

Policy I3: Green infrastructure, trees and hedgerows

New development will, commensurate with its size and location, be expected to protect and strengthen the existing green infrastructure network by:

- a. ensuring that future green and open space needs are planned for;
- b. enhancing and connecting cycling and walking provision between local open spaces and, where appropriate, the countryside;
- c. connecting together and enriching biodiversity and wildlife habitats;
- d. improving connections, green corridors and links between different components of the green infrastructure network; and
- e. replacing and planting additional locally native trees and hedgerows where appropriate.

Local green space

Where justified with robust local evidence and consistent with national planning policy, local planning policies in neighbourhood plans may seek to identify and protect important Local Green Space.

Recreation and Open Space

276. The responsibility for sports facilities and public open space is shared with parish and town councils. The town or parish for each area is normally responsible for playing fields, parks and allotments, and have the ability to raise money for sport through their local precept. Sports centres, playing fields and swimming pools are provided in schools, sometimes made available for community use. There is an increasing trend for private gyms.
277. New proposals for open space and recreation land will need to fit within the wider forthcoming Green Infrastructure Strategy.
278. The Purbeck Built Sports Facilities Assessment (2017) showed that Purbeck has adequate but out-dated sports facilities; the Council will work in partnership with facility owners to identify opportunities to enhance and improve existing provision. A rural Dorset Council wide playing pitch strategy is also in preparation. The playing pitch strategy will consider the quality and quantity of the current facilities and identify where there is a current shortfall in provision. The requirement for local play and other open space facilities will be considered on a site by site basis. Where there is an identified shortfall, and having regard to the multi-functionality of open/green space, developments will be expected to have regards to the Fields in Trust standards currently set out within guidance for outdoor sport and play beyond the six acre standard, October 2015.

- 279.** Employment areas could include the provision of facilities such as informal open space or circular walking and cycling routes which would enhance the appearance of employment areas through the provision of green space and landscaping whilst also providing the opportunity for employees to benefit from an improved working environment and informal recreation during breaks. Dorset Innovation Park concept masterplan, for example includes a network of open spaces to support the biodiversity of the neighbouring protected heathland and informal recreational opportunities.