rights 2025 Ordnance Survey 100019417</p>
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0 600 1,200 1,800 2,400 m		Scale 1:29,480 <small>(as far as possible)</small>	
1:29,480		Date 11.12.2025 Drawn By: LG Rugby Borough Council Town Hall, Evreux Way CV21 2RR ©Crown copyright & database rights 2025 Ordnance Survey 100019417	



Coton & Boughton Ward Open Space

0 200 400 600 800 m

1:11,549

Drawn By:
LG

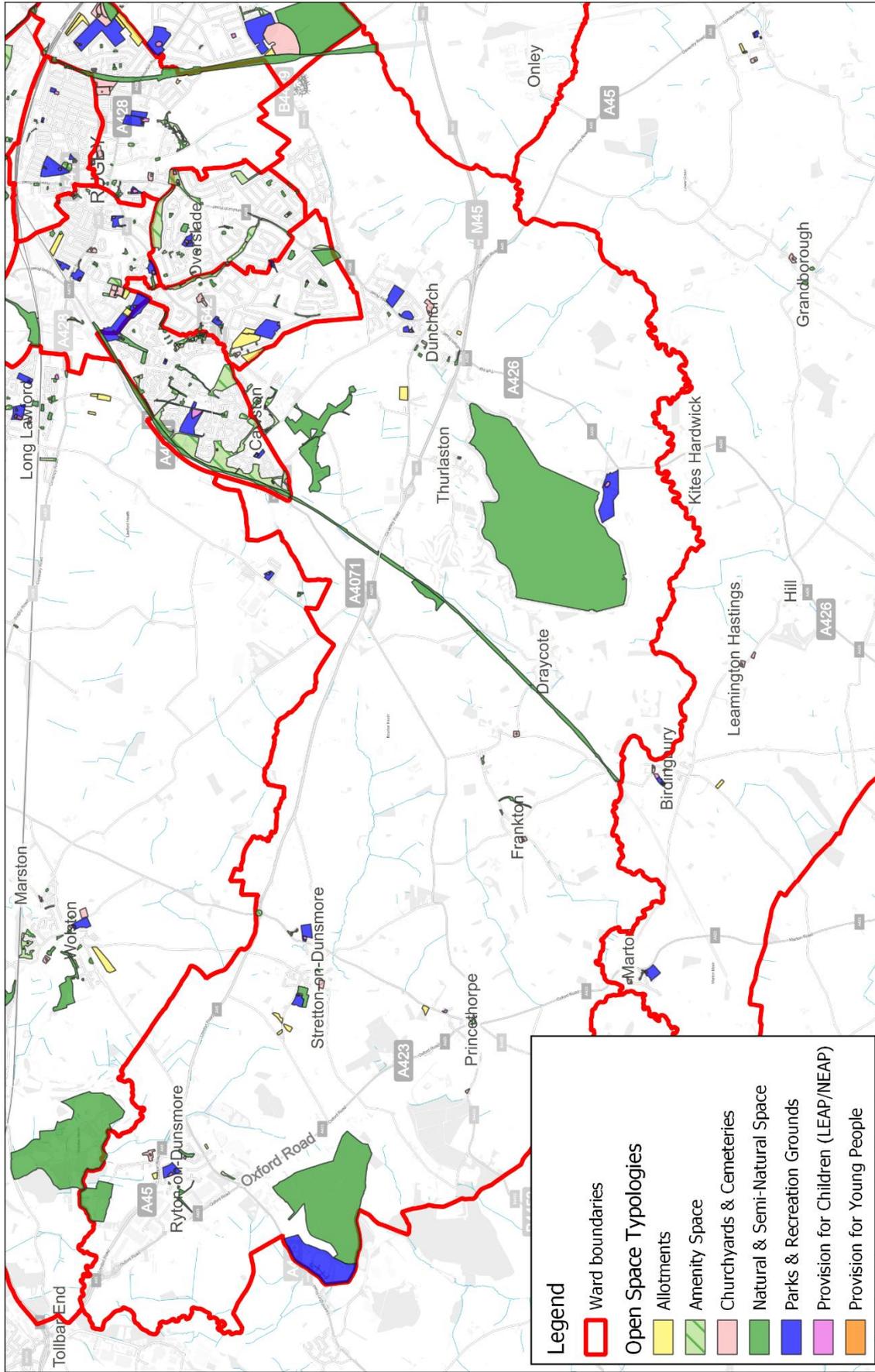
Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR

Date
11.12.2025

Scale
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(as far as practicable)

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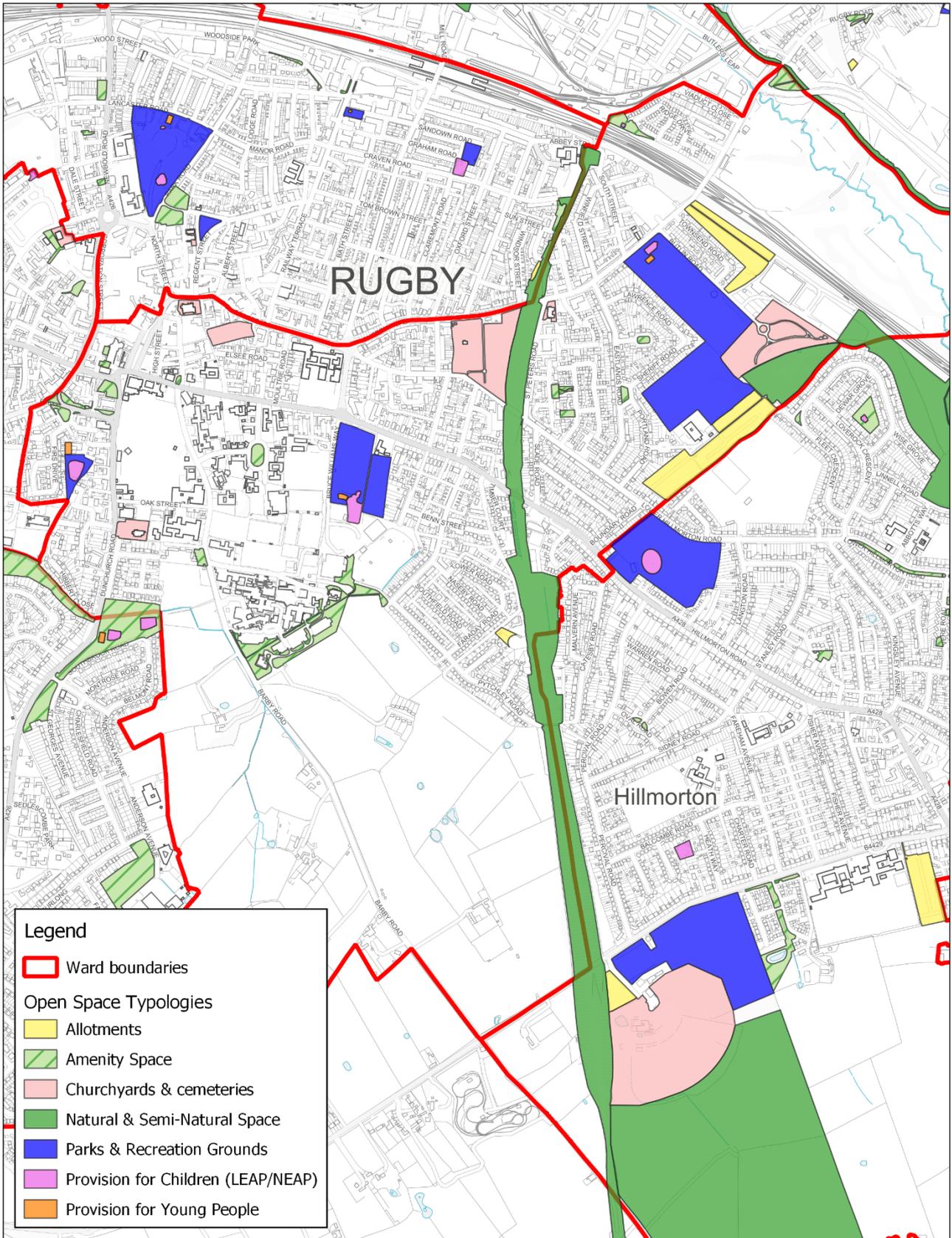
RUGBY
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date: 11.12.2025
 Scale: 1:57,851
 (when printed @A3)

Rugby Borough Council
 Town Hall, Evreux Way, CV21 2RR

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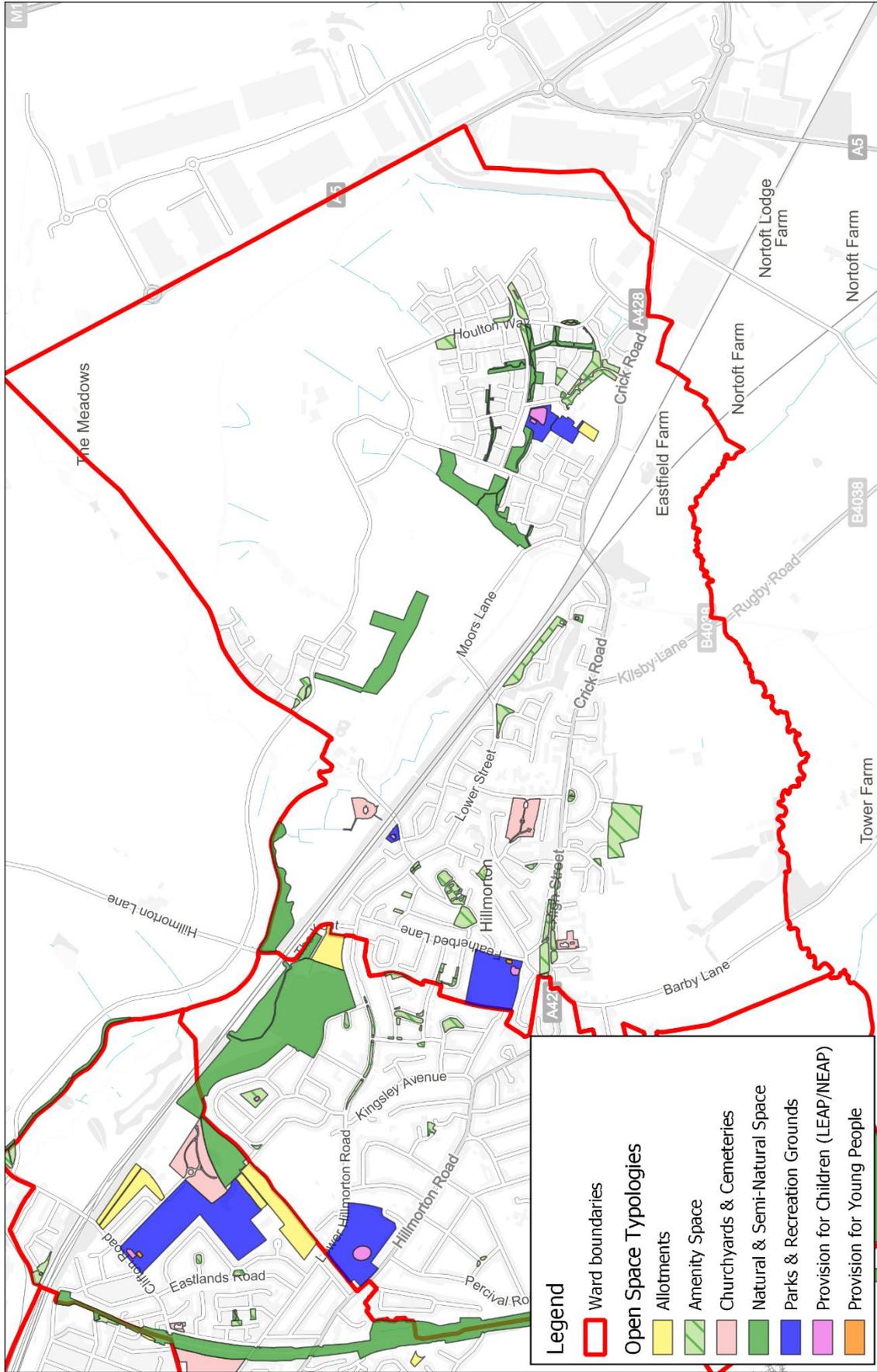
Drawn by: LG



Legend

- Ward boundaries
- Open Space Typologies**
- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

Eastlands Ward Open Space		Date 11.12.2025	Scale 1:14,038 <small>(as laid ground @A4)</small>	
0 200 400 600 800 m	1:14,038	Drawn By: LG	Rugby Borough Council Town Hall, Evreux Way CV21 2RR	



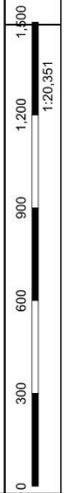
Legend

- Ward boundaries

Open Space Typologies

- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

Hillmorton Ward Open Space



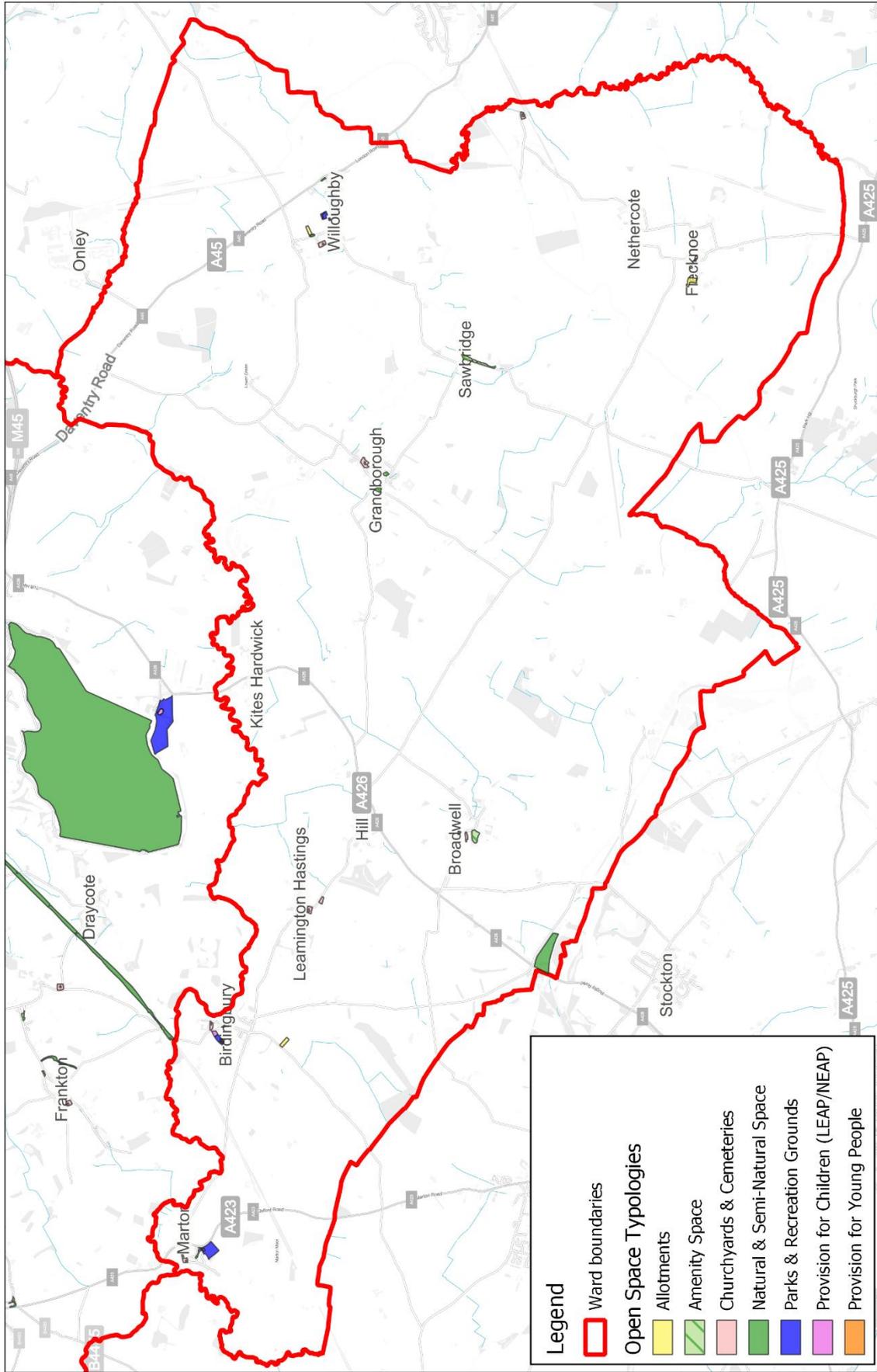
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Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way, CV21 2PR

Date: 11.12.2025
Scale: 1:20,351
(when printed)



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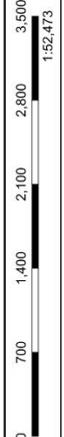
Legend

- Ward boundaries

Open Space Typologies

- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

Leam Valley Ward Open Space



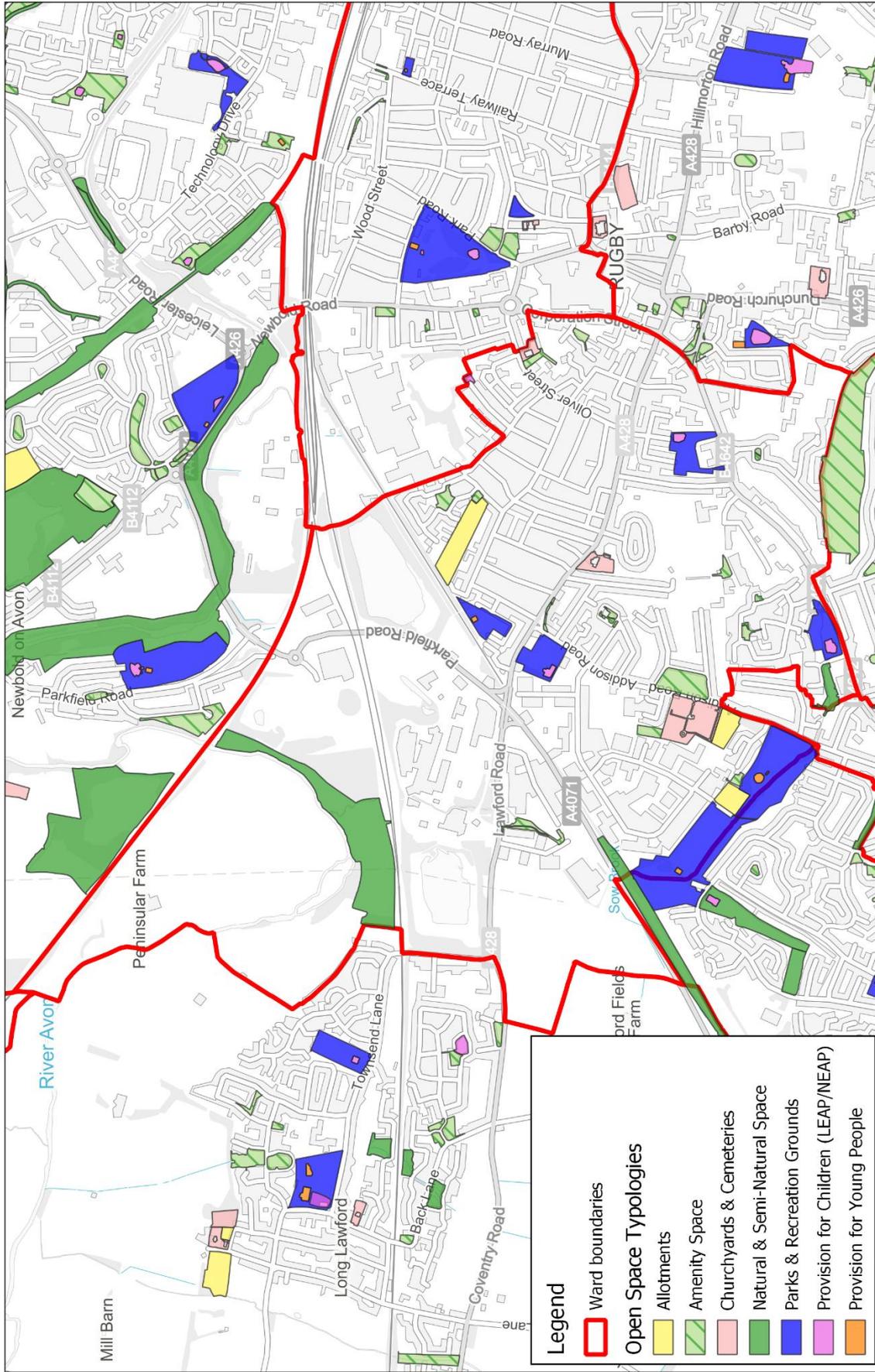
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Date: 11.12.2025
Scale: 1:52,473
(when printed A3)



Legend

- Ward boundaries

Open Space Typologies

- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

New Bilton Ward Open Space

0 200 400 600 800 1,000
 1:15,186

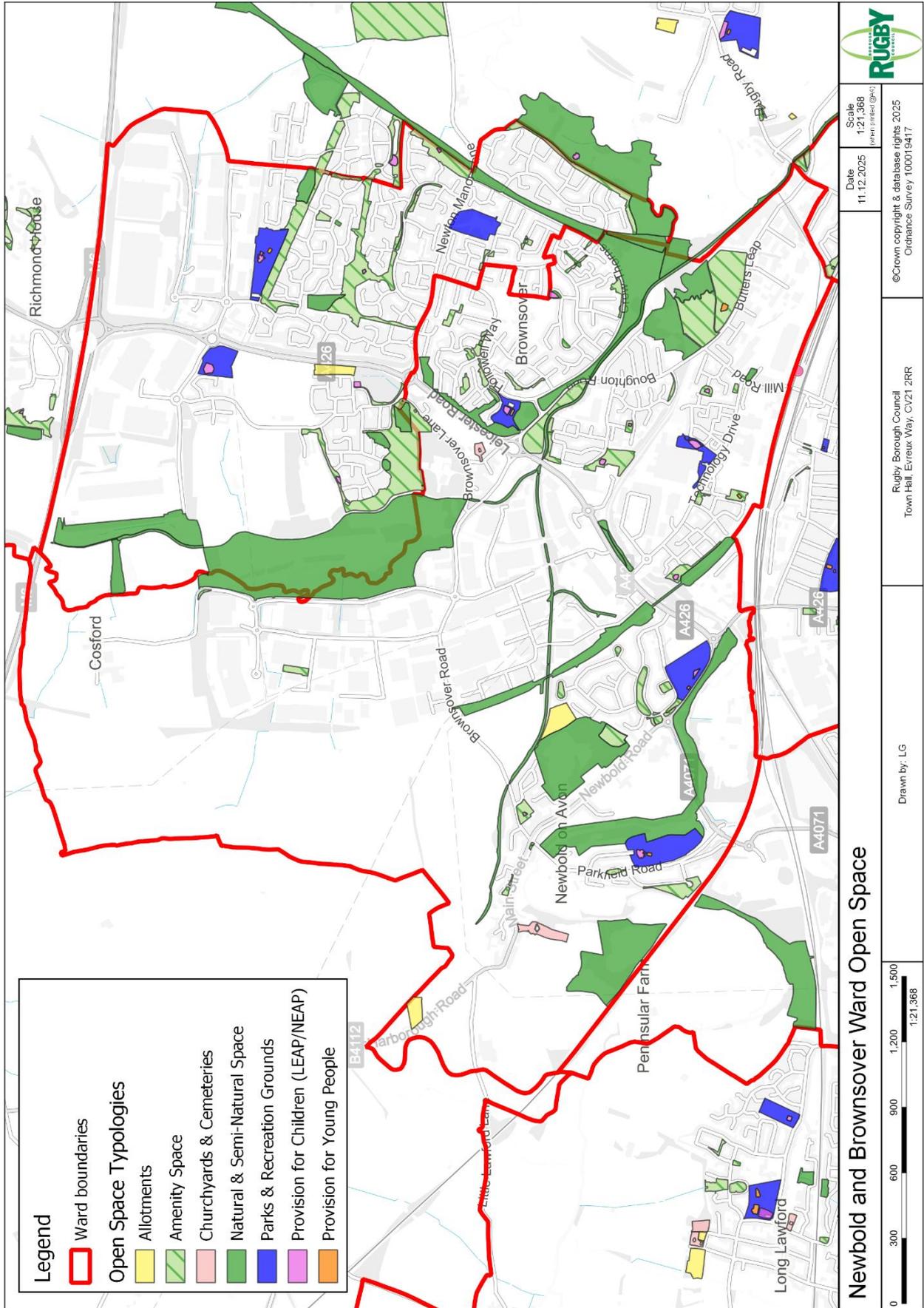
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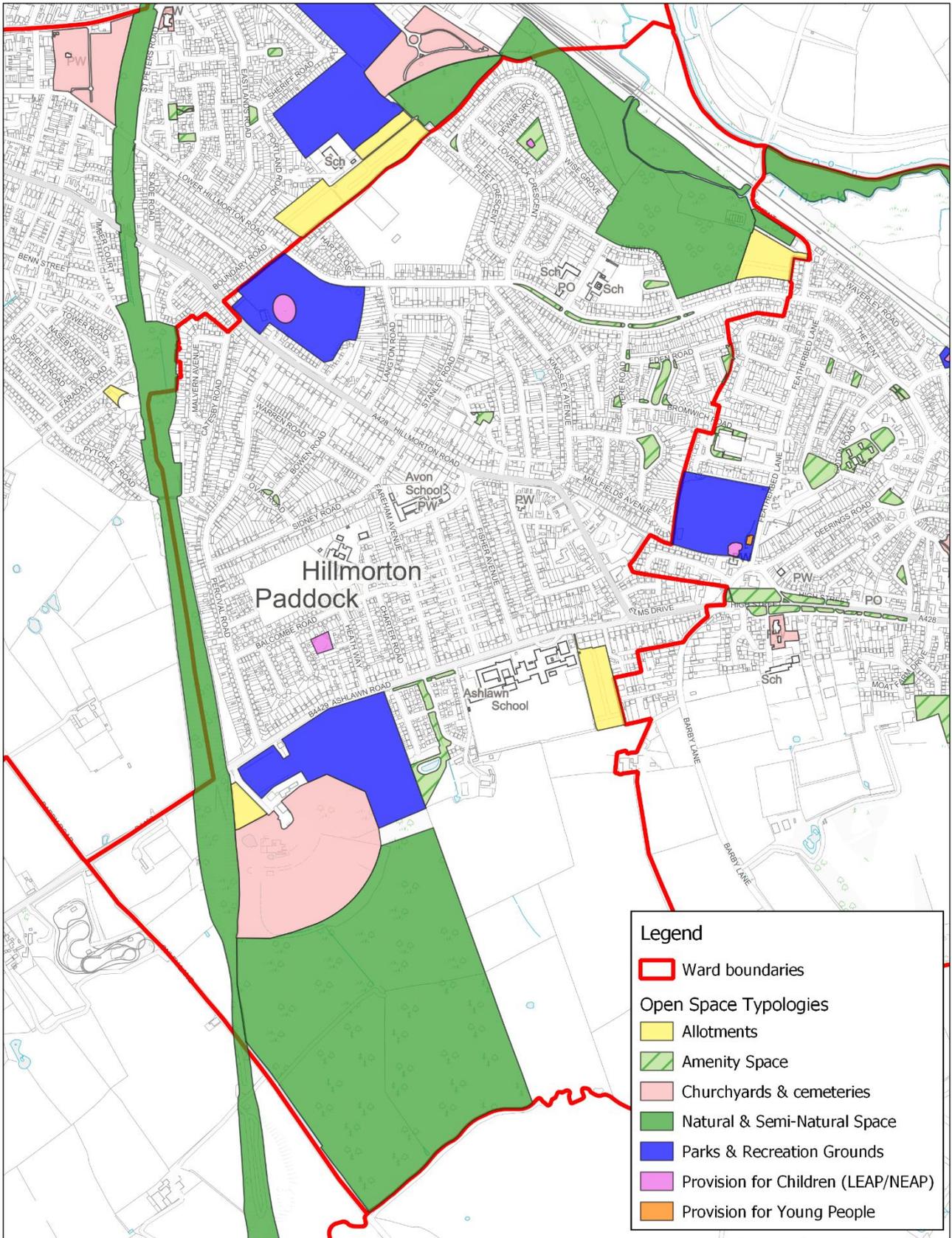
Rugby Borough Council
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Date: 11.12.2025
 Scale: 1:15,186
 (www.rugby.gov.uk)

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Paddock Ward Open Space

0 200 400 600 800 m

1:12,127

Drawn By:
LG

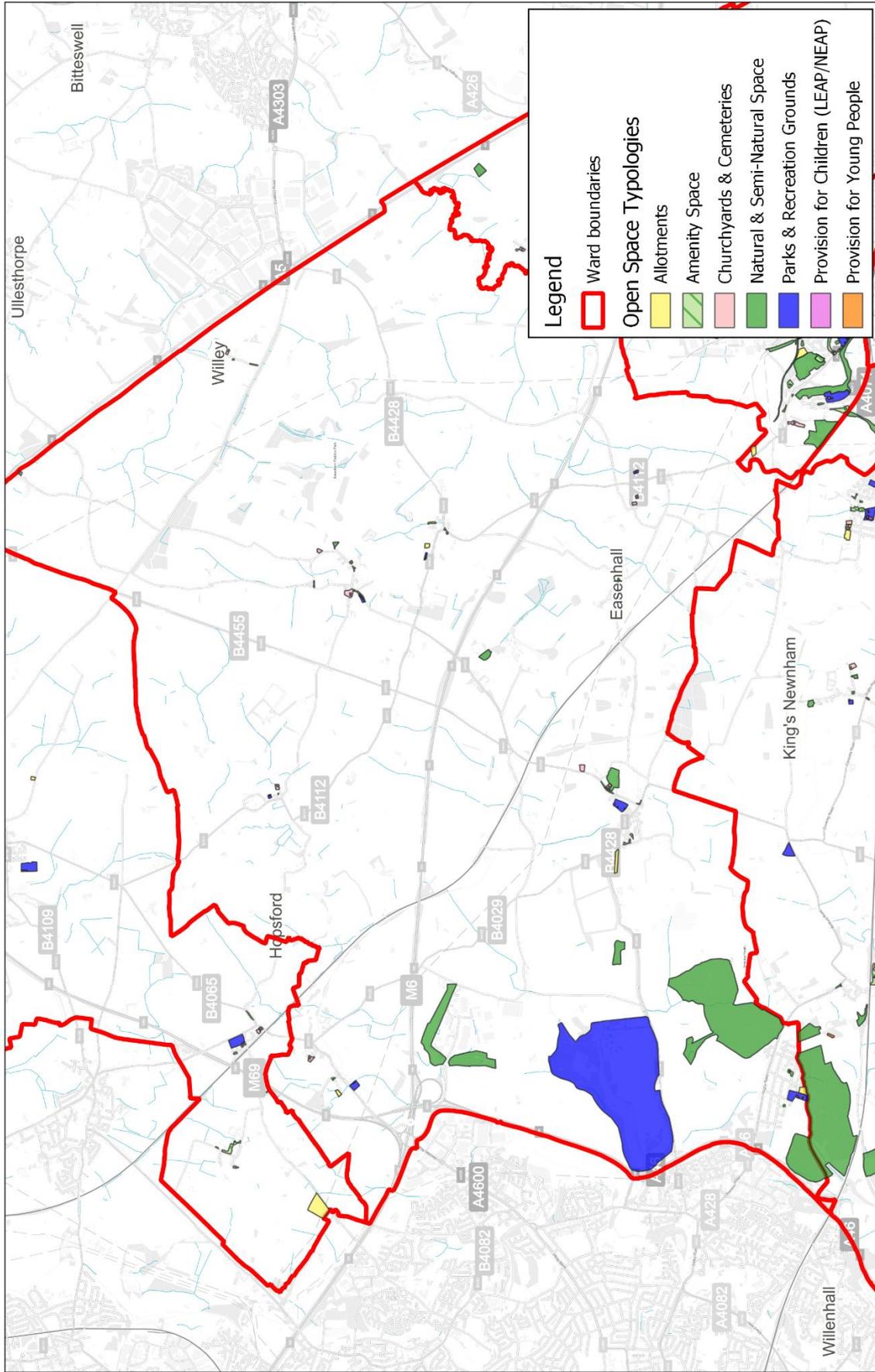
Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR

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11.12.2025

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(as printed @A4)

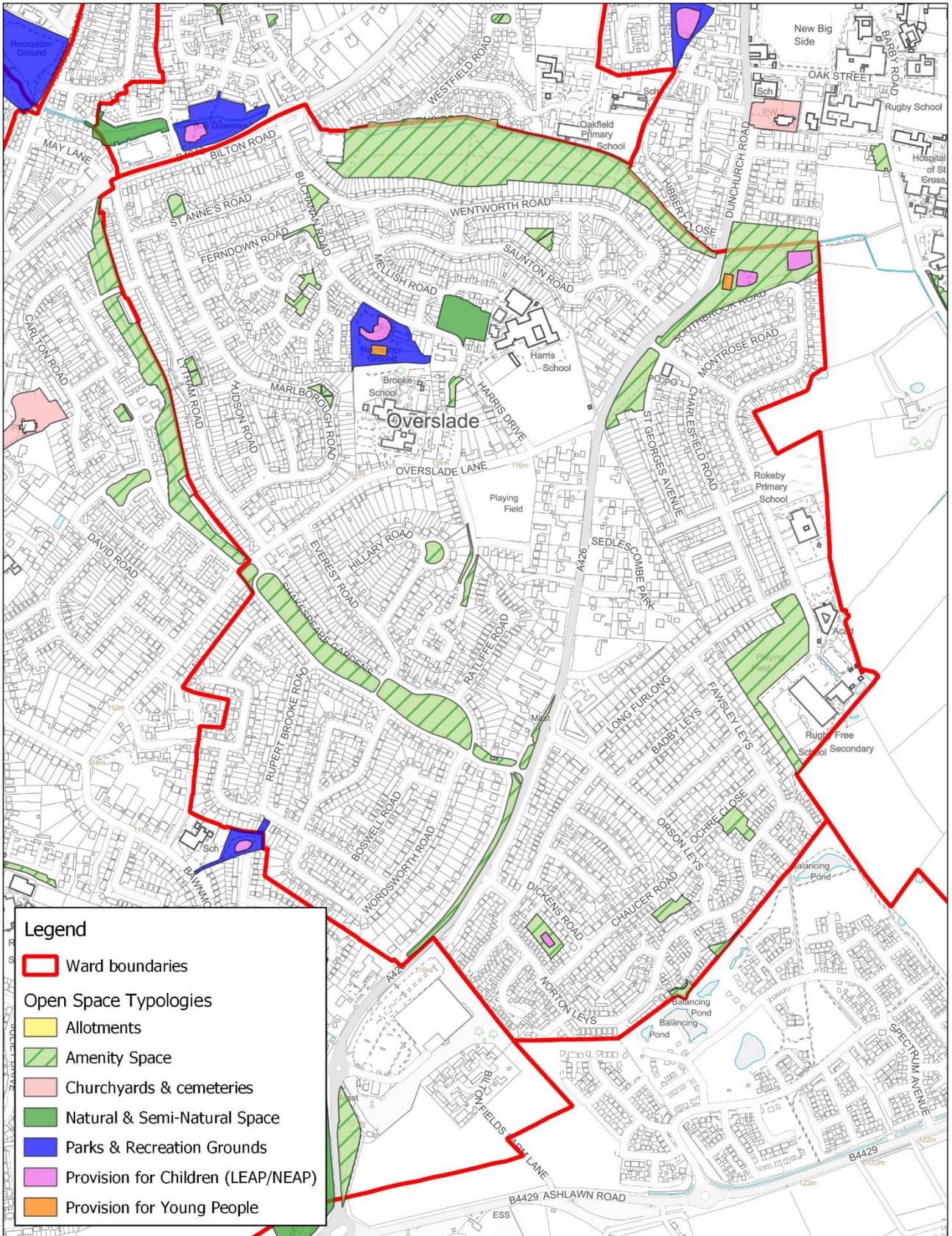
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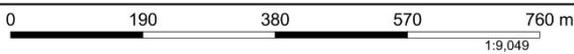


Revel and Binley Woods Ward Open Space

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Rokeby & Overslade Ward Open Space

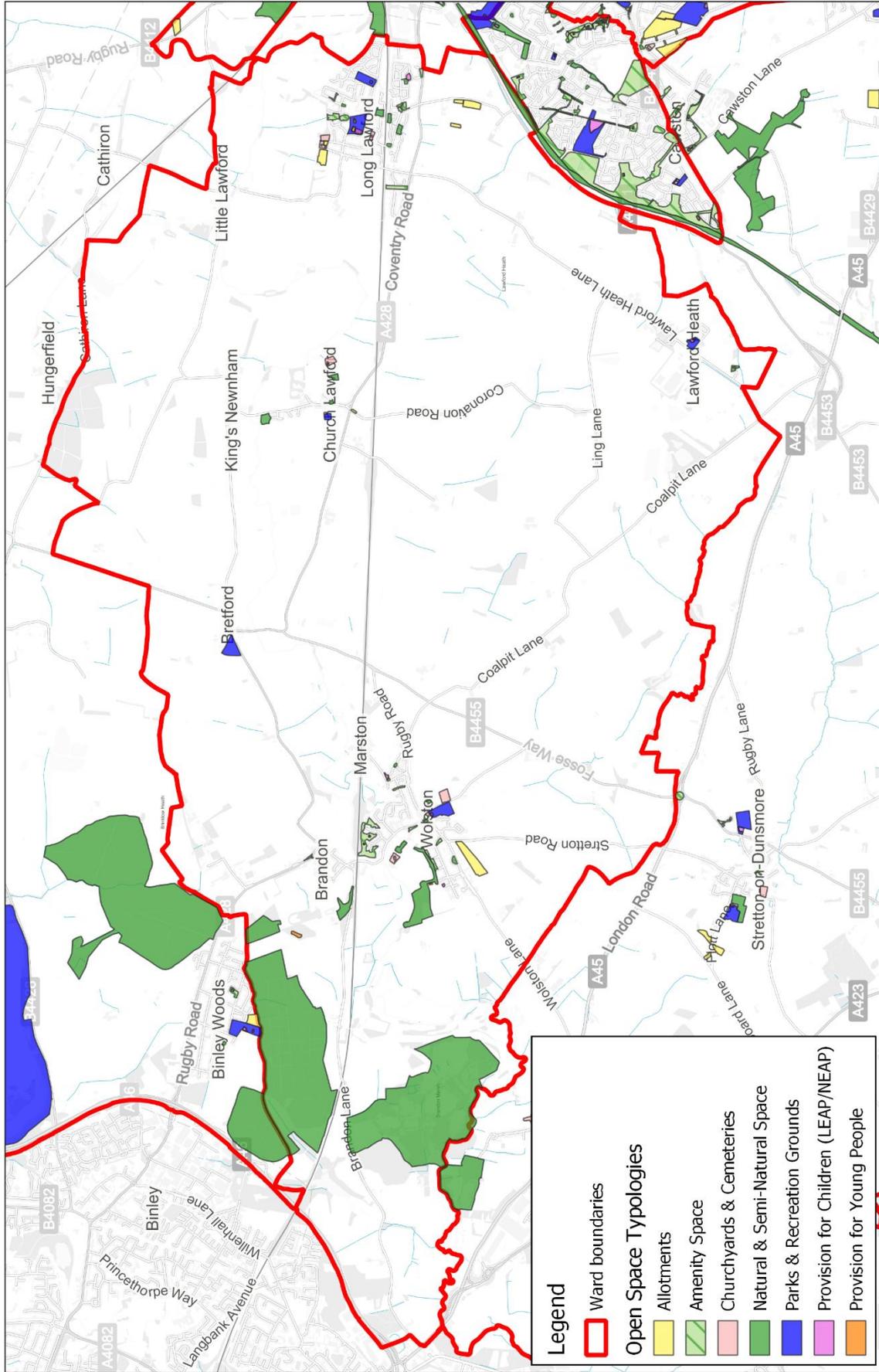


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Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR

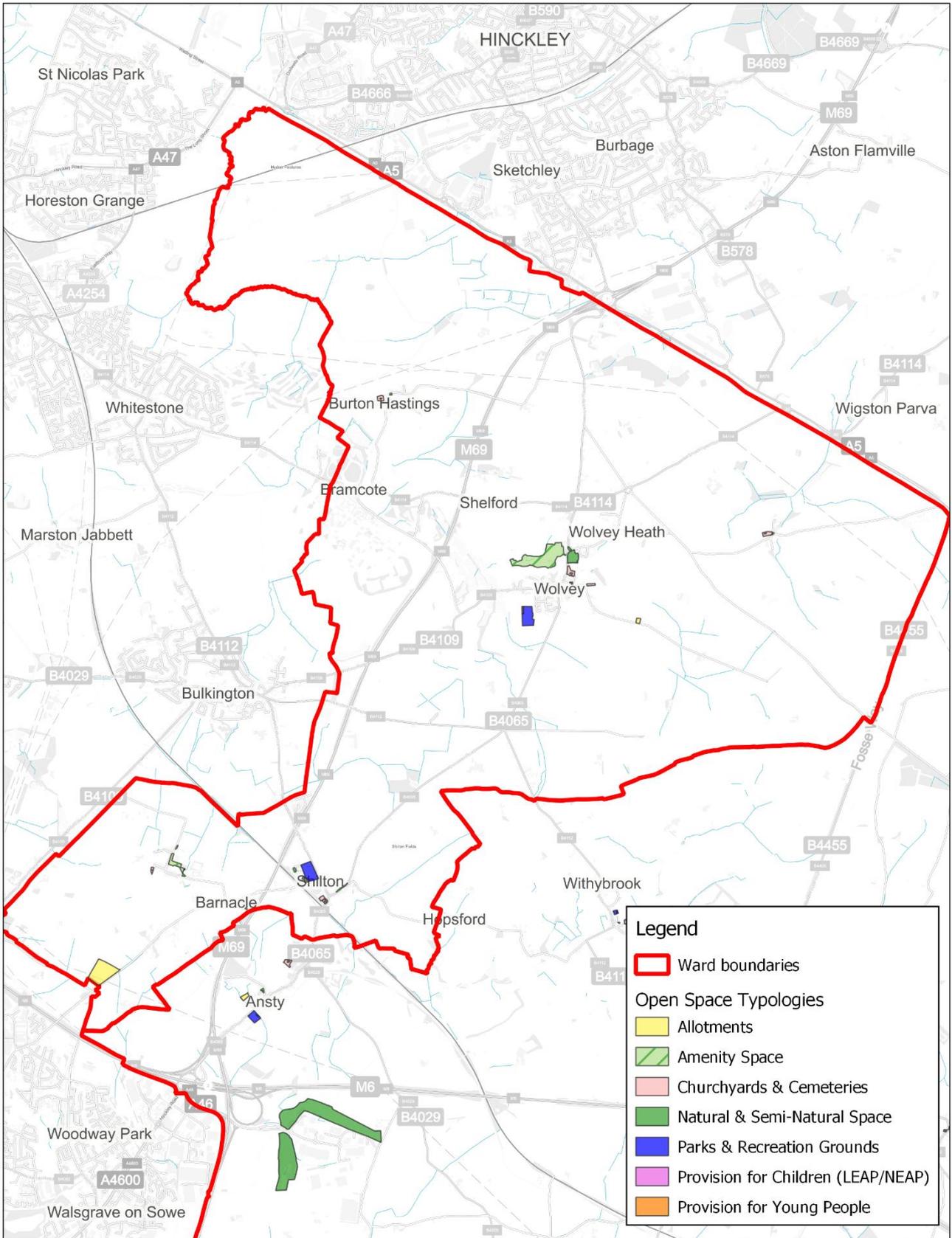
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Legend

- Ward boundaries
- Open Space Typologies**
- Allotments
- Amenity Space
- Churchyards & Cemeteries
- Natural & Semi-Natural Space
- Parks & Recreation Grounds
- Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP)
- Provision for Young People

Wolvey and Shilton Ward Open Space



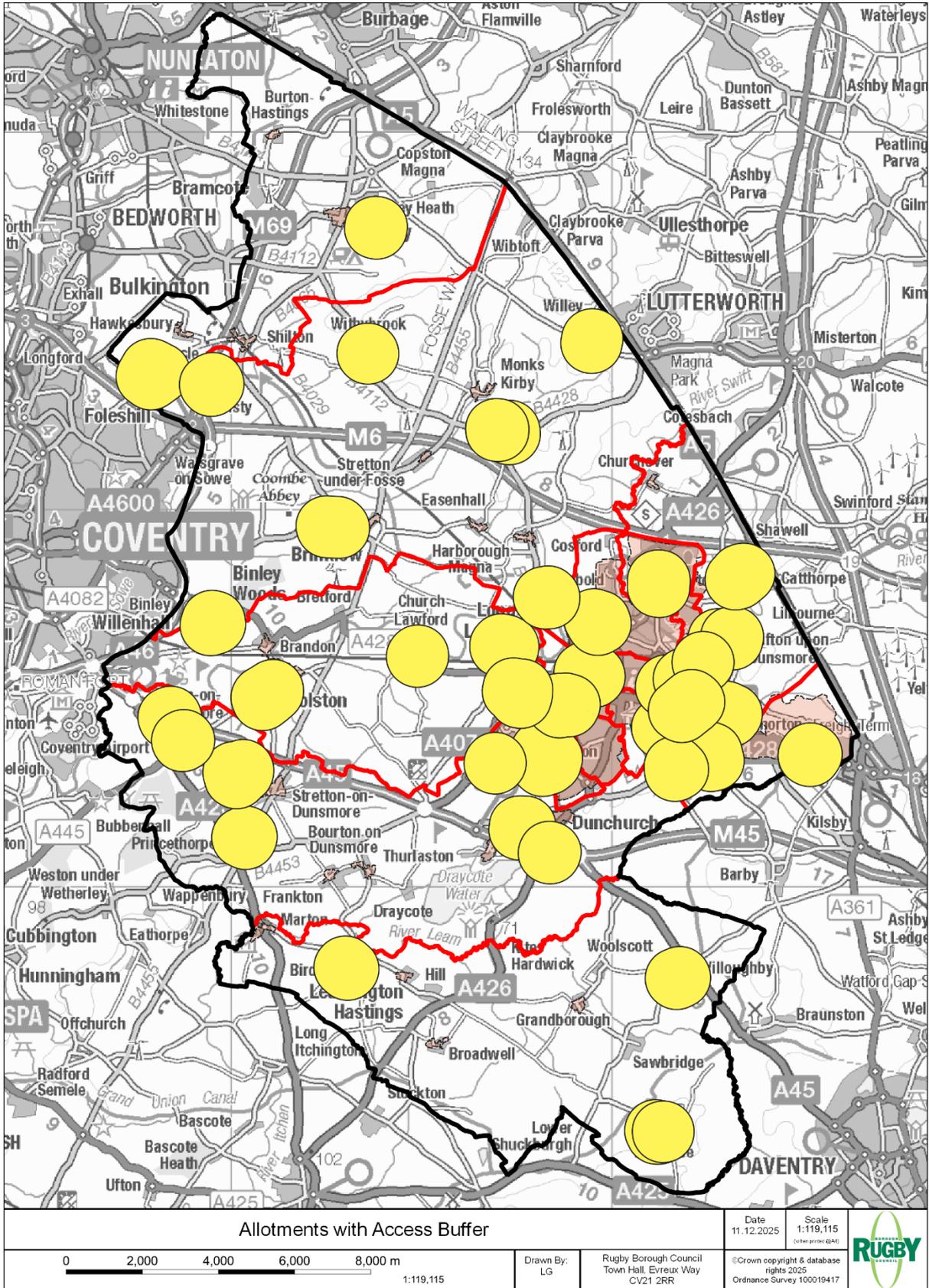
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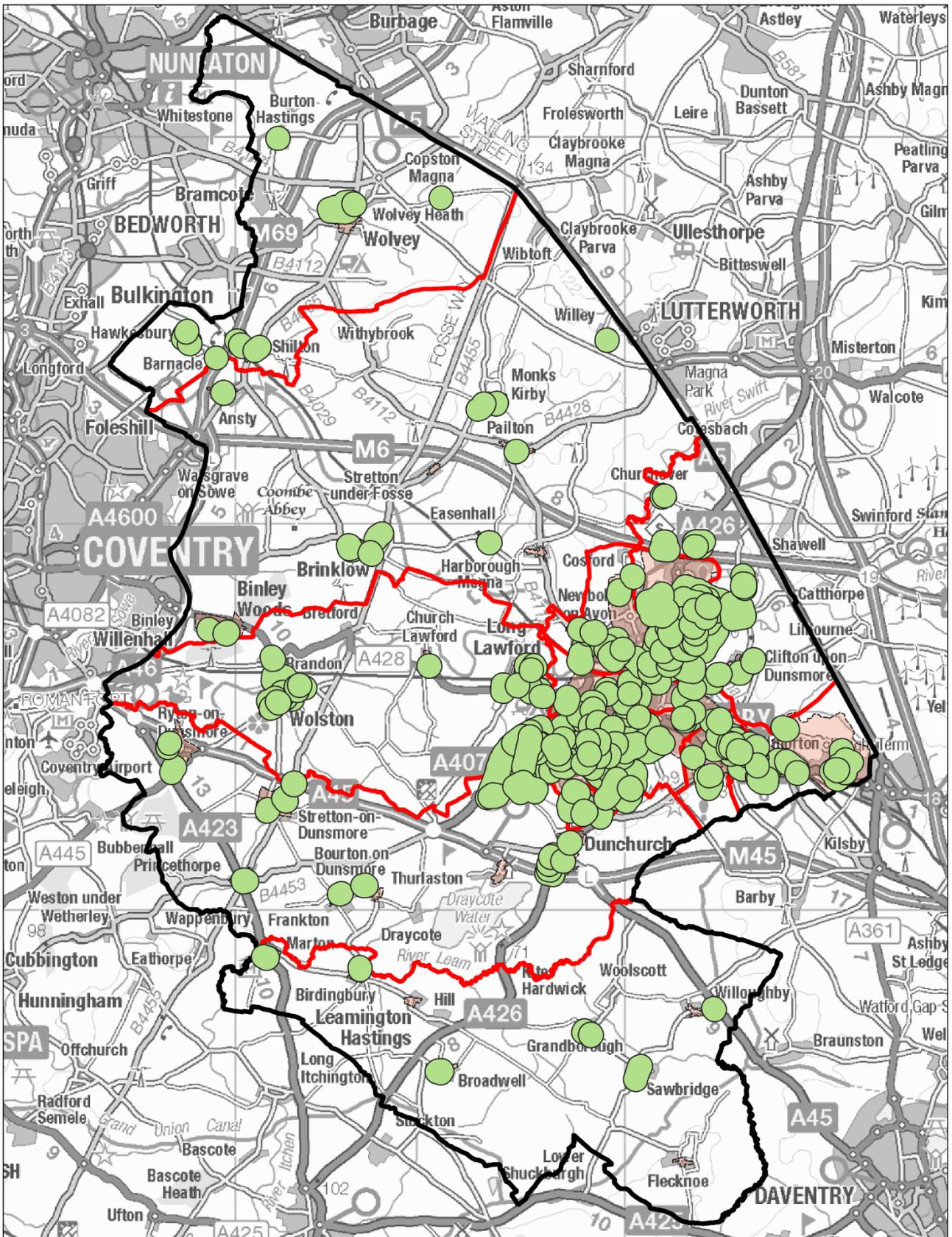
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Date: 11.12.2025
Scale: 1:50,932
(as per ground @A6)
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11. APPENDIX II: ACCESS BUFFER MAPS





Amenity Green Space with Access Buffer

Date
11.12.2025

Scale
1:119,115
(on paper printed @A4)

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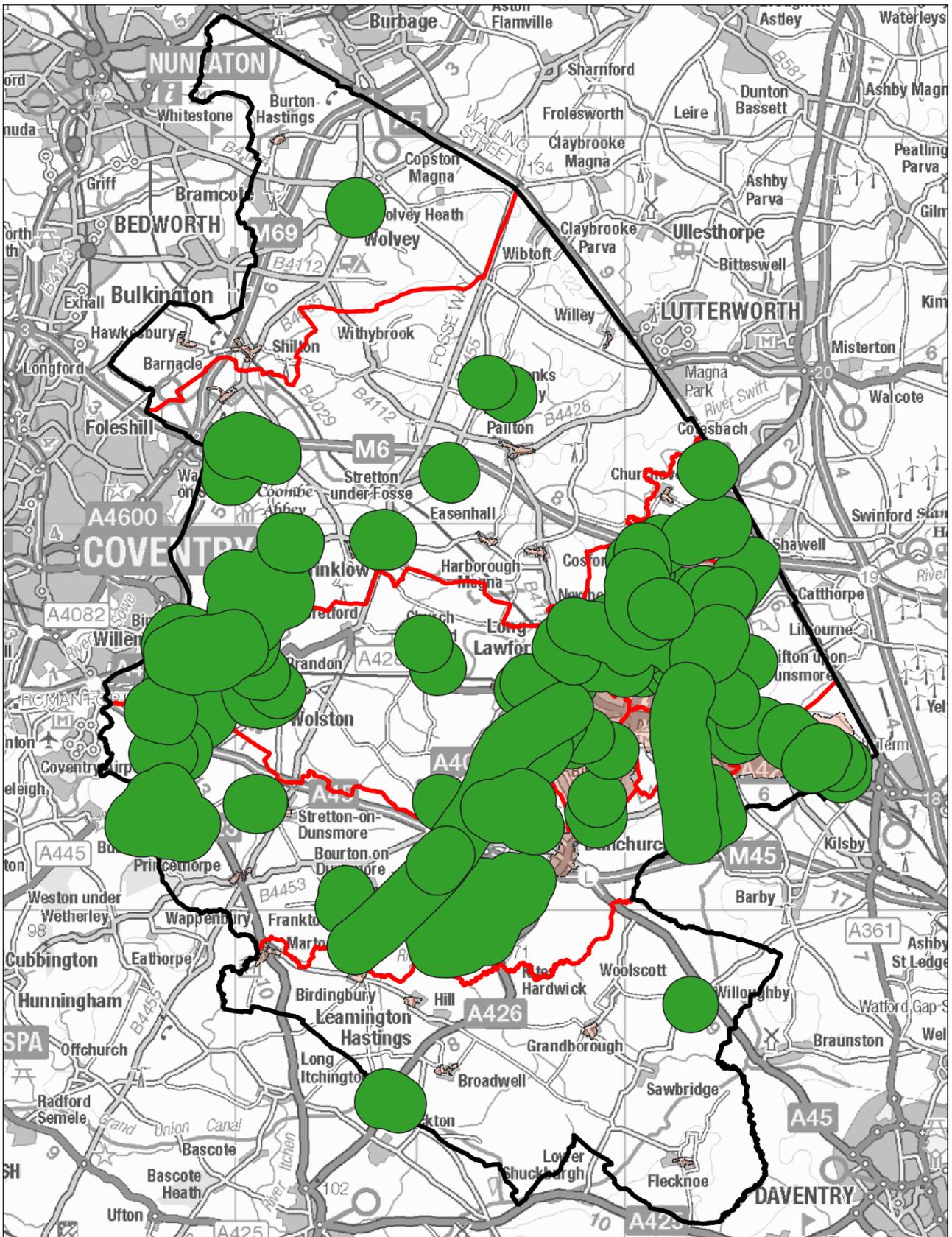


0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 m

1:119,115

Drawn By:
LG

Rugby Borough Council
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CV21 2RR



Natural & Semi-Natural Space with Access Buffer

Date
11.12.2025

Scale
1:119,115
(see page 104)

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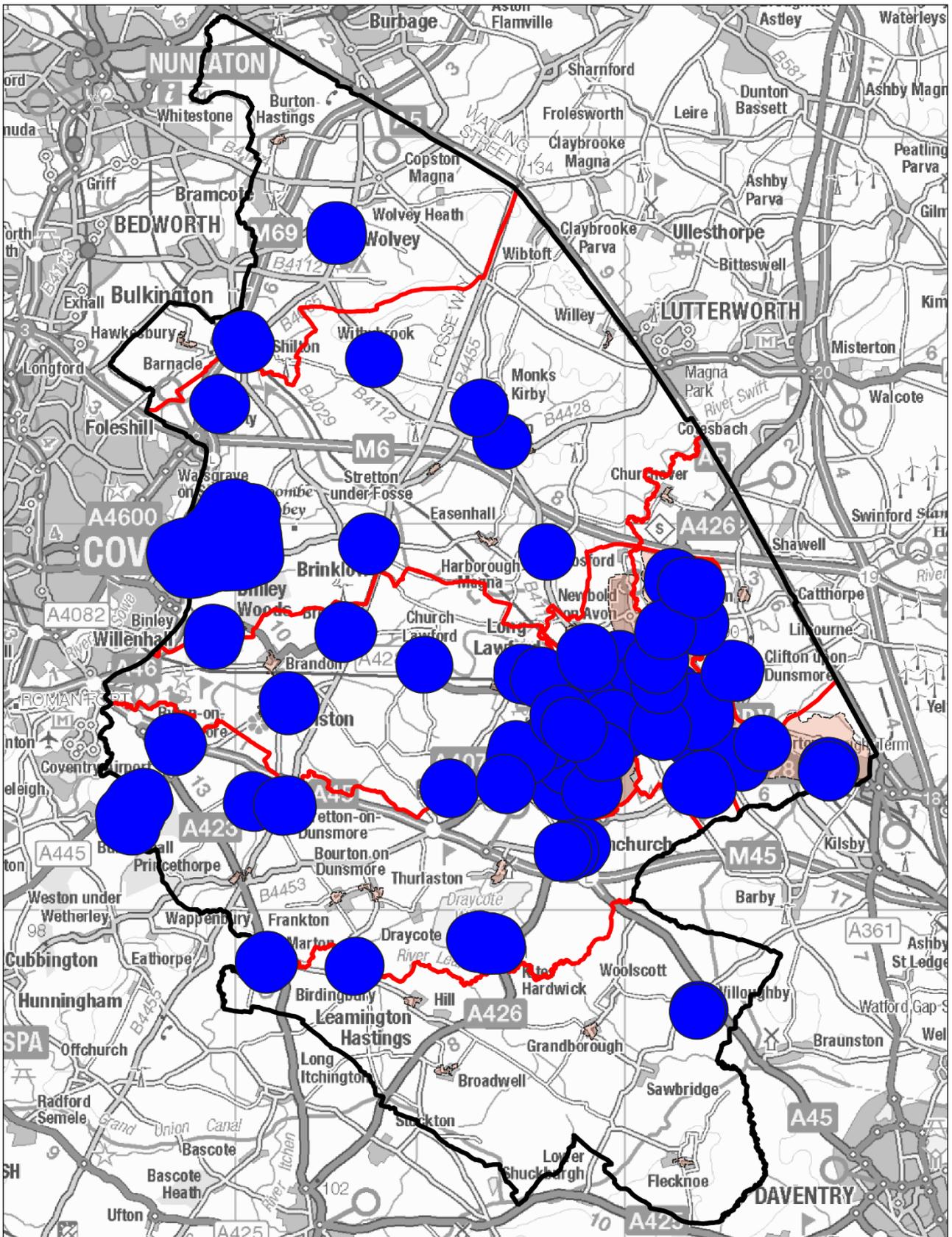


0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 m

1:119,115

Drawn By:
LG

Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR



Parks and Recreation Grounds with Access Buffer

Date
11.12.2025

Scale
1:119,115
(on paper printed @A4)

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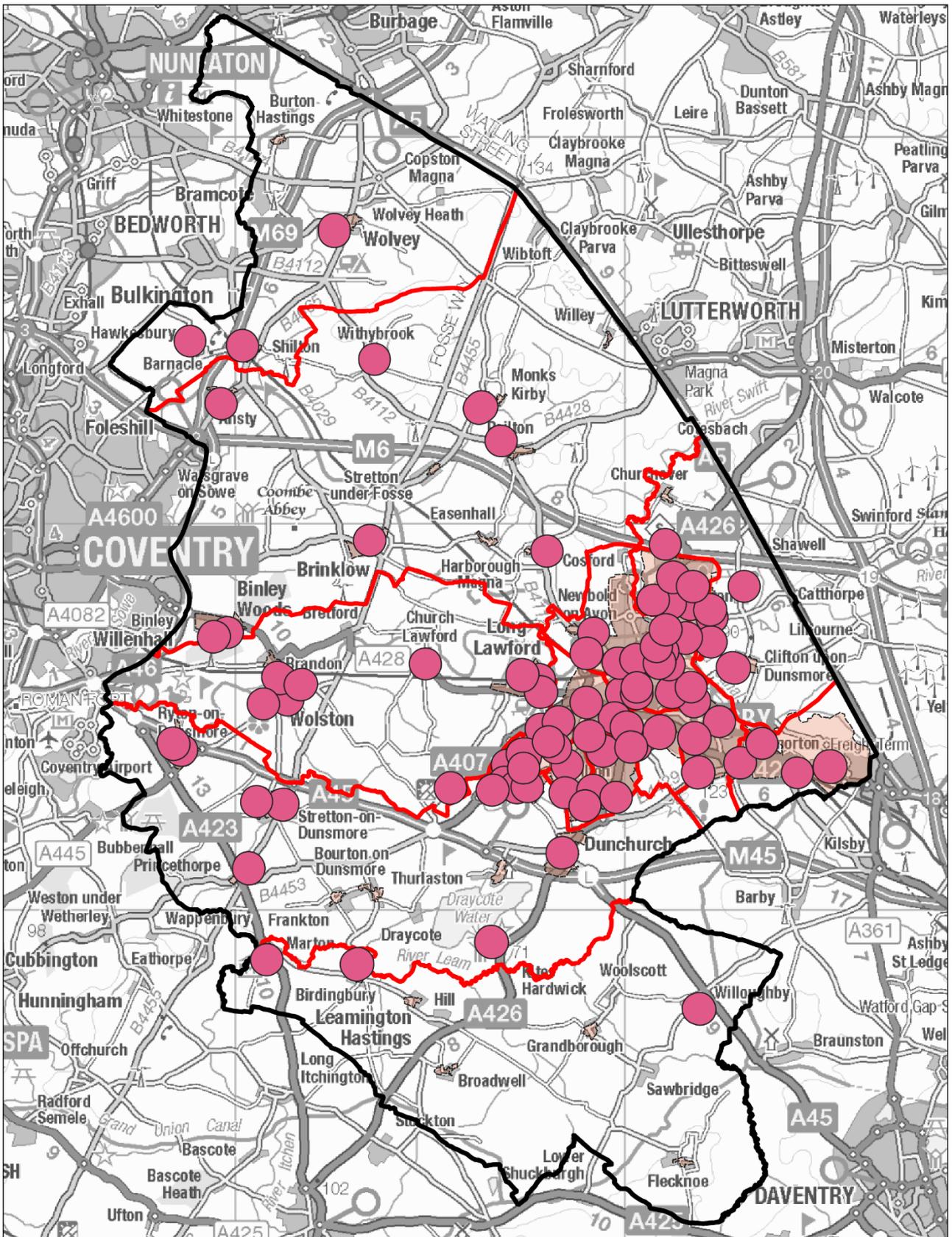


0 2,000 4,000 6,000 8,000 m

1:119,115

Drawn By:
LG

Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR



Provision for Children (LEAP/NEAP) with Access Buffer

Date
11.12.2025

Scale
1:119,115
(see page 104)

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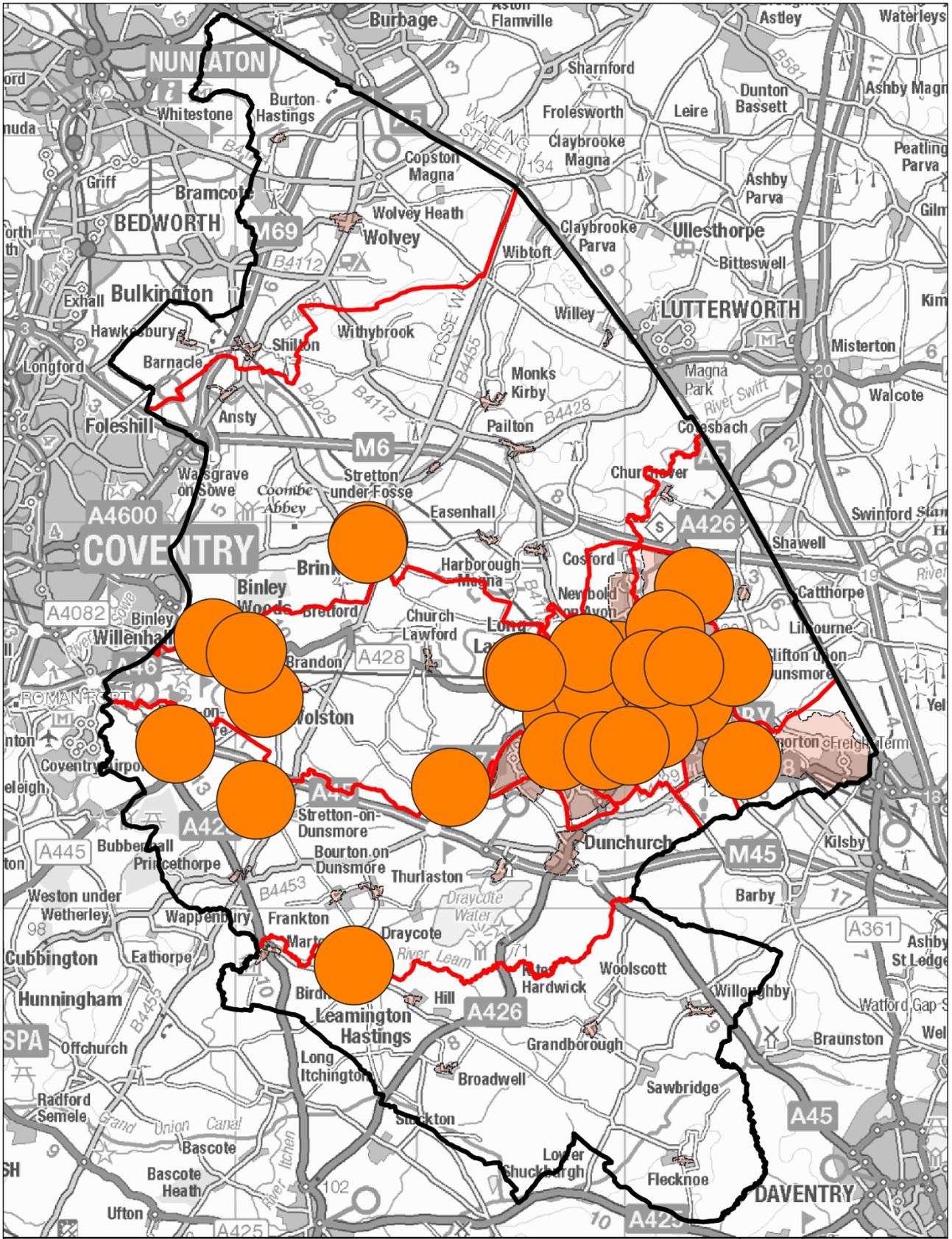


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Drawn By:
LG

Rugby Borough Council
Town Hall, Evreux Way
CV21 2RR



Provision for Young People with Access Buffer

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1:119,115

Drawn By:
LG

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Date
11.12.2025

Scale
1:119,115
(see panel 04)

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