

## **Summary of current play from information provided by Soham Town Council**

This Summary of Play report has been produced by East Cambridgeshire District Council following the 2012-13 Play Audit on behalf of parish councils to help guide their planning and funding for new or upgrading play facilities.

The report includes details of current provision and any issues highlighted by Soham Town Council when completing the consultation. The findings are based on information provided by the parish council during 2012-13 and have been compared to the local planning standards which provide a benchmark on provision that should be available according to population size.

The findings indicate where there may be deficits and will be useful for parishes that are considering any improvements or enhancing play provision to address deficits or growth.

## **Play Provision and Informal Open Space**

The table below identifies all play areas and areas of informal open space in Soham, using information provided by Soham Town Council in September 2012.

Map Ref	Location	Category <sup>1</sup>	Age Group(s)	Size (hectares)
2A	Recreation Ground	Play Area	TJ	0.059189045
2B	Centre Road	Play Area	TJ	0.042752303
SOH001	Teal Avenue	Play Area	T	0.011577
SOH002	Bittern Grove	Play Area	T	0.010424
SOH003	Lapwing Way	Play Area	T	0.031303
SOH004	Kingfisher Drive	Play Area	T	0.013086
SOH007	Recreation Ground (skate park)	Play Area	Y	0.007
SOH008	Recreation Ground	Play Area	Y	0.00264
SOH009	Orchard Row	Play Area	MoD	0.13245415

---

<sup>1</sup> Play Area: A space with equipment sited for the purpose of enabling children and young people to play legitimately (including Skate Parks)

Informal Open Space: Areas of informal space (not used for formal sports), including parks, kick-about areas, green corridors and village greens.

3A	Qua Fen Common	Informal Open Space		10.06713814
3B	Cloverfield Drive	Informal Open Space		0.201834604
3C	Foxwood South	Informal Open Space		0.071798282
3D	Thorn Close	Informal Open Space		0.152502911
3E	Northfield Park	Informal Open Space		0.141560581
3F	Angle Common	Informal Open Space		2.757596952
3G	Eastern Avenue	Informal Open Space		0.03204531
3H	East Fen Common	Informal Open Space		14.64884915
3I	The Causeway	Informal Open Space		0.14561282
3J	Cornmills Road	Informal Open Space		0.106604371
3K	Cornmills Road	Informal Open Space		0.216183665

T = Toddler (2 to 5 year olds)

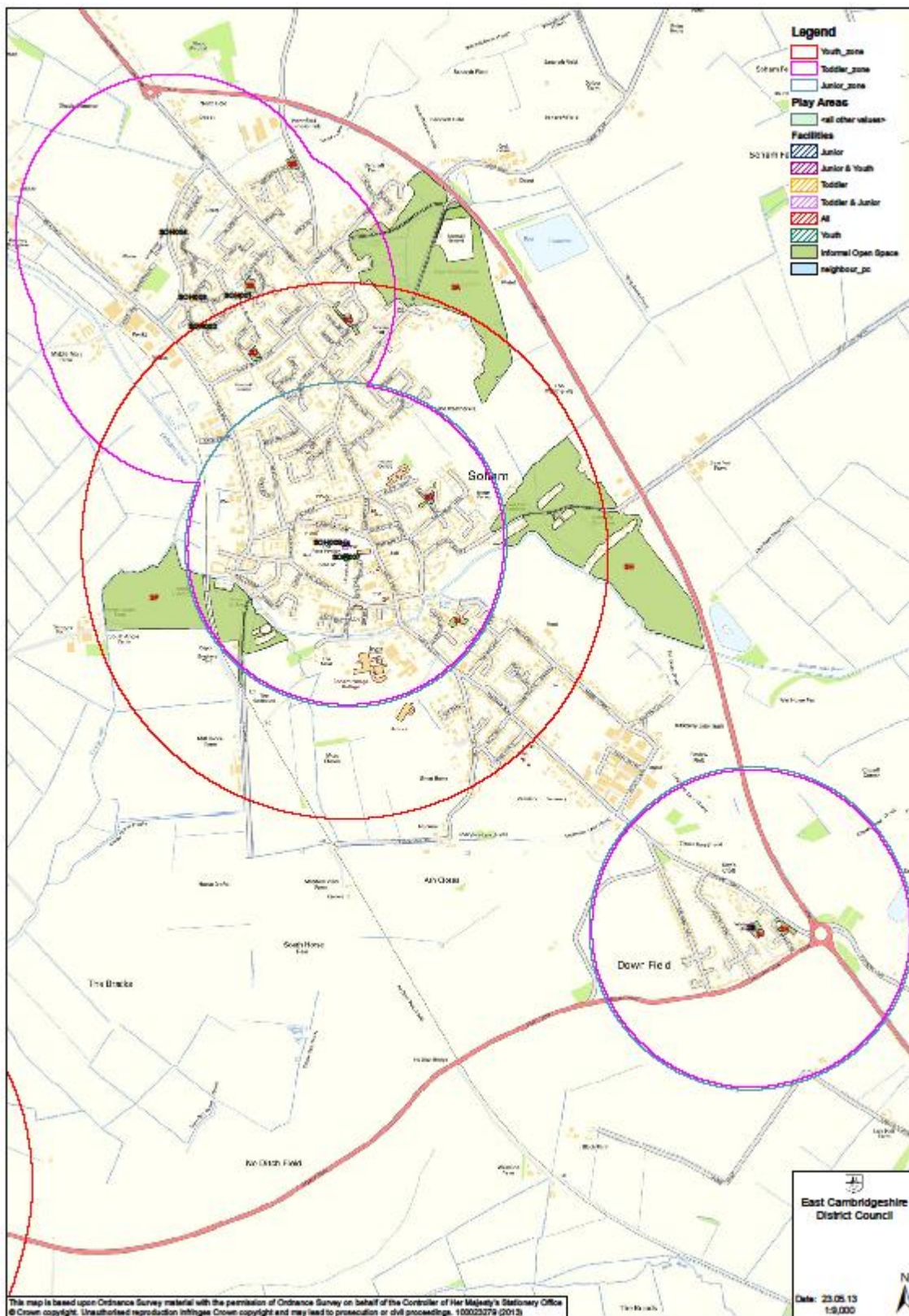
J = Junior (6 to 12 year olds)

Y = Youth (13 to 18 year olds)

Map illustrating the locations of existing play areas and areas of informal open space.

The following map illustrates the locations of play areas and areas of informal open space in Soham.

Radial travel distances have been outlined to illustrate catchment areas for each play area. The radial travel distances are a part of the East Cambs planning standard for play areas set out in the East Cambs Sports Facilities & Play Areas Assessment 2005.



Toddler: Approx 600m straight line distance

Junior: Approx 600m straight line distance

Youth: Approx 1000m straight line distance

### **ECDC Assessment of play provision and informal open space against the local planning standard**

#### East Cambs Planning Standards for Play Areas and Informal Open Space

Local provision standards set by the East Cambs Sports Facilities & Play Areas Assessment 2005 and the East Cambridgeshire Informal Open Space Study 2005 were used to measure against existing provision in order to determine whether or not there is a surplus or deficit of provision.

<b>Category of Space</b>	<b>Space per person (m2)</b>	<b>Standard size of area (ha)</b>
Informal Open Space	25 square metres (2.5 ha)	
Toddler Outdoor Play Space (2 to 5 years old)	0.2 square metres (0.02 ha)	0.01 ha
Junior Outdoor Play Space (6 to 12 years old)	0.8 square metres (0.08 ha)	0.04 ha
Youth Outdoor Play Space (13 to 18 years old)	1 square metres (0.1 ha)	0.1 ha

#### Population

10,860<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> 2011 Census, Neighbourhood Statistics, January 2013

Informal Open Space (hectares)		
Actual	Requirement	Deficit/ Surplus
28.542 hectares	27.15 hectares	1.392 hectares

Toddlers (facilities)		
Actual	Requirement	Deficit/ Surplus
16.83 facilities	21.72 facilities	-4.89 facilities

Juniors (facilities)		
Actual	Requirement	Deficit/ Surplus
2.55 facilities	21.72 facilities	-19.17 facilities

Youths (facilities)		
Actual	Requirement	Deficit/ Surplus
0.10 facilities	10.86 facilities	-10.76 facilities

	deficit
	surplus
	no response
	incomplete response

## **Analysis of existing provision in Soham**

There are currently eight public play areas and eleven areas of informal open space in Soham. There is one other play area in Soham that could not be included as part of this audit, this is a private play area in Orchard Row owned by the military.

### **Deficits and surpluses of provision**

Although Soham's play areas cater for toddlers, juniors youths, the audit identifies shortfalls in provision for all age groups. Junior and Youth provision are of significant deficit.

The audit identifies a surplus of informal open space based on the planning standard per head of population. There are two areas of informal open space of considerable size; these are Qua Fen Common and East Fen Common.

The map identifies that the majority of houses in Soham fall within the radial travel distance of toddler, junior and youth play provision, however provision is still inadequate based upon the population size using the planning standards.

The areas that fall outside of the radial travel zone for toddler play include:

- Fordham Road, north of and including Regal Lane
- Brook Street, Tanners Lane
- Greenhills
- The Butts, Mill Croft, Staples Lane, The Crescent
- Some houses in Bushell Lane and Queensbury

The areas that fall outside of the radial travel zone for junior play include:

- Entire North of the village, including Townsend, The Shade, Holmes Lane, Julius Martin Lane, The Avenue
- Fordham Road, north of and including Regal Lane
- Brook Street, Tanners Lane
- Greenhills
- The Butts, Mill Croft, Staples Lane, The Crescent
- Some houses in Bushell Lane and Queensbury

The areas that fall outside of the radial travel zone for youth play include:

- Entire south of the village, including but not exclusive of Fordham Road (south of Kings Parade), Brook Street (south of Staples Lane), Regal Lane, Regal Drive, Centre Road and Orchard Row
- Entire north of the village, including but not exclusive of Townsend, Cloverfield Drive, The Birches, Kingfisher Drive, The Avenue, Holmes Lane, Northfield Road and Bancroft Lane

Some aspects of the audit could not be commented on, such as future development, accessibility and consultation with residents, as the consultation was not fully completed by the parish council.

### **Play experiences**

This could not be commented on due to an incomplete response.

### **Accessibility**

This could not be commented on due to an incomplete response.

## **Further information**

### **Fields in Trust protection**

Protecting outdoor recreational space is vital for the health and wellbeing of communities now and in the future, and to increase wildlife diversity and provide habitat.

Fields in Trust works with landowners to protect outdoor spaces with legal documentation. The landowner will nominate the site and a deed of dedication is drawn up by Fields in Trust and signed by both parties. There's no transfer of ownership or management to Fields in Trust.

For further information on safeguarding outdoor recreational space, visit [www.fieldsintrust.org](http://www.fieldsintrust.org).

### **Best Practice Guidance**

Attached you will find up-to-date, best practice guidance on play area development, with information on the following:

- Location
- Design
- Access and inclusion
- Consultation and participation
- Quality
- Risk Management

### **Promotion of online tools**

The following websites may provide useful information regarding play and open space, along with helpful ways to promote your existing facilities:

Fields in Trust Protected Fields Map  
[www.fieldsintrust.org](http://www.fieldsintrust.org)

East Cambridgeshire District Council  
[www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk)