

Central Cluster

The Central Cluster contains the wards of Central, Eastcott and Gorse Hill and Pinehurst and is centrally located within the borough. The dense urban characteristics of this area mean that it contains the smallest quantity of pitches of all of the clusters (14ha). There is likely to be a projected increase in the population of this area, associated with the regeneration of Swindon's Central area. The population is likely to rise from 28, 698 to 31,223 by 2011.

Table 6.1: Central Cluster

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
<p>Ensuring the quantity of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> surplus adult football pitches (1.5) decreasing to 1.1 shortfalls of junior and mini soccer provision (-0.1 and 4.0 rising to -0.3 and 4.2 respectively) the largest shortfalls of cricket in the borough (4.5 rising to 5.5) overall shortfall of pitches equivalent to 5.4 pitches at the current time. 	<p>The County Ground is the largest site within this area and is one of the highest quality facilities in the borough. This quality is maintained to a degree by reduced levels of play on the site in comparison to other grounds in the borough. This site provides an excellent opportunity for teams requiring the use of a quality pitch site and also meets the needs of the highest club in the borough in terms of standard, Swindon Town FC. The facilities at this site should be maintained and protected.</p>	1	Ongoing
	<p>The other key site located within the central area is Southbrook Recreation Ground which is leased to Westbrook FC, who have (through grant funding) improved the changing facilities and created a dug out and fencing around the pitch. Like the County Ground, this is one of the highest quality sites in the borough and is therefore a valuable resource. This ground is well used by other teams in addition to Westbrook FC. These pitches should be protected through the Local Development Framework</p>	1	Ongoing
	<p>Although there are sufficient pitches to meet the requirements of adult football teams, there are shortfalls of mini and junior soccer teams to meet existing demand. A shortage of pitches at the current time may also result in displaced demand, and there is colloquial evidence to suggest that teams of these age groups are travelling outside of the area in order to find facilities to use. Future increases in participation / population will see demand rise.</p>	2	Medium Term
	<p>The shortfall of junior and mini pitches occurs primarily as a result of the number of teams run by Greenmeadow Youth FC who play at Pinehurst Junior School. These pitches are only anticipated to remain available until the end of this season, as Pinehurst Junior School is due to close to be relocated as an academy. Although these pitches are likely to be replaced when the new academy is opened, it may be that they are not available in the short term. Alternative arrangements for accommodating junior and mini football teams should therefore be considered as a priority to ensure that these teams have access to sufficient facilities to meet their needs.</p> <p>St Josephs's Catholic Comprehensive School have expressed interest in enabling community use at their school facilities. Although these pitches are adult size, formalising an agreement at this site may offset demand for mini pitches in the short term (mini teams would need to play across adult pitches which would be preferable to having no facilities at all although would contravene FA regulations). Both Penhill Primary School and Gorse Hill Primary School currently permit community use although they do not have a formal agreement. Consideration should be given to securing agreements at these schools to accommodate junior teams. It should be ensured that new pitches at Pinehurst Academy are available to the community and are able to meet the needs of local junior and mini teams. If the pitches at Pinehurst Academy are not likely to be available for a number of years, consideration should be given to the development of new provision.</p>	1,4 2	

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
	For all football provision, it is important to ensure that the quantity of pitches remains above the minimum standard. It is recommended that provision is maintained as a minimum at 10% above demand to allow for rest and recovery of pitches. The surplus adult football pitches should therefore be protected. Any new developments in this area should contribute to the provision of junior / mini soccer sites, or should be used to address quality improvements at adult pitch sites.		
<p>Ensuring the quantity of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> surplus adult football pitches (4.2) decreasing to 3.8 shortfalls of junior and mini soccer provision (1.1 and 4.0 rising to 1.3 and 4.2 respectively) the largest shortfalls of cricket in the borough (4.5 rising to 5.5) overall shortfall of pitches equivalent to 5.4 pitches at the current time. 	<p>Cricket – The shortfall of cricket pitches is the highest in the borough. The County Ground is the focus of cricket in this area as a result of the quality of the pitch at the site. This is the home of Swindon Cricket Club, a focus club and the largest facility in the borough. As a result of shortfalls in the area, all existing pitch sites should be protected through the LDF.</p> <p>There are no cricket pitches at schools in the area and there are significant pressures on existing provision across the central cluster. In light of the pressure on existing pitches, and the desire of the NGB to grow the game (which should start at grass roots at a school level), new provision, potentially in the form of an artificial wicket should be considered at the new Pinehurst Academy site. Improvements to the quality of other cricket pitches in the borough may also reduce demand within the central cluster.</p> <p>In light of shortfalls and evidence that many clubs travel outside of the borough, the feasibility of new provision should be investigated in consultation with Swindon Cricket Club. All new developments in this area should contribute to the improvement of provision for cricket (and football) in this area.</p>	1	Ongoing
		2	Short – Medium Term
		2,3	Ongoing
	<p>Rugby – there is no existing provision or demand for rugby facilities in the central area. The adequacy of pitches to meet demand in other areas, along with new demand in the central area should be monitored and pitch provision should be considered accordingly.</p> <p>Hockey – there are no synthetic facilities within the central area and there is currently no demand for hockey evident in this area. Should this situation change, consideration should be given to the installation of a synthetic pitch at the new Pinehurst Academy site.</p>		
<p>Ensuring the quality of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p>	<p>The quality of football pitches in the central area is perceived to be higher than in any others area of the borough. This was also reflected through site visits. The maintenance regime at the County Ground should therefore continue and the Council should continue with the leasing arrangements currently in place with Westfield FC. Further improvements to pitch quality in this area should not be prioritised but the Council should ensure that rest and recovery of sites is maintained.</p> <p>Advice and support should be provided to schools permitting community use as they are providing an essential community resource.</p>	5	Ongoing
	<p>While the quality of cricket pitches is a key issue across the borough, cricket facilities within the central area of higher quality than in other areas and should not therefore be prioritised for further improvement. Despite this, there is a need for new provision in the area and any new sites should be maintained at a level to ensure that the quality of facilities is acceptable to clubs. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of allowing any tenant club to undertake their own maintenance, as was requested through consultation.</p>	6	Short Term and ongoing

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
Maximising Access to pitches across the borough.	Pitches at school sites will be central to the future delivery of sports pitch provision in the central area. Increasing and preserving access to facilities at the new Pinehurst Academy, St Joseph's Catholic High School, Gorse Hill Primary School and Penhill Primary School should be prioritised.	8	Short Term
	Consideration should be given to the level of access for disabled people in the borough and an audit should be undertaken to ensure compliance with DDA. This relates to existing and future pitches for all sports.	9	Ongoing

Eastern Cluster

The eastern Cluster includes the wards of Covingham and Nythe, St Margaret and St Philip and contains 22 hectares of pitch provision in total. This represents a lower level of provision than the majority of other areas of Swindon. Only 48% of pitch area on the eastern side of the borough is available for community use. The eastern area of the borough is the only area where population is projected to decline by 2011 and is one of only two areas where overall provision is currently sufficient to meet demand.

Despite this, proposed development at the Eastern Development area is likely to result in an additional 12,000 dwellings. This is likely to generate significant additional demand for pitches and result in sufficient pitch provision in this area in the long term. The likely provision of pitches is not yet confirmed in this area, but all dwellings should contribute towards new provision. Team Generation Rates / Conversion Rates and the local standard should be used to determine the required levels of pitch provision. Developers of new dwellings in the EDA cannot be required to provide for existing deficiencies.

Table 6.2: Eastern Cluster

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
<p>Ensuring the quantity of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surplus adult football pitches (8.8) decreasing to 8.7 • shortfall of junior soccer provision (4.4 rising to 4.5) • sufficient mini soccer provision (2 pitches) • sufficient cricket pitches (0.2 surplus) • overall sufficient pitch provision (1.5) 	<p>Football - There is currently sufficient provision of football pitches to meet the demand from adult teams, although there is a contrasting shortfall of junior pitches. Demand will however increase.</p>	1	Medium term
	<p>The majority of football in this area is played at the Cross Link Centre and at Nalگو Sports Ground. Stratton Youth FC are based predominantly in this area at the Cross Link Centre, although one team is forced to play outside of this cluster in light of pressures on existing provision. In light of the pressures on junior pitches, many junior teams are playing on adult pitches. Proposals have been put forward for a new commercial centre which would involve the replacement of two adult pitches with a junior pitch and 10 indoor junior pitches. While there is demand for additional provision in this area, consideration should be given to the impact of the loss of green space prior to any development going ahead. In light of surplus adult football provision in the area, the loss of the two adult pitches to be replaced by junior facilities would ensure that provision better meets demand.</p>	2	
	<p>If junior facilities were to replace the adult pitches currently at the Cross Link Centre, the venue could provide a focus for junior pitch provision in the borough. Adult teams currently playing at the Premier Club would need to be relocated to the Nalگو Sports Ground, where there is sufficient space capacity to accommodate these facilities. This potential new provision is likely to increase in importance should development go ahead in the EDA as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy as an additional 12,000 people will place significant pressures on pitches. In the short term, adult pitches should be redesignated to junior facilities in order to meet demand. Both Stratton St Margaret and Stratton JFC highlighted that they currently travel outside the borough with several of their teams, in order to access pitches. If the EDA goes ahead, new pitches should be supplied as part of this development.</p>	2	Medium Term
	<p>Provision for mini soccer in this area is currently sufficient to meet demand. These pitches should be maintained and demand should be monitored on an ongoing basis.</p>		
	<p>For all football provision, it is important to ensure that the quantity of pitches remains above the minimum standard. It is recommended that provision is maintained as a minimum at 10% above demand to allow for rest and recovery of pitches. Some surplus adult football pitches should therefore be protected. Pitches at the Mitre Sports Ground are not currently laid out.</p>	1,4	Ongoing
	<p>Cricket – While there are currently sufficient pitches in the eastern area to meet the demand for cricket pitches, the Governing Body are keen to develop cricket in Swindon and have identified Nalگو Cricket Club as a focus for development, in particular targeting the formation of a junior section. Any growth in participation will increase the development of cricket facilities in the area and will result in the need for further provision. All existing facilities should be protected as part of the LDF.</p>	1,2	Ongoing
	<p>Demand should be monitored on an ongoing basis and consideration should be given to the installation of synthetic wickets at schools, or the provision of an additional wicket at the Nalگو site.</p>	2	Long Term

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
<p>Ensuring the quantity of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • surplus adult football pitches (7.8) decreasing to 7.7 • shortfall of junior soccer provision (3.9 rising to 4) • sufficient mini soccer provision (2 pitches) • sufficient cricket pitches (0.2 surplus) • shortfall of rugby union pitches • overall sufficient pitch provision (1.5) 	<p>Rugby – pressure on rugby pitches is higher in the eastern cluster than in all other areas of the borough. This results from the high demand from Swindon RFC, the largest club in the borough. Consultation reinforces these findings, with the club highlighting that they have insufficient facilities to maintain the level of demand and that pitch quality is deteriorating as a result of overuse of pitches. In light of the high demand for these facilities, it is important to ensure that pitch provision is protected through the LDF.</p> <p>There are no school sites in the local area (although Headlands School has one pitch and is located within the eastern cluster) containing rugby pitches and consideration should therefore be given to new provision. It will be important to ensure that demand is not constrained by a lack of facilities. The Club have identified an opportunity to expand the existing site onto neighbouring land. These plans should be supported in light of pressures on existing pitches.</p>		
<p>Ensuring the quality of provision is sufficient to meet the needs of residents now and in the future.</p>	<p>Consultation did not highlight facilities at the Cross Link Centre / Premier Club and Nalگو Sports Ground to be priority for improvement. This is reinforced by consultation, which indicates that provision for adult football in the eastern areas experiences less pressure than other areas of the borough. In terms of football, quality improvements should focus on provision for juniors, ensuring that facilities meet NGB regulations. A programme of rest and recovery at all sites should be implemented to ensure that pitches are maintained to the highest quality.</p> <p>In light of the potential development of Nalگو Cricket Club and the growth of a junior section in the area, pitch quality improvements at this site should be supported in order to ensure that the quality of the site is sufficient to accommodate the increased demand.</p> <p>The quality of the rugby ground used by Swindon RUFC was highlighted to be of poor quality, resulting primarily from the high levels of overuse that the pitches are experiencing. In the short term, the club are in the process of applying for funding from the RFU to upgrade existing pitch and ancillary accommodation. This application should be supported by the Council. In the longer term, following the development of new facilities, the Council / Governing Body should support the club to ensure that any additional provision is also sufficient in quality terms to meet the needs of the club and to comply with NGB guidance.</p>	<p>5, 7</p> <p>6</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Short – Medium Term</p> <p>Short Term / long Term</p>

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
Maximising access to facilities	<p>School facilities play an important role in provision in this area, particularly the junior football pitch at Crowdys School. While Headlands School have indicated that they have a formal community use agreement, there is limited use of this site by community teams at the current time. Consideration should therefore be given to increasing the access to this site to ensure resources are optimised.</p> <p>All sites should be audited to ensure sufficient access to facilities for people with disabilities in line with DDA regulations.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Short – Medium Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

The North Cluster

The north cluster contains the wards of Abbey Meads, Haydon Wick, Moredon and Penhill and is projected to see a substantial increase in the resident population up to 2011. In addition, The Northern Development Area (NDA) is earmarked to include a development of up to 350 dwellings. The Northern cluster currently contains 24 hectares of provision, of which 69% is secured for use by the community. There is less pressure on the existing pitch stock in the northern cluster than in the majority of other areas of the borough.

Table 6.3: Northern Cluster

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
<p>Ensuring the quantity of pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of residents across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> surplus adult football pitches (2.9) decreasing to 2.5 sufficient junior soccer pitches (1.5) sufficient mini pitch provision (0.5) supply is in line with demand for cricket overall sufficient pitch provision for hockey 	<p>There are currently sufficient pitches to accommodate demand from football clubs of all ages in the area. Despite this, consultation highlights pressures on existing pitch sites. The new Learning Campus (included in calculations) will be available to the community at the beginning of next season and will alleviate existing pressures in this area.</p> <p>While all pitches are currently required, pitch quality and changing accommodation issues at Penhill Recreation Ground mean that this site is not used to capacity. In light of the emphasis through consultation on the provision of higher quality facilities, consideration should be given to the investment and improvement of Penhill Recreation Ground. Following the provision of further pitches at this site, the site at Pembroke Gardens may no longer be required. Provision of all pitches on one site would drive economies of scale and would enable the Council to invest to improve local pitch provision. Prior to any disposal of this site, consideration should be given to the value of the site as an open space resource.</p> <p>In light of growing participation, demand for mini and junior pitch provision should be monitored and opportunities through the redevelopment of schools or use of existing school sites should be capitalised. All existing football sites should be protected through the local development framework and development should not be permitted unless it can be proven that the facilities have been replaced elsewhere by higher quality facilities or there is no demand. The potential for the development of additional junior facilities at Maldon Hill Country Park should also be considered. While there are no deficiencies in junior provision in this area at the current time, there are significant pressures across the borough, and new junior facilities may alleviate issues in the neighbouring rural area. As the population increases, particularly if planned development takes place, pressures may grow and these new pitches will be required.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1, 3,4</p>	<p>Medium – long term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Theme	Action	Related Objectives	Priority
	Cricket – there are currently sufficient cricket pitches to meet demand in this area in quantitative terms. Despite this, consultation highlights that clubs choose not to use these facilities as a result of their poor quality, instead travelling outside of the borough to play. Qualitative improvements will be returned to address this issue, but following quality improvements, demand should be monitored on an ongoing basis.	2	Medium Term
	Rugby – there is currently no demand evident for rugby in this area of the borough. This should be monitored on an ongoing basis. There are 2 rugby pitches at the new Hreod School which should be available for community use in the event of evidence of demand.		
	Hockey – although there are no hockey clubs in the northern area, the new facility at the learning campus is suitable for hockey. This pitch is currently unused but should be considered a possibility to address borough wide pressures on synthetic pitches and promotion regarding the availability of the new site should be undertaken through liaison with the hockey clubs. Swindon HC have already considered the use of the new pitch and indicates that it is unsuitable. Quality investigations should therefore be considered as a priority. The synthetic pitch should also act as an opportunity to provide for football training needs.	1,2	Ongoing
Ensuring the quality of facilities is sufficient to meet the needs of local residents	Football – Penhill Recreation Ground was identified as a significant opportunity through both consultation and site visits. The site is currently underused as a result of insufficient changing facilities for the number of pitches that could be located at the site. Improvement to this facility should be prioritised in order that pitch use can be maximised. Opportunities to alleviate the pressures of informal use of the cricket pitch at this site should also be maximised (through protection of the wicket) to encourage additional clubs to use the site. This is essential to reduce the pressures on pitches in other areas of the borough. Pembroke Gardens is one of the poorest quality sites in the borough. Despite this, in light of the potential to expand the number of pitches at Penhill Recreation Ground, only short-term improvements should be made to this site in order to ensure that it is able to sustain the number of games required to meet demand.	5	Short Term
	Hockey – investigate issues surrounding the synthetic pitch at the Learning Campus and ensure that this facility meets quality expectations of clubs and is fit for the purpose intended.	5	Short Term

<p>Maximising access to facilities</p>	<p>Football – while there are currently sufficient pitches for football to meet demand, it will be important to ensure that this situation remains in light of increased participation and population growth in the area. Abbeymeads Primary School, Orchid Vale Primary School and Sevenfields Primary School all currently permit community use informally. Effort should be made to formalise these agreements in order to ensure the long-term availability of the pitches.</p> <p>The long term availability of the synthetic facility at the Learning Campus should be ensured and consideration should be given to ensuring that price for hiring this facility is in line with other facilities and is perceived to be reasonable value for money by users.</p> <p>Ensure that all facilities provided are compliant with DDA and are accessible to all sectors of the community.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Medium – long term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
--	--	----------	--

