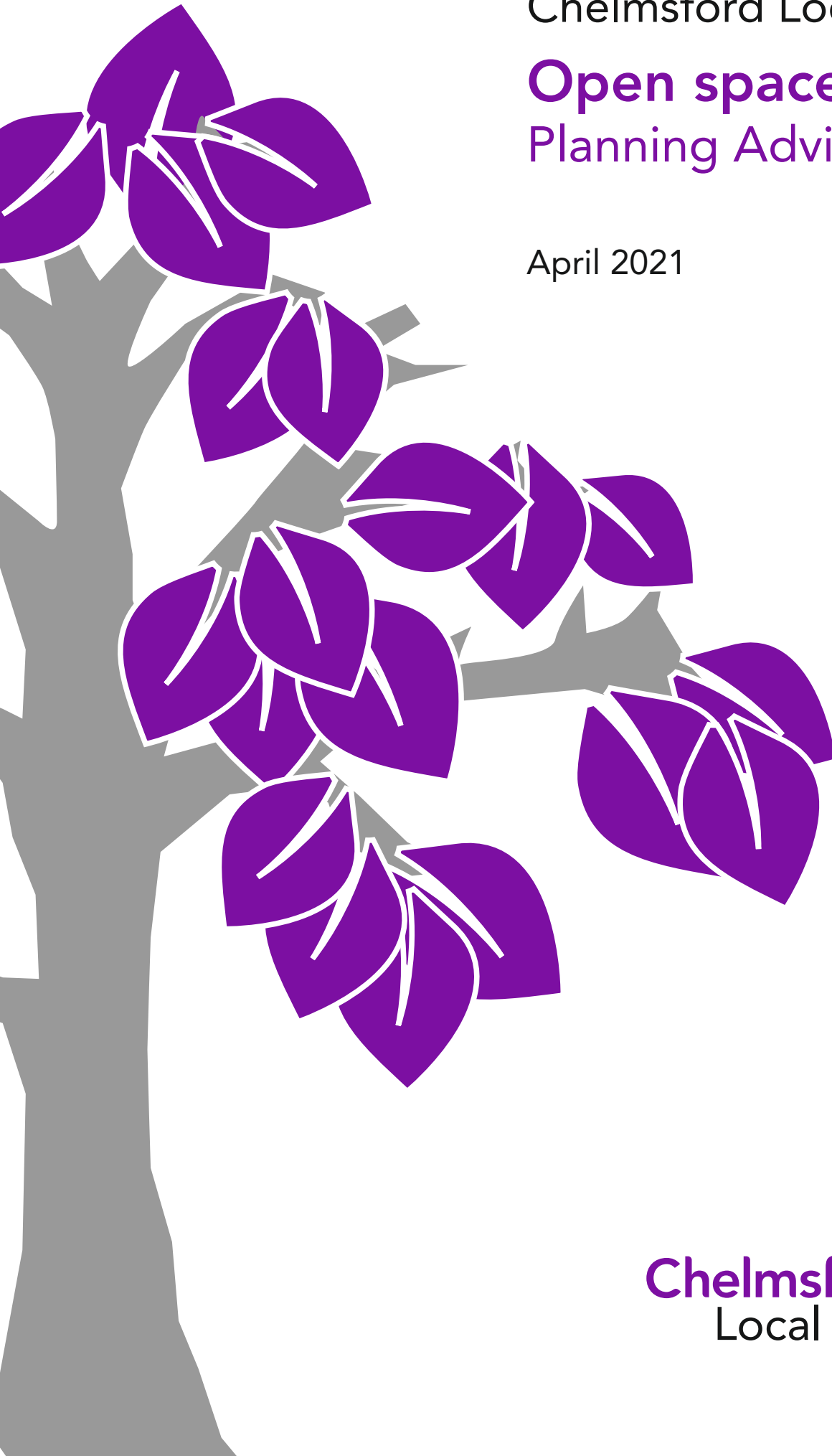


Chelmsford Local Plan

**Open space**  
Planning Advice Note

April 2021



# Open Space: Planning Advice Note

## Background

Appendix B of the Local Plan sets out the calculation for how much open space will be required for each new dwelling based on an average occupancy rate of homes in Chelmsford of 2.4 persons per dwelling (Census 2011).

Table 12 in Appendix B of the Local Plan sets out three types of open space:

### 1. Accessible Local open space

- Allotments and community gardens at 0.30 ha per 1,000 population
- Amenity green space at 0.40 ha per 1,000 population
- Play space (children) at 0.05 ha per 1,000 population
- Play space (youth) at 0.05 ha per 1,000 population

Sub total 0.8 ha or **8,000 sqm**

### 2. Strategic open space

- Parks and recreation grounds at 1.65 ha per 1,000 population

Sub total 1.65 ha or **16,500 sqm**

### 3. Natural / semi-natural green space at 1.0 ha per 1,000 population

Sub total 1.0 ha or **10,000 sqm**

Paragraph B.24 of Appendix B of the Local Plan sets out the following calculations for how much open space will be required for each new dwelling, using the average occupancy rate of 2.4 persons per dwelling:

- Number of households per 1000 population:  $1000 \text{ people} / 2.4 \text{ people per dwelling} = 417 \text{ dwellings}$
- **Accessible Local Open Space** per dwelling:  $8,000\text{sqm} / 417 \text{ dwellings} = \mathbf{19 \text{ sqm/dwelling}}$
- **Strategic Open Space** per dwelling:  $16,500\text{sqm} / 417 \text{ dwellings} = \mathbf{40 \text{ sqm/dwellings}}$

Paragraph B.25 of Appendix B of the Local Plan notes that in addition to the Accessible Local Open Space requirements of 19 sqm per dwelling and Strategic Open Space requirements per dwellings of 40 sqm per dwelling (59 sqm in total), on-site natural and semi-natural open space will need to be provided at a rate of 1.0 ha / 10,000 sqm per 1,000 population. It states that 'the quantity and type of this open space will be determined through the planning process for each site and may form part of a sustainable drainage system'.

Table 14 in Appendix B of the Local Plan sets of the Threshold for on or off-site provision of open space as:

Size of Scheme	Provision
Less than 10 dwellings	No provision expected on site
10-29 dwellings	Accessible Local Open Space Required on site at 19 sqm per-dwelling
30 dwellings	Accessible Local Open Space Required on site at 19 sqm per-dwelling, plus Strategic Open Space required on-site at 40 sqm per-dwelling

## Purpose

This advice note clarifies the method for testing whether the requirement to provide on-site natural and semi-natural open space can be met on-site and provides a means of calculating a financial contribution in lieu when it cannot be met on-site.

## Calculation Method

The method for calculating what level of on-site natural and semi-natural open space can be met on-site uses the same average occupancy rate of 2.4 persons per dwelling:

- **Natural / semi natural open space** per dwelling: 10,000/417 dwellings = **24 sqm/dwelling**

Assuming the threshold of 30 dwellings or more applies to the application of the requirement for natural / semi natural open provision; this produces a total requirement of **83 sqm/dwelling of open space for sites of 30 dwellings or more consisting of:**

- Accessible Local Open Space - 19 sqm
- Strategic Open Space - 40 sqm
- Natural /semi natural open space – 24 Sqm

Tables 7 and 8 in Section 8 of the Planning Obligations SPD set out that where provision of Local Open Space, Strategic Open Space and Natural Green Space is not required on-site, cannot be accommodated on site or a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision is acceptable, the rate per dwelling that will apply. These amounts are summarised below for ease of reference:

For sites of 10 dwellings or more where the Local Open Space is not provided on-site the commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision will be £1,063 per dwelling.

For sites of 30 dwellings or more where the Strategic Open Space is not provided on-site the commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision will be £1,052 per dwelling.

For sites of 30 dwellings or more where the Natural / Semi Natural Open Space is not provided on-site the commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision will be £811 per dwelling.

Where sites achieve part of the provision on-site; the balance in lieu of on-site provision can be calculated by following the formulas below:

### Local Open Space Formula:

Total commuted sum in lieu of onsite provision = [Total number of residential dwellings – (onsite provision in sqm/19)] x £1,063.

### **Worked example:**

Where a residential scheme of 15 dwellings can only secure 200 sqm of Local Open Space on-site, the calculation using the above Local Open Space formula would require a commuted sum of £4,756 to meet the balance of the policy requirement that cannot be met on-site:

$$£4,756 = [15 - (200\text{sqm}/19)] \times £1,063$$

### **Strategic Open Space Formula:**

Total commuted sum in lieu of onsite provision = [Total number of residential dwellings – (on-site provision in sqm/40)] x £1,052.

### **Worked example:**

Where a residential scheme of 35 dwellings can only secure 80 sqm Strategic Open Space on-site, the calculation using the above Strategic Open Space formula would require a commuted sum of £34,716 to meet the balance of the policy requirement that cannot be met on-site:

$$£34,716 = [35 - (80\text{sqm}/40)] \times £1,052$$

### **Natural / Semi Natural Open Space Formula:**

Total commuted sum in lieu of onsite provision = [Total number of residential dwellings – (on-site provision in sqm/24)] x £811.

### **Worked Example:**

Where a residential scheme of 50 residential dwellings can only secure 1,000 sqm of Natural / Semi Open Space on-site, the calculation using the above Natural /Semi Natural Open Space formula would require a commuted sum of £6,758 to meet the balance of the policy requirement that cannot be met on-site:

$$£6,758 = [50 - (1,000\text{sqm}/24)] \times £811$$

### **Maintenance Sums**

Tables 9 and 10 in the Planning Obligations SPD provide the commuted sum dwelling rate for the maintenance of the three types of open space referenced above. They have been calculated across a 25-year period (thereafter to be absorbed within Council Tax rates) and will be payable to the Council direct or secured through a conditional performance bond if a developer will not agree to transfer the open space to the Council or a Parish or Town Council.