



# Green Spaces Paper

DRAFT

*Our Community*

*Our Plan*

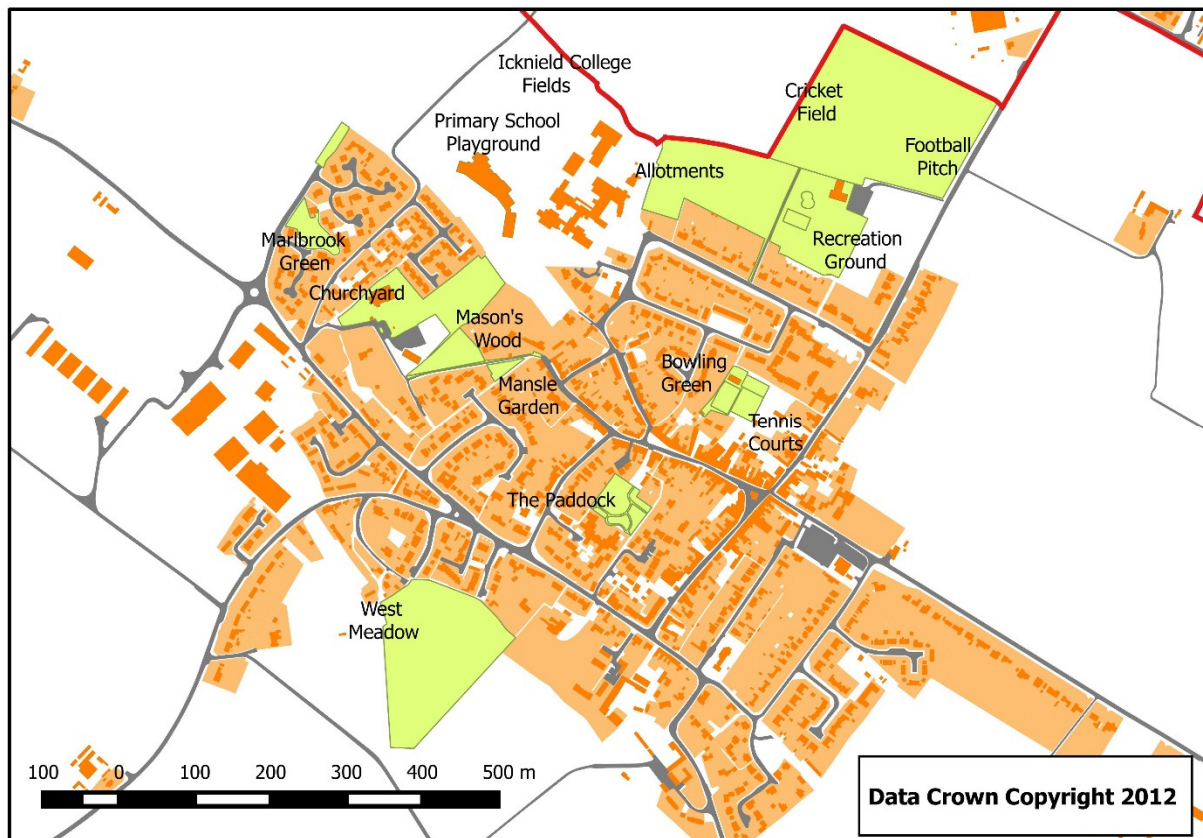
## Green Spaces and Rights of Way Watlington

### Green Spaces

There are a variety of green spaces and recreational facilities in Watlington. The spaces are important assets for the town, providing different opportunities for sports, recreation, relaxation and social wellbeing for all people of all ages. The green spaces and associated recreational facilities are very well used and contribute significantly to the character and visual amenity of the town.

In view of the high amenity value and levels of use of the sites within Watlington and its surrounds, it was concluded that the larger sites should not be put forward for development. The Parish Council will be seeking to designate relevant areas as Local Green Spaces.

### Green Spaces Map



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A summary of key spaces with high amenity value is detailed below:

**Spaces for recreation, relaxation and social wellbeing within the main town built up area**

<b>Green Space</b>	<b>Map Reference</b>	<b>Responsible body</b>	<b>Notes</b>
St Leonard's Churchyard		Church of England	Graveyard is operational Space for quiet contemplation for all ages Space for fetes and festivals
Mansle Gardens		Gifted to the parish	Area for contemplation and relaxation used by young children & carers and elderly residents
The Green Marlbrook Estate		Parish Council	Used by local residents as a recreation space, including for social gatherings Accessible by residents with mobility issues living in bungalows around the green
The Paddock Community Garden		Parish Council	Space for recreation and relaxation Play area with equipment for young children Daily use by all ages
The green at the Lilacs			Used by local residents as a recreation space
Allotments		Parish Council	There are approximately 70 allotment holders and all allotments are in active use
Mason's Wood		Masonic Lodge	Area for wildlife & dog walking
Horse Ponds		Parish Council	Public footpath through the land Amenity for walkers and dog walkers
West Meadow		Charitable Trust	Trust have confirmed that they have no plans to apply for development. Very well used area for walkers and dog walkers.

### Spaces for sports activities within the main town built up area

Green Space	Map Reference	Responsible	Notes
Shirburn Road Recreation ground & Pavilion		Parish Council	Skateboard park, 'trim-trail', play equipment. Hard play area with goals Daily use by children of all ages Space for young people to meet up at weekends and in the evenings
Shirburn Road Recreation Ground sports fields		Parish Council leases the sports fields	Sports fields are extensively used for combined purposes including football, cricket & croquet
Shirburn Road Recreation Ground sports fields		Football	Approx. 120 children from Watlington and surrounding areas. Matches Saturdays and Sundays Soccer School training groups U5s / U6s 8 x junior teams under (U7's x 2, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U14) Approx. 100 adults involved in football with the club 3 x adult teams – men's open & 2 veterans teams Mens open training sessions Tuesdays 16+ Ladies training sessions Wednesdays Affiliated to local leagues There is an unmet need for the provision of adult and evening football
Shirburn Road Recreation Ground sports fields		Cricket	Senior team 2 x junior teams Affiliated to Oxfordshire Cricket Association Regular training sessions
Watlington Club		Charitable Trust	Aunt Sally, Darts, Pool, Tai Chi, Judo, 2 x squash courts, Slimming World, Senior circuits, dance and social area Outside space – tennis, bowls
Watlington Club Tennis Club		Charitable Trust	3 tennis courts, 2 x floodlit, courts available for use throughout the year Club sessions Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings Junior sessions Friday and Sunday evenings Men's, ladies, mixed teams in Oxfordshire leagues. Summer knockout tournaments Matches played at weekends Adult and junior coaching Visitors welcome
Watlington Club Bowls Club		Charitable Trust	Ladies and men's sections

Green Space	Map Reference	Responsible	Notes
			Approximately 60 members ages ranging from early teens to 90 Club and County competitions played April - Sept
Icknield Community College & Primary School playing fields		OCC	Fields used for school sports and afterschool and holiday club activities

#### Spaces outside the built-up area of the town

Green Space	Map Reference	Responsible	Notes
Willow Ponds		Copas Farms	Very popular destination for local walks with a permissive path and links to local rights of way.
Chalk Pits		Parish Council. Managed by the Watlington Environment Group	Local Wildlife Site, and most is also SSSI. It is designated for its biodiversity, habitats and natural interest

Areas to be designated as Local Green Spaces in the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- West Meadow
- The Paddock Community Garden
- Watlington Club Bowling Green and Tennis Court
- Allotments
- Recreation Ground and Playing Field
- Mansle Garden
- Mason's Wood
- Marlbrook Green
- Marlbrook Green 2

## Rights of Way

Pedestrian and cycle access will be a key means of promoting integration of new development sites and the existing built environment of Watlington. The WNDP has identified a number of opportunities to protect and develop the footpath and bridleway network, which are detailed below.

Regulations concerning urban footpaths (including adopted footpaths) are due to be published by the government later this year. The Parish Council will be guided by the regulations in any proposals it brings forward

Recommendations from a meeting of the Watlington Neighbourhood Development Plan Forum Infrastructure Group on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017:

## **1. PROTECTING THE EXISTING NETWORK**

There are several footpaths that do not have the security of being on the definitive map. For the long-term protection of paths the Parish Council will seek legal protection for the following paths:

- Johnson's Alley
- War memorial to Saunders Close
- Pilgrims Cottage Brook St to Watcombe Road
- Extension of footpath W28 between Britwell Road and Cuxham Rd
- Brook St to Brookside
- Church Pound to St Leonard's Close
- Britwell Road to Hurdlers Green

## **2. RESTORING ACCESS TO ROUTES THAT ARE NOT CURRENTLY OPEN**

A 30 foot public carriageway is shown on the Inclosure Award running in a SW direction from Watcombe Manor to the Parish boundary. This route would make an important addition to the network in Watlington as it would join/cross footpath W 13 and so public access to the route should be restored

It is believed that at one time there was access to the small area of land to the rear of Bucklands Paddock from the side of No 29 Hurdlers Green. Currently the access is blocked . Further investigation to clarify the situation is recommended

## **3. POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE FROM POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITES**

Due to the built-up nature of the Town there is limited scope for expansion of rights of way, but the following possibilities should be considered:

- If Pyrton Lane ceases to be a through route and Willow Close is not incorporated into the alternative route for the B4009, it would seem feasible to create a footpath/ cycleway from Willow Close, across Pyrton Lane along the edge of the Primary School grounds and join Chapel St. Such a route to the Town would be most useful for potential residents on housing sites B and C.
- Formalise the well-used footpath along the side of the field adjoining the allotments to join up with the Recreation Ground. Better surfacing would be required along the length of the path including the section at the Pyrton Lane end (Pyrton 6)
- If housing site A is developed it will be important to look carefully at a formal crossing point near the roundabout by the Industrial Estate
- Pavement widths and continuity of pavements which are currently very poor in two areas, could be improved considerably the adoption of a one-way system along Britwell Road (out of Watlington) and Cuxham Road (into Watlington). This would only be possible if the alternative route for the B4009 is built

#### **4. IMPROVING ACCESS OUTSIDE THE TOWN CENTRE**

There are a number of connecting routes that could be developed to improve pedestrian access outside the town centre

- Create a path from the end of the Recreation Ground to the B 4009 / Station Road alongside the B4009 but within the boundary of site PYR1(if this is developed).
- Create a safer short route along the B 480 between footpaths W 11 and W 10 on Howe Hill
- Create a link between bridleways W 22 and W 9
- Create a safer route between footpaths W 6 and 7 to avoid the need to use Hill Road
- Create a branch link from footpath W 12 to the Icknield Way
- Create a link from Watlington Hill car park and footpath W 4
- Extend footpath W 11 at the Britwell Parish boundary to the Icknield Way
- Create a safer route between the Icknield Way and footpath W 6 along the B480 or inside the adjoining field.

#### **5. IMPROVING ACCESS TO NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES**

##### CUXHAM

There are two possible new routes , both have been used informally . The first takes a NW direction along the field edge from the end of Willow Close , turns NE at the field boundary until the Parish boundary is reached , and follows this boundary until joining the footpath from Pyrton (Pyrton 8). The second follows the track from the Parish boundary on Pyrton Lane (a continuation of Pyrton 6) until the Pyrton footpath is reached (Pyrton 8)

Local research has identified that there is sufficient space along SW side of the B480 to establishing a footpath linking Cuxham and Watlington. This clearly warrants further study and discussion with Cuxham and OCC

##### BRITWELL SALOME

The most obvious route would be from Watcombe Manor (assuming the re-opening of the route to the Parish boundary) and continuing until Shakespeare Way is reached (bridle path Britwell 12) or preferably the Britwell Hill / Britwell Road is met

##### PYRTON

Assuming the alternative route for the B4009 is built and is doesn't incorporate Pyrton Lane, the existing Pyrton Lane (beyond St Leonard's Close) could become a quiet road without vehicular traffic. This would result in improved conditions for horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians. There would need to be a crossing point of the 'new' section of B4009 at some point.

#### **6. IMPROVEMENT TO SURFACES OF WELL USED PATHS**

The worst section in this category is the 200m + of footpath W13 along the brook from the Willow Ponds. Options to improve the surface of this section should be investigated, including bringing in stone to improve the surface. Funding for this work would not be met by OCC but they would have no objection to it in principle. It may also be necessary to consider improving the surface of footpath W 12 to the south of the horse ponds if the planned cutting back of overhanging vegetation is not sufficiently effective in drying the surface of the path in winter

## **7. OTHER POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Improved crossing point on the B480 Howe Road from footpath W12 to footpath W13b.
- There also may be the possibility of converting the old railway track to Lewknor into a cycleway
- Improve the surface of the Icknield Way between Hill Road and Station Road

## **8. ACCESS**

Access for those with impaired mobility should be built into all improvements in pedestrian routes