Woodbury Parish Council
Play Area, Amenities & Open Space Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

Woodbury Parish Council (the Council) is committed to providing and maintaining high-quality, inclusive, and stimulating play areas and outdoor fitness amenities for the benefit of the community. The Council also wishes that all open space of public value is retained and it strives to provide additional and enhanced open space in the Parish of Woodbury. This policy applies to all open space including play areas, equipped public spaces, and external fitness equipment owned, adopted, or managed by the Council.

The Council regarding new developments will communicate with the principal authority and developers to ensure that the site plan / S106 / application adheres to this policy and others that the Council has adopted as well as our Neighbourhood Plan / Village Design Statement. Consideration should also be given for the general provision of open spaces amenities on site as well as contributing to the parish facilities.

The Council endorses Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognising play as essential for children's development. We aim to create engaging spaces that balance risk and safety, guided by the principle of being "as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible."

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

2.0 Core Principles & Legal Duty of Care

The Council acknowledges its statutory 'Duty of Care' under relevant legislation, including but not limited to:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Occupiers' Liability Acts 1957 & 1984 (Signage)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

The Council's duty is to take reasonable and proportionate measures to manage risk, ensuring safety "so far as is reasonably practicable."

The Council also acknowledges:

- COSHH (Control of substances hazardous to health 2002)
- RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences regulations)
- Child Protection Policy under the Children's Act 1989

3.0 Design, Siting & Sustainability

3.1 Type of play area

Play Type	Typical Size (Guide)	Catchment (Walking Distance)	Key Characteristics & Equipment
LAP **Local Area for Play**	100-400sqm	**Hyper local** **100m** (1-2 minutes walk) - Serves a small neighbourhood, e.g., a few streets.	• **Informal, low-key play.** • Primarily for **younger children (up to ~6).** • E.g., A small swing set, a spring rocker, a play hut, maybe a mini slide. • Often unfenced or minimally enclosed.
LEAP **Local Equipped Area for Play** **S106** **50+dwellings**	400-800sqm	**Local** **400m** (5 minutes walk) - Serves a small housing estate or local community.	• **Formal play provision with a range of equipment.** • For **younger children (2-8 yrs)** and some challenge for older. • E.g., Multi-unit play structure (with slides, clamber), roundabout, see-saw, swings (baby & junior), maybe a simple basket swing. • Usually **fenced** with a self-closing gate.
NEAP **Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play** **Large development**	1,000+sqm (0.1 Ha+)	**Neighbourhood** **1km** (15 minutes walk/cycle) - Serves a whole neighbourhood/village.	• **A destination play space with the most variety and challenge.** • For a **wide age range (4-14+ yrs).** • Includes **more challenging, dynamic equipment** (e.g., taller slides, larger climbing frames, zip wires, swings for older users, spinning equipment). • Often includes **multi-use games areas (MUGAs)** for ball games and **informal kick-about space.** • **Always fenced** and a clear community asset.

3.2 Location & Accessibility:
Play Areas (PAs) shall be sited safely, with hazards removed or mitigated. Designs must promote inclusivity and accessibility for all users, complying with the Equality Act 2010.
Open Spaces can fall into different types of categories and located for the benefit of those in the parish :

* Parks & gardens
* Natural & semi natural spaces
* Green corridors / green wedges
* Outdoor sports facilities
* Amenity green spaces
* Provision for children and young people
* Allotments, community gardens and urban farms
* Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds
* SANG – Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces

The Council wishes to provide sufficient amount of open space which fall into the above categories but also to develop the green infrastructure and connectivity including green spaces both on the borders of the parish and within the parish. Connectivity: a priority linking footpaths, cycleways and bridleways or multi use paths to the wider network.

3.2 Community Consultation: Stakeholder consultation (including schools, youth groups, and residents) is mandatory during the design phase.

3.3 Sustainable & Robust Design:

- **Equipment:** New play and fitness equipment must be constructed from durable, high-quality **steel or recycled materials** and comply to BS EN 1176.
  A specialised piece of wooden equipment may be considered and agreed by the Council. i.e. Puffing Billy train at Exton.
  Preferred companies, Outdoor Play Devon, Playdale, Sutcliffe, Rhino, Marmax.
- **Surfacing:** Safety surfacing must comply with BS EN 1177. The choice of surfacing should suit the setting:
  - **Rubber Bonded Mulch or Wet-Pour** is preferred for urban or high-usage areas.
  - **Engineered Wood Chip or Similar Natural Chippings** may be used in more rustic or natural settings, subject to a maintenance plan.
  - If **Rubber matting** is used it **should have an underlay**
- **Vandalism / Dogs / Gates:** Designs shall incorporate vandal-resistant features. PAs should include measures to exclude dogs, supported by clear signage. Guide dogs are exempt, as is Amenity Trails / Green Gyms or similar in the open space, if not fenced.
  Fenced areas to be green bow top fence with yellow “easy gate” self-closing gates, gate area to be concrete, or one of the above surfaces.
- **Signage** complying with Occupiers’ Liability Acts 1957 / 1984 and to include owner details , contact number, if enclosed, no dogs allowed, What3Words location. Any MUGA’s signs should mention – not to climb.
- **Benches:** All benches must be constructed from recycled materials and have arms. They shall be placed on stable hardstanding (e.g., concrete, rubber-bonded mulch, wet-pour rubber, or rubber matting). A minimum 600mm of stable hardstanding must also be in front of each bench to prevent mud and puddles in the footwell area.

- **Bins** must be a pyramid top with cigarette stubbing plate, have a dual waste logo (litter & dog waste) and be fixed to the ground. Colour black or green.

3.4 Reference Guidance: The primary design reference shall be the latest **East Devon District Council's Children's Space Design Guide** (or successor document). All designs and equipment shall conform to relevant BS EN 1176 standards.

4.0 Procurement, Installation & Standards

4.1 Procurement: The Council will follow its formal procedures to secure best value, which is not defined by cost alone.

4.2 Mandatory Requirements for Suppliers: Tender packages must require suppliers to provide evidence of:

* Compliance with BS EN 1176 and 1177.
  (European Standard which replaces the old British Standards)
* Insurance (Public Liability, Product Liability, Professional Indemnity).
* Quality management accreditation (e.g., ISO 9001).
* Minimum of 10% to be retained, until all works are fully signed off to a satisfactory level. In some cases, the retention will be retained until 1 year after installation/completion.
* Full installation, maintenance, and warranty details to be transferred to the council.
* A declaration confirming the use of specified sustainable materials (steel/recycled content) and appropriate safety surfacing.

4.3 Installation & Handover: Installers must provide written confirmation that equipment is installed to manufacturer specifications and relevant standards. A post-installation inspection by a competent body (e.g., RPII qualified company ROSPA / The Play Inspections) is required. A full asset inventory and all certifications must be supplied upon handover.

5.0 Adoption of Assets Under Planning Obligations (S106)

The Council may, but is not obliged to, adopt PAs, open spaces offered under Section 106 agreements.

- Early consultation with the Council by developers is essential.
- The design, materials, and construction must meet all standards in this policy.
- Discussions with the Principal Authority and Council to make sure this policy standards are met by developers and part of s106 agreement.
- A 12-month defect correction period applies post-adoption, excluding vandalism or misuse.
- A sum for future maintenance must be agreed prior to adoption and for a minimum 5 years, standard being 10 years.
- SUDS may or may not be included in the transfer of play areas and open space to the Council. The Council will consider whether it wishes to take on such asset. If it decides to take on the management of it then a considerable remuneration must also be transferred.

6.0 Inspection, Maintenance & Risk Management

Open Spaces

6.1.1 General open spaces should be welcoming to all residents and accommodate a diverse range of uses for people of every age and ability. It is important to note, however, that some criteria listed in section 3.2 are designed to serve specific demographic groups or to prioritize wildlife and environmental enhancement, rather than general recreational pursuits.

6.1.2 Grounds maintenance the council contracts out for tree maintenance, grass cutting and hedge cutting of all open spaces, PA's as well as some grass road verges. See separate grounds maintenance programmes.

6.1.3 General Rights & Powers for all areas open spaces

BBQ / Campfires are prohibited in all open space areas. However, a commercial outfit providing a BBQ / Spit Roast (under their insurance) can be permitted for an event, but this must be agreed by the Council prior to the event.

Drones / model aircraft are NOT permitted on our open spaces.

Sky Lanterns are NOT permitted to be released on our open spaces.

Fireworks are NOT permitted on our open spaces.

Camping is NOT permitted on our open spaces.

Community Events / Commercial Outfits – Booking or use of the open spaces may be granted by the Council for Community events or by Commercial outfits . All events or use must comply with relevant legislation, insurance and risk assessments in place and if necessary, an Event Management Plan. Separate Temporary Event Notice (TEN) and other licenses may be required i.e. music. Traffic Management also considered. Copies of the above must be provided to the Council prior to the event or use.

Every effort must be made to avoid damage to the open space; any damage caused must be rectified by the organiser/outfit and all rubbish cleared from the site.

Use of animals at the event is only permitted if PL Insurance is in place including relevant risk assessments, washing facility if needed, correct disposal of animal waste.

Fly Tipping and littering have a negative impact on the environment and health. If necessary, the Council will investigate and act accordingly.

6.1.4 Risk Management & Risk Register consists of all the councils' assets and open spaces these are reviewed annually.

Play Areas

6.2.1 Routine Inspections: A weekly visual inspection (look and see) will be conducted by a competent person to check for vandalism, litter, glass, animal faeces, and obvious equipment damage.

6.2.2 Operational Inspections: A formal operational inspection by a competent person will be conducted quarterly. More detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of all the equipment and surfaces for wear and tear.

6.2.3 Annual Inspection: A comprehensive inspection by an independent, suitably qualified inspector (e.g., RPII) must be carried out approximately every 12 months but should not exceed . Reports will inform maintenance and renewal programmes. Inspections to be kept for 21 years.

6.2.4 Risk Assessment: A documented risk assessment for each PA will be reviewed annually and after any significant change.

6.2.5 Actions: Any equipment identified as unsafe will be made inaccessible immediately. The Council will determine appropriate repair or removal.

Other
6.3.1 The Council also has a network of footpaths it manages and maintains. They are **essential, inseparable components of a high-quality open space network.** The Council wants to maintain its current network but also expand it to enhance connectivity to other networks outside the parish, this would include multi-use rights of way.

6.3.2 Parking, so that residents and visitors can enjoy the open spaces the Council requests that there is a provision for some on road parking near to the PA or open space within any new development. The Council provides a large car park in Flower Street, also a separate car park adjacent to The Green play space for 7 vehicles and it is hoped that an additional car park can be sited near Globe Hill also public toilet/s provided at both sites. Woodbury, Exton and Woodbury Salterton play areas have parking adjacent for numerous vehicles.

7.0 Record Keeping, Monitoring & Communication

7.1 Play Area Register: A dedicated register for each PA will be maintained, containing plans, equipment details, inspection reports, maintenance logs, and accident records.

7.2 Accident Reporting: All accidents and incidents will be recorded and reviewed to inform future safety management and design.

7.3 Asset Register -all play areas, street furniture, land & buildings owned will be included within the Council's Asset Register.

7.4 Community Communication: The Council will:
* Erect clear signage
* Communicate regularly with residents via noticeboards, the parish website, and social media to promote parental supervision, encourage fault reporting, and advise on safe use of PAs.

8.0 Roles, Responsibilities & Policy Review

8.1 Council Committees: Specific responsibilities are delegated as follows:

- **Asset & Estates Committee:** Oversees inspections, maintenance, and forward planning.
- **Planning Committee:** Manages S106 opportunities and adoptions.
- **Staffing, Finance, Policy Committee:** Sets budgets for maintenance and renewal. Insurance to make sure sufficient cover is in place.
- **Full Council:** Final approval of policy, significant expenditure, and new projects.

8.2 Parents & Guardians: Are responsible for the supervision, safety, and conduct of children in PAs.

8.3 Policy Review: This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or best practice.

Adopted by Woodbury Parish Council on: 26.01.2026 Review Date: Annually