

# Outdoor Play Space in the District of Bromsgrove

Supplementary  
Planning Guidance  
Note 11

JULY 2004

**Bromsgrove District Council**



# Introduction

This draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is intended to supplement policies RAT5 and RAT6, Appendix 14 and supporting text in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (BDLP).

This new guidance will only apply to those residential planning applications registered after the guidance has been adopted for development control purposes by the Council. However, in instances where permission has already been refused, prior to the adoption of this guidance and an appeal is pending, the Inspector will be informed of this new guidance where it is relevant to the case.

## How will the Policy be Applied ?

## Are there any Exceptions to the Policy ?

## What is Defined as Playing Space ?

## What are the Council's Standards for Play Space ?

## How is the Amount of Play Space Required Calculated ?

**Figure 3**  
gives a worked example

This SPG will apply to residential developments of 6 units or more, or a minimum site area of 0.2 hectares. The requirement for play space will also include smaller parcels of land that are perceived as consecutive and cumulative, but together exceed 6 dwellings of 0.2 hectares.

Normally it does not apply to:

- Development of 1 to 5 dwellings
- Replacement dwellings where there is no net gain
- Sheltered housing where the occupancy is controlled so that the housing will never accommodate children
- Certain types of hostel accommodation where the occupancy is controlled so that the housing will never accommodate children

The Council use the National Playing Field Association's (NPFA) definition of playing space. Playing space is defined as 'space which is available for sport, active recreation or children's play, which is of suitable size and nature for its intended purpose and safely accessible and available to the general public'.

Informal/casual play space is defined as 'open space of a useful size and safe location providing opportunities for informal play activities'. Therefore, roadside verges are not considered appropriate but grassed or hard surfaced open space within a housing area with adequate separation from roads would conform to the definition.

The Council will seek the provision of play space throughout the District in accordance with its minimum standards of 2.43 hectares (6 acres) per 1,000 people.

- Step 1** Establish how many dwellings are proposed
- Step 2** Establish the number of bedrooms in each dwelling
- Step 3** Use **Table 1** to establish the minimum amount of play space generated per dwelling (sq. m)
- Step 4** Multiply the minimum amount of play space generated per dwelling by the number of units to establish the minimum total amount of play space generated by the development

**Table 1** Minimum Amount of Play Space Generated Per Dwelling

Number of Bedrooms	Minimum Amount of Play Space Generated (sq. m)
1 Bedroom	49
2 Bedroom	73
3 Bedroom	97
4 Bedroom	121
5+ Bedroom	146

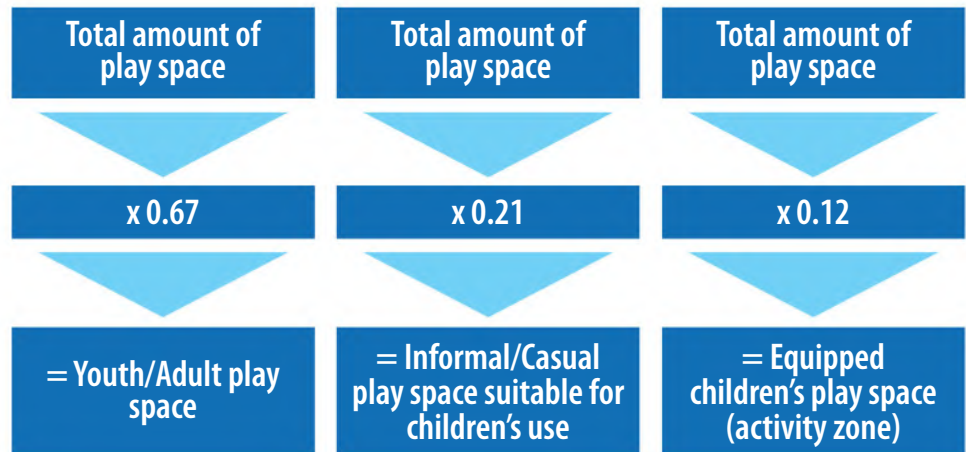


## How is the Amount of Play Space Required Broken into the Three Components

The Council's play space standard of 2.43 hectares per 1000 population has three components:

- Land provided for outdoor sports principally for youths and adults
- Informal/casual play space suitable for children's use
- Equipped children's play areas (activity zone)

The total amount of play space is broken into these three components in the following way



## What Type of Facility is Required ?

The Type of facility to be provided depends on the size of application site or number of dwellings proposed. Refer to **Figure 1** for an example of a Local Equipped Area of Play.

**Table 2** Type and Characteristics of Play Area Required

Size of Site/ Number of Dwellings	Facility Required#	Max. Walking Time	Min. Size Activity Zone	Characteristics of Play Area	Designed/ Laid out for
0.2ha or 6-50 units	Local Area of Play (LAP)	1 minute	100 sq. m	Small low-key games area (may include bench and play features)	Young Children
0.8ha or over 50 units	Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)	5 minutes	400 sq. m	About 5 types of equipment and bench. Small games area	Children of early school age
Major Comprehensive development scheme*	Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP)	15 minutes	1000 sq. m	About 8 types of equipment. Kickabout and 'wheeled' play opportunities. Provision of Youth Shelters	Mainly for older children but with opportunities for play for younger children

\* Please speak to a Planning Officer to establish whether scheme would be regarded as major comprehensive development scheme.

# Please note that within major comprehensive developments, more than one facility may be required.

## Where should the Play Space be Provided ?

Play space will be sought on-site on all developments that generate a minimum requirement for play space of not less than 0.1 hectare (1000 sq. m). Play space should be provided on-site in single areas of no smaller than 0.1 hectare (1,000 sq. m) in size and be of a reasonable shape for recreational and maintenance purposes. All the appropriate categories of play space and associated facilities should normally be provided on, or adjacent to, the development that are necessary and reasonable to meet the needs of their residents and are also accessible to other residents. These areas must meet the Council's standards. The provision of play space will be secured on site by means of a planning condition and possibly a legal agreement relating to future retention and maintenance (see **Table 3** for maintenance costs).

Although it is the Council's policy to normally seek all play space on site, it recognises in exceptional circumstances there may be some instances where it is not appropriate to seek all of the play space on-site. For example, where the amount of play space generated is less than 0.1 hectare (1,000 sq. m). Where the Council agrees that some or all of the provision is to be made off-site there will be a need for a financial contribution as set out in **Table 4**. This will be achieved by means of a Planning Obligation.

## What are Activity and Buffer Zones ?

Two characteristics that are common to the three types of play area are an activity zone and a buffer zone. An activity zone is an area of land specifically dedicated for children to use for play, which will usually include play equipment. This area should not be compromised in size (see **Figure 1**). A buffer zone is required so as to avoid possible disturbance to nearby residents (see **Figure 1**). The buffer zone may be reduced or omitted where there is likely to be little impact on adjacent land, for example where a site is planned beside a school.

## How are Commuted Sums Calculated for the Maintenance of On-Site Play Space ?

Where outdoor recreation space is to be provided on-site, developers may wish to request that the District Council adopts and maintain such facilities in the longer term. Where the Council is willing to adopt the site, the developer must undertake the maintenance for a period of 12 months to the satisfaction of the Council before adoption. The developer will need to enter into a legal agreement to transfer the land and agree to pay a contribution towards future maintenance costs covering a period of twenty years. The amount of the contribution will depend on the type of play space provided (see **Table 3**). If developers do not intend to offer these areas for adoption alternative arrangements should be made for their long term maintenance by, for example, the establishment of a sufficiently resourced management company or residents' association responsible for their upkeep.

**Table 3 Maintenance Costs for on-site play space**

Type of Play Space	Maintenance Costs for activity zone (per sq.m)	Maintenance Costs for informal/casual space (per sq.m)	Maintenance Costs for youth/adult play space (per sq.m)
LAP	£40	£40	N/A
LEAP	£21	£40	N/A
NEAP	£7	£40	N/A
Youth/Adult	N/A	N/A	£40

## How are Commuted Sums Calculated for the Provision of Off-Site Play Space ?

The amount of the contribution is based on all the anticipated costs of a facility of the required size, including 20 years maintenance, land acquisition, equipment and any other identified costs associated with each type of provision.

**Table 4 Commuted Sums for off-site play space**

Type of Play Space	Off-Site Costs for activity zone (per sq. m)	Off-Site Costs for informal/casual space (per sq. m)	Play Equipment Costs	Off-Site Costs for youth/adult play space (per sq. m)
LAP	£224.00	£224.00	N/A	N/A
LEAP	£205.00	£224.00	£35,000	N/A
NEAP	£191.00	£224.00	£50,000	N/A
Youth/Adult	N/A	N/A	N/A	£224.00

## Arrangements for Payment

Payments will be index linked if the development has not commenced within 12 months from the date of the payment.

## Return of unspent Contributions

The Council will undertake to spend contributions within a reasonable period of time (normally five years) after the completion of the development. Failure to do so will entitle developments to repayment of their contributions.

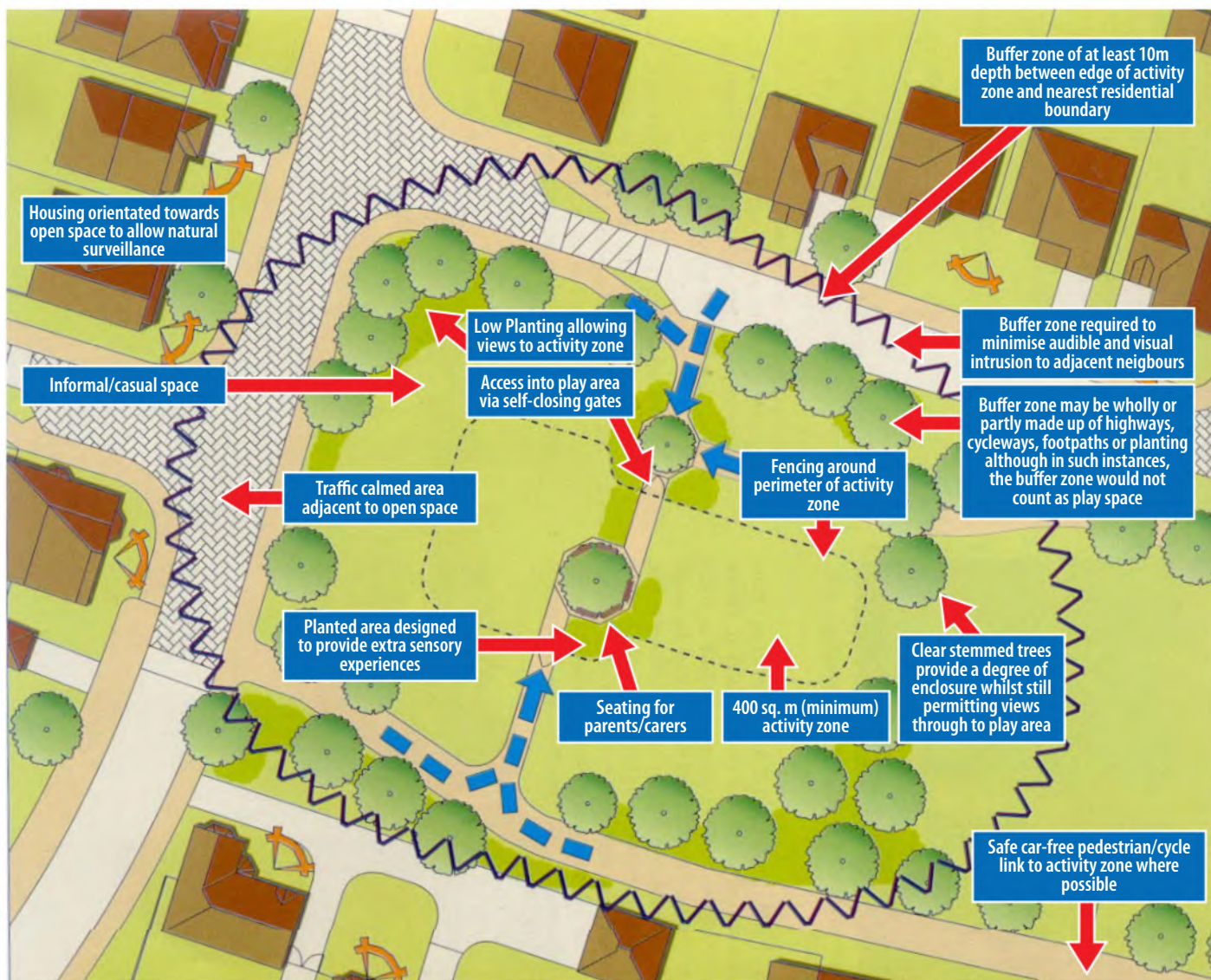
## Justification for Guidance

The justification for introducing this guidance is set out in a note entitled: SPG11 - Justification for Guidance. This can be found on the Council's website at: <http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5826>



Figure 1

## Illustrative Plan showing main characteristics of a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)



Adapted from NPFA. 2001.  
The Six Acre Standard

Figure 2

## How to Work out the Amount of Play Space Required and Commuted Sum Required

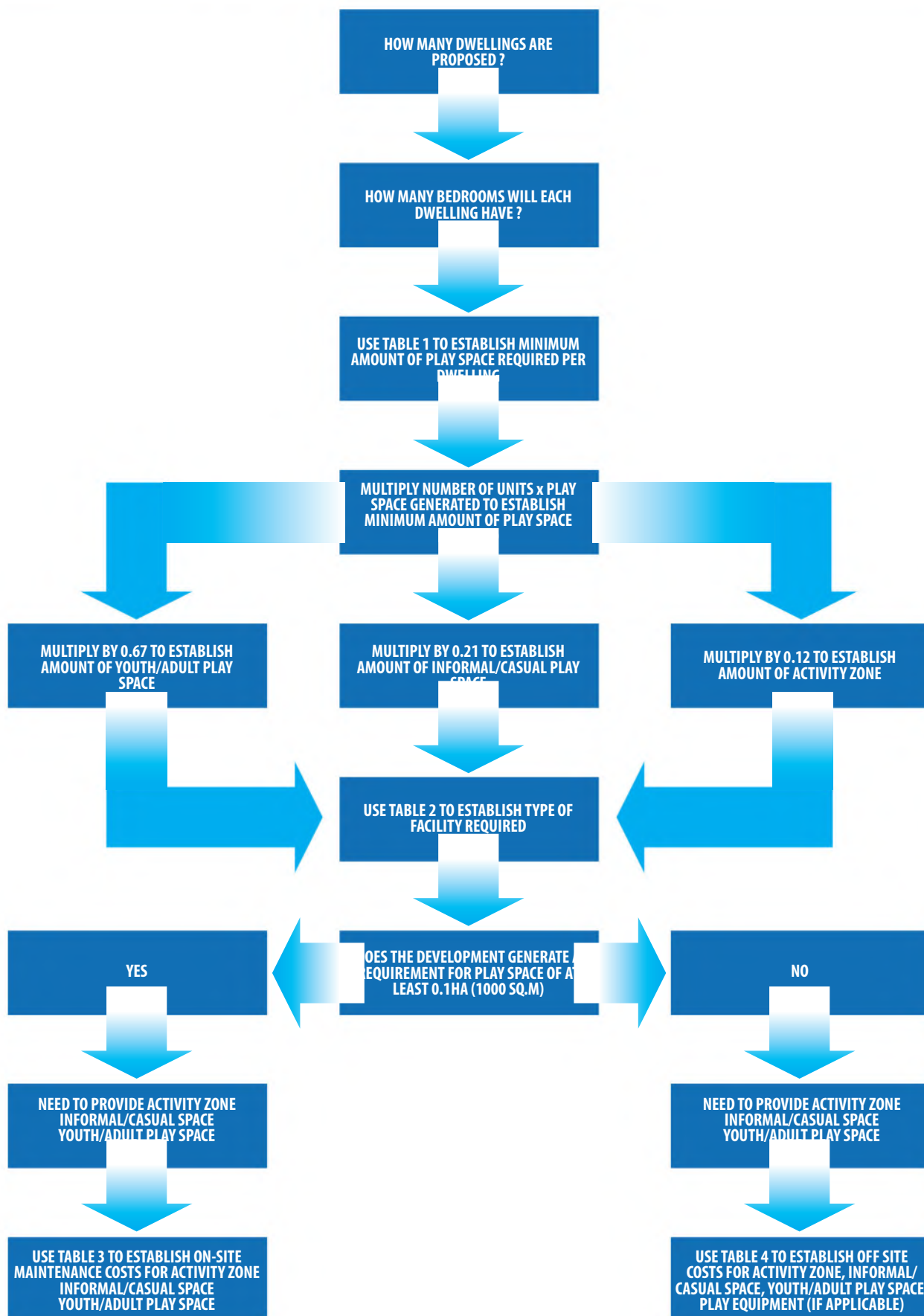
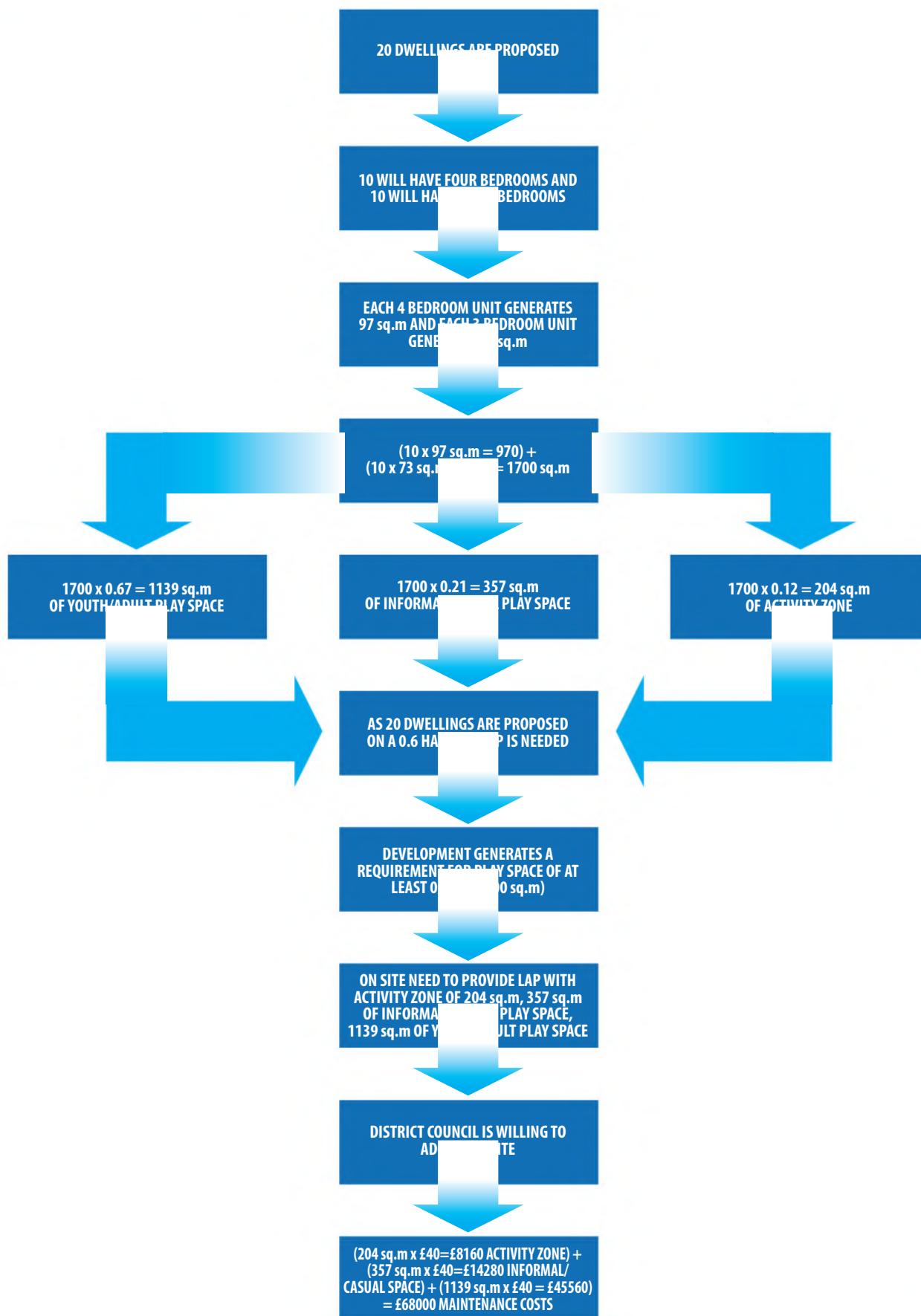




Figure 3

## Worked Example showing how to Work out the Amount of Play Space Required and Commuted Sums Required



## Additional Information

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The Council considers this guidance will be a material consideration.

The justification for introducing this guidance is set out in a note entitled: SPG11 - Justification for Guidance.

A further note provides details of the Consultation Process undertaken including the publicity and representations regarding this SPG.

Both these notes can be found on the Council's website at:

<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5826>

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## Contact Information

For further information or to request further copies of the Guidance please phone the Local Plans section on **01527 881318**, or write to:

**Local Plans Section,  
Planning Services,  
Bromsgrove District Council,  
The Council House,  
Burcot Lane,  
Bromsgrove B60 1AA.**

You can also fax us on **01527 881313**

This SPG can also be viewed on the Council's website.

The address is:

**<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/localplanning>**

You can e-mail us on:

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## References

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