



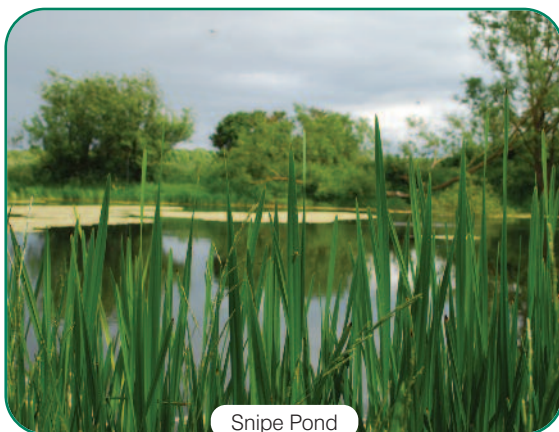
WHAT THE LOCAL PLAN SETS OUT TO DO

- Help deliver the objectives, priority actions and key projects identified in the adopted Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Achieve the quantity, quality and accessibility standards of open space provision set out in the Open Space Strategy
- Protect and where appropriate, enhance and extend the network of green space and allotments and improve accessibility to them
- Achieve the hierarchy of provision for sports facilities set out in the Core Strategy in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

Two new documents have been adopted by the Council this year which aim to protect and improve the quality of greenspace in Darlington, where appropriate:

- Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2013): will help deliver a quality landscape and townscape with healthy ecosystems, an accessible green multi-functional network for sport, recreation and play, that is well managed and maintained and is also highly productive and can help mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Planning Obligations SPD (January 2013): through new development, where appropriate, new green infrastructure and/or developer contributions will be used to make sure that local green spaces and sports facilities can cope with the extra use from new residents.



Snipe Pond

Open Space: The quality of many local green spaces has been improved. The Friends of **Snipe Pond** have been working with the Council and the Environment Agency to create a welcoming green space with greater recreational value. The Pond has been re-stocked with 1000 coarse fish for local anglers and the area has been cleared of scrub, litter and invasive species like Himalayan Balsam.

Access for all has been significantly improved at **Rockwell Local Nature Reserve**. The Council has used funding from the Local Transport Plan and Local Sustainable Transport Fund to install a new foot/cycle bridge across the Skerne which makes it easier for older people, families

with children and people with disabilities to move around the space. New paths to nearby roads encourage more people to use the green corridor to go between home, work, shops and school.

A new green corridor opened – Bonomi Way provides a convenient foot/cycle link between North Road and Whessoe Road within an establishing wildlife friendly greenspace.

Also during 2012/13, a new outdoor gym has been installed at **South Park**. The Friends of South Park secured funding from the Dulverton Trust for a chest press, leg press and an air skier. If the gym is a success, the Friends hope to raise more funds to add extra equipment in the future.

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GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FACT SHEET



While demand for allotments continues to exceed available land, the Council and the Self Managed Associations that run some allotments have successfully re-allocated many plots, in some cases subdividing plots so that more people can grow their own food.

People value the multiple uses that much of the Borough's open space provides, but, for the purposes of monitoring changes in provision, it is the primary function of the space which is of particular importance. A summary of open space in the Borough is shown in the table below.

Open Space: Primary Purpose 2012

	No of Spaces 2012	Total Site Area (Ha) 2012
Parks and gardens	14	82.41
Informal recreation	85	73.73
Green Corridors	39	142.5
Wildlife friendly green spaces	30	108.91
Children and young people provision	25	14.48
Landscape amenity space	41	17.59
Cemeteries and churchyards	9	33.37
Civic Spaces	4	0.71
Total	247	473.7
Allotments	28	28.43

Source: Darlington Borough Council.

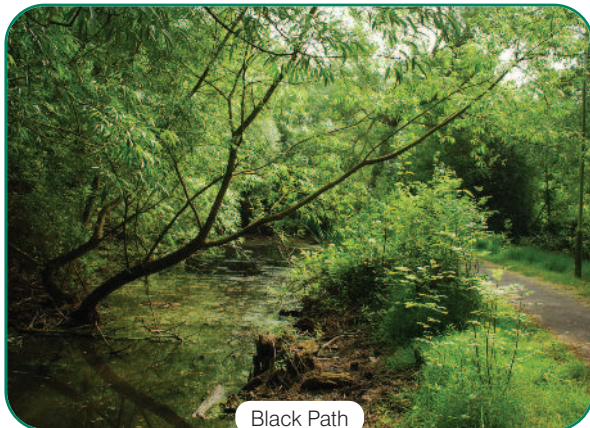
Three new spaces have been identified – Bonomi Way (new) and two other spaces at Red Hall Stables and Oronsay Walk, identified by local residents as being important local greenspaces that were not included in the original audit. The amount of informal recreation space and landscape amenity space has reduced slightly - the number of green corridors and space for children and young people has increased as a result. For example, Red Hall Villa has a kickabout area and basketball hoops and is primarily used by children and young people.

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Biodiversity: The Borough has four Sites of Special Scientific Interest, whose management plans are overseen by Natural England, all are in favourable condition. The number of Local Wildlife Sites designated by the Tees Valley Nature Partnership has increased from 27 in 2012 to 30 in 2013, of which 12 are being actively managed. The three new ones are spread out across the town - at Bonds Bog near Harrowgate Hill, in the Black Path area at Faverdale and at Red Hall Wetland.



Black Path



Red Hall wetland

Outdoor Sports: Darlington's adult participation rate in sport continues to increase year on year from 23.7% (2012) to 25.8% (2013), above the National and Regional average and currently the highest in the Tees Valley. To help meet the increasing demand a new 4 court sports hall and outdoor tennis courts recently opened at Longfield Academy, cementing its position as a sports academy and a destination for community sport. Two new football pitches are in use at Blackwell Meadows helping to meet the increasing demand for football in the Borough and a new MUGA at Darlington College meets the needs of the growing student population at the College and from Teesside University. Mowden Park Rugby Club has also re-located to Darlington Arena where there is space to accommodate future growth in rugby union.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Council has continued to work in partnership with Friends Groups, Self Managed Associations, education facilities, sports clubs, the community and other organisations to progress key projects which are designed to improve the quality of local open spaces and sports facilities, and the range of activities that can take place there. A key priority is to make sure that as many residents as possible have access to high quality open space and sports facilities particularly in and around the urban area and urban fringe.

In this challenging economic climate, the increasing involvement of the community and other partners is more important than ever to help secure funding that is unavailable to the Council. Projects that deliver multiple objectives in the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy will be prioritised to make best use of limited resources available.



MOVING THINGS FORWARD: KEY ACTIONS

- Produce a progress report for the Darlington Green Infrastructure Strategy in November 2014
- Adopt the Darlington Sport and Physical Activity Strategy by Summer 2014
- Adopt the Darlington Playing Pitch Strategy and Darlington Sports Facilities Strategy by Autumn 2014
- Provide up to date standards for each type of open space, including allotments and playing fields in the emerging Making and Growing Places DPD
- Make more land available for allotments by converting land where this is viable, by re-allocating existing open space or by changing the management of sites where this is possible
- Work with developers to ensure open space and sports facilities are provided for by new development, where appropriate.

Contact Us: You can access more information on planning policy in Darlington at:

www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

If you are particularly interested in statistics and data for Darlington borough, you can view these at:

<http://lis.darlington.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, contact the Planning Policy Team on **01325 388644** or email planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

This document is available in different formats on request.