



## **SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

### **ASSESSMENT REPORT FEBRUARY 2025**

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM



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## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
ANOG	Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BAFA	British American Football Association
BARLA	British Amateur Rugby League Association
BBF	British Baseball Federation
BC	Bowls Club
BSF	British Softball Federation
BSUK	Baseball Softball United Kingdom
CC	Cricket Club
CFS	County Facilities Strategy
CONGU	Council of National Golf Unions
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FIVB	Fédération Internationale de Volleyball
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facilities Plan
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NC	Netball Club
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGBs	National Governing Body of Sport
NGS	National Game Strategy
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non-turf pitches
PPOSS	Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
SBC	Swindon Borough Council
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under
WASP	Wiltshire & Swindon Sport

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### PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

#### 1.1: Introduction

Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) has been commissioned to undertake a Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) for Swindon Borough Council. This will provide the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions affecting relevant provision within the local authority area.

This report presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities across Swindon. For playing pitch sports, it is delivered in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Guidance. This details five stages for the developing the study:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date

Stages A to C are covered in this report, with Stage D covered in the ensuing strategy document. Stage E references the ongoing work that will be required once the PPOSS has been approved and adopted.

For "non -pitch" sports, Sport England's 'Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide (ANOG)' is followed. This has a similar staged approach:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information on supply and demand
- ◀ Stage C: Assessment – bringing the information together
- ◀ Application: Application of an assessment

The PPOSS is being carried out alongside an Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy to form an Integrated Sports Assessment. The inter-relationship between these must be noted as some sports covered by the PPOSS also use indoor facilities.

#### 1.2: Prepare and tailor the approach (Stage A)

##### *Why the Strategy is being developed*

The PPOSS will replace the existing study in Swindon, which was published in 2018 and covered the period 2016-2021, with a subsequent addendum which covered the period from 2021-2026. As part of this, it seeks to deliver the following aims:

- ◀ Ensure that all valuable facilities are protected for the long-term benefit of sport.
- ◀ Promote a sustainable approach to the provision of playing pitches and management of sports clubs.
- ◀ Ensure that there are sufficient facilities in the right place to meet current and projected future demand.
- ◀ Ensure that all clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and longer-term aspirations.
- ◀ Seek to ensure that all facilities meet up-to-date standards of accessibility.
- ◀ Ensure the Swindon community have a voice in facility development through area-by-area data gathering and assessment of needs.

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- ◀ Ensure facility development meets the need of all residents including those who face barriers to participation, health inequalities or reside from undeserved communities.

In addition, the study will help inform the Council's new Local Plan. It is in the process of preparing this, which will supersede the current Swindon Local Plan 2026. The New Local Plan will have a 30-year plus vision and a functional plan period to at least 2043. This therefore requires long-range thinking about the overall health, wellbeing and active lifestyle of the Borough.

Furthermore, an up-to-date PPS is required to inform local planning policy and to conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). One of the core planning principles of this is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Section eight of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities, with Paragraph 102 stating that "planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."

Paragraph 103 sets three criterion that ensures existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

Paragraphs 105, 106, and 107 set the parameters for the designation of Local Green Space. Such spaces may include playing fields and playing pitches.

The PPOSS will also tie into and help the Council meet various other outcomes identified in its strategic plans. As an example, the Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2017-2022) has the following five stated objectives:

- ◀ Every child and young person in Swindon has a healthy start in life.
- ◀ Adults and older people in Swindon are living healthier and more independent lives.
- ◀ Improved health outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities (including adults with long term conditions, learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health problems, offenders).
- ◀ Improved mental health, wellbeing and resilience for all.
- ◀ Creation of sustainable environments in which communities can flourish.

The Council's Get Swindon Active Strategy focuses on three objectives to be delivered by the Council in collaboration with its partners and making use of existing leisure, park and open space assets and active infrastructure. These are:

- ◀ Encouraging everyone in Swindon to be more physically active and move more, focussing particularly on groups who are less active.
- ◀ Removing the barriers to physical activity and movement so that everyone in Swindon is able to be active.

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- ◀ Working together with partners and the local communities in Swindon.

Swindon's Whole Systems Approach to Healthy Weight Strategy (2022-2033) acknowledges the wider determinants of health such as income equality, access to green space, the food environment, food costs and food preparation skills that create inequalities for individuals and communities trying to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Through a collaborative framework working across diverse sectors, it aims to create supportive environments to address these underlying factors contributing to obesity, where healthy eating and physical activity are the easy choice at every stage of life.

Finally, the Wiltshire & Swindon Active Partnership (WASP) Strategy 'Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well' (2022-2025) has a vision of "a county where everyone can start life well, live life well and age well, by accessing physical activity". WASP is key a partner on the implementation of the PPOS and it is a key stakeholder in the Local Plan Sport & Leisure Working Group.

### ***Management arrangements***

A project team from the Council has worked with KKP to ensure that all relevant information is readily available and to support the consultants as necessary to ensure that project stages and milestones are delivered on time, within the cost envelope and to the required standard to meet Sport England guidance.

Further to this, a Steering Group is and has been responsible for the direction of the PPOSS from a strategic perspective. Its role is also to support, check and challenge the work of the project team. The Steering Group comprises representatives from the Council, Sport England, WASP and the relevant national governing bodies of sport (NGBs).

It will be important for the Steering Group to continue to meet once the PPOSS has been finalised for several reasons, including a continuing responsibility to:

- ◀ Be a champion for playing pitch and outdoor sport provision in the area and promote the value of the PPOSS.
- ◀ Ensure implementation of the recommendations and action plan.
- ◀ Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the study and ensure that the PPOSS is kept up-to-date.

### ***Study area***

The study area comprises of the full local authority area, with analysis areas (or sub areas) also used to allow for a more localised analysis in addition to the analysis for Swindon as a whole. This entails splitting the Council's administrative area into eight community areas that are already used from a planning perspective in the emerging new Local Plan.

The areas are shown in Figure 1 below.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 1.1: Analysis area map



### Scope

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As standard, the PPOSS covers the 'core' playing pitch sports, which are as follows:

- ◀ Football
- ◀ Rugby union
- ◀ Rugby league
- ◀ Hockey
- ◀ Cricket

A bespoke section for third generation turf (3G) pitches is also included within this report. This is relevant to several sports, predominately football but also rugby union and rugby league.

It is separated out from other sections due to this multi-sport nature. In addition, other grass pitch sports are also included where supply and/or demand is identified within the Borough. This therefore includes baseball/softball and American football.

In terms of other outdoor sports, the following are included within the scope, as agreed by the Steering Group:

- |                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| ◀ Tennis (including padel tennis) | ◀ Athletics     |
| ◀ Netball                         | ◀ Cycling       |
| ◀ Bowls                           | ◀ Speedway      |
| ◀ Pétanque                        | ◀ Golf          |
| ◀ Bocce                           | ◀ Volleyball    |
| ◀ Croquet                         | ◀ Skateboarding |

Only the outdoor aspects of the above sports are focused upon within this study, although it is noted that several are also commonly played indoors. This activity is instead captured within the Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy, although such supply and demand is cross-referenced, where relevant.

Where a sport has not been included, this is because its presence has not been evidenced. However, that is not to say that the sports are not played informally, or that localised demand does not exist.

Sport England's PPS guidance applies to football, rugby union, rugby league cricket and hockey as well as the other grass pitch sports identified. ANOG guidance applies to the remaining 'non-pitch' sports.

Cross boundary issues are also explored to determine the level of imported and exported demand i.e., demand travelling into and outside of Swindon. This recognises that people can travel to and make use of strategic facilities irrespective of administrative boundaries.

### **1.3: Gather information and views on supply of and demand for provision (Stage B)**

A clear picture of the supply of and demand for playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities in Swindon is required to enable an accurate assessment of quantity, quality and usage. This has been achieved through site assessments and consultation with key stakeholders.



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### *Gather supply information and views – an audit of provision*

#### *Quantity*

Where known, all playing pitch facilities are included within the PPOSS, irrespective of ownership, management and use.

Sites have been initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web-based database, with the Council and NGBs supporting this process by checking and updating this initial data as well as by supplying their own affiliation data and booking information. For each site, the following details are recorded in the project database:

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ◀ Ownership and management type
- ◀ Security of tenure
- ◀ Community availability
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of provision
- ◀ Usage levels

Relative to the playing pitch sports included, Sport England's guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2021 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order':

- ◀ **Playing pitch** – a delineated area which is used for association football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, American football, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo.
- ◀ **Playing field** – the whole of a site that encompasses at least one playing pitch.

Although the statutory definition of a playing field sets out a minimum size, the PPOSS takes account of smaller sized pitches that contribute to the supply side. For example, a site containing a mini 5v5 football pitch is included despite it potentially being smaller than 0.2ha. The study counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply, with the definition of a playing pitch also including artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

As far as possible, this report aims to capture all of the playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities within Swindon; however, there may be instances that have led to omissions, such as unused school sites where access was not possible (although facilities at sites not accessed are still included within the study where provision is known to exist from other sources e.g., affiliation data or club/league consultation). Where provision has not been recorded within the report, it is still considered to exist for planning purposes and will continue to do so. Furthermore, any exclusion does not mean that the provision is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

#### *Accessibility*

Not all playing pitch and outdoor sport sites offer the same level of access to the community. The ownership and accessibility of also influences their actual availability for community use. As such, each site included in the PPOSS is assigned a level of community use as follows:

- ◀ **Community use** - provision in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for hire and currently in formal use.

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- ◀ **Available but unused** - provision that is available for hire but are not currently used on a formal basis. This most often applies to school sites but can also apply to sites which are expensive to hire or that are particularly poor quality.
- ◀ **No community use** - provision which as a matter of policy or practice is not available for hire. This includes professional club sites along with some semi-professional club sites where play is restricted to the first or second team.
- ◀ **Disused** - sites that have previously been used for sport but that are not currently being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either (often being unmarked). However, they remain undeveloped and could be brought back into use.

In addition, there should be a good degree of certainty that provision will be available to the community for at least the following three years. If this is not the case, the provision is still included within the assessment but is noted as having unsecure tenure. A judgement is made based on the information gathered and a record of secured or unsecured community use is put against each site.

### *Quality*

The capacity of provision to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of provision affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of a sport. In extreme circumstances, it can result in a facility being unable to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times.

The quality of all provision identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed as part of a PPOSS, regardless of ownership, management and availability. Along with capturing any detail specific to the individual facilities and sites, a quality rating is also recorded within the audit for each pitch/facility. These ratings are then used to help estimate the capacity (aligned to NGB guidance) to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

For the purposes of quality assessments, the PPOSS refers to playing facilities and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'good', 'standard' or 'poor' quality. However, some good quality sites may have poor quality elements and vice versa (e.g., a good quality pitch may be serviced by poor quality changing facilities).

**Good quality** refers to facilities with, for example, good grass cover, even surfaces and that are free from vandalism and litter. For ancillary facilities, it refers to access for disabled people, sufficient provision for referees, juniors/women/girls and appropriate showers, toilets and car parking. Facility age can also have a significant bearing on the overall quality rating.

**Standard quality** refers to playing provision that has, for example, adequate grass cover, minimal signs of wear and tear and goalposts that may be secure but in need of minor repair. In terms of ancillary facilities, standard quality refers to adequately sized changing rooms, storage provision and the provision of toilets, although some level of improvement/modernisation may be required.

**Poor quality** refers to playing provision with, for example, inadequate grass cover, uneven surfaces and waterlogging issues, whilst for ancillary facilities it may relate to changing rooms with no showers (or communal showers), no running water and old, dated interiors. They are often unsuitable for mixed gender use.

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To ensure accurate findings, site assessments for each sport are carried out during the playing season for that sport. As such, site assessments for sports played in the winter are generally conducted between November and February, whilst the sports played in the summer are assessed between July and August. This also enables sufficient play to be carried out on the provision before the assessments take place by means of providing an accurate picture regarding the impact of demand.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the guidance), users and providers have also been consulted on the quality as well as the Council and relevant NGBs. In some instances, the quality rating has been adjusted to reflect feedback (thus establishing an “agreed quality rating”).

Furthermore, technical assessments have also been provided, where undertaken, such as those carried out by the Grounds Maintenance Association (GMA), which now provides technical assessments across football, rugby union, rugby league and cricket (known as PitchPower reports). PitchPower reports where carried out have informed the quality assessments for the PPOSS to ensure the findings align (unless there is a clear reason for a differential e.g., recent improvements).

### ***Gather demand information and views***

#### *Current demand*

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities (i.e., recording how and when provision is used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment. To that end, demand for provision in Swindon tends to fall within the following categories:

- ◀ Organised competitive play
- ◀ Organised training
- ◀ Informal play
- ◀ Unofficial use

Current and future demand for provision is presented on a sport-by-sport basis within the relevant sections of this report. In addition, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section (unless no such demand has been identified).

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to provision. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is in training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the competition. In comparison, latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams (or members) that could be accommodated if access to a sufficient number of playing pitch facilities (and ancillary provision) was available.

Exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority area of choice. This therefore includes Swindon-based demand that travels outside of the authority to access provision (exported demand), as well as demand from nearby authorities that travel into the area (imported demand). This can often be linked to capacity and/or quality issues within an authority, although nationally some leagues and competitions operate a central venue system that can necessitate the displacement.

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A variety of consultation methods have been used to collate demand information. Firstly, face-to-face consultation (normally via video call) has been carried out with key clubs and leagues from each sport (as identified by the Council and the relevant NGBs), thus allowing for the collection of detailed demand information and further interrogation of key issues. For all remaining clubs, telephone consultation or an online survey (converted to postal if required) has been utilised.

Key providers and other users of provision have also been contacted, including town and parish councils as well as schools and further/higher education establishments. This involves face-to-face meetings with secondary schools, colleges and universities and an online survey being sent to primary schools, special schools and independent schools.

### *Future demand*

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPOSS to assess whether the future demand for provision can be met. Using population projections (ONS-based) and proposed housing growth, as well as likely participation growth informed through consultation, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for the relevant facilities. Assumptions can then be made as to whether existing provision can cater for such growth.

Team generation rates are used to provide an indication as to how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group). This ratio can then be applied to predicted participation, population and housing growth to help estimate the change in demand for each sport that may arise in the future.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand include:

- ◀ Recent trends in the participation.
- ◀ The nature of the current and likely future population and their propensity to participate.
- ◀ Feedback from clubs on plans to develop additional teams / attract additional members.
- ◀ Any local and NGB specific sports development targets e.g., women's and girls' activity.

All future demand projections across the PPOSS for Swindon cover the period up until 2043, in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan.

### **1.4: Assess the supply and demand information and views (Stage C)**

Supply and demand information gathered is used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision in Swindon and to identify key issues, challenges and aspirations. This forms the basis of this report.

### ***Understanding the situation at individual sites***

Qualitative ratings are linked to a capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. For playing pitch sports, the quality and use of each pitch is assessed against recommended capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions provision could accommodate.

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Each pitch is said to have potential spare capacity, be at capacity, or be overplayed – as follows:

Potential spare capacity: Play is below the level the site could sustain.	
At capacity: Play is at a level the site can sustain.	
Overused: Play exceeds the level the site can sustain.	

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use. One team accessing one whole pitch is considered to use the pitch for 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week based on them playing home and away fixtures on an alternate basis (therefore only requiring access to their home pitch every two weeks).

As a guide, the NGBs for football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league and hockey have set a standard number of matches that each pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality. Given how the sports operate, this is per week for football, rugby league, rugby union, per day for hockey and per season for cricket and is further detailed in the table below.

*Table 1.1: Capacity of playing pitches in match equivalent sessions*

Sport	Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Senior pitches	3.3 per week	2.6 per week	2 per week
Rugby league	Senior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Junior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Primary pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	60 per season
Hockey	One AGP	4 matches per day	4 matches per day	0 matches per day

For non-pitch sports, capacity is not linked to the number of matches taking place but rather the number of members (and other users) attracted to a site. For example, for tennis, a sports-lit hard court is said to have capacity for 60 members, whereas a non-lit has court has capacity for 40 members (this varies for grass courts).

Other sport specific capacity guidance is detailed within the relevant sections of this report.

### ***Develop the current and future picture of provision***

Once capacity is determined on a site-by-site basis, actual spare capacity is calculated on a Council-wide and an area-by-area basis via further interrogation of peak time demand (i.e., the day/time demand is most likely to exist). This then identifies whether there is overall spare capacity or whether there is a shortfall of capacity.

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Although spare capacity may be identified at some sites and in some areas, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed (actual spare capacity), or a site may be retained in a 'strategic reserve' to enable rotation and to reduce wear and tear. There may also be a need to discount some capacity, for example at poor quality sites that should not be used until they are improved, or at unsecure sites where long-term access cannot be guaranteed.

Conversely, where a shortfall of capacity is identified, this does not necessarily mean there is a need for increased provision via new facilities. Instead, it may be possible for deficits to be overcome through better utilising the existing stock, such as through quality improvements or through improving community access.

Once current capacity has been determined, future capacity can then also be calculated via incorporating the future demand that has been identified as well as any unmet, latent and exported demand.

### ***Identify the key findings and issues***

The Assessment Report, which is this document, is drafted and presented on a sport-by-sport basis, with data analysis undertaken on both a Council-wide and sub-area basis. This focuses on reporting research findings, consultation, site audit information and data analysis supported by detailed GIS mapping. It is agreed and 'signed off' prior to moving on to the strategy and action plan development stages.

Each included section (from Part 2 onwards) summarises the local administration of the included playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities. Each provides a summary of the supply of and demand for provision, with key issues identified and an overall supply and demand analysis undertaken.

### **1.5: Develop the strategy (Stage D)**

The Strategy follows the production of this Assessment Report, once it has been finalised and signed off by the Steering Group. It will feature:

- ◀ Headline findings
- ◀ An overall vision and associated aims for the PPOSS
- ◀ Sport-by-sport recommendations and scenarios
- ◀ Strategic recommendations
- ◀ A site-by-site and area-by-area Action Plan
- ◀ Housing growth scenarios

Additionally, it will provide detail as to how to deliver the PPOSS and keep it robust and up to date (Stage E).



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 2: FOOTBALL

#### 2.1: Introduction

Wiltshire FA is the primary organisation overseeing the development (and some elements of administration) of football in Swindon Borough. It is responsible for growing participation, promoting diversity and regulating the sport for everyone to enjoy.

Facility development for football is largely the responsibility of the Football Foundation (FF), which is a charity, linked to and funded by the Premier League, The FA and the Government (via Sport England), that helps communities improve their local football facilities through grant funding. It is committed to improving the experience of playing football for everyone involved in the game. The FF also acts on behalf of The FA as the strategic NGB for football in supporting development of the PPOSS.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches, where formal demand is generally defined through five formats of play and five pitch types, linked to the age of teams and players. Please refer to the table below for more detail relating to this.

*Table 2.1: Football grass pitch formats*

Format/pitch type	Age range	Recommended pitch size (metres)	Recommended pitch size including runoff (metres)
Adult	U17s+	100 x 64	106 x 70
Youth 11v11	U15s-U16s	91 x 55	97 x 61
	U13s-U14s	82 x 50	88 x 56
Youth 9v9	U11s-U12s	73 x 46	79 x 52
Mini 7v7	U9s-U10s	55 x 37	61 x 43
Mini 5v5	U7s-U8s	37 x 27	43 x 33

Part 3 of this report captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches), which is the preferred artificial surface type for football.

#### **Swindon Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP)**

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Games Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project. As part of this, an LFFP has been produced for every local authority across England, with each plan being unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

The LFFP is strategically aligned to the National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS); a 10-year plan to change the landscape of football facilities in England. The NFFS represents a major funding commitment from the national funding partners (The FA, Premier League and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)) and is delivered through the FF to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into facilities.

Each LFFP builds upon PPOSS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game as well as including strategic priorities for investment across small-sided football (including recreational and indoor activity). The LFFP also incorporates consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as under-represented communities. This includes those which may be key partners with regards to using football for behavioural change, plus groups which may be key drivers of FA priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The LFFP for Swindon Borough was produced in 2019. As it is a 'live' document it should be updated following the completion of this study as an up-to-date supply and demand assessment may present findings and recommendations that need to be incorporated for investment purposes. LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require potential funding through the FF.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment; it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPOSS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal. A LFFP does, however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans.

### Consultation

In addition to face to face and video consultation with key clubs, an electronic survey has been sent to all football clubs playing in Swindon Borough as well as leagues accommodating Swindon-based teams. This has been distributed via Wiltshire FA.

Through the consultation process, a 73% team response rate has been achieved. The responsive clubs include the following that have been identified as particularly key given their size and/or aspirations:

- ✦ Blunsdon Youth FC
- ✦ Croft Junior FC
- ✦ FC Abbey Meads
- ✦ Ferndale Rodbourne FC
- ✦ Highworth Town Junior FC
- ✦ Kingsdown Lions FC
- ✦ Stratton Juniors FC
- ✦ Wanborough Junior FC
- ✦ Wroughton Youth FC

### 2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 191 grass football pitches within Swindon Borough across 84 sites, with 143 pitches across 50 sites identified as being available for community use. The majority of unavailable pitches are located at education sites, with the only exception to this being The County Ground. This considered to be unavailable due to being reserved for professional match play (via Swindon Town FC).

*Table 2.2: Grass football pitches available for community use by analysis area*

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total	%
Central East	2	4	2	3	2	13	9
Central North	16	5	14	13	11	59	41
Central South	6	-	4	1	1	12	8
North	2	1	1	1	-	5	3
North East	4	7	4	5	3	23	16
South	4	3	5	2	2	16	11
South East	-	3	1	1	1	6	4
West	-	1	2	4	2	9	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

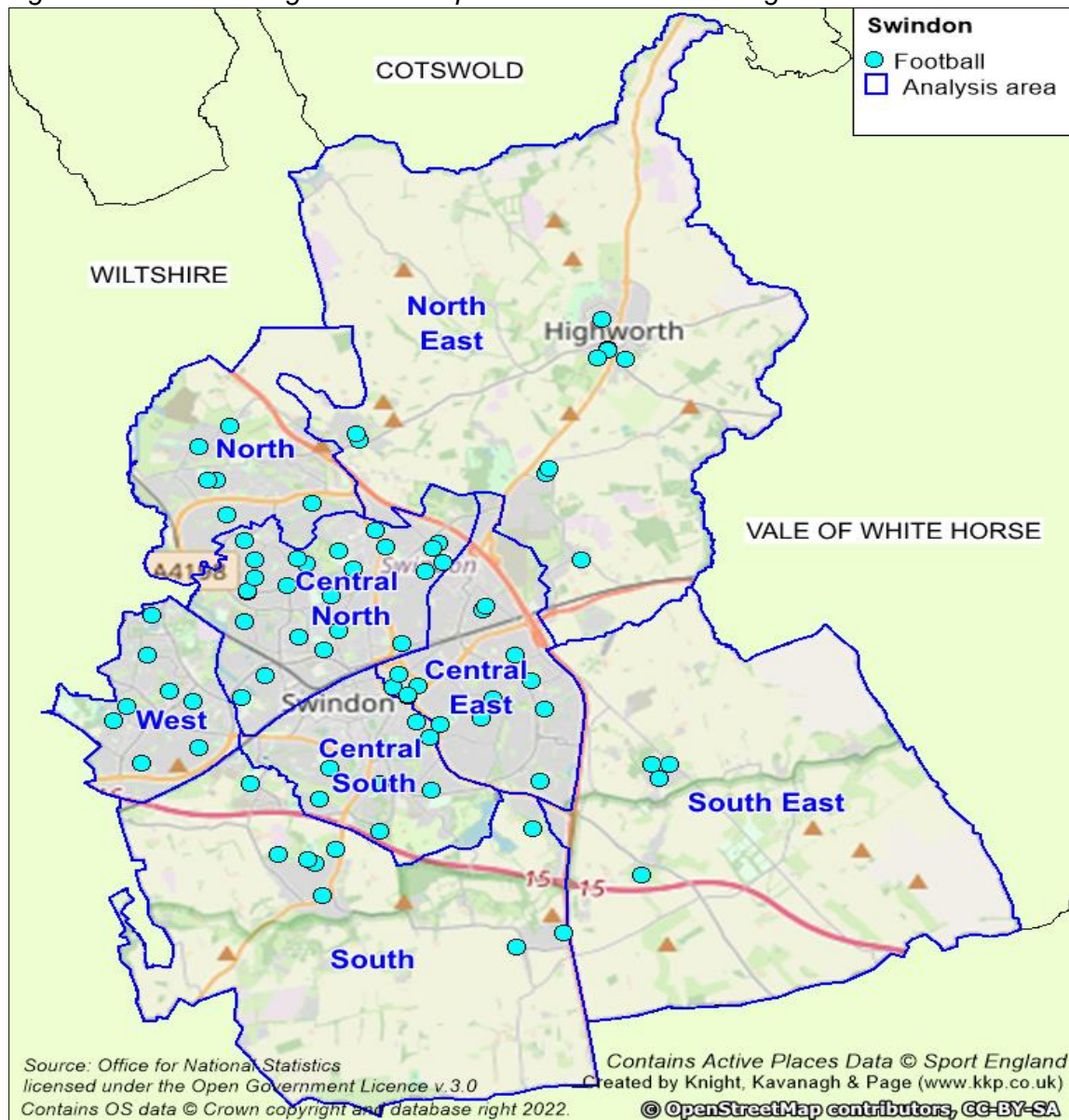
As seen in the table above, of the community available pitches in Swindon Borough, 59 (41%) are located in the Central North Analysis Area, which is comfortably the largest proportion of the supply. The fewest number are identified in the North Analysis Area, with only five pitches provided, followed by South East (six pitches) and West (nine pitches).

In terms of pitch types, most available pitches across Swindon Borough are adult size (34), whilst there are a similar number of youth 9v9 (33) and mini 7v7 (30) pitches. The least common pitch type is mini 5v5 with 22 provided, followed by 24 youth 11v11 pitches.

In terms of gaps in provision, there are no adult pitches in the South East and West analysis areas, no youth 11v11 teams in the Central South Analysis Area and no mini 5v5 pitches in the North Analysis Area. All other areas are provided by at least one community available pitch for each playing format.

For the location of the pitches, please see Figure 2.1 below. Table 2.14 provides a key to the map.

Figure 2.1: Location of grass football pitches in Swindon Borough



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Disused provision*

In addition to the pitches identified above, four disused pitches are identified in Swindon Borough across three sites. Some of these were provided at sites which are now completely disused (disused site), whilst others were at sites which remain in use for other sport (disused pitches).

*Table 2.3: Sites which no longer accommodate active football provision*

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Comments
10	Coleshill Playing Field	SN6 7PR	North East	One youth 11v11 football pitch. Last maintained circa 2021 although posts remain on site.
75	Shrewsbury Road Recreation Ground	SN3 3AH	Central East	Two adult pitches that were last maintained circa 2019. Now maintained as an open grass space.
106	Wanborough Recreation Ground	SN4 0AD	South East	One mini 7v7 football pitch. Last maintained circa 2022 although posts remain on site.

### *Management and security of tenure*

Of the 143 community available pitches in Swindon Borough, most are operated by education providers and the Council, each with 54 accessible pitches (38%). There are then 18 pitches (13%) managed by sports clubs, ten (7%) operated by trust's and the remaining seven (5%) by community organisations.

*Table 2.4: Summary of pitch management (number of community available pitches)*

Education	Council	Sports club	Community organisation	Trust	Total
54	54	18	7	10	<b>143</b>

In terms of security of tenure, this is generally provided across football sites in Swindon Borough. Clubs are broadly considered to have secure tenure where they have freehold, leasehold or formally secured use of their site/s (e.g., through a community use agreement) for the next three or more years. As part of this, sites operated by the Council (or a parish/town council) are considered to be secure due an ongoing commitment for a leisure offering to be provided.

All community available pitches which are classified as having unsecure tenure are at educational sites. This is due to schools, academies and universities being able to state their own policies, resulting in them being more likely to restrict levels of community use. The only exceptions to this are where community use agreements are in place, with these generally being secured via a planning condition. This is often linked to a development at their site/s.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Pitch quality*

The quality of football pitches across Swindon Borough has been assessed via a combination of site visits undertaken in November 2023 (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA), user consultation and PitchPower assessments. This is to reach and apply an agreed quality rating as follows:

PitchPower Rating	PPOSS Quality Rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

Please see Appendix 2 for the full assessment criteria.

Pitch quality primarily influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use. Pitches that receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work are likely to be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games they are able to accommodate each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality. Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking several matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use in Swindon Borough. In total, 30 pitches (21%) are rated as good quality, 60 as standard quality (42%) and 53 as poor quality (37%).

*Table 2.5: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)*

Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor	Total	%
Adult	10	15	9	34	24
Youth 11v11	3	13	8	24	17
Youth 9v9	6	14	13	33	23
Mini 7v7	6	11	13	30	21
Mini 5v5	5	7	10	22	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>

Whilst there are more standard and poor quality pitches than there are good, the percentage of good quality provision is actually comparably high when considered against most other local authorities. However, the same could also be said for the number of poor quality pitches.

The good quality community available pitches are located at:

- ♣ Chiseldon Recreation Ground
- ♣ Mannington Rec
- ♣ Penhill Recreation Ground
- ♣ Southbrook Recreation Ground
- ♣ Swindon Athletic Track
- ♣ The Elms Recreation Ground



PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

In contrast, the 50 poor quality community available pitches are spread across 25 different sites, with this therefore amounting to a significant number. In the main, these pitches show significant signs of wear and tear and limited maintenance with many also having waterlogging problems. Further, more detailed assessments (e.g., via PitchPower) would be required to determine, on a site-by-site basis, if this could be overcome or whether the general nature of the land would make it unfeasible.

The distribution of football pitch sites by quality can be seen in the following mapping.

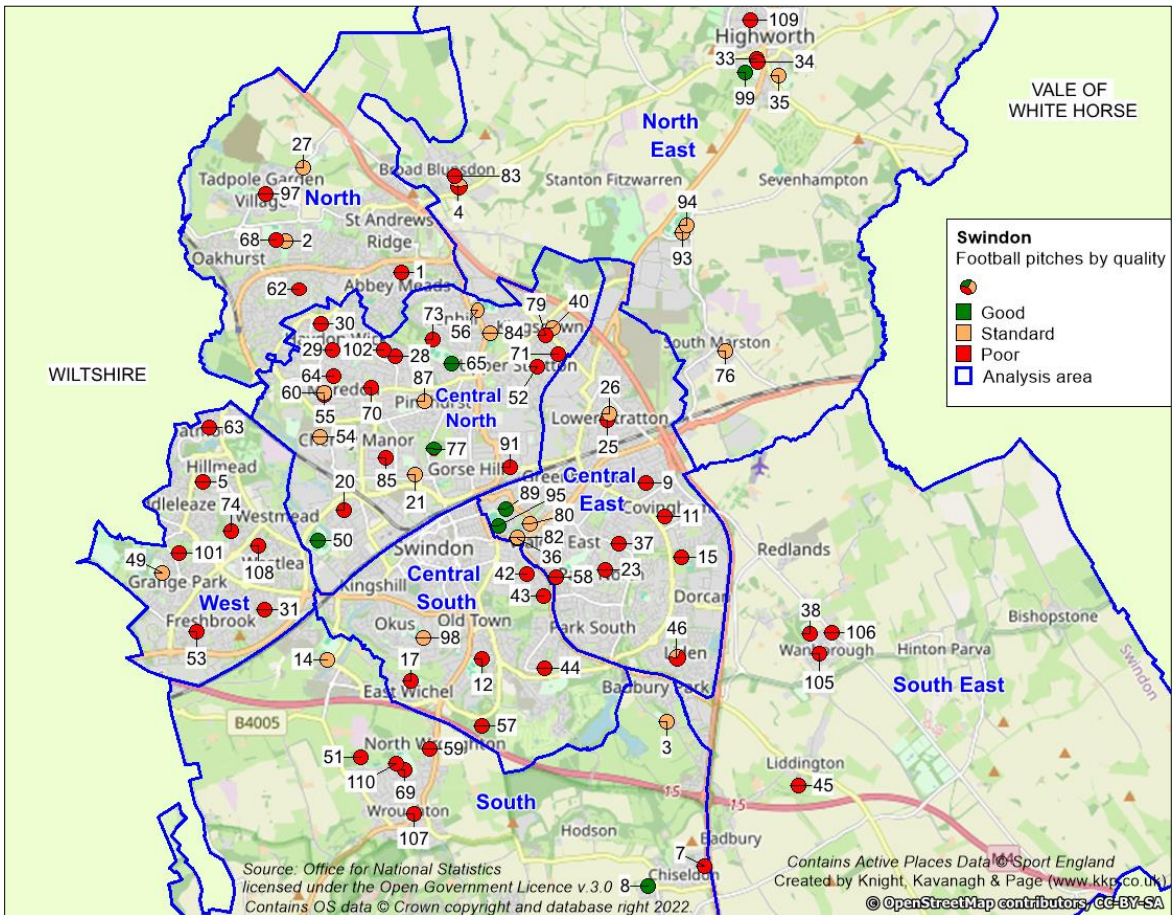


Figure 2.2: Location of football pitches by quality

Specific comments relating to the pitch conditions at some key individual sites are detailed in the table below. These are either taken from club consultation or from site assessments.

Table 2.6: Summary of pitch quality (community available) comments from consultation

Site ID	Site name	Site quality rating	Club user	Comments
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	Standard / Poor	Blunsdon Youth FC	Pitch quality has declined considerably, in spite of a dedicated maintenance regime, primarily due to waterlogging on site.



**PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Site quality rating	Club user	Comments
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	Good	Chiseldon FC	The Club receives grants to seed and verti-drain twice a season. It has also purchased a mower, scarifier and roller to further improve pitch quality on site.
12	Croft Sports Centre	Poor	Croft Junior FC	Grass on site is cut too short and coverage is limited. Dog fouling/glass/litter is also prevalent on site and there is evidence of unofficial use/damage to the playing surface and poor drainage. Limited off season maintenance.
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	Standard	Ferndale Rodbourne FC	Recently awarded GPMF via PitchPower to improve pitch quality. In the fourth year of a six year pitch improvement project with the next step being to irrigate and aerate the playing surface.
33	Highworth Recreation Centre	Poor	-	The site sits on a considerable slope and so all pitches are uneven. Dog fouling/glass/litter is also prevalent on site.
50	Mannington Rec	Good	Inter North Swindon FC	Pitch quality has improved recently thanks to more regular maintenance.
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	Poor	Stratton Juniors FC	Dog fouling/glass/litter is prevalent on site and there is evidence of unofficial use and damage to the playing surface.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Standard	-	Undergoing a development that will include improvement of the pitches.
64	Pembroke Gardens	Poor	-	Dog fouling/glass/litter is prevalent on site and there is evidence of unofficial use and damage to the playing surface as well as poor drainage.
65	Penhill Recreation Ground	Good	FC Grange	Drainage is reported to be poor on site, meaning games are often called off due to waterlogging.
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	Poor	Wroughton Youth FC	Pitch quality has reportedly declined recently due to declining maintenance and heavy rain.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Site quality rating	Club user	Comments
91	Swindon Gas Sports & Social Club	Poor	AFC Haydon Vale	Dog fouling/glass/litter is highly prevalent on site and there is evidence of unofficial use/damage to the playing surface
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	Good	Highworth Town Junior FC	Pitches are in adequate condition although one area of the field has a dip that collects water. A separate section of the playing surface has a slight slope.
106	Wanborough Recreation Ground	Poor	-	The site sits on a moderate slope and grass is often left too long. Dog fouling/glass/litter is prevalent on site and there is evidence of poor drainage.

Please see Table 2.14 for a full site-by-site and pitch-by-pitch breakdown of the quality ratings.

### *PitchPower Assessment Tool*

Initially launched in 2020 alongside the Football Foundation Pitch Preparation Fund before being updated and re-launched in 2022, the web-app is a new digital self-assessment tool to allow reports and recommendations to be made more quickly and easily. This is once submitted for review by Grounds Management Association (GMA) regional pitch advisors.

The tool across web-app and desktop is open to access by all providers, including clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower Assessment Report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Eligible clubs and organisations can also utilise the report as an evidence base to acquire potential funding streams, such as to obtain revenue funding for improved maintenance or the required maintenance equipment, both available through the Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF).

Furthermore, the FF also launched a new Groundskeeping Community online platform in 2019 which provides a resource of expert advice for grounds staff, enabling them to connect with peers, discover new tips and tricks and share advice on best industry practice. Users can seek guidance from the GMA regional pitch advisors, who are available to answer questions and update members on changes to industry standards. Wiltshire FA is currently working with Swindon Borough Council and clubs to complete PitchPower assessments for their respective sites.

### *Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund<sup>1</sup>*

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country. This has resulted in the creation of the GPMF. As part of this, grass pitches identified as having quality issues undergo a pitch inspection from a member of the GMA (formerly the Institute of Groundsmanship).

<sup>1</sup> <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The GPMF can be utilised by grassroots football clubs, leagues and other eligible organisations with the simple aim of improving the quality of grass pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide members of the programme with advice/practical solutions via a PitchPower site assessment and subsequent Assessment Report which will also identify the key enhanced maintenance works required along with machinery requirements.

Following a report, clubs can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Once an assessment report has been produced for the site, eligible organisations can then apply for grant funding support through the GPMF, a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 good quality grass pitches by 2030. If a site is categorised as 'poor' or 'basic' then clubs can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

All applicants must have the required security of tenure and have received a PitchPower Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs (excluding pitches used for National League System play), leagues, County FAs, community organisations and charities. In 2023 the fund has now been opened up to education organisations and Town/Parish Councils as eligible applicant. Local authorities are not currently eligible applicants, however, eligible organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have permission of the landowner via service level agreement.

There are currently two sites which are receiving GPMF support in Swindon Borough. These are Chiseldon Recreation Ground (via Chiseldon Youth FC) and The Elms Recreation Ground (via Highworth Town Juniors FC).

### *Swindon Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP)*

The 2019 LFFP for Swindon Borough identifies key sites considered a priority to improve, with these selected based on the rationale of identifying sites that are the poorest in quality and that are the best utilised, or that have the greatest potential for increased utilisation following quality enhancements. Emphasis is on sites with three or more pitches, although scope exists for the inclusion of smaller sites if they are deemed to be strategically important.

The following 11 site specific projects were identified:

- ◀ Moredon Playing Fields
- ◀ Highworth Town Football Club
- ◀ Mannington Rec
- ◀ Maunsell Way Playing Fields
- ◀ Meadowcroft Recreation Ground
- ◀ Pembroke Gardens
- ◀ Penhill Recreation Ground
- ◀ Southbrook Recreation Ground
- ◀ St Lukes Academy
- ◀ Hooper's Field
- ◀ Wanborough Church Meadow

As previously referenced (Table 2.6), improvements at Moredon Playing Fields are now taking place as part of the wider development of the site.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

In the PPOSS, most pitches at the sites have been assessed as poor or standard quality. Whilst most of these will therefore still require improvement, given that the LFFP is a live document, there will be a need to update this list based on the findings of this study. As such, the validity of the sites and the impact of improving them will be tested as a scenario within the subsequent Strategy document.

### **Ancillary facilities**

As with pitch quality, the quality of ancillary facilities across Swindon Borough has been rated via a combination of site visits and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating of good, standard or poor. Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site and their quality, with provision such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities and boundary fencing included.

The table below identifies the findings for football sites that are actively utilised for football across Swindon Borough. Of the sites used for community football that are known to be serviced by ancillary provision, seven (35%) are serviced by good quality ancillary facilities, nine (45%) by standard quality facilities and four (20%) by poor quality facilities. The remaining sites are not known to be serviced by onsite clubhouse/changing room provision and therefore have been excluded from the table below.

*Table 2.7: Summary of ancillary facility quality at active (community available) sites*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ancillary facility quality
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Standard
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	Standard
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	Central North	Good
26	Grange Leisure Centre	Central East	Standard
34	Highworth Town Football Club	North East	Good
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Good
50	Mannington Rec	Central North	Poor
51	Maunsall Way Playing Fields	South	Standard
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	Central North	Good
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Good
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Standard
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	Good
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	South	Standard
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	North East	Poor
89	Swindon Athletic Track	Central East	Standard
91	Swindon Gas Sports & Social Club	Central North	Poor
93	Swindon Supermarine Football Club	North East	Good
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	North East	Standard
106	Wanborough Recreation Ground	South East	Poor
107	Weir Field	South	Standard

Ferndale Rodbourne FC indicates that whilst ancillary provision at Ferndale Youth & Community Centre is of good quality, it is a converted groundsman's hut that remains without changing facilities.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Highworth Town FC reports that ancillary provision at The Elms Recreation Ground was installed over 20 years ago with support from the FF. Facilities on site remain in adequate condition although the Club is considering installing dedicated female changing provision as well as a medical room on site.

The FA is also working with Blunsdon Youth FC to enhance ancillary provision at Blunsdon Recreation Ground, with initial discussions having already taken place.

The aforementioned development at Moredon Playing Fields includes a new pavilion with a community room and changing provision. The development is due to be completed in Summer 2024 and should result in the ancillary provision onsite becoming good quality.

In addition to the above, car parking provision at Croft Sports Centre, Highworth Recreation Centre, Mannington Rec and Penhill Recreation Ground is reported as being insufficient to meet current demand. Furthermore, of the responsive clubs, 62% report they have experienced vandalism at their respective home sites with this ranging from goals being damaged to vehicles being driven across pitches and break-ins to ancillary provision.

### *Local Football Facility Plan*

As with grass pitch improvements, the LFFP for Swindon Borough identifies sites considered as priority sites for clubhouse and changing facility improvements, although there may again be a need to amend and/or add to this list based on the findings of this study. It recommends that the following six sites should be a priority for ancillary refurbishment/ replacement:

- ✦ Chiseldon Recreation Ground
- ✦ Mannington Rec
- ✦ Meadowcroft Recreation Ground
- ✦ Pembroke Gardens
- ✦ Southbrook Recreation Ground
- ✦ South Marston Village Recreation Ground

### **2.3: Demand**

Through the audit and assessment, a total of 392 teams from across 69 affiliated clubs are identified as playing regular, competitive matches on football pitches within Swindon Borough. This consists of 74 adult men's, eight adult women's, 139 youth boys', 33 youth girls' and 136 mini teams.

*Table 2.8: Summary of football team demand playing in Swindon Borough*

Age group	No. of teams
Adult Men's (18-45)	74
Adult Women's (18-45)	8
Youth Boys (12-17)	53
Youth Girls (12-17)	12
Youth Boys (10-11)	86
Youth Girls (10-11)	23
Mini Mixed (8-9)	74
Mini Mixed (6-7)	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

When broken down, the Central North Analysis Area provides for the largest number of teams with a total of 182 teams (46%), whilst the West Analysis Area caters for only a single team and the North Analysis Area is without any demand. Furthermore, youth 9v9 football is the predominant playing format (107 teams), whilst mini 5v5 football has the fewest teams (62).

*Table 2.9: Summary of competitive teams playing matches in Swindon Borough*

Analysis area	No. of teams					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central East	17	13	17	11	9	67
Central North	39	25	52	36	30	182
Central South	4	5	10	5	3	27
North	-	-	-	-	-	0
North East	14	14	14	15	13	70
South	8	5	10	7	3	33
South East	-	3	4	2	3	12
West	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>392</b>

Of the 392 teams, 343 (87%) play on grass pitches, whilst six adult men's, five adult women's, 12 youth boys, eight youth girls and 18 mini teams access 3G pitches for competitive match play across three sites at Foundation Park, New College Swindon and Swindon Academy. For more information in regards to this demand, see Part 3 of this report.

### ***Women's and girls' demand***

There are currently eight women's teams and 41 dedicated girls' teams playing football in Swindon Borough, of which seven are mini soccer teams playing in practice as all girls' teams (rather than mixed). This represents 13% of all demand across the Borough, which is a relatively healthy proportion when compared nationally.

Key clubs and organisations presently fielding female teams include Swindon Town Foundation ETC, Abbey Meads, Kingsdown Lions, Nalگو Swindon Lionesses, Swindon Spitfires and Wroughton Youth football clubs. Teams from these typically play locally in the Wiltshire County Women's & Girls Football League.

The FA currently has a drive to increase women's and girls' participation as part of its Inspiring Positive Change Strategy. As such, it is imperative that sufficient facilities are suitable for female access, particularly in relation to toilets and appropriate changing provision.

### ***The National League System***

The National League System (NLS) is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It begins below the Football League (from the National League at Step 1) and comprises of six steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the system than at the top. The NLS has a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the steps, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Clubs playing within the NLS must adhere to ground grading requirements set out by the FA; the higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground grading requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from 1 to 7, with Grade 1 being the requirement for Step 1 clubs and Grade 6 being the requirement for Step 6 clubs. Please refer to the FA website for the full specifications for each<sup>2</sup>.

The general principle for clubs in the NLS is that they must achieve the appropriate ground grade by March 31st of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard. However, this is not the case for clubs joining Step 6, which must meet requirements immediately. It is therefore important to note that from a ground grading perspective, the jump from a Regional Feeder League to Step 6 is significant and that, as a minimum, sites require a pitch with sports lighting, hardstanding areas for fans and turnstiles for fan entry.

In Swindon Borough, there are two teams which compete in the NLS. A summary of this demand is provided in the following table. In addition to the below, it should also be noted that Swindon Town FC are based in Swindon, currently competing in League Two of the English Football League (EFL), which sits above the NLS.

*Table 2.10: Summary of teams playing within the football pyramid structure*

Team	League	Level
Swindon Supermarine FC	Southern League	Step 3
Highworth Town FC	Hellenic Football League	Step 5

Neither club within the NLS report any ground grading issues.

### *Women's National League System*

Correspondingly, there is a Women's NLS. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6 with each Tier needing to meet differing stadium accreditation requirements. Although women's clubs are still required to meet ground requirements set out by the FA, these differ from the men's NLS, with ratings ranging from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements (Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Tier 3 and four of the men's NLS, although not exactly the same).

There is currently one team which is part of the Women's NLS in Swindon. This is Swindon Town FC Women's, which plays in the FA Women's National League Division One South West at Tier 4 of the structure.

### ***Imported/exported demand***

No demand is identified as being imported into Swindon Borough.

The only known exported demand out of Swindon Borough is expressed via Swindon Town FC. The Club uses Beversbrook Sports Facility within Wiltshire as its training ground and therefore exports all training demand as well as academy and youth team matches to the site.

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<sup>2</sup> [Link to FA Ground Grading](#)

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Unmet/latent demand*

Both Wroughton Youth FC and Kingsdown Lions FC report latent demand in that they state additional growth cannot be achieved due to a lack of grass pitch capacity at their existing sites. This is despite both having future demand aspirations (see section below).

### *Future demand*

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from housing developments across Swindon Borough.

### *Participation growth*

Of responding clubs, ten report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. This totals a predicted growth of 50 teams, as seen below.

*Table 2.11: Potential team increases identified by clubs*

Club	Analysis area	No. of teams	Gender	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions
Croft Junior FC	Central South	1	Men's	Adult	0.5
Croft Junior FC	Central South	2	Mixed	Mini	1
Highworth Town Juniors FC	North East	3	Mixed	Mini	1.5
Highworth Town FC	North East	2	Men's	Adult	1
FC Abbey Meads	Central North	1	Women's	Adult	0.5
FC Abbey Meads	Central North	2	Girls	Youth	1
Blunsdon Youth FC	North East	3	Mixed	Mini	1.5
Wanborough Junior FC	South East	2	Mixed	Mini	1
Stratton Juniors FC	Central North	1	Women's	Adult	0.5
Stratton Juniors FC	Central North	1	Boys	Youth	0.5
Stratton Juniors FC	Central North	2	Girls	Youth	1
Stratton Juniors FC	Central North	3	Mini	Mixed	1.5
Wroughton Youth FC	South	1	Men's	Adult	0.5
Wroughton Youth FC	South	1	Women's	Adult	0.5
Wroughton Youth FC	South	5	Boys	Youth	2.5
Wroughton Youth FC	South	4	Girls	Youth	2
Wroughton Youth FC	South	4	Mixed	Mini	2
Kingsdown Lions FC	Central North	2	Men's	Adult	1
Kingsdown Lions FC	Central North	1	Women's	Adult	0.5
Kingsdown Lions FC	Central North	2	Boys	Youth	1
Kingsdown Lions FC	Central North	4	Girls	Youth	2
Swindon Spitfires FC	North East	2	Girls	Youth	1
Swindon Spitfires FC	North East	1	Mixed	Mini	0.5
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>50</b>	-	-	<b>25</b>

The total future demand expressed by clubs amounts to 25 match equivalent sessions per week (as two teams equates to one match equivalent session playing on a home and away basis). Broken down by pitch type, five match equivalent sessions per week are identified on adult pitches, 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week on youth 11v11 pitches, 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week on youth 9v9 pitches and nine match equivalent sessions per week on mini 5v5 pitches.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Population growth*

Based on ONS-population projections to 2043 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from any growth. This is through using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers. Team generation rates have then been established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

For reference total current population of 233,000 is projected to increase to 248,497 by 2043. The table below shows the number of new teams that are predicted to generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions it will create.

*Table 2.12: Authority-wide team generation rates*

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population – rounded figure	Match equivalent sessions per week
Adult Mens (16-45)	1:578	6.52	6	3
Adult Womens (16-45)	1:4,205	0.88	0	0
Youth Boys (12-15)	1:110	4.67	4	2
Youth Girls (12-15)	1:563	0.88	0	0
Youth Boys (10-11)	1:37	7.57	7	3.5
Youth Girls (10-11)	1:142	1.85	1	0.5
Mini Mixed (8-9)	1:82	6.52	6	3
Mini Mixed (6-7)	1:95	5.46	5	2.5

As seen, there is predicted growth of six adult, four youth 11v11, eight youth 9v9, six mini 7v7 and five mini 5v5 teams across Swindon Borough as a whole, which is relatively substantial.

When applying the growth on an analysis area level, it reduces the predicted increase to five adult, one youth 11v11, six youth 9v9, four mini 7v7 and three mini 5v5 teams. This is due to the fact that the total number of predicted teams across Swindon Borough dissipates due the large nature of authority and the number of analysis area used (when looking at individual analysis areas, the same number of full teams are not predicted).

The analysis areas which are predicted for a growth in teams are Central East (one adult and one youth 9v9), Central North (three adult, one youth 11v11, four youth 9v9, three mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5) and the North East (one adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5). No increases are projected in the remaining five areas.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that NPPF housing requirements indicate that the population will increase far in excess of what is set out above (to 282,527). Moreover, this is expected to increase further when the new NPPF is released in the near future, possibly substantially so. This will therefore need to be taken into consideration following sign off of the PPOSS, with the proceeding Strategy document providing further context as to how population increases from housing growth can be dealt with.

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Additionally, it must be noted that some aims and initiatives are likely to result in participation increasing to a greater level than what is projected through population growth. For example, the FA has a current focus on growing women's and girls' demand that will likely see a greater number of female teams than what is currently predicted via population projections alone.

### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, it is considered unfeasible for all future demand to be factored in. This is because it is likely that club aspirations will absorb the future demand identified through population growth, rather than them being judged separately and therefore double counted. As such, only demand identified through population growth is taken forward, with club demand considered to be more theoretical and aspirational. However, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain a scenario that will consider the impact if club aspirations are also realised.

**Taking the above into consideration, a total requirement for three match equivalent sessions per week is identified on adult pitches, one match equivalent sessions per week on youth 11v11 pitches, four match equivalent session per week on youth 9v9 pitches, three match equivalent sessions per week on mini 7v7 pitches and 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week on mini 5v5 pitches.**

### 2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times.

As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without it adversely affecting its quality. Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity, the following ratings were used in Swindon:

Adult pitch quality	Matches per week	Youth pitch quality	Matches per week	Mini pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

Table 2.14 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

<b>Potential capacity</b>	Play is below the level the site could sustain
<b>At capacity</b>	Play matches the level the site can sustain
<b>Overplayed</b>	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

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### ***Match equivalent sessions per week***

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use.

For match play, one team using one home pitch generally amounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions of usage. This is to account teams for playing on a home and away basis, with access therefore only required, on average throughout the season, bi-weekly.

### ***Education sites***

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches, the current usage at such sites needs to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches on site and whether there is access to an on-site AGP (as this can result in less grass pitch use).

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking. As such, where not overplayed as a result of community use, many school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further usage based on assumed curricular and extracurricular activity.

For school sites which are available for community use, current play has been enlarged on a site-by-site basis following consultation with the providers. Generally, usage is increased by one match equivalent session per pitch; however, in some cases, further use is added when it is known that a particular provider uses a particular pitch heavily.

### ***Peak time***

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time. In Swindon Borough, peak time is considered to be Sunday afternoons for adult football and Sunday mornings for youth 11v11, youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 football. Peak time is based on when the majority of teams are playing matches for each particular format of play.

On occasion, spare capacity in the peak period is identified despite the pitch being played to capacity or overplayed, or more spare capacity is identified in the peak period than the overall spare capacity that exists. This is because most or all of the use on those particular pitches occurs outside of the peak period. Where this is the case, given that peak time usage should not be utilised over and above overall capacity, adjustments have been made.

A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of play. Any pitch not meeting this criterion is therefore not considered to have additional capacity, although it may have capacity outside of peak time.

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There may also be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to the already low carrying capacity of the pitches. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn will aid the improvement of pitch quality. Furthermore, any pitches with unsecured tenure are not considered to have actual spare capacity as no further play should be encouraged on such sites given that future access cannot be guaranteed.

The table below identifies the way capacity balance is represented in Table 2.14.

*Table 2.13: Capacity balance examples*

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of capacity balance
1	Highlighted in green with a number denotes that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	With a dash, this indicates that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it were to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	Highlighted in orange with a zero, this indicates the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	Not highlighted but with a value, this indicates that the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, capacity has been discounted. This may be due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.
1	Highlighted in red with a number denotes that the pitches are overplayed and have no spare capacity across the week. This includes at peak time, despite any availability at peak time which may exist.



Table 2.14: Grass football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
1	Abbey Meads Community Primary School	SN25 4GY	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	SN25 2AN	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		2	Standard	2	4	2	2	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
3	Badbury Park Primary School	SN3 6ER	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	SN26 7BA	North East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	SN26 7BA	North East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	SN26 7BA	North East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	SN26 7BA	North East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	Pitch is played to capacity.
5	Brook Field Primary School	SN5 5SB	West	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
7	Chiseldon Primary School	SN4 0NS	South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	SN4 0NZ	South	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	SN4 0NZ	South	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	0.5	6	5.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	SN4 0NZ	South	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
9	Colebrook Junior School	SN3 4AS	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
11	Covingham Park Primary School	SN3 5BD	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
11	Covingham Park Primary School	SN3 5BD	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
12	Croft Sports Centre	SN3 1RA	Central South	Yes	Trust	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	3	2	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
12	Croft Sports Centre	SN3 1RA	Central South	Yes	Trust	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
12	Croft Sports Centre	SN3 1RA	Central South	Yes	Trust	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
12	Croft Sports Centre	SN3 1RA	Central South	Yes	Trust	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	3	Poor	3.5	3	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
14	Deanery Academy	SN1 7DA	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
14	Deanery Academy	SN1 7DA	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
15	Dorcan Academy	SN3 5DA	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
15	Dorcan Academy	SN3 5DA	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	2	2	0	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
17	East Wichel Primary School	SN1 7AG	Central South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
20	Even Swindon Primary School	SN2 2UJ	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	SN2 1HF	Central North	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	SN2 1HF	Central North	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	SN2 1HF	Central North	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	SN2 1HF	Central North	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	3	2	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
23	Goddard Park Community Primary School	SN3 2QN	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
25	Grange Junior School	SN3 4JY	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
26	Grange Leisure Centre	SN3 4JY	Central East	Yes	Trust	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
27	Great Western Academy	SN25 2PP	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	2	4	2	-	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
27	Great Western Academy	SN25 2PP	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
28	Greenmeadow Primary School	SN25 3LW	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
29	Haydon Wick Primary School	SN25 1HT	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
30	Haydonleigh Primary School	SN25 1JP	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
31	Hazelwood Academy	SN5 8DR	West	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
33	Highworth Recreation Centre	SN6 7DD	North East	Yes	Trust	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
33	Highworth Recreation Centre	SN6 7DD	North East	Yes	Trust	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
34	Highworth Town Football Club	SN6 7DD	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	2	1	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
35	Highworth Warneford School	SN6 7BZ	North East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	3	Standard	3	6	3	3	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
36	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	SN3 1AR	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	3	4	1	-	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
37	Holy Family Catholic Primary & Nursery School	SN3 2PT	Central East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Poor	2	4	2	-	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	2	1	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	3	2	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2	1	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent sessions per week.
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	4	2	2	0	Pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week.
42	Lainesmead Primary School	SN3 1EA	Central South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
43	Lawn Manor Academy	SN3 1ER	Central South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		2	Poor	2	2	0	0	Pitches are played to capacity.
44	Lawn Primary School	SN3 1LE	Central South	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
44	Lawn Primary School	SN3 1LE	Central South	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
45	Liddington Rec	SN4 0HB	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	SN3 6EX	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	1.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	2	4	2	2	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
50	Mannington Rec	SN5 7YW	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		5	Good	4.5	15	10.5	2	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
50	Mannington Rec	SN5 7YW	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	4	Good	3	24	21	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
50	Mannington Rec	SN5 7YW	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	4	Good	3	24	21	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
50	Mannington Rec	SN5 7YW	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	3	Good	4	12	8	0	Pitches are played to capacity at peak time.
51	Maunsell Way Playing Fields	SN4 9JF	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	SN2 7JX	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	3	1	2	0	Pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week.
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	SN2 7JX	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	SN2 7JX	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	SN2 7JX	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	3	1	2	0	Pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week.
53	Millbrook Primary School	SN5 8NU	West	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	4	8	4	0	Pitches are played to capacity at peak time.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	3.5	2	1.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	5.5	4	1.5	0	Pitches are overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
55	Moredon Primary School	SN2 2JG	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	2	4	2	-	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	SN2 7AP	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	SN2 7AP	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	SN2 7AP	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	SN2 7AP	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	3	2	1	0	Pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
57	Nationwide Sports Club	SN38 4LN	Central South	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
58	New College Swindon	SN3 1AH	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		2	Poor	5	2	3	0	Pitches are overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week.
59	North Wroughton Recreation Ground	SN4 9AG	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
60	Nova Hreod Academy	SN2 2NL	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		2	Standard	2	4	2	2	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
60	Nova Hreod Academy	SN2 2NL	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
62	Orchid Vale Primary School	SN25 1UG	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
63	Peatmoor Community Primary School	SN5 5DP	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
64	Pembroke Gardens	SN25 3EU	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	2	4	2	2	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
64	Pembroke Gardens	SN25 3EU	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
64	Pembroke Gardens	SN25 3EU	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
65	Penhill Recreation Ground	SN25 3AQ	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		3	Good	3	9	6	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
68	Red Oaks Primary School	SN25 2AN	North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	SN4 9DJ	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	SN4 9DJ	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	3	2	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	SN4 9DJ	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.



Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	SN4 9DJ	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
70	Rodbourne Cheney Primary School	SN25 3BN	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
71	Ruskin Primary School	SN2 7NG	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	3	2	1	0	Pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.
73	Seven Fields Primary School	SN2 5DE	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Poor	2	4	2	2	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
74	Shaw Ridge Primary School	SN5 5PU	West	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	SN3 4sh	North East	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	SN3 4sh	North East	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	SN3 4sh	North East	Yes	Community Organisation	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
77	Southbrook Recreation Ground	SN2 1RH	Central North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Good	3.5	3	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
79	St Catherine's Catholic Primary School	SN2 7LL	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
80	St Josephs Catholic College	SN3 3LR	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
80	St Josephs Catholic College	SN3 3LR	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
82	St Josephs Catholic Comprehensive School (Lower)	SN3 1AR	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
82	St Josephs Catholic Comprehensive School (Lower)	SN3 1AR	Central East	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
83	St Leonards C Of E Primary Academy	SN26 7AP	North East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
84	St Lukes Academy	SN2 7AS	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	5	8	3	-	Pitches are unavailable for community use.
85	St Marys Catholic Primary School	SN2 1PE	Central North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
87	Swindon Academy	SN2 1JR	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.



Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
87	Swindon Academy	SN2 1JR	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
87	Swindon Academy	SN2 1JR	Central North	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
89	Swindon Athletic Track	SN1 2EE	Central East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
91	Swindon Gas Sports & Social Club	SN2 8DH	Central North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
91	Swindon Gas Sports & Social Club	SN2 8DH	Central North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
93	Swindon Supermarine Football Club	SN3 4BZ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
94	Swindon Supermarine Youth Football Club	SN3 4BZ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	3	4	1	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
94	Swindon Supermarine Youth Football Club	SN3 4BZ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
94	Swindon Supermarine Youth Football Club	SN3 4BZ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
95	Swindon Town Football Club (The County Ground)	SN1 2ED	Central East	No	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	1	3	2	0.5	Pitch is reserved for professional club use.
97	Tadpole Farm Ce Primary Academy	SN25 2QS	North	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
98	The Commonweal School	SN1 4JE	Central South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
98	The Commonweal School	SN1 4JE	Central South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	SN6 7SJ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	2	6	4	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	SN6 7SJ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	3.5	6	2.5	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	SN6 7SJ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Good	3	4	1	0	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.
99	The Elms Recreation Ground	SN6 7SJ	North East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Good	4	4	0	0	Pitch is played to capacity.
101	Tregoze Primary School	SN5 6JU	West	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to unsecure tenure.
102	Trent Road Field	SN25 3NG	Central North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
105	Wanborough Primary School	SN4 0EJ	South East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.

**SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Site ID	Site name	Post code	Analysis area	Com use	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play (match equivalent sessions)	Carrying capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Spare capacity in peak period (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
106	Wanborough Recreation Ground	SN4 0AD	South East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Actual spare is discounted due to poor pitch quality.
107	Weir Field	SN4 0SA	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	0	Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
108	Westlea Primary School	SN5 7BT	West	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
109	Westrop Primary School	SN6 7DN	North East	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	Pitch is unavailable for community use.
110	Wroughton Junior School	SN4 9DL	South	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	3.5	4	0.5	-	Pitch is played to capacity at peak time.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Actual spare capacity

Actual spare capacity totals 13 match equivalent sessions per week across 29 pitches. This is summarised site-by-site below.

Table 2.15: Summary of actual spare capacity of grass football pitches by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Mini (7v7)	1	1
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	South	Adult	1	0.5
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	South	Mini (7v7)	1	0.5
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	South	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
26	Grange Leisure Centre	Central East	Youth (11v11)	1	1
50	Mannington Rec	Central North	Adult	5	2
50	Mannington Rec	Central North	Mini (5v5)	4	1
50	Mannington Rec	Central North	Mini (7v7)	4	1
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Adult	1	0.5
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Adult	2	0.5
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Mini (5v5)	1	1
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Mini (7v7)	1	0.5
65	Penhill Recreation Ground	Central North	Adult	3	1
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	North East	Adult	1	0.5
76	South Marston Village Recreation Ground	North East	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
89	Swindon Athletic Track	Central East	Youth (11v11)	1	1
-	-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>

Most actual spare capacity is identified on adult pitches (five match equivalent sessions), although there is some level of spare capacity identified across all pitch types. The least is identified on youth 9v9 pitches (0.5 match equivalent sessions), with this aligning it to being the most prominent format of play.

On an analysis area basis, most actual spare capacity is in the Central North Analysis Area (7.5 match equivalent sessions). In contrast, the Central South, North, South East and West analysis areas are without any actual spare capacity.

Actual spare capacity has been aggregated up by area and by pitch type below.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.16: Summary of actual spare capacity on grass football pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central East	-	2	-	-	-	2
Central North	4	-	-	1.5	2	7.5
Central South	-	-	-	-	-	0
North	-	-	-	-	-	0
North East	0.5	0.5	-	1	-	2
South	0.5	-	0.5	0.5	-	1.5
South East	-	-	-	-	-	0
West	-	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>

### Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (which can often be due to the low carrying capacity caused by poor quality). In Swindon Borough, 35 pitches across 19 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 31 match equivalent sessions per week. This is summarised site-by-site below.

Table 2.17: Summary of overplay of grass football pitches by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Mini (5v5)	1	0.5
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	Adult	2	1
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	Youth (9v9)	3	0.5
14	Deanery Academy	South	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	Central North	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
21	Ferndale Youth & Community Centre	Central North	Youth (9v9)	1	1
34	Highworth Town Football Club	North East	Adult	1	1
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Youth (9v9)	1	1
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	Youth (11v11)	1	1
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	Youth (9v9)	2	2
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	Central East	Youth (11v11)	1	1.5
46	Liden Primary & Nursery School	Central East	Youth (9v9)	1	2.5
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	Central North	Adult	1	2

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	Central North	Mini (7v7)	1	0.5
52	Meadowcroft Recreation Ground	Central North	Youth (9v9)	1	2
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Youth (11v11)	1	1.5
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Youth (9v9)	2	1.5
56	Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Youth (9v9)	1	1
58	New College Swindon	Central East	Adult	2	3
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	South	Mini (7v7)	1	1
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	South	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
71	Ruskin Primary School	Central North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
77	Southbrook Recreation Ground	Central North	Adult	1	0.5
91	Swindon Gas Sports & Social Club	Central North	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
93	Swindon Supermarine Football Club	North East	Adult	1	0.5
94	Swindon Supermarine Youth Football Club	North East	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
107	Weir Field	South	Mini (5v5)	1	0.5
-	-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>

The most overplay is situated in the Central North Analysis Area (16 match equivalent sessions) and on youth 9v9 pitches (13 match equivalent sessions per week). Conversely, mini 5v5 pitches have the least amount of overplay, equating to a total of one match equivalent session per week. This has been aggregated up by area and by pitch type below.

Table 2.18: Summary of overplay of grass football pitches

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central East	3	1.5	2.5	-	-	7
Central North	2.5	3	8	2.5	-	16
Central South	1	-	0.5	-	-	1.5
North	-	-	-	-	-	0
North East	1.5	0.5	-	-	0.5	2.5
South	-	-	1	1	0.5	2.5
South East	-	0.5	1	-	-	1.5
West	-	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Most overplay is generated from high levels of demand, in some instances regardless of quality. However, it should be noted that most overplayed pitches are only marginally overplayed, although there are exceptions such as the pitches at Kingsdown School, Liden Primary & Nursery School, Meadowcroft Recreation Ground and New College Swindon. Overplay across these four sites equates to 15.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

### 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify current demand (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for the different pitch types, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is based on team generation rates which are driven by population increases.

#### Adult pitches

At present, across adult pitches in Swindon Borough, 14 pitches at seven sites have actual spare capacity equalling five match equivalent sessions per week, whilst overplay of eight match equivalent sessions per week is identified on seven adult pitches across five sites.

Table 2.19: Supply and demand position for adult pitches in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	-	3	3	0.5	3.5
Central North	4	2.5	1.5	1.5	0
Central South	-	1	1	-	1
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	0.5	1.5	1	0.5	1.5
South	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
South East	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>

Overall, there is a current shortfall of three match equivalent sessions per week on adult pitches. Furthermore, a deficit is found in three of the eight analysis areas (Central East, Central South and North East), although spare capacity is present in two (Central North and South).

When accounting for future demand through population growth, five additional teams are expected to be generated, with this increasing the overall shortfall to 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This worsens the shortfall in the Central East and North East analysis areas whilst actual spare capacity in the Central North Analysis Area is removed.

#### Youth 11v11 pitches

Across youth 11v11 pitches, three pitches at three sites have actual spare capacity equating to 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. However, overplay outweighs spare capacity and totals 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week on six pitches across six sites.



## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.20: Supply and demand for youth 11v11 pitches in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	2	1.5	0.5	-	0.5
Central North	-	3	3	0.5	3.5
Central South	-	-	0	-	0
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	0.5	0.5	0	-	0
South	-	-	0	-	0
South East	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>

As seen in the table above, there is an overall shortfall of three match equivalent sessions per week to accommodate current youth 11v11 demand. Shortfalls are identified in the Central North and South East analysis areas, albeit minimal spare capacity is found in the Central East Analysis Area.

When accounting for future demand through population growth, one additional team is expected to be generated, leading to a future shortfall of 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This worsens the shortfall in the Central North Analysis Area.

### Youth 9v9 pitches

Across youth 9v9 pitches in Swindon Borough, one pitch at one site has actual spare capacity equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week, whereas overplay of 13 match equivalent sessions per week is identified on 16 pitches across 12 sites.

Table 2.21: Supply and demand position for youth 9v9 pitches in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	-	2.5	3	0.5	3.5
Central North	-	8	8	2	19
Central South	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	-	-	0	0.5	0.5
South	0.5	1	0.5	-	0.5
South East	-	1	1	-	1
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15.5</b>

Overall, there is a shortfall of 12.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week to accommodate current demand. This includes a shortfall within five of the eight analysis areas, with no overall actual spare capacity identified in any analysis area.

When accounting for future demand through population growth, six additional teams are expected to be generated, leading to a future shortfall of 15.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This exacerbates existing shortfalls in the Central East and Central North analysis areas whilst also generating a shortfall in the North East Analysis Area.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Mini 7v7 pitches

Seven mini 7v7 pitches across four sites have actual spare capacity of three match equivalent sessions per week across Swindon Borough, whereas overplay of 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week is identified on four pitches across four sites.

Table 2.22: Supply and demand position for mini 7v7 pitches in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	-	-	0	-	0
Central North	1.5	2.5	1	1.5	2.5
Central South	-	-	0	-	0
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	1	-	1	0.5	0.5
South	0.5	1	0.5	-	0.5
South East	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.5</b>

There is a small shortfall of 0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week to accommodate current demand. This is due to a deficit in the Central North and South analysis areas, although actual spare capacity is identified in the North East Analysis Area.

When accounting for future demand through population growth, four additional teams are expected to be generated, leading to a future shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This exacerbates the existing shortfall in the Central North Analysis Area, whilst actual spare capacity in the North East Analysis Area is reduced.

### Mini 5v5 pitches

On mini 5v5 pitches, there is actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week identified on five pitches across two sites, whereas overplay of one match equivalent session per week is identified on two pitches across two sites.

Table 2.23: Supply and demand position for mini 5v5 pitches in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	-	-	0	-	0
Central North	2	-	2	1	1
Central South	-	-	0	-	0
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
South	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
South East	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>

Overall, there is actual spare capacity of one match equivalent sessions per week in relation to mini 5v5 pitches, with all actual spare capacity identified in the Central North Analysis Area. In contrast, the North East and South analysis areas each have current shortfalls of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

When accounting for future demand through population growth, three additional teams are expected to be generated. This creates an overall shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week, with shortfalls within the North East and South analysis areas whilst actual spare capacity remains in the Central North Analysis Area albeit at a reduced level.

### 2.6: Conclusion

In conclusion, at an authority-wide level, there are current shortfalls across adult, youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitches, whilst capacity is sufficient across mini 5v5 provision. Future demand would see the shortfalls further exacerbated and an overall shortfall created on each type. This is particularly significant in relation to youth 9v9 provision.

*Table 2.22: Supply and demand analysis for all football pitches in match equivalent sessions*

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Adult	5	8	3	2.5	5.5
Youth 11v11	2.5	5.5	3	0.5	3.5
Youth 9v9	0.5	13	12.5	3	15.5
Mini 7v7	3	3.5	0.5	2	2.5
Mini 5v5	2	1	1	1.5	0.5

Based on the above, it is clear that existing supply is insufficient to meet both current and future demand.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Football – supply and demand summary**

- Actual spare capacity totals 13 match equivalent sessions per week across 29 pitches, whilst 35 pitches across 19 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 31 match equivalent sessions per week.
- There are current shortfalls across adult, youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitches, whilst capacity is sufficient across mini 5v5 provision
- When factoring in future demand, there is a shortfall across all pitch types, clearly evidencing that supply is insufficient.

### **Football – supply summary**

- The audit identifies a total of 191 grass football pitches within Swindon Borough across 84 sites, with 143 pitches across 50 sites identified as being available for community use.
- In addition, four disused pitches are identified across three sites.
- Of the 143 community available pitches, most are operated by education providers and the Council each with 54 accessible pitches (38%).
- Tenure of football sites is generally secure, although not at most educational sites.
- Of the pitches that are available for community use, 34 pitches (21%) are rated as good quality, 60 as standard quality (42%) and 53 as poor quality (37%).
- Of the sites used for community football that are known to be serviced by ancillary provision, seven (35%) are serviced by good quality ancillary facilities, nine (45%) by standard quality facilities and four (20%) by poor quality facilities.

### **Football – demand summary**

- There are 392 teams from across 69 affiliated clubs within Swindon Borough consisting of 74 adult men's, eight adult women's, 139 youth boys', 33 youth girls' and 136 mini teams.
- Of the 392 teams, 343 play on grass pitches, whilst six adult men's, five adult women's, 12 youth boys, eight youth girls and 18 mini teams access 3G pitches for competitive match play.
- Five clubs play within the men's football pyramid and have to adhere to ground grading, whilst Swindon Town FC Women's play within the female structure.
- No demand is identified as being imported into Swindon Borough.
- The only known exported demand out of Swindon Borough is expressed via Swindon Town FC as the Club uses Beversbrook Sports Facility within Wiltshire as its training ground and for academy matches.
- Both Wroughton Youth FC and Kingsdown Lions FC report latent demand in that they state additional growth cannot be achieved due to a lack of grass pitch capacity at their existing sites.
- Future demand from population growth projects an increase of six adult, four youth 11v11, eight youth 9v9, six mini 7v7 and five mini 5v5 teams across Swindon Borough as a whole.
- Of responding clubs, ten report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (AGPS)

#### 3.1: Introduction

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces that have been FIFA or International Matchball Standard tested and approved by the FA for inclusion on the FA pitch register. As such, in addition to training demand, a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play, providing that the performance standard meets FIFA quality requirements.

World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby union, more commonly known as 'Regulation 22', which provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for the sport. The artificial surface standards identified allows contact training and matches to be played on surfaces that meet the required standard, meaning full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts, can take place.

Competitive rugby league play and contact practice is permitted to take place on 3G pitches which are deemed by the Rugby Football League (RFL) to meet its Performance Standard. Pitches fall under two categories; community club pitches which require retesting every two years and elite stadia pitches which require an annual retest. Much of the criteria within the RFL performance standard test also forms part of the World Rugby test, meaning World Rugby certified 3G pitches are considered by the RFL to be able to meet rugby league requirements, subject to passing an additional RFL performance standard test.

Other sports that are suitable to be accommodated on 3G pitches for training and match play include American football and lacrosse. Many test contractors offer reduced rates through efficiency savings to carry out multiple performance tests in the same session, therefore providers seeking 3G pitch compliancy for a number of sports would be recommended to consider this opportunity.

EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy (June 2016) advises that 3G pitches should not be used for hockey matches or training and that they can only be used for lower level hockey (introductory level) as a last resort when no sand-based or water-based AGPs are available.

#### 3.2: Supply

The recommended dimensions for a 11v11 3G artificial grass pitch for football are 100 x 64 metres. This extends to an area of 106 x 70 metres with the recommended minimum three metre run off area included. These dimensions allow for all age group match play to take place including adults, youth under 17/18 and younger age groups via overmarked pitches e.g., the marking out of two 9v9 pitches for under 11/12s.

For rugby union, a pitch must measure 106 x 68 metres for senior match play, with a 5-m run off around the full perimeter.

If a new pitch is proposed to measure below the recommended dimensions, then justification must be provided for this in relation to the identified needs it will provide for and/or site constraints. In doing so, the impacts of a reduced pitch size in meeting current and future needs must be considered e.g., a pitch not providing the recommended dimensions for adult match play and/or only being able to accommodate one rather than two overmarked 9v9 pitches. This justification needs to be included in the planning application details submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the new pitch.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPOSS for any new 11v11 3G pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions. Whilst not large enough to accommodate adult match play, smaller sized provision can be used to accommodate youth and mini matches, in addition to training demand, providing that they are FA approved, of an adequate size and with appropriate run-off areas. The FA's recommended pitch size for youth football varies from 91 x 55 metres to 73 x 46 metres depending on age, whilst it is 55 x 37 metres for mini 7v7 play and 37 x 27 metres for mini 5v5 play.

The table below summarises all 3G pitch provision in Swindon Borough by size and analysis area. In total, there are seven 11v11 3G and eight smaller sized 3G pitches identified, with all pitches available for community use and serviced by sports lighting. This is uncommon.

*Table 3.1: Number of small size and 11v11 3G pitches by analysis area*

Analysis area	11v11 3G pitches available for community use	Small size 3G pitches available for community use	Total	%
Central East	2	2	4	27
Central North	3	1	4	27
Central South	-	1	1	7
North	1	-	1	7
North East	-	1	1	7
South	-	-	0	-
South East	-	-	0	-
West	1	3	4	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

There is no form of 3G provision in the South and South East analysis areas. The Central South and North East analysis areas are only serviced by smaller sized provision. There are two 11v11 3G pitches in the Central East Analysis Area, three in the Central North Analysis Area and one within both the West and North analysis areas.

Please see the figure below for the location of the 3G pitches currently servicing Swindon. See Table 3.2 for a key to the map.





Figure 3.1: Location of 11v11 3G AGPs in Swindon Borough

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.2: Summary of all 3G pitches in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Size	Community use?	Number of pitches	Sports lighting?	Dimensions (metres)	Year built/refurbished	Certification (Expiration)
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	SN3 1RA	Small	Yes	1	Yes	62 x 42	2011	FA (31/05/2025)
22	Foundation Park	Central East	SN1 2FD	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	95 x 56	2019	FIFA (31/05/2025)
22	Foundation Park	Central East	SN1 2FD	Small (Indoor)	Yes	1	Yes	60 x 40	2023	-
26	Grange Leisure Centre	Central East	SN3 4JY	Small	Yes	1	Yes	54 x 40	2014	-
27	Great Western Academy	North	SN25 2PP	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	100 x 60	2025	FA (31/05/2027)
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	SN2 7SH	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	95 x 57	2013	FA (31/05/2025)
47	Link Centre	West	SN5 7DL	Small	Yes	3	Yes	32 x 16	2007	-
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	SN5 6HN	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	97 x 65	2008	-
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	SN2 2YZ	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	105 x 72	2023	FIFA (31/05/2027)
58	New College Swindon	Central East	SN3 1AH	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	105 x 70	2018	FA (31/05/2025)
71	Ruskin Primary School	Central North	SN2 7NG	Small	Yes	1	Yes	40 x 20	2015	-
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	SN2 1JR	11v11	Yes	1	Yes	113 x 74	2010	FIFA (31/05/2026)
100	The Swindome	North East	SN3 4BZ	Small (Indoor)	Yes	1	Yes	70 x 45	2015	-

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Potential future provision***

The Swindon Borough LFFP identifies sites considered as priority sites for 3G pitch development, although there will be a need to amend and/or add to the LFFP list based on the findings of this study. In summary, the 2019 plan recommends developments at the following sites:

- ◆ Moredon Playing Fields – new 11v11 3G pitch (completed)
- ◆ Highworth Area – new 11v11 3G pitch
- ◆ New Eastern Villages Development – new 11v11 3G pitch
- ◆ Kingsdown Development – new 11v11 3G pitch
- ◆ Wroughton Area – new smaller sized (youth 9v9) pitch

Since the production of the LFFP, of the abovementioned sites, the only development which has taken place is the creation of a 11v11 3G pitch at Moredon Playing Fields, which occurred in 2023.

In line with the LFFP for a 3G pitch in the Highworth Area, the FF, Wiltshire FA and Highworth Town FC have outlined plans to develop provision at Highworth Town Football Club. This would entail the creation of a stadia 3G pitch in place of the existing grass pitch which caters for Step 5 football.

Away from the LFFP, Swindon RUFC is looking to convert its second grass pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch. This would be for both training and match demand.

Highworth Golf Course was a 9-hole golf course owned by the Council prior to closure in December 2019. Plans are in place for its development, with a mitigation package set out that includes smaller sized 3G provision.

### ***FA Pitch Register***

In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches, the pitch should be FIFA or IMS tested and approved and added to the FA Pitch Register, which can be found at: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>.

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard.

For pitches used by affiliated grassroots football clubs (below regional feeder league level) and clubs in the Women's Football Pyramid (Tier 3), the minimum requirement of testing is the FA Register Test. However, matches played at Step 1 to 6 of the Men's National League System must follow more stringent testing, with this including a minimum pitch size of 100 x 64 metres, a run-off area of between 1.83 metres (Step 2-6) and 2.25 metres (Step 1), a consistent playing surface shade of green and appropriate line markings. In addition, FA testing must take place annually rather than every three years.

As for 3G pitches used in the Women's Football Pyramid; at Tier 1, matches cannot be played on a 3G pitch, whilst existing 3G pitches at Tier 2 must be accredited to the FIFA Recommended Quality performance standard.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

In Swindon Borough, six of the seven 11v11 3G pitches are either FA or FIFA certified. These are at the following sites:

- Great Western Academy
- Foundation Park
- Kingsdown School
- Moredon Playing Fields
- New College Swindon
- Swindon Academy

At present, only the pitch at Lydiard Park Academy does not have FA or FIFA certification.

Of the smaller sized pitches, only the pitch at Croft Sports Centre has FA certification.

### ***World Rugby compliant pitches***

To enable 3G pitches to accommodate competitive rugby union matches, World Rugby has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification. This is to ensure that the surfaces can replicate the playing qualities of good quality grass pitches, provide a playing environment that will not increase the risk of injury and are of an adequate durability.

The specification includes a rigorous test programme that assesses ball/surface interaction and player/surface interaction and has been modified to align the standard with that of FIFA. Any 3G pitch used for any form of competitive rugby or contact training must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Swindon Borough. However, as referenced above, Swindon RUFC has an aspiration to create such provision.

### ***Management***

The table below summarises the management of all 11v11 3G pitches across Swindon Borough. A total of five pitches are managed by schools, whilst one pitch is managed by both a parish council and one by a community organisation.

*Table 3.3: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch management*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management
22	Foundation Park	Central East	Swindon Town Community Foundation
27	Great Western Academy	North	School
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	School
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	School
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	North Central Swindon Parish Council
58	New College Swindon	Central East	School
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	School

In regards to the smaller sized pitches, five are under GLL management (Swindon Borough Council's leisure provider), three are operated by the MOD, and the remaining three are controlled by a community organisation (Foundation Park), an educational provider (Ruskin Primary School) and a sports club (The Swindome).

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Availability

The availability at each site with a 11v11 3G pitch is summarised in the table below. However, please note that this only refers to overall availability and opening hours, rather than considering current capacity, which is instead accounted for within the demand part of this section. A pitch may theoretically have good availability but may currently be operating at capacity, especially during peak times, based on existing usage levels.

As seen, availability is generally good for the pitches that are available for community use, with minimal restrictions in place. However, the pitches at both Sarum Academy and The Wellington Academy have reduced operating hours at the weekend, particularly on Sunday afternoons. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is due a lack of demand in conjunction with minimising expenditure for the schools.

*Table 3.4: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch opening hours in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Availability
22	Foundation Park	Central East	Everyday 09:00 to 22:00
27	Great Western Academy	North	Mon-Fri 17:00 to 22:00 Sat-Sun 09:00 to 17:00
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	Mon-Fri 17:00 to 21:00 Sat-Sun 09:00 to 17:00
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	Mon-Fri 17:00 to 21:00 Sat-Sun 09:00 to 17:00
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Everyday 09:00 to 22:00
58	New College Swindon	Central East	Mon-Fri 16:30 to 21:30 Sat-Sun 10:00 to 18:00
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	Mon-Fri 17:00 to 21:30 Saturday 09:00 to 17:00 Sunday 09:30 to 16:00

The smaller sized pitches at Croft Sports Centre, Foundation Park, Link Centre and The Swindome are all open and available every day from 09:00-22:00. At Ruskin Primary School, the pitch offers availability after school hours from 17:00-21:00.

### Quality

It is considered that the carpet of a 3G pitch usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. It is therefore recommended that sinking funds be put into place by providers to enable long-term sustainability, ongoing repairs and future refurbishment beyond this period.

For the 11v11 community available 3G pitches in Swindon Borough, there are four good quality pitches and three poor quality pitches, with no standard quality pitches identified. Of the smaller sized pitches, there is one good quality pitch, three standard quality pitches and four poor quality pitches.



## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.6: Age and quality of community available 3G pitches in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Size	Number of pitches	Year installed/ last resurfaced	Quality
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	Small	1	2011	Standard
22	Foundation Park	Central East	11v11	1	2019	Good
22	Foundation Park	Central East	Small	1	2023	Good
27	Great Western Academy	North	11v11	1	2024	Good
26	Grange Leisure Centre	Central East	Small	1	2014	Standard
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	11v11	1	2013	Poor
47	Link Centre	West	Small	3	2007	Poor
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	11v11	1	2008	Poor
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	11v11	1	2023	Good
58	New College Swindon	Central East	11v11	1	2018	Good
71	Ruskin Primary School	Central North	Small	1	2015	Poor
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	11v11	1	2010	Poor
100	The Swindome	North East	Small	1	2015	Standard

The poor quality 11v11 3G pitches are located at Kingsdown School, Lydiard Park Academy and Swindon Academy, whilst the smaller sized pitches are at Link Centre and Ruskin Primary School. All of these have reached or are near the end of their recommended lifespan and therefore require resurfacing.

In specific relation to the pitch Lydiard Park Academy, the School reports that it does not currently have any funding to undertake the resurfacing and requires some support to undertake this before the pitch becomes unusable.

### Ancillary facilities

No significant issues have been identified regarding the ancillary facilities servicing the 3G pitches across Swindon Borough, although as some are located at school sites, the provision is generally not dedicated to the supply. Nevertheless, this is not considered to be a major issue given that most use is for training and recreational football, with users therefore tending to show up ready to play rather than relying on good access to changing rooms.

### Smart access

The Premier League, FA and the FF is seeking to establish a single supplier booking system framework to support its delivery of key products and programmes. For 3G pitches, it is identified that in recent years the industry has seen major innovations and improvements to artificial surfaces (and sports lighting), which has created playing surfaces that replicate a good standard natural turf pitch whilst significantly increasing levels of use. The Foundation has therefore undertaken research with applicants and there is a clear demand for accessing a booking system framework from its historic and future applicants.



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## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### 3.3: Demand

The 3G pitches currently servicing Swindon Borough are broadly reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of sports lighting). This applies not only to midweek capacity but also to weekend capacity on account of five of the 11v11 3G pitches being FA approved to host competitive matches.

Any spare capacity that remains on the provision is often at times deemed unfavourable by clubs such as on midweek evenings between 17:00 and 18:00, which is difficult to arrange logistically, or on Mondays and Fridays, which are deemed too close to competitive fixtures. Also, any capacity remaining at the weekend is generally outside of peak time for match play such as on Sunday afternoons.

As an example of the above, the 3G pitches at Kingsdown Academy, Lydiard Park Academy and Swindon Academy have reported spare capacity. However, all available slots during midweek are on Monday or Friday evenings or between 17:00 and 18:00. At more desirable times, no booking slots are available.

Currently, it is considered that the large majority of the community-based activity on 3G pitches is football related. Such usage is further detailed on a site-by-site basis in the table overleaf, with current usage compared against availability for each 11v11 3G pitch. For this, the hours of availability have been multiplied by four for midweek capacity based on most 11v11 3G pitches being divided into quarters for training demand, with capacity then considered to exist if at least a quarter of a pitch is currently unused for at least a one-hour slot. Weekend availability is unaltered as full pitch hire is more likely to be required i.e., for adult and youth 11v11 match play.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 3.7: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch demand site-by-site

Site ID	Site name	Midweek availability in the peak period (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability in the peak period (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)	Comments
22	Foundation Park	72	Unknown	16	Unknown	Booking information was not made available.
27	Great Western Academy	72	Unknown	16	Unknown	Pitch has only opened recently.
40	Kingsdown School	72	54	16	12	18 slots remain during midweek (generally between 17:00-18:00) and four at weekends.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	72	54	16	2	18 slots remain during midweek (generally between 17:00-18:00) and 14 at weekends.
54	Moredon Playing Fields	72	65	16	13	Seven slots remain during midweek (generally between 17:00-18:00) and three at weekends.
58	New College Swindon	72	66	16	14	Six slots remain during midweek (generally between 17:00-18:00) and two at weekends.
87	Swindon Academy	72	58	16	10	14 slots remain during midweek (generally between 17:00-18:00) and six at weekends.

Demand relating to smaller size pitches is not included within the above as insufficient data has been made available to inform this study. Furthermore, the supply is not as capable of accommodating sufficient levels of training and match play demand.

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### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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#### ***Imported/exported demand***

There is no known imported 3G pitch demand into Swindon Borough.

Furthermore, the only known exported demand out of Swindon Borough is from Swindon Town FC, which accesses its training ground Beversbrook Sports Facility in Wiltshire.

#### ***Unmet/latent demand***

In Swindon Borough, 67% of football clubs that responded to consultation report that they require additional access to 3G provision, which represents a relatively high proportion of unmet demand. Over three quarters (82%) of these clubs are currently training on 3G pitches but do not have capacity for all of their teams, or do not have access at preferred times.

The remaining clubs expressing unmet demand (18%) are not training on 3G pitches at all and are instead using sand-based pitches (particularly at Deanery School, St Joseph's Catholic College and Dorcan Recreation Complex) or grass pitches, either at their home grounds or elsewhere. In total, 71 teams in Swindon are using sand-based pitches for training.

In addition, an element of unmet demand for 3G access has also been identified by Swindon RUFC. This is linked to its plans to develop a pitch at its site.

#### ***Future demand***

As set out in Part 2 of this report, there is an anticipated increase of 19 football teams by 2043 (based on population projections). If this growth was realised, and if all additional teams wanted to train on 3G provision, it could potentially increase the number of 3G pitches required. This will be factored into the supply and demand analysis below.

In addition, although no rugby union demand currently accesses 3G pitches (with none suitable for such activity), it is clear that future access could provide a solution to the deficits identified in Part 5 of this report. This would be particularly relevant in the case of Swindon RUFC given its current aspirations.

### **3.4: Supply and demand analysis**

#### ***Football***

The FA considers high quality 3G pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development, with the pitches considered to be great assets on account of being able to support intensive use and use during inclement weather. Primarily, such facilities have been installed for social use and training, however, they are increasingly being used for competition, which the FA wholly supports.

#### ***Training demand***

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at sports lit facilities, with 3G provision preferred by the FA and most clubs.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a sports lit 3G surface, together with priority access for every England Accredited Club through a partnership agreement. As such, it has established a model to calculate the required number of pitches to meet demand, with one 11v11 3G pitch being required to service every 38 teams within a local authority. This is based on peak time access being Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings (Mondays and Fridays are discounted as it is considered that teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match, and it also allows for other forms of access such as for commercial leagues and recreational play).

For the model, in addition to 11v11 3G pitches being included, some smaller sized pitches can also be incorporated as nationally many are suitable for accommodating training demand, especially larger ones. To calculate their contribution, a pitch large enough to cater for youth matches (but not adult) is considered to be the equivalent of half a 11v11 3G pitch (0.5 pitches). Any pitch smaller than this is discounted, as are any pitches that are unavailable for community use.

The contribution each pitch makes towards the modelling is summarised in the table below. This then informs the proceeding tables.

*Table 3.8: Contribution of 3G pitches in meeting training requirements*

Site name	Analysis area	Size (metres)	Comments	3G pitch equivalents
Croft Sports Centre	Central South	62 x 42	Large enough to accommodate youth football	0.5
Foundation Park	Central East	95 x 56	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
Foundation Park	Central East	60 x 40	Large enough to accommodate youth football	0.5
Grange Leisure Centre	Central East	54 x 40	Too small to accommodate training demand	-
Great Western Academy	North	100 x 60	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
Kingsdown School	Central North	95 x 57	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
Link Centre	West	32 x 16	Too small to accommodate training demand	-
Lydiard Park Academy	West	97 x 65	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	105 x 72	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
New College Swindon	Central East	105 x 70	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1

PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Site name	Analysis area	Size (metres)	Comments	3G pitch equivalents
Ruskin Primary School	Central North	40 x 20	Too small to accommodate training demand	-
Swindon Academy	Central North	113 x 74	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
The Swindome	North East	70 x 45	Large enough to accommodate youth football	0.5

No clubs currently report using any of the pitches for training that have been discounted in the table above, further evidencing their unsuitability for this purpose.

Based on 392 teams currently playing on football pitches in Swindon Borough, there is a theoretical need for 10.5 11v11 3G pitches (rounded up from 10.32). As there are currently 8.5 11v11 3G pitch equivalents provided, this means that there is a potential need for two additional 11v11 3G pitches to meet all current training demand.

Table 3.9: Current demand for 3G pitches in Swindon Borough (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Current number of teams	Current 3G requirement <sup>3</sup>	Current number of 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
392	10.5	8.5	2

When considering future demand for an additional 19 teams (based on growth identified in Part 2 of this report), the overall need increases marginally to 11 11v11 3G pitches (rounded up from 10.82).

Table 3.10: Future demand for 3G pitches in Swindon Borough (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>4</sup>	Number of 3G pitch equivalents	Future shortfall
411	11	8.5	2.5

Alternatively, the table below considers the number of 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the respective analysis area that they play in. This not only identifies where the potential needs exist across Swindon Borough, but it can also be used to guide which areas should be targeted for new provision.

Table 3.11: Current demand for 3G pitches by analysis area (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current 3G requirement <sup>5</sup>	Current number of 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
Central East	68	2	2.5	-
Central North	183	4.5	3	1.5
Central South	27	0.5	0.5	-
North	0	0	1	-
North East	68	2	0.5	1.5

<sup>3</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.5.

<sup>4</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.5.

<sup>5</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.5.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current 3G requirement <sup>5</sup>	Current number of 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
South	33	1	0	1
South East	12	0.5	0	0.5
West	1	0	1	-

This shows an overall shortfall of 4.5 11v11 3G pitch equivalents and identifies that there are specific shortfalls in the Central North, North East, South and South West analysis areas.

Although no demand has been identified in the North Analysis Area, this is only a consequence of no teams currently playing within it, with only five community available grass pitches existing and with all these being at unsecure school sites. It is not to say that no football demand comes from the area, with teams particularly in the North East and Central North analysis areas likely to be picking this up. Aligned to this, the pitch in the area at Great Western Academy will be catering for training demand from such clubs.

Overall, the number of 3G pitches required within the sub area modelling is higher than the broader analysis of provision across Swindon Borough. This is in part due to a theoretical oversupply in the Central East, North and West analysis areas, whilst it is also an impact of how the figures are rounded. In reality, clubs will travel to neighbouring analysis areas to access provision if required (as per the example used above at Great Western Academy), especially if pitches are strategically located in close proximity, meaning that the wider analysis is a more accurate tool for determining overall need. However, the analysis area approach is beneficial in determining where any new pitches should be located to overcome the remaining shortfall.

### *The role of sand/water-based pitches*

The above section assumes that all football teams should train on 3G pitches. However, in practice, there is a national need for a proportion of football training demand to be retained on hockey suitable AGPs to maintain the financial and commercial sustainability of such provision. This is especially the case where only minimal hockey demand exists, at which point the provision needs to be protected for hockey use but can require supplementary activity in order to remain viable.

In Swindon Borough, the 11v11 3G pitches at Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) and Dorcan Recreation Complex accommodate either no hockey demand and/or have relatively high football demand with no major pressures for more hockey access. The football activity is therefore vital to the long-term sustainability of this provision.

In contrast, the 11v11 3G pitches at Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College are well used for hockey. In instances such as this, the transfer of supplementary football usage can actually aid capacity issues and free up space for additional hockey activity.

For further information, please see Part 7: Hockey.

### *Match play demand*

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches, providing that the pitch is FA approved, sports lit and available for community use during the peak period.



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In Swindon Borough, a considerable number of 3G pitches are FA approved to host competitive matches and 49 affiliated teams are registered as using the provision for regular match play. This equates to only 12.5% of total match play demand and is a relatively low amount given the number of 3G pitches provided and the number that are certified. As such, there are significant opportunities for this to be further increased.

Moreover, as the number of 3G pitches increases in line with meeting training demand shortfalls, so should the number of teams utilising the provision for matches, which in turn should further relieve grass pitches of use. As such, whilst the number of 3G pitches needed for matches will never outweigh the number of 3G pitches needed for training (as they would not be sustainable without midweek usage), maximising the pitches that are in place and that are proposed should be fully supported.

The use of 3G pitches for matches also emphasises the importance of maintaining good quality pitches. Should pitches become poor quality, they will likely lose accreditation to accommodate fixtures. This will then result in all teams using the provision needing to transfer to grass pitches, adding to their usage, reducing their capacity and further diminishing their quality.

#### ***Rugby union***

There is evidence to warrant the creation of additional World Rugby compliant 3G pitches given the grass pitch shortfalls evident in Part 5 of this report, both overall and at sites such as Supermarine Sports & Social Club and Swindon Rugby Football Club. However, other solutions to alleviate these deficits may also be possible.

#### ***Other sports***

There is no known usage of 3G pitch provision from any other affiliated sports in Swindon Borough, other than football. Furthermore, away from rugby union, there is no known ambitions from clubs to access such provision currently or in the future (e.g., American football and rugby league).

### **3.5: Conclusion**

For football, there is a current shortfall of 3G pitches in Swindon Borough to meet requirements, as evidenced through the levels of demand evidenced and with only minimal amounts of spare capacity remaining on the current supply of pitches. The proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will identify areas and sites that should be prioritised for provision moving forward, taking into account existing proposals.

For rugby union, an increase in suitable 3G pitches may provide a solution to the identified overplay of grass pitches, although this needs to be considered against grass pitch solutions to fully determine requirements. This will also be explored in the subsequent Strategy document.

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### **3G – supply and demand summary**

- Based on current demand, there is a shortfall of 3G pitches to meet football training requirements, with shortfalls evident within Central North, North East, South and South West analysis areas.
- There is also evidence to warrant the creation of additional World Rugby compliant 3G provision given the grass pitch shortfalls evident as this could be a solution to alleviating the deficits.

### **3G – supply summary**

- In total, there are seven 11v11 3G and eight smaller sized 3G pitches identified in Swindon Borough.
- All of the pitches are available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.
- The FF, Wiltshire FA and Highworth Town FC have outlined plans to develop 11v11 3G provision at Highworth Town Football Club, whilst Swindon RUFC has an aspiration for a pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club.
- Six of the seven 11v11 3G pitches are either FA or FIFA certified, with the Lydiard Park Academy pitch the only pitch without certification.
- There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches.
- For the 11v11 community available 3G pitches, there are four good quality pitches and three poor quality pitches.
- Of the small size community available 3G pitches, there is one good quality pitch, three standard quality pitches and four poor quality pitches.
- No ancillary facility issues have been identified.

### **3G – demand summary**

- The 3G pitches are broadly reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months.
- The large majority of activity is currently football-related.
- High levels of unmet demand for 3G pitch access is expressed, with 67% of responding football clubs stating that additional provision is required to meet or better cater for their training requirements.
- Swindon RUFC also expresses unmet demand for 3G pitch access.
- No significant exported or imported 3G pitch demand is identified, outside of exported demand from professional club activity by Swindon Town FC.
- If future demand from population projections (and/or club aspirations) is realised, this could further increase 3G requirements for football and rugby union.
- Away from football and rugby union, there are no known aspirations for any other sports clubs to access 3G provision in the future.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 4: CRICKET

#### 4.1: Introduction

Wiltshire Cricket is the main governing and representative body for Cricket within Swindon Borough. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children within the area. It is currently working with the ECB on delivering its Strategy, 'Inspiring Generations', which has been live since 2020.

For adult cricket in Swindon Borough there are three main offerings; Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket (including some recreational demand). The youth league structure tends to be club-based matches which are played mid-week, although some matches are also played on Sundays. The playing season generally runs from April to September.

#### Consultation

In total there are 12 community cricket clubs in Swindon Borough. Of these, only five clubs have responded to consultation requests resulting in a response rate of 42%. A full breakdown of the responsive clubs can be seen in the table below.

*Table 4.1: Cricket club response rate*

Club name	Club response?
Blunsdon CC	No
Coastal Cobras CC	No
Nationwide House CC	Yes
Swindon CC	Yes
Swindon Nalgo CC	No
Swindon Royal Challengers CC	No
Swindon Spartans CC	No
Swindon Super Strikers CC	No
Swindon Titans CC	No
Swindon United Churches CC	Yes
Wanborough CC	Yes
Wroughton Wranglers CC	Yes

#### County Facilities Strategy

In 2022, to build upon the ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy, the ECB started the process of producing a County Facilities Strategy (CFS) for each county. A CFS will be produced by each individual county cricket board and will be unique to its geographical area as well as being diverse in its representation. The plan for Wiltshire is currently in production.

The CFS will be a 'long-term' plan with county boards ensuring it provides a ten-year view of facility needs. These will therefore be seen as a long-term plan and will involve engagement with key stakeholders, including clubs, leagues, active partnerships, county pitch advisors and Sport England.

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To inform the strategies, the ECB has set out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the strategies:

- ✦ Traditional facilities (pitches, outfield, pavilions, practice areas)
- ✦ Non-traditional facilities (multi-use games areas, tapeball/softball spaces, courts/cages)
- ✦ Indoor facilities (multi use halls, cricket specific halls, match play venues)

The strategies will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, with the decision-making process clearly explained before a list of priority projects is produced. To inform this process, each strategy will utilise PPOSS findings, where in place, as a 'high quality' evidence base.

### 4.2: Supply

#### **Grass wicket squares**

In total, there are seven active grass wicket cricket squares in Swindon Borough provided across seven sites. All squares are available for community use.

As seen in the table below, the North East Analysis Area has the most community available grass cricket squares with a total of two (29% of provision), whilst the North and West analysis areas are both without provision. All remaining analysis areas host a single square available for community use.

*Table 4.2: Summary of grass wicket squares in Swindon Borough*

Analysis area	Number of squares available for community use	Number of squares unavailable for community use
Central East	1	-
Central North	1	-
Central South	1	-
North	-	-
North East	2	-
South	1	-
South East	1	-
West	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>

#### **Non-turf pitches**

There are a total of 13 active non-turf pitches (NTPs) across 11 sites in Swindon Borough. Of these, one NTP accompanies a grass wickets square at Nationwide Sports Club, whilst the remaining 12 are standalone.

Of the 13 NTPs, six are considered to be unavailable for community use, all of which are located at educational sites. There is, however, some form of community available provision in five of the eight analysis areas, with only the South, North East and South East analysis areas without a community available NTP.

The NTPs are summarised in the table below.

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Table 4.3: Summary of NTPs in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of NTPs	Position
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	Yes	1	Standalone
27	Great Western Academy	North	No	1	Standalone
40	Kingsdown School	Central North	No	1	Standalone
43	Lawn Manor Academy	Central South	No	2	Standalone
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	No	1	Standalone
50	Mannington Rec	Central North	Yes	2	Standalone
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	Yes	2	Standalone
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	Yes	1	Square
60	Nova Hreod Academy	Central North	No	1	Standalone
80	St Josephs Catholic College	Central East	Yes	1	Standalone

At Moredon Playing Fields, the two NTPs are currently in the process of being relocated/ repositioned at the site due to a wider development. The replacement wickets will be in place and ready to be used ahead of the 2025 season.

NTPs, particularly when located at club sites, can aid with training and practice and can help reduce overplay on grass wickets when used for matches. The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play. Additionally, NTPs are frequently used for junior matches across the Country.

### Hybrid pitches

The ECB has been working with SIS Pitches on the installation of hybrid cricket wickets at county cricket clubs (2019) such as Edgbaston Cricket Ground and more recently at recreational sites such as Perry Hall Playing Fields (Birmingham) in 2021 and Didsbury Cricket Club (Manchester) in 2022.

A hybrid wicket combines natural turf grass with less than 5% of uniquely engineered, soft polyethylene yarn, which has already been used for other sports such as to improve golf tees, tennis courts and pitch surrounds. These wickets are designed to offer greater capacity in addition to reducing the time spent on repair works, with a faster recovery time intended. Reports have found that hybrid wickets improve surface stability, reduce wear, reduce bowler foot holes and significantly extended hours of playing time (around double the capacity of natural turf provision).

Ideally, once hybrid wickets become more readily available for community cricket clubs and have gone through the required testing, they could act as a way to increase levels of playing capacity on heavily used squares. This would be particularly beneficial for those sites which are limited in space and cannot create additional wickets due to restrictions on things such as boundary length and ball strike.

Although it is difficult at this stage to understand what impact hybrid wickets could have on capacity, it is suggested that they could potentially alleviate all the overplay on both junior and senior wickets. This is based on the assumption that more senior demand can take place on the hybrid wickets allowing for the outer senior wickets to be used/converted for junior demand.



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There are currently no hybrid pitches in Swindon Borough. For the location of all grass wicket and NTP provision, see Figure 4.1 below.



Figure 4.1: Location of cricket pitches within Swindon Borough



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Table 4.4: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Club user/s	No. of squares	No. of grass wickets	No of non-turf pitches
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	SN26 7BA	North East	Yes	Blunsdon CC	1	6	-
12	Croft Sports Centre	SN3 1RA	Central South	Yes	Swindon Super Strikers CC	1	-	1
27	Great Western Academy	SN25 2PP	North	No	-	1	-	1
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Yes	Wanborough CC	1	7	-
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	No	-	1	-	1
43	Lawn Manor Academy	SN3 1ER	Central South	No	-	2	-	2
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	No	-	1	-	1
54	Moredon Playing Fields	SN2 2YZ	Central North	Yes	Swindon Titans CC	2	-	2
56	Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club	SN2 7AP	Central North	Yes	Swindon Nalگو CC Coastal Cobras CC	1	9	-
57	Nationwide Sports Club	SN38 4LN	Central South	Yes	Nationwide House CC	1	7	1
60	Nova Hreod Academy	SN2 2NL	Central North	No	-	1	-	1
80	St Josephs Catholic College	SN3 3LR	Central East	Yes	Swindon Titans CC	1	-	1
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	SN1 2EE	Central East	Yes	Swindon CC	1	22	-
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	SN6 7QF	North East	Yes	Swindon United Churches CC	1	14	-
107	Weir Field	SN4 0SA	South	Yes	Wroughton Wranglers CC	1	6	-

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### ***Disused provision***

Two sites in Swindon Borough have previously provided grass cricket squares but no longer do so. These are Croft Sports Centre and The Elms Recreation Ground.

Croft Sports Centre had an eight wicket square but has not been maintained since 2016. However, the site remains active for cricket with an NTP located onsite, as well as the site being accessed for football throughout the winter months. It also has an indoor facility that is used for cricket and that has previously received cricket-specific investment.

The Elms Recreation Ground provided an 11-wicket square. This was included in the last PPS developed in 2016 but satellite evidence suggests that the pitch has not been maintained since 2018.

### ***Future provision***

Swindon CC currently exports three of its Saturday teams outside of the Borough into Wiltshire and wants to bring the majority of this demand back to within Swindon. To enable this, the Club has in recent years been in discussion with the Tadpole Garden Village development, where a cricket ground has been included as part of the masterplan. It wishes to be the anchor tenant of the site and would look to maintain and manage the site as its second ground. Further dialogue is currently taking place, with full details yet to be 100% confirmed.

Hills Homes is currently in the process of a new development of 150 houses in North Wroughton, with a new grass cricket square facility proposed for inclusion. The development has been earmarked for use by Wroughton Wranglers CC as a new site, with this to enable relocation from Weir Field.

Elsewhere, several clubs in Swindon Borough are currently searching for a more permanent facility, with a number currently nomadic or exporting outside of the Borough. This provides limited security of tenure and relates to the likes of Coastal Cobras, Swindon Royal Challengers, Swindon Spartans and Swindon Super Strikers cricket clubs.

### ***Security of tenure***

The table below identifies tenure arrangements for all affiliated clubs in Swindon Borough, where known. As seen, all arrangements are considered to be secure.

For reference, a site is considered to have unsecure tenure if the cricket provision on site is not guaranteed to be retained and useable for clubs in the long-term (i.e., for more than three years). As such, unless known otherwise, squares managed by the Council (and parish/town councils) are secure as part of a commitment to continue providing a sports and leisure offering.

*Table 4.5: Summary of security of tenure for Swindon cricket clubs (where known)*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club/league	Arrangement	Tenure
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Blunsdon CC	Long term lease agreement from Parish Council	Secure
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Wanborough CC	Long term lease agreement from Parish Council	Secure

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Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club/league	Arrangement	Tenure
56	Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Swindon Nalگو CC	Freehold (via the wider sports club)	Secure
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	Nationwide House CC	Long term lease agreement from the Council	Secure
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	Swindon CC	Lease agreement from the Council (five years remaining)	Secure
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	North East	Swindon United Churches CC	Freehold	Secure
107	Weir Field	South	Wroughton Wranglers CC	Annual rent agreement from the Council	Secure

Swindon CC is currently in the process of extending its lease at Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground) as only five years remain on the existing arrangement. Generally, agreements of over 25 years are recommended from a site development perspective as this can often be a condition linked to funding partners. Nevertheless, tenure is still considered to be secure at present, particularly as the Club also suggests that the site has a covenant in place which will not allow for a change of use away from cricket.

### Pitch quality

The quality of cricket pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the ECB) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor. For the full assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket; if the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. As an example, if a square is poor quality, a ball can bounce erratically on a wicket and become a danger to players.

Of the seven grass wicket cricket squares in Swindon Borough, four (57%) are rated as good quality, whilst three (43%) are rated as standard quality (there are no poor quality grass wicket cricket squares identified). The site-by-site breakdown of this is shown in the following table.

Table 4.6: Quality ratings for all grass wicket squares (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of squares	Square quality
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Yes	1	Good
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Yes	1	Good
56	Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Yes	1	Standard
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	Yes	1	Good
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	Yes	1	Good
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	Central East	Yes	1	Standard
107	Weir Field	South	Yes	1	Standard

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The sites are also mapped by quality in following imagery.

Figure 4.2: Location of cricket squares by quality



As seen, the standard quality squares are found at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club Weir Field and Swindon United Churches Cricket Club, where greater signs of wear and tear are identified in addition to an outfields that suffer from undulation. No other sites have any noticeable issues.

At Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground), the square was re-laid recently as part of an annual maintenance programme. The Club undertakes a full relay of the square every five to

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ten years to ensure that it does not become tired. It also notes that it re-laid its outfield in 2021.

Away from the grass wickets, standalone NTPs at Croft Sports Centre, Mannington Rec, Moredon Playing Fields and St Joseph's Catholic College is also in use for community cricket. These are all assessed as standard quality currently.

### *Performance Quality Standards*

To obtain a full technical assessment of wickets and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment to determine whether a cricket square meets the Performance Quality Standards which are benchmarked by the Grounds Management Association (GMA). There are three categories of measurement that relate to the overall quality of the square: structural quality, presentational quality and playing quality. Once a square has been assessed it is given a quality rating, as shown below.

Table 4.7: Performance Quality Standard assessment ratings

Quality Rating	Details
Premier (High)	Where the surface is intended for Premier League play, with those within the top quartile capable of holding minor county and 1st class one day matches. May include some of the better schools and university pitches.
Club (Standard)	A Club pitch suitable for league, school and junior cricket.
Basic	An acceptable level suitable for recreational cricket and where the surface is designed and maintained within tight financial limitations such as local authorities.
Unsuitable	This is where the surface is deemed unfit or unsafe for play.

Clubs can contact the ECB to arrange for a GMA pitch advisor to undertake a Performance Quality Standard assessment. Clubs can choose from three different reports (comprehensive/mini/verbal) that vary in cost. A fully comprehensive report includes soil testing and guidance on machinery and corrective procedures, a mini report includes guidance on machinery and corrective procedures and a verbal report is a spoken version of a mini report.

Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that PitchPower is soon to be fully utilised to undertake technical assessments on squares. Although it has not been utilised during the 2023 season, from 2024 onwards it will stand as a replacement for PQS assessments.

### *Ancillary facilities*

The table below identifies the quality of ancillary provision at the primary sites used for community cricket within Swindon Borough (both grass wickets and NTPs). As seen, there are three sites accompanied by good quality facilities, whilst five have standard quality provision and two are categorised as having poor quality provision. These are Moredon Playing Fields and Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club, although the former is undergoing development which will see it serviced by good quality facilities.

Table 4.8: Summary of ancillary facility quality



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Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Ancillary facility quality
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	1	Standard
12	Croft Sports Centre	Central South	1	Standard
38	Hooper's Field	South East	1	Standard
54	Moredon Playing Fields	Central North	2	Poor
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	1	Poor
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	1	Good
80	St Josephs Catholic College	Central East	1	Good
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	1	Standard
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	North East	1	Standard
107	Weir Field	South	1	Standard

Swindon CC reports that its pavilion at Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground) is a Grade 2 listed building. As such, the Club reports that due to the age of the building, it requires a lot of maintenance to sustain its quality, with alterations inside the building not always viable. It has plans to install a disabled toilet and also reports that it is looking at plans to develop dedicated female changing rooms.

Wanborough CC aspires to develop its clubhouse onsite at Hooper's Field. However, it suggests that it would need funding support to enable such a project.

### Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. Clubs access both indoor and outdoor provision before the season commences, whilst during the season, outdoor training provision supplies most of the use.

In Swindon Borough, from non-technical assessments, it was identified that only four sites currently have dedicated fixed net provision. These are summarised in the table below.

Table 4.9: Summary of current fixed net training facilities

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Training facility	Quality
38	Hooper's Field	South East	2 x lane facility	Poor
60	Nova Hreod Academy	Central North	2 x lane facility	Standard
80	St Josephs Catholic College	Central East	4 x lane facility	Standard
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	3 x lane facility	Good

This means that only Swindon CC and Wanborough CC are provided for at the sites that they use for matches.

In addition, it should also be noted that both Croft Sports Centre and Swindon United Churches Cricket Club have both previously accommodated fixed net provision but that they do not currently do so.

Furthermore, although not the focus of this study, it should be noted that several clubs report an issue with a lack of access to suitable indoor facilities. This can be particularly



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problematic during winter months. Currently, only the Deanery Academy provides provision of a suitable standard.

For more information regarding indoor cricket facilities, please see the Indoor & Built Facilities Strategy that is being produced alongside this study.

### 4.3: Demand

There are 12 affiliated cricket clubs in Swindon Borough which collectively provide 42 teams. This equates to 30 senior men's, one senior women's and 11 junior boys' teams (no junior girls' teams).

Table 4.10: Summary of teams by club in Swindon Borough

Club	Analysis area	No. of senior male teams	No. of senior female teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams
Blunsdon CC	North East	1	-	-	-
Coastal Cobras CC	Central North	2	-	-	-
Nationwide House CC	Central South	3	-	-	-
Swindon CC	Central East	7	1	9	-
Swindon Nalgo CC	Central North	3	-	-	-
Swindon Super Strikers CC	<i>Exported</i>	3	-	-	-
Swindon Royal Challengers CC	<i>Exported</i>	1			
Swindon Spartans CC	<i>Nomadic</i>	1			
Swindon Titans CC	Central North	2	-	-	-
Swindon United Churches CC	North East	2	-	-	-
Wanborough CC	South East	3	-	2	-
Wroughton Wranglers CC	South	2	-	-	-
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>

The clubs are varied in size, with Swindon CC providing the largest offering with 17 teams. In contrast, there are three clubs that host just one team each (Blunsdon CC, Swindon Royal Challengers CC and Swindon Spartans CC).

Both Swindon Super Strikers CC and Swindon Royal Challengers CC export demand outside of Swindon, whilst Swindon Spartans CC is a nomadic club, meaning it does not have a permanent home venue. In addition, Swindon Titans CC generally utilises only NTP provision rather than grass wickets.

As seen in the table below, for teams that are based in Swindon Borough and with a permanent home venue, most play in the Central East Analysis Area (15 teams) as this caters for the largest club in Swindon CC as well as Swindon Titans CC. Both of the North and West analysis areas are without any demand.

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Table 4.11: Summary of competitive teams by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of senior men's teams	No. of senior women's teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams	Total
Central East	7	1	9	-	17
Central North	7	-	-	-	7
Central South	3	-	-	-	3
North	-	-	-	-	0
North East	3	-	-	-	3
South	2	-	-	-	2
South East	3	-	2	-	5
West	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>

### Additional activity

The ECB is currently running a number of initiatives across the Country which results in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfield, making squares unusable for matches during these periods. This can mean no availability on one or two nights a week.

#### All Stars cricket

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine, cricket clubs in Swindon Borough can register to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre. Once registered, a club can deliver the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight. Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs. The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

- ◆ Increase cricket activity for five to eight year olds in the school and club environment.
- ◆ Develop consistency of message in both settings to aid transition.
- ◆ Improve generic movement skills for children, using cricket as the vehicle.
- ◆ Make it easier for new volunteers to support and deliver in the club environment.
- ◆ Use fun small sided games to enthuse new children and volunteers to follow and play the game.

Swindon CC is currently the only one club in Swindon Borough involved in All Stars. It had 32 participants signed up during the 2023 season.

#### Dynamos cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' will be the Dynamos programme for 8-11 year olds which originally aimed to launch in 2020. It plans on building on the significant growth of the All Stars Cricket programme for 5-8 year olds and will develop the pathway to retain juniors progressing from All Stars into Dynamos.

Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamos seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified soft ball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket. The programme will be strongly linked to The Hundred, a new short format competition which launched in 2021.

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Swindon CC is also currently the only one club in Swindon Borough involved in Dynamos, with 16 participants signed up during the 2023 season.

#### *Softball cricket*

Softball is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls with the aim to increase participation in cricket as a sport. The aim of softball cricket sections is enjoyment and participation, without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and with limited rules. Sessions are played on the outfield and follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

In Swindon Borough, only Swindon CC operates women's softball cricket (it fields one team).

#### *Swindon Midweek League*

The Swindon Midweek Cricket League operates four midweek divisions, with a number of teams fielded within this structure from Swindon Borough that sit separately from the 11 affiliated clubs (although some affiliated clubs also enter teams).

The 12 unaffiliated teams below are considered to be Swindon based:

- ✦ AB CC (Croft Sports Centre)
- ✦ Mannington United CC
- ✦ Swindon Tigers CC
- ✦ RWE CC
- ✦ DC CC
- ✦ Hippocrikes CC
- ✦ Motorola CC
- ✦ Sevenfields CC
- ✦ Swindon Knights CC
- ✦ The Hop CC
- ✦ Ashbury CC
- ✦ Swindon Panthers CC
- ✦ Swindon Spartans CC

Sites identified as being used by these include Croft Sports Centre, Hooper's Field, Swindon Cricket Club and Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club. Moredon Playing Fields will also be used, as it has been in the past, when the NTPs are ready following site development.

#### *Last Man Stands*

Last Man Stands (LMS) was founded in 2005, in London. The social outdoor eight-a-side T20 cricket game is played midweek, lasts approximately two hours and is generally played on NTPs. All eight wickets are required to bowl a team out so when the seventh wicket falls, the 'Last Man Stands' on his own. This shorter format of the game has encouraged more people to participate in the sport and is increasing in popularity.

There is an LMS franchise running in Swindon Borough that currently features nine teams. These are known as:

- ✦ Dynamos CC
- ✦ Motorola Lions CC
- ✦ Swindon Eagles CC
- ✦ Swindon Hunters CC
- ✦ Swindon Knights CC

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- ✦ Swindon Royal Smashers CC
- ✦ Swindon Sultans CC
- ✦ Swindon Tigers CC
- ✦ Swindon Young Stars CC

Matches are played at Mannington Rec and Croft Sports Centre on Sundays, which is somewhat uncommon. Most LMS franchises operate via midweek fixtures.

NTPs are used to accommodate the demand, rather than grass wickets.

#### *Wiltshire Cricket (National Counties, women's and age groups)*

Wiltshire Cricket runs a number of teams, with its First XI being a member of the National Counties set up. It also runs a full county boys age group section and a women's and county girls age group section as well as a senior's section. The First XI plays in three competitive National Counties competitions across Three day, One Day and T20 cricket.

The boy's county age group section includes teams within each age group from U10-U18 level, in addition to development teams in the U10-U15 age groups and a Second XI which helps bridge the gap from U18 to First XI cricket. The women's and county girls age group section includes a women's First XI and age group teams at U18, U15, U13 and U11 level, whilst the senior section comprises of men's Over 50s, Over 60s and Over 70s teams and a women's senior team.

All teams play both friendly and competitive fixtures on a yearly basis within the National Counties and ECB cricket programmes, utilising facilities and squares across the County for fixtures and training.

Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground) is the only site which Wiltshire Cricket currently uses for matches in Swindon Borough. Most of its venues are within Wiltshire (the authority).

#### ***Unmet/latent demand***

No unmet or latent demand has been identified via the consultation process. This means that no responding clubs/teams believe that a lack of facilities is preventing demand from being fielded.

#### ***Imported/exported demand***

Swindon CC exports some demand from Swindon Borough and utilises two sites within Wiltshire to do this. It uses Chestnut Springs Playing Field, which is the home ground for its two teams on Saturday afternoons, whilst also utilising Ramsbury Recreation Centre for one team. However, this team does not utilise the grass wickets onsite and instead uses the NTP.

In addition, Swindon Super Strikers CC also exports demand to Wiltshire via Devizes Cricket Club. The Club shares the second ground at the site on Saturday afternoons with Devizes CC's third team.

Lastly, Swindon Royal Challengers CC currently plays at Burbage & Easton Royals CC, also in Wiltshire, despite being based in Swindon Borough. This involves a 19-mile trip outside of the Borough.

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### *Future demand*

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from developments across Swindon Borough.

### *Population forecasts*

For population projections, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass wicket cricket squares that will arise from forecasted growth. This uses the current population within each relevant age group together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates that are applied to future population projections.

Using the above, it is predicted in Swindon Borough that there will be a growth of two senior men's teams to 2043 (the date selected to align the PPOSS with the Council's Local Plan). This is shown in the table below.

*Table 4.12: Authority wide team generation rates*

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Peak time for population	Average games for age group	Match equivalent sessions per season
Men (18-55yrs)	1:2,273.23	2.20	2	Saturday	12	24
Women (18-55yrs)	1:64,691	0	0	Sunday	6	0
Boys (7-18yrs)	1:1,597	0.97	0	Midweek	6	0
Girls (7-18yrs)	0	0	0	Midweek	6	0

When team generation rates are applied on an analysis area level, no additional teams are expected to be generated through population growth alone with the increase in demand expected to be absorbed into existing squads at established clubs.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that NPPF housing requirements indicate that the population will increase far in excess of what is set out above (to 282,527). Moreover, this is expected to increase further when the new NPPF is released in the near future, possibly substantially so. This will therefore need to be taken into consideration following sign off of the PPOSS, with the proceeding Strategy document providing further context as to how population increases from housing growth can be dealt with.

Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that there are plans and strategies in place to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends and population changes would suggest. For example, consultation with the ECB suggests that further development of women and girl's participation in cricket in Swindon Borough is likely as it is currently a national priority, despite no growth being forecasted via team generation rates. This also applies to potential increased growth in junior cricket, linked to the aforementioned All Stars and Dynamos initiatives.

In addition, the ECB's media rights deal includes a continuation of its relationship with Sky Sports, up to 2028. This now extends beyond broadcasting and is a partnership which will secure significant investment and a commitment to increase participation and drive engagement. This could therefore boost demand to levels in excess of those anticipated through the PPS, meaning the impact should be reviewed over coming years.

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Furthermore, the demand identified is based solely upon current levels of formal demand from community-based cricket clubs and does not capture informal or recreational activity (i.e., from the Swindon Midweek League and LMS).

### *Participation increases*

Of the responding clubs, Swindon CC indicates aspirations to increase levels of participation through the creation of new teams. This equates to a total aspirational growth of two teams, totalling one senior men's and one senior women's team. However, for this to come to fruition in Swindon Borough, a new ground will be required, as set out previously.

In addition, Wiltshire Cricket identifies that Swindon CC is to begin operating a junior girls' section in the near future. This will likely lead to the creation of dedicated teams.

*Table 4.13: Future demand aspirations expressed by club*

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'
Swindon CC	Central East	1	1	-	2
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

No other clubs express any future demand.

### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, only demand identified through population growth is taken forward, with club demand considered to be more theoretical and aspirational. Furthermore, it is considered likely that club aspirations will absorb the future demand identified through population growth, meaning that they should not be judged separately and double counted. However, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain a scenario that will consider the impact if club aspirations are also realised.

## 4.4: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than a weekly basis. This is due to playability (as only one match is generally played per square per day at weekends or weekday evening) and because wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and tear and to allow for repair.

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report therefore presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive match equivalent sessions per season per square that is available and that currently takes place.

For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per grass wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not deemed safe for play.

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from consultation with the clubs. Where the level of play was not made clear through the consultation process, an assumption has been made that all senior teams play between ten and 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play between four and eight matches per year depending on their age and level of competition.



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The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

<b>Potential capacity</b>	Play is below the level the site could sustain
<b>At capacity</b>	Play matches the level the site can sustain
<b>Overused</b>	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

Please note that non-turf wickets have been discounted from the table overleaf. No non-turf wicket squares are recorded as accommodating more than 60 matches per season; therefore, all non-turf wickets are considered to have spare capacity. This generally translates to actual spare capacity for junior cricket as peak time is midweek, in addition to capacity for the Swindon Midweek Cricket League and LMS, whereby non-turf wickets are more commonly used and where matches can be played on a variety of days. However, this is not the case where midweek demand is particularly high, with capacity still limited due to general site usage.

In addition, the capacity analysis assumes that all clubs rotate their wickets evenly. However, this may not be the case at all sites, with central wickets potentially used more commonly than outer wickets that are closer to a boundary, especially for senior matches. The idea is to showcase what the capacity is or could be if best practice is followed for the whole square, rather than doing it on a wicket-by-wicket basis.

### **Peak time demand**

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Swindon Borough is Saturday, although a good proportion of teams are also fielded on a Sunday, including senior women's teams, as well as midweek in shorter formats of the game. In addition, peak time is midweek for junior cricket, albeit that some Sunday cricket is also recorded.

Based on the above, capacity across Saturday's, Sunday's and midweek requires consideration, which the following analysis looks to provide. This involves factoring in the overall capacity level at each site and current usage levels across each relevant period.

### **Spare capacity**

The table below explains the difference between the potential spare capacity referenced in Table 4:15 and the actual spare capacity identified in the final three columns (Saturday, Sunday and midweek).

*Table 4.14: Spare capacity examples*

<b>Potential spare capacity in peak period (examples)</b>	<b>Explanation of spare capacity</b>
<b>No</b>	If the cell has a "no" it means that the pitch is played to capacity within this period and therefore cannot accommodate any further demand.
<b>Yes</b>	If the cell has a "yes" that is not highlighted it means there is spare capacity to accommodate further demand within this designated peak period; however, this is discounted due to unsecure tenure, poor pitch quality, the pitch not being available for community use or the pitch already being played to capacity or being overplayed so it cannot accommodate any additional demand.
<b>Yes</b>	If the cell has a "yes" and is also highlighted in green it means there is actual available spare capacity within this peak period which can be utilised.

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Table 4.15: Capacity analysis of grass cricket squares across Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Users	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (match equivalent sessions per season)	Actual play (match equivalent sessions per season)	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	North East	Blunsdon CC	Yes	Secure	1	Good	6	30	10	20	Yes	Yes	Yes
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Wanborough CC Hippocrikes CC Swindon Midweek League	Yes	Secure	1	Good	7	35	37	2	No	No	No
56	Nalgo Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	Swindon Nalgo CC Coastal Cobras CC Swindon Midweek League	Yes	Secure	1	Good	9	45	44	1	No	No	No
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	Nationwide House CC	Yes	Secure	1	Good	7	35	10	25	No	Yes	Yes
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	Swindon CC Wiltshire CCC Motorola CC Swindon Midweek League	Yes	Secure	1	Good	14 <sup>6</sup>	70	102	32	No	No	No
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	North East	Swindon United Churches CC	Yes	Secure	1	Standard	14	56	16	40	No	Yes	Yes
107	Weir Field	South	Wroughton Wranglers CC	Yes	Secure	1	Standard	6	24	16	8	No	No	Yes

<sup>6</sup> Although the site has 22 grass wickets, this has been reduced to 14 for the purposes of this analysis as several of the outer wickets are considered to be unsuitable for purposeful play.

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### *Actual spare capacity*

A square is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage during a particular peak period. Using the capacity analysis, this section therefore considers the level of actual spare capacity available for each playing format (Saturday cricket, Sunday cricket and midweek cricket).

Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that the actual spare capacity on Saturdays, Sundays and during midweek should not be viewed collectively as utilising it across different days may result in overplay. For example, a site with 12 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity per season theoretically has capacity for one additional senior team and two additional junior teams; however, it does not have capacity for both. As such, this needs to be taken into consideration on a site-by-site basis as and when demand grows.

### *Saturday cricket spare capacity*

For senior men's cricket, peak time is Saturday as this is when most demand exists. As only one match can be played on each square per day, only two Saturday teams can be assigned to play home matches on one square (based on matches being played on an alternate home and away basis). As such, if a square has two Saturday teams already playing home fixtures on it, no actual spare capacity is perceived to exist for additional senior usage, even if overall spare capacity remains. However, if one or no teams are playing on a square on a Saturday, and it has overall capacity, actual spare capacity for senior demand is generally identified.

Taking the above into consideration, there is one square in Swindon Borough that has potential capacity to accommodate further Saturday demand, with this being at Blunsdon Recreation Ground. All remaining squares are already accessed by two Saturday teams or do not have sufficient overall capacity to accommodate another team without resultant overplay.

*Table 4.16: Summary of actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday)*

Site ID	Site name	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	20	Used by one team on a Saturday, meaning spare capacity exists for one team.

The square has actual spare capacity amounting to 20 match equivalent sessions per season and is identified in the North East Analysis Area.

*Table 4.17: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday) by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-
Central North	-
Central South	-
North	-
North East	20
South	-
South East	-
West	-

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Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Swindon	20

### ***Sunday cricket spare capacity***

Similar to Saturday cricket, a square on a Sunday is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is not already used by two teams at this time and is not over, at, or close to capacity. Taking this into consideration, there are three squares in Swindon Borough that have potential capacity to accommodate further Sunday demand, with these being Blunsdon Recreation Ground, Nationwide Sports Club and Swindon United Churches Cricket Club. Each square is currently unused on a Sunday.

*Table 4.18: Summary of actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday)*

Site ID	Site name	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	20	Unused on a Sunday, meaning capacity exists for two Sunday teams.
57	Nationwide Sports Club	25	Unused on a Sunday, meaning capacity exists for two Sunday teams.
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	54	Unused on a Sunday, meaning capacity exists for two Sunday teams.

A total of 99 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity is identified for Sunday cricket, most significantly of which is in the North East Analysis Area with 74 match equivalent sessions identified. The remaining capacity is in the Central South Analysis Area.

*Table 4.19: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-
Central North	-
Central South	25
North	-
North East	74
South	-
South East	-
West	-
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>99</b>

### ***Midweek cricket spare capacity***

For midweek cricket, most squares with spare capacity have actual spare capacity for an increase in demand. This is because matches can be spread across numerous days, meaning capacity is not limited to two teams. Moreover, the presence of junior wickets at certain sites, as well as NTPs, provide further capacity that is generally not available to senior demand.

For a square to have actual spare capacity for midweek cricket, it must not be overplayed and have more than four match equivalent sessions of spare capacity as this is the minimum number of matches an additional junior team would play. However, a square is not

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considered to have capacity for an increase in demand if it is already used by six midweek teams or more as availability is then assumed to be limited (on average, clubs are able to play fixtures on three nights per week, with other nights reserved for other activity such as All Stars and Dynamos).

Taking the above into consideration there are four squares in Swindon Borough that have potential capacity to accommodate further demand during midweek. These are Blunsdon Recreation Ground, Nationwide Sports Club, Swindon United Church Cricket Club and Weir Field.

*Table 4.20: Summary of actual spare capacity for midweek cricket by site*

Site ID	Site name	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Comments
4	Blunsdon Recreation Ground	20	Unused midweek.
57	Nationwide Sports Club	25	Used by two midweek teams; spare capacity exists for an additional four teams.
96	Swindon United Churches Cricket Club	54	Used by one midweek team; spare capacity exists for an additional five teams.
107	Weir Field	8	Used by one midweek team; spare capacity exists for an additional five teams.

A total of 107 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity is identified for midweek cricket, most significantly of which is in the North East Analysis Area with 74 match equivalent sessions identified. The remainder is found in the Central South and South analysis areas.

*Table 4.21: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Midweek) by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-
Central North	-
Central South	25
North	-
North East	74
South	8
South East	-
West	-
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>107</b>

### Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain based on the number of wickets provided and the quality of the square. Although it is possible to sustain certain, minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a reduction in play is recommended on overplayed squares to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

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In Swindon Borough, two sites are currently overplayed. Hooper's Field has exceeded its recommended capacity by a minimal total of two match equivalent sessions per season, whilst Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground) has a more significant deficit of 32 match equivalent sessions. This is due to particularly high levels of activity at the site.

*Table 4.22: Summary of overplay*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)
38	Hooper's Field	South East	2
90	Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground)	Central East	32

The overplay is identified in the Central East Analysis Area and the South East Analysis Area. It totals 34 match equivalent sessions.

*Table 4.23: Summary of overplay by analysis area*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	32
Central North	-
Central South	-
North	-
North East	-
South	-
South East	2
West	-
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>34</b>

It must be noted that the overplay identified at both Swindon Cricket Club and Hooper's Field is because of a general overuse of the number of wickets and not a result of quality (as both are assessed as good).

### 4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Consideration must be given to the extent to which current provision can accommodate current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket. This section therefore looks at actual spare capacity on grass wicket squares considered against overplay and identified future demand. Match equivalent sessions for future demand are calculated using the average number of matches played per season (12 matches for senior Saturday teams, eight match for Sunday teams and four matches for junior teams).

#### **Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (Saturday)**

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday).

*Table 4.24: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Saturday)*



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Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)	Current total (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-	32	32
Central North	-	-	0
Central South	-	-	0
North	-	-	0
North East	20	-	20
South	-	-	0
South East	-	2	2
West	-	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>14</b>

As seen in the table above, there is a shortfall of capacity for Saturday cricket in Swindon Borough amounting to 14 match equivalent sessions per season. This is predominately due to overplay at Swindon Cricket Club in the Central East Analysis Area, although a small shortfall is also found in the South East Analysis Area.

When future demand across the Borough is accounted for, the overall shortfall increases to a projected deficit of 38 match equivalent sessions per season (two additional senior men's teams).

Table 4.25: Future supply and demand balance for Saturday cricket in Swindon Borough

Current total (match equivalent sessions)	Future competitive demand (match equivalent sessions)	Future total (match equivalent sessions)
14	24	38

**Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (Sunday)**

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance for Sunday cricket, which is peak time for senior women's demand but also relevant to some senior men's and junior teams.

Table 4.26: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for Sunday cricket in Swindon

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)	Current total (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-	32	32
Central North	-	-	0
Central South	25	-	25
North	-	-	0
North East	74	-	74
South	-	-	0
South East	-	2	2
West	-	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>65</b>

There is an overall spare capacity amounting to 65 match equivalent sessions per season for Sunday cricket. There is, however, a shortfall in the Central East and South East analysis areas.

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No future demand is forecast for Sunday cricket via population growth, meaning the picture is unaltered when factoring this in. However, through club aspirations and ECB targets, there is expected to be an increase in demand, particularly for senior women's cricket. The following Strategy document will explore this further.

Table 4.27: Future supply and demand balance for Sunday cricket in Swindon Borough

Current total (match equivalent sessions)	Future competitive demand (match equivalent sessions)	Future total (match equivalent sessions)
65	-	65

### Midweek cricket supply and demand analysis

For the midweek supply and demand analysis, actual spare capacity equates to the total spare capacity at each available site or, if it is lower, the total number of additional midweek teams that could be fielded on each available square (on the assumption that one square can accommodate six midweek teams), multiplied by four (the minimum number of matches a junior team plays). This is because midweek demand at peak time is not limited to one day, although some capacity should be reserved for activity such as All Stars and Dynamos cricket.

Table 4.28: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for midweek cricket

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)	Current total (match equivalent sessions)
Central East	-	32	32
Central North	-	-	0
Central South	25	-	25
North	-	-	0
North East	74	-	74
South	8	-	8
South East	-	2	2
West	-	-	0
<b>Swindon</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>73</b>

There is an overall spare capacity amounting to 73 match equivalent sessions per season for midweek cricket. There is, however, a shortfall in the Central East and South East analysis areas.

With no future demand forecast via population growth, the picture is unaltered when factoring this in. That being said, as with Sunday cricket, future demand is projected via club aspirations and ECB targets which the following Strategy document will explore further.

Table 4.29: Future supply and demand balance for midweek cricket in Swindon Borough

Current total (match equivalent sessions)	Future competitive demand (match equivalent sessions)	Future total (match equivalent sessions)
73	-	73

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### 4.6: Conclusion

Overall, there is currently a sufficient supply of cricket squares in Swindon Borough to cater for Sunday and midweek cricket; however, there is a shortfall for Saturday cricket which is projected to worsen when accounting for future demand.

*Table 4.30: Capacity balance for cricket across Swindon Borough*

Playing format	Match equivalent sessions per season				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Saturday	20	34	14	24	38
Sunday	99	34	65	-	65
Midweek	107	34	73	-	73

The above suggests that demand for cricket is not currently being adequately met in Swindon Borough, although this predominately relates to Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground). However, the capacity issues are also exacerbated when considering that some demand is currently exported from the Borough.

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### **Cricket – supply and demand summary**

- There is one square in Swindon Borough that has potential capacity to accommodate further demand on a Saturday, three squares on Sundays and four squares during midweek.
- Swindon Cricket Club and Hooper's Field are overplayed, with this amounting to two match equivalent sessions per season at the latter site and 32 at the former.
- Overall, there is currently a shortfall capacity to meet current demand for Saturday cricket, although spare capacity exists on Sundays and during midweek.

### **Cricket – supply summary**

- In total, there are seven grass wicket cricket squares in Swindon Borough across seven sites.
- There are also 13 active NTPs across 11 sites, with one accompanying a grass wicket square at Nationwide Sports Club and the remaining 12 being standalone.
- Swindon CC has been in dialogue with Tadpole Garden Village regarding the creation of additional provision.
- Two sites previously provided grass cricket squares but no longer do so; Croft Sports Centre and The Elms Recreation Ground (disused).
- Whilst security of tenure is provided to all clubs with a dedicated home venue, several are without a permanent site.
- Of the seven grass wicket cricket squares, four (57%) are rated as good quality, whilst three (43%) are rated as standard quality (there are no poor quality squares identified).
- All NTPs are assessed as standard quality.
- Only four sites currently have dedicated fixed net training provision (Hooper's Field, Nova Hreod Academy, St Josephs Catholic College and Swindon Cricket Club).
- The audit of ancillary facilities determines that two sites accompanied by good quality provision, six by standard quality provision and two by poor quality provision (at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club and Moredon Playing Fields).

### **Cricket – demand summary**

- There are 12 clubs in Swindon Borough which collectively provide 42 teams, equating to 30 senior men's, one senior women's and 11 junior boys' teams.
- The largest club in the authority is Swindon CC with 17 teams.
- Swindon CC is involved in All Stars, Dynamos women's and girls' softball activity.
- In addition to the club-based demand, the Swindon Midweek Cricket League operates for midweek cricket leagues.
- There is a LMS franchise catering for nine teams, with Mannington Rec and Croft Sports Centre used.
- Wiltshire Cricket occasionally uses provision at Swindon Cricket Club (The County Ground) for its demand.
- Swindon CC, Swindon Super Strikers CC and Swindon Royal Challengers CC export demand outside of Swindon Borough due to a lack of provision.
- It is expected that two additional men's team are to be generated by population growth, whilst Swindon CC records total aspirational growth equating to one senior men's, one senior women's team and two junior girls' teams.

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### PART 5: RUGBY UNION

#### 5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the national governing body and is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. Club Developers, Coach Developers, club volunteers and teachers deliver programmes in schools and clubs across Swindon Borough.

The RFU governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side and Tag rugby as well as The Touch Union programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

The rugby union playing season operates from September to May, with senior men's fixtures generally being held on Saturday afternoons whilst ladies, juniors and mini fixtures usually taking place on Sundays.

#### Consultation

There are a total of three community rugby union clubs playing in Swindon Borough. As seen in the table below, all three clubs responded to consultation requests, resulting in a 100% response rate.

Table 5.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Swindon RUFC	Yes
Swindon College Old Boys RUFC	Yes
Supermarine RUFC	Yes

#### 5.2: Supply

Within Swindon Borough, there are 17 rugby union pitches, with 16 (97%) available for community use. Only the pitch at Dorcan Academy is unavailable.

The rugby union provision is spread across the Borough, as seen in the table below. The North East Analysis Area has the highest number of community available pitches with five, whilst the South East Analysis Area is the only area with no rugby union pitch pitches.

Table 5.2: Supply of all rugby union pitches across Swindon Borough

Analysis area	Number of rugby union pitches available for community use	Number of rugby union pitches unavailable for community use	Total	%
Central East	2	1	3	18
Central North	2	-	2	12
Central South	3	-	3	18
North	1	-	1	6
North East	5	-	5	29
South	2	-	2	11
South East	-	-	0	-
West	1	-	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

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The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches that are serviced by goalposts. However, nationally, there are some additional marked spaces that are used, without goalposts, particularly for age grade rugby. It is also common for age grade matches to be played on senior pitches via the use of cones, particularly at sites used by clubs. This is the case across Swindon Borough as no dedicated age grade pitches are supplied.

Recommended pitch dimensions for all formats of play are shown in the table below.

*Table 5.3: Rugby union pitch dimensions*

Team reference	Playing format	Team type	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>7</sup>
Under 7	Age grade mixed	U7s	20 x 12
Under 8	Age grade mixed	U8s	45 x 22
Under 9	Age grade mixed	U9s	60 x 30
Under 10	Age grade mixed	U10s	60 x 35
Under 11	Age grade mixed	U11s	60 x 43
Under 12	U12s Boys U12s Girls	U12s	60 x 43
Age Grade Boys	U13s – U18s	U13s*, U14s, U15s, U16s, U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100 x 70 (with posts at either end) *90 x 60 (with posts at either end)
Age Grade Girls	U13s – U18	U14s (as dual age band w/U13s), U16s (as dual age w/U15s), U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100 x 70 (with posts at either end)
Senior Men	Over 18s	Senior	100 x 70 (with posts at either end)
Senior Women	Over 18s	Senior	100 x 70 (with posts at either end)

Please see the figure below for the location of the pitches. For a key to the map, see Table 5.6.

<sup>7</sup> Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.





Figure 5.1: Location of rugby union pitches within Swindon Borough

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Security of tenure**

Swindon College Old Boys RUFC is based at Nationwide Sports Club; however, it has no formal agreement for its use of the site. It previously approached the operator with a view to securing a tenure agreement to help attract RFU funding but this was declined. The Club also has an annual agreement in place for use of the Ridgeway Leisure Centre, although this is only for its training demand.

Conversely, Swindon RUFC has a long-term lease for its site at Swindon Rugby Football Club from the Council and therefore the Club has security of tenure. Similarly, Supermarine RUFC is part of the overall sports club at Supermarine Sports & Social Club which provides it with security of tenure.

### **Future developments**

Swindon College Old Boys RUFC is exploring options to relocate to a new site. It is currently in discussions with the Council regarding available S106 funding which has revealed that a new housing development adjacent to Coate Water could provide a suitable option. That being said, the Club states that it would prefer to have a more centralised venue and is also considering an option at the greyhound/speedway stadium.

Swindon RUFC is exploring options to redevelop its site and the potential conversion of its second grass pitch to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in order to accommodate some of its match and training demand. As part of this redevelopment, it would also look to relocate its first team pitch to the south field adjacent to its current site, with the clubhouse then to be moved and redeveloped on the existing first team pitch. This redevelopment of the clubhouse will ensure the facility is futureproofed in line with the club's growth development plans to become a true community hub and multisport site.

### **Pitch quality**

The quality of rugby union pitches across Swindon Borough have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor. Furthermore, based on the RFU now employing the use of PitchPower assessments, pitches that have had a recent PQS rating are aligned to the same good, standard, and poor quality ratings, as shown below.

*Table 5.4: PPOSS quality ratings based on PQS ratings*

PQS Rating	PPOSS Quality Rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

Using the above, most rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough are rated at poor quality (nine pitches), with seven assessed as standard quality and one assessed as good. The good quality pitch is at Nationwide Sports Club (PitchPower rating of Advanced).

The table below summarises the quality findings across each analysis area.

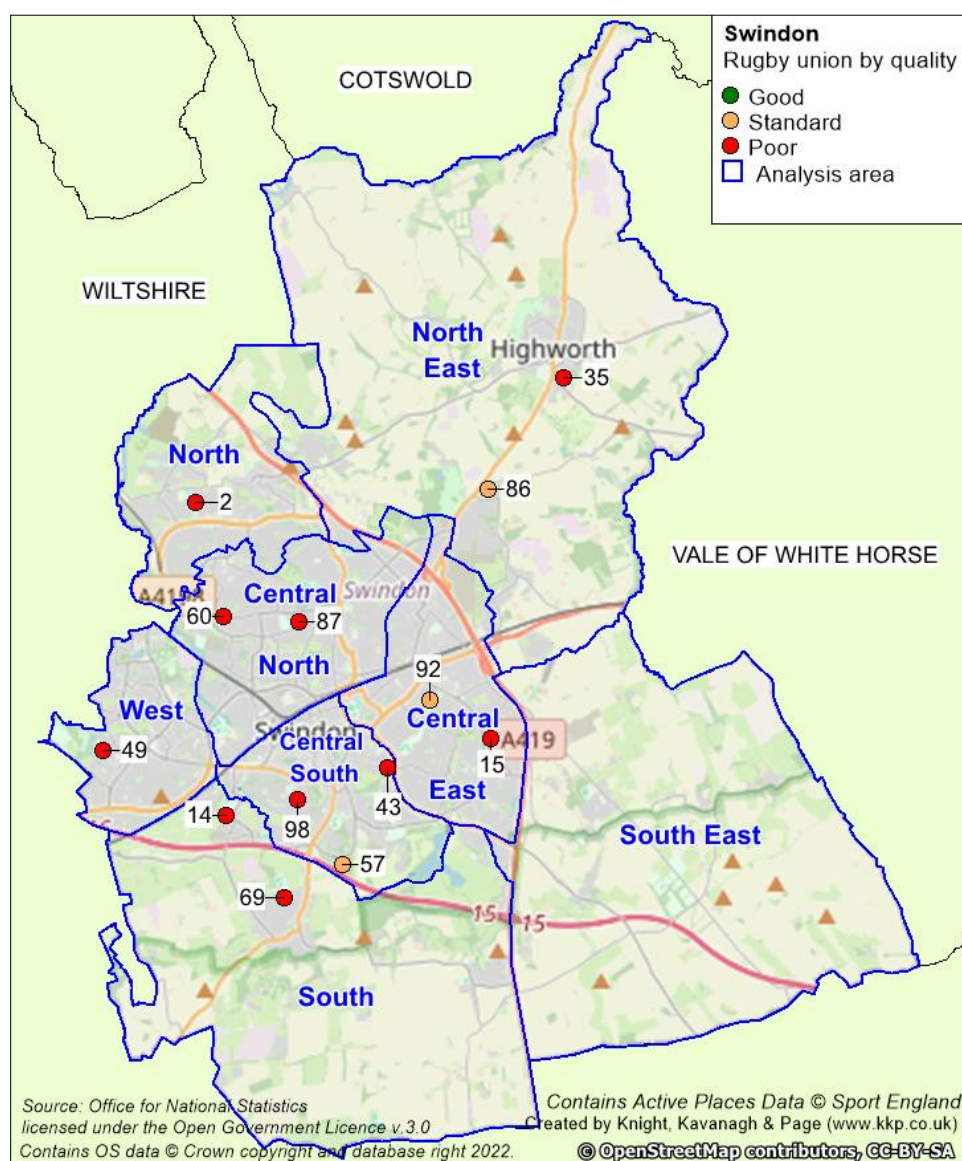
## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.5: Summary of rugby union pitch quality for pitches in Swindon by analysis area

Analysis area	Good	Standard	Poor	Total	%
Central East	-	2	1	3	18
Central North	-	-	2	2	24
Central South	1	-	2	3	18
North	-	-	1	1	6
North East	-	4	1	5	29
South	-	1	1	2	11
South East	-	-	-	-	0
West	-	-	1	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Please see the table overleaf for the full breakdown on a site-by-site basis. This is also supported by the mapping below.

Figure 5.2: Location of rugby union pitches by quality



## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.6: Summary of quality

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Quality rating
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	North	SN25 2AN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
14	Deanery Academy	South	SN1 7DA	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
15	Dorcan Academy	Central East	SN3 5DA	No	1	Senior	No	Poor
35	Highworth Warneford School	North East	SN6 7BZ	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
43	Lawn Manor Academy	Central South	SN3 1ER	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	SN5 6HN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	SN38 4LN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Good
60	Nova Hreod Academy	Central North	SN2 2NL	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	South	SN4 9DJ	Yes	1	Senior	No	Standard
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	SN3 4BZ	Yes	4	Senior	Yes	Standard
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	SN2 1JR	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor
92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Central East	SN3 3LA	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Standard
					1	Senior	No	Standard
98	The Commonweal School	Central South	SN1 4JE	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor



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### PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

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As seen, all pitches in use by clubs across Swindon Rugby Football Club, Supermarine Sports & Social Club, Nationwide Sports Club and Ridgeway Leisure Centre are assessed as good or standard quality, with all remaining pitches then considered to be poor quality.

Swindon RUFC states that pitch quality is adequate at Swindon Rugby Football Club, identifying that it received RFU funding in 2008 for the installation of a drainage system. The pitches receive basic maintenance throughout the season as well as aeration and reseeding at the end of the season. Verti-draining is undertaken during the winter and at the end of the season. However, the site suffers from dog fouling as it is not a locked site.

Swindon Supermarine RUFC reports that whilst the pitches at Supermarine Sports Club are of adequate quality in good weather, they drain poorly and lose a lot of grass during the winter.

Swindon College Old Boys RUFC states that there are no major quality issues at Nationwide Sports Club, although it notes that maintenance could be enhanced.

The pitch at Ridgeway Leisure Centre has recently undergone a PitchPower inspection. This was to provide general maintenance advice, with it being noted that currently little maintenance is performed, other than cutting and marking the provision.

#### ***Ancillary facilities***

Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities.

In Swindon Borough, whilst Nationwide Sports Club is serviced by good quality ancillary provision, Swindon College Old Boys RUFC notes that its access to facilities on site is limited due to the nature of the site.

For Swindon RUFC, the Club notes that its clubhouse is serviced with a bar, function hall, treatment room, gym and changing rooms. Whilst the facility is generally of adequate condition, the changing rooms on site are no longer considered to be fit for purpose and are in need of refurbishment.

Similarly to the above, Swindon Supermarine RUFC has a clubhouse serviced with a bar, changing and toilet facilities. Whilst it is in adequate condition, the general building is now very dated and in need of modernisation. A particular focus for the Club is to improve and expand the women's and girls' facilities on site to bring these to parity with the men's provision.

#### **5.3: Demand**

Demand for rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

For competitive play, rugby union demand is split between adult rugby, age grade boys/girls' rugby (previously junior) and age grade mixed rugby (previously mini). Age grade runs from U13 level to U18 level (otherwise known as colts), whilst age grade mixed is for U7 to U12 level. In addition, new girls' age bands have been established, with the new age bands being at U12, U14, U16 and U18 level.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Competitive play

There are three community rugby union clubs based in Swindon Borough providing a total of 26 teams. This is divided into six senior, 11 age grade boys/girls and nine age grade mixed teams.

Only Supermarine RUFC offers women's and girls teams at present. However, it should be noted that its girls' teams are formed via an amalgamation with other clubs in the wider area including Minchinhampton RUFC and Cirencester RUFC. Nevertheless, as these teams play at Supermarine Sports Club, they are considered to be Supermarine RUFC's teams for the purposes of this study.

*Table 5.7: Summary of Swindon Borough based club demand*

Club	Analysis area	Age grade mixed (U7-U11)	Age grade boys and girls (U12)	Age grade boys and girls (U13-U18)	Adult male and female senior teams
Swindon RUFC	Central East	4	1	1	2
Swindon College Old Boys RUFC	Central South	-	-	1	2
Supermarine RUFC	North East	5	1	7	2
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>

### Training demand

Throughout the Country, many rugby union teams train at their home ground on match pitches. As a result, usage is concentrated which reduces the capacity for match play on these pitches and means they are more likely to be overplayed. A key factor in determining the extent of training on match pitches is the presence of sports lighting.

The table below summarises the training demand for all three community rugby union clubs in Swindon Borough. As seen, each accesses provision via permanent or portable sports lighting.

*Table 5.8: Summary of training demand for Swindon based clubs*

Club	Site ID	Site name	Sports lit training provision	Match equivalent sessions per week
Swindon RUFC	92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Sports lit senior pitch	2.75
Swindon College Old Boys RUFC	69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	Portable sports lighting on senior pitch	2.5
Supermarine RUFC	86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	Sports lit senior pitch	5.75

In total there are 11 match equivalent sessions of training demand occurring on a weekly basis across Swindon Borough. This is through permanent sports lighting at Swindon Rugby Football Club and Supermarine Sports & Social Club, whilst portable lighting is used at Ridgeway Leisure Centre.



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### PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Whilst no issues are reported with training facilities across Swindon Borough, as previously mentioned, Swindon RUFC is exploring options to convert the second grass pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch. This will partly relieve its grass provision of usage.

#### *Use of artificial pitches*

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, with ad hoc use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 3: Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS).

Currently, no 3G pitches in Swindon Borough are World Rugby compliant although, as mentioned, Swindon RUFC aspires to convert its second grass pitch to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch. This need will be examined in the Strategy & Action Plan in addition to determine the potential need for the provision.

#### ***Additional demand***

In addition to training demand from Supermarine RUFC, the Bath Rugby Developing Player Programme also utilises Supermarine Sports & Social Club for its training demand in the area. Whilst exact usage is not known and varies, this is generally considered to equate to two match equivalent sessions per week at the site.

During summer months, a pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club is marked out for rugby league activity, with Swindon St George RLFC accessing the provision. Whilst this does not impact on rugby union capacity due to the seasons running at different times of the year, it can impact on post-season remedial work. This is especially the case given the level of demand received (4.25 match equivalent sessions a week).

#### ***Imported/exported demand***

There is no known rugby union exporting or importing demand out of or into Swindon Borough.

#### ***Latent/unmet demand***

No latent or unmet demand has been identified for rugby union in Swindon Borough.

#### ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from housing developments across Swindon.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Population growth

Based on population projections to 2043 for Swindon Borough (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass rugby pitches that will arise from any growth. As seen in the table below, a single additional age grade mixed team is expected to be generated through population growth alone.

Table 5.9: Borough-wide team generation rates

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Match equivalent sessions per week
Men (19-45yrs)	1:6,457	0.53	0	0
Women (19-45yrs)	1:19,104	0.18	0	0
Boys (13-18yrs)	1:1,195	0.62	0	0
Girls (13-18yrs)	1:2,692	0.26	0	0
Mixed (7-12yrs)	1:1,505	1.06	1	0.25

However, when considering population growth by analysis area, no additional teams are expected to be generated through population growth alone. This is because the growth dissipates and becomes insufficient for a full team to be established.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that NPPF housing requirements indicate that the population will increase far in excess of what is set out above (to 282,527). Moreover, this is expected to increase further when the new NPPF is released in the near future, possibly substantially so. This will therefore need to be taken into consideration following sign off of the PPOSS, with the proceeding Strategy document providing further context as to how population increases from housing growth can be dealt with.

Additionally, it should be noted that the RFU and clubs aim to grow participation across Swindon Borough above and beyond what is solely suggested from population increases. A growth in women and girls' rugby is thought to be particularly likely given current RFU aspirations and due to the upcoming 2025 Rugby World Cup.

### Participation growth

Overall, two clubs report future demand aspirations, equating to one senior men's, two senior women's and one age grade girls team. This subsequently equates to two match equivalent sessions per week on senior pitches.

Table 5.10: Summary of Swindon club aspirational future demand

Club	Analysis area	Future team aspirations	Match equivalent sessions
Swindon RUFC	Central East	1 x senior women's	0.5
Supermarine RUFC	North East	1 x senior men's	0.5
		1 x senior women's	0.5
		1 x age grade girls	0.5
-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

No future demand is expressed by Swindon College Old Boys RUFC.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, only demand identified through club aspirations is taken forward given that only minimal increases are projected via population growth. Whilst judged to be more theoretical and aspirational, the increases expressed by the clubs is considered to be realistic and therefore achievable.

### 5.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing rugby. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times.

It is said by the RFU that a poor quality pitch can accommodate three hours of play per week, with this generally equating to two senior matches (80 minutes plus additional time) and, thus, two match equivalent sessions of demand. For standard quality pitches, this increases to four hours (2.6 match equivalent sessions), whilst for good quality pitches it is five hours (3.3 match equivalent sessions).

*Table 5.11: New pitch capacity guidance (match equivalent sessions per week)*

PPS quality rating	Pitch capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)
Poor	2
Standard	2.6
Good	3.3

This therefore informs the capacity analysis, with current levels of demand compared to the pitch supply in place on a site-by-site basis. In addition, to enable an accurate supply and demand assessment, the following assumptions are applied:

- ✦ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ✦ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches, unless it is known that dedicated smaller pitches are instead used.
- ✦ From U13s upwards, teams play 15v15 and use a full pitch.
- ✦ For senior and age grade boys/girls teams U13-U18, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 match equivalent sessions for each match played based on all teams operating on a home and away basis.
- ✦ For U12s, one match equates to 0.25 match equivalent sessions as a smaller pitch area is utilised and matches are shorter.
- ✦ Age grade mixed teams (U7s-U11s) play on only a proportion of senior pitch, with match play equating to 0.125 match equivalent sessions per week.
- ✦ Training that takes place on marked pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels (one training session is one match equivalent session per week).
- ✦ Internal use of school pitches is added to current play, where community availability is offered, as determined on a site-by-site basis depending on levels of activity.
- ✦ Other usage of pitches (e.g., by football teams) is added as match equivalent sessions based on the level and regularity of play.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *The peak period*

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established for all types of rugby. For senior teams, it is Saturday PM as all senior men's teams play at this time, whilst peak time for mini and junior rugby is Sunday AM.

### *Spare capacity*

To determine 'actual spare capacity', each site with 'potential capacity' has been reviewed. A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting this criterion has consequently been discounted.

There may also be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to the already low carrying capacity of the pitches. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn will aid the improvement of pitch quality. Furthermore, any pitches with unsecured tenure are not considered to have actual spare capacity as no further play should be encouraged on such sites given that future access cannot be guaranteed.

The way the above is represented in the Table 5.12 is as follows:

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	If the cell is highlighted in green with a number, it means that the pitch/es has actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	If the cell has a dash in it, it means the pitch is played to capacity during the peak period.
1	If the cell has a number in it but is not highlighted, it means the pitch has spare capacity at peak period; however, this is discounted. This could be due to unsecure tenure, poor pitch quality, the pitch not being available for community use, or the pitch already being played to capacity or being overplayed (outside of peak time).

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 5.12: Capacity table for rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Community use?	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lights?	Quality rating	Pitch Capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)	Competitive demand (match equivalent sessions per week)	Training sessions (match equivalent sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Actual spare capacity	Comments
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	North	SN25 2AN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
14	Deanery Academy	South	SN1 7DA	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
15	Dorcan Academy	Central East	SN3 5DA	No	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Not available for community use.
35	Highworth Warneford School	North East	SN6 7BZ	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
43	Lawn Manor Academy	Central South	SN3 1ER	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
49	Lydiard Park Academy	West	SN5 6HN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Central South	SN38 4LN	Yes	1	Senior	No	Good	3.3	1.5	-	1.8	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
60	Nova Hreod Academy	Central North	SN2 2NL	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
69	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	South	SN4 9DJ	Yes	1	Senior	Yes (portable)	Standard	2.6	-	2.5	0.1	-	Actual spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate any further usage.
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	SN3 4BZ	Yes	2	Senior	Yes	Standard	5.2	1	5.75	1.55	-	Pitches are overplayed by 1.55 match equivalent sessions.
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	SN3 4BZ	Yes	2	Senior	No	Standard	5.2	4.7	-	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions.
87	Swindon Academy	Central North	SN2 1JR	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.
92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Central East	SN3 3LA	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Standard	2.6	-	2.75	0.15	-	Pitch is overplayed by 0.15 match equivalent sessions.
92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Central East	SN3 3LA	Yes	1	Senior	No	Standard	2.6	2.3	-	0.3	-	Spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate additional usage without overplay being caused.
98	The Commonweal School	Central South	SN1 4JE	Yes	1	Senior	No	Poor	2	1	-	1	-	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.

## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *Actual spare capacity*

Of all the rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough, only two are considered to provide actual spare capacity. This amounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on the pitch at Nationwide Sports Club and on the two non-lit pitches at Supermarine Sports & Social Club. This is assisted by no training demand taking place on pitches.

One pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club and the pitch at Ridgeway Leisure Centre also have minimal amounts of spare capacity amounting to 0.3 and 0.1 match equivalent sessions, respectively. However, this is insufficient to accommodate any additional play as overplay would be caused (e.g., an additional senior team accessing the pitch would be 0.5 match equivalent sessions of demand).

No other pitches provide any spare capacity. This is a result of overplay across the remaining provision at Swindon Rugby Football Club and Supermarine Sports & Social Club, in addition to capacity being discounted across the school sites due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.

### *Midweek spare capacity*

Midweek capacity differs to that of the whole site conclusions which are detailed above. For community rugby union clubs, the only use of any site midweek for playing purposes is for access to grass or artificial grass pitches which have accompanying sports lighting to support midweek training requirements. On any given site, only a proportion of pitches provide sports lighting, and some sites have no provision altogether. As a result of the requirement for sports lighting and many pitches not providing it, many pitches are, in effect, unusable midweek, even if overall spare capacity is provided.

In Swindon Borough, there are three pitches which provide permanent sports lighting, with two provided at Supermarine Sports & Social Club and one at Swindon Rugby Football Club. All three of these are overplayed – Supermarine Sports & Social Club by 1.55 match equivalent sessions and Swindon Rugby Football Club by 0.15 match equivalent sessions. This means that no actual spare capacity exists across Swindon for additional midweek activity.

The pitch at Nationwide Sports Club offers actual spare capacity, but not for training demand given that no sports lighting is in place. Swindon College Old Boys RUFC instead uses Ridgeway Leisure Centre for its training activity but does so almost to capacity via 2.5 match equivalent sessions of demand. This is also via portable lighting, meaning a permanent full pitch sports lighting solution should be sought to better accommodate midweek demand.

### *Overplay*

There are three pitches across two sites in Swindon Borough which are overplayed by a total of 1.7 match equivalent sessions per week. This is summarised by site below.

*Table 5.13: Summary of overplay on senior rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	2	1.55
92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Central East	1	0.15
-	<b>Total</b>	-	<b>3</b>	<b>1.7</b>



## PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 5.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall supply and demand balance (actual spare capacity against overplay) in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week. As no future demand is predicted based on anticipated growth from population increases, aspirational team demand has been brought through to this supply and demand analysis.

*Table 5.14: Supply and demand balance on rugby union pitches (match equivalent sessions)*

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central East	-	0.15	0.15	0.5	0.65
Central North	-	-	0	-	0
Central South	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
North	-	-	0	-	0
North East	0.5	1.55	1.05	1.5	2.55
South	-	-	0	-	0
South East	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Overall, there is a current minimal shortfall of 0.7 match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches to meet current demand, with shortfalls evident in both the Central East and North East analysis areas (where Swindon RUFC and Supermarine RUFC are located, respectively). With this being said, there is marginal spare capacity located in the Central South Analysis Area (where Swindon College Old Boys RUFC is located).

When factoring in future demand from Swindon and Supermarine rugby clubs, the shortfall in the Central East Analysis Area increases to 0.65 match equivalent sessions per week, whilst the shortfall in the North East Analysis Area increases to 2.55 match equivalent sessions per week. This increases the total shortfall across Swindon Borough to 2.7 match equivalent sessions.

### 5.6: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a clear and evident shortfall of grass rugby union provision within Swindon Borough due to the amount of overplay identified, although this is relatively minimal. It relates specifically to Swindon RUFC and Supermarine RUFC, both of which have capacity deficits.

In addition, whilst Swindon College Old Boys RUFC does not presently have any capacity issues, it is without security of tenure at Nationwide Sports Club and therefore is also not being adequately accommodated within the Borough.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Rugby union – supply and demand summary**

- Of all the rugby union pitches in Swindon Borough, only the pitch at Nationwide Sports Club and the two non-lit pitches at Supermarine Sports & Social Club have actual spare capacity, equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week across both sites.
- There are three pitches across Swindon Rugby Football Club and Supermarine Sports & Social Club which are collectively overplayed by a total of 1.7 match equivalent sessions per week.
- Overall, there is a current shortfall of 0.7 match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches to meet current demand, with this increasing to 2.7 match equivalent sessions when factoring in future demand.

### **Rugby union - supply summary**

- Within Swindon Borough, there are 17 rugby union pitches, with 16 (97%) available for community use (only the pitch at Dorcan Academy is unavailable for community use).
- Swindon and Supermarine rugby clubs have security of tenure at their respective home venues; however, Swindon College Old Boys RUFC has been unable to formalise a usage agreement at Nationwide Sports Club.
- Swindon College Old Boys RUFC is exploring options to relocate to a new site, whilst Swindon RUFC is exploring options to convert the second grass pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch.
- Most pitches are rated at poor quality (nine pitches), with seven assessed as standard quality and one assessed as good.
- Swindon RUFC reports that its changing facilities are no longer fit for purpose and Swindon Supermarine RUFC's ancillary facilities are in need of modernisation.
- Swindon College Old Boys RUFC notes that its access to ancillary facilities at Nationwide Sports Club is limited.

### **Rugby union - demand summary**

- There are three community rugby union clubs based in Swindon Borough providing a total of 26 teams and consisting of six senior, 11 age grade boys/girls and nine age grade mixed teams.
- Only Swindon Supermarine RUFC caters for women's and girls' activity.
- Pitches at Swindon Rugby Football Club, Supermarine Sports & Social Club and Ridgeway Leisure Centre are used to accommodate training demand.
- The Bath Rugby Developing Player Programme also utilises Supermarine Sports & Social Club for its training demand in the area, whilst a pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club is used for rugby league activity during summer months.
- No imported, exported, latent or unmet demand is identified.
- A single additional age grade mixed team is expected to be generated through population growth alone, although no increases are projected when looking at individual analysis areas.
- Swindon RUFC has future demand aspirations to field a senior women's team, whereas Supermarine RUFC is looking to increase by one senior men's, one senior women's and one age grade girls' team.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 6: RUGBY LEAGUE

#### 6.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in Britain and Ireland. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League, and the Championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game structure in the UK. The RFL also administers the amateur and junior game across the country in association with the British Amateur Rugby League Association (BARLA).

Most community club rugby league is played throughout the summer season (from February to October). However, rugby league is considered as a winter season sport within schools, colleges and universities and therefore pitch provision for matches and training can also be required throughout the winter months.

Senior rugby league is played on a pitch measuring 100 x 68 metres. The preferred pitch size for U7s, U8s and U9s is 60 x 40 metres, whereas for U10s and U11s it is 80 x 30 metres, with U12s and above generally playing on senior pitches. Teams from U7s to U11s are known as primary teams, whilst teams from U12s to U18s known as junior teams.

#### **Consultation**

There is one club located within the Swindon Borough known as Swindon St George RLFC. The Club responded to consultation, resulting in a 100% response rate.

#### 6.2: Supply

A dedicated rugby league pitch is identified within Swindon Borough, located at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club in the Central North Analysis Area. Swindon St George RLFC previously used the site on a rental basis; however, it reports that it has relocated for the 2024 season due to the operator no longer wanting to mark out the provision.

Due to the above, the Club now uses Swindon Rugby Football Club in the Central East Analysis Area to begin a partnership with the host rugby union club. A rugby league pitch has been marked out at the site, with this being the main pitch. As such, it is now dual use provision that is otherwise used for rugby union from around September-May.

#### **Security of tenure**

Swindon St George RLFC is without long-term security of tenure at Swindon Rugby Football Club as the rugby league provision could be removed at any point, as was also the case at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club. This would be at the behest of the rugby union club that manages the site and presents a significant issue from a rugby league perspective.

#### **Quality**

The quality of the rugby league pitches have been assessed via a combination of site visits and user consultation, with a non-technical assessment carried out as determined by the RFL. This is to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

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The pitch at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club has been assessed as poor quality. The Club reports that it has numerous undulations, which is a result of a football pitch being marked across part of the pitch during the winter months. In addition, limited maintenance takes place on the pitch.

In line with quality findings in the rugby union section, the pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club is assessed as standard quality. It therefore offers an improvement in provision for the Club.

*Table 6.1: Rugby league pitch quality rating*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Quality rating
56	Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club	Central North	1	Senior	Poor
92	Swindon Rugby Football Club	Central East	1	Senior	Standard

For more information in relation to the non-technical site assessment, see Appendix 2.

### **Ancillary provision**

At present, there is an onsite clubhouse at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club; however, this is rated as poor quality. Swindon St George RLFC reports that the ancillary facilities are in a very tired state and in need for improvement.

The ancillary provision at Swindon Rugby Football Club is considered to be of standard quality.

### **6.3: Demand**

There is a single affiliated rugby league club in Swindon Borough, known as Swindon St George RLFC. The Club fields two senior men's team (one open age and one master's team) as well as one junior boys' team and two mini teams. All training and match play now takes place at Swindon Rugby Football Club, with Nalگو Sports Leisure Club no longer accessed.

Senior men's training takes place on Wednesday evenings, with matches played on Saturday afternoons, whilst the junior and mini teams also train on Wednesdays. Matches are played on Sunday mornings (or additional training takes place if no fixtures are arranged).

The Club's total demand equates to 4.25 match equivalent sessions per week on grass provision.

### **Future demand**

Future demand can be defined via several ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand that could arise from developments across Swindon Borough.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

More generally, the RFL identifies that the retention of demand and any future growth is inhibited locally by a lack of clubs existing. This results in players having to travel further, both to access a host club and to get to away fixtures. Based on this, it is looking to establish more centralised events/programs to help grow activity and prevent a drop off, particularly when demand transitions from junior to senior level.

### *Population increase*

Based on population projections to 2043 for Swindon Borough (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass rugby pitches that will arise from any growth. However, due to only minimal existing rugby league demand in Swindon, no increases are projected.

*Table 6.2: Authority wide team generation rates*

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Match equivalent sessions
Men (19-45yrs)	1:19,372	<b>0.18</b>	0	-
Women (19-45yrs)	0	<b>0</b>	0	-
Boys (13-18yrs)	1:9,841	<b>0.09</b>	0	-
Girls (13-18yrs)	0	<b>0</b>	0	-
Mixed (7-12yrs)	1:7,590	<b>0.18</b>	0	-

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that NPPF housing requirements indicate that the population will increase far in excess of what is set out above (to 282,527). Moreover, this is expected to increase further when the new NPPF is released in the near future, possibly substantially so. This will therefore need to be taken into consideration following sign off of the PPOSS, with the proceeding Strategy document providing further context as to how population increases from housing growth can be dealt with.

### *Club aspirations*

Swindon St George RLFC reports that it has tried to establish female training sessions during the 2023 season but has thus far been unable to attract enough demand to field a full team. Over the coming years it aims to do this.

No other growth aspirations are cited.

## 6.4: Supply and demand analysis

The capacity of rugby league pitch provision is linked to quality. This is as follows:

Category	Capacity
Good	3 matches per week
Standard	2 matches per week
Poor	1 match per week

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

As the rugby league pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club is assessed as standard quality, it is deemed to have capacity for two match equivalent sessions per week. As a result, based on existing demand equating to 4.25 match equivalent sessions, Swindon St George RLFC is currently overplaying the provision by 2.25 match equivalent sessions. This is primarily due to the pitch being used for both match and training demand.

It should be stressed that Swindon Rugby Football Club is also currently overused from a rugby union perspective. Whilst rugby league activity will take place at separate times of the year, the dual use will need to be carefully managed e.g., regarding post season remedial work to ensure quality does not deteriorate as a result.

As the rugby league pitch at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club is assessed as poor quality, it is deemed to have capacity for only one match equivalent sessions per week. Swindon St George RLFC was therefore overplaying the provision by 3.25 match equivalent sessions when based at the site. This suggests that its relocation has been beneficial in terms of reducing its capacity deficit.

### 6.5: Conclusion

There is an insufficient supply for rugby league within Swindon Borough for both current and future demand. Whilst the capacity deficit has reduction following the relocation of Swindon St George RLFC to Swindon Rugby Football Club, further action is still required, with a lack of security of tenure also presenting an issue. Furthermore, the dual use nature of the provision will need to be carefully managed given that it is primarily used for rugby union activity.

#### **Rugby league - supply and demand summary**

- ▶ The rugby league pitch at Swindon Rugby Football Club is currently overplayed by 2.25 match equivalent sessions per week, whilst the pitch at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club was also previously overused.
- ▶ There is an insufficient supply for rugby league within Swindon Borough for both current and future demand, with a lack of security of tenure also presenting an issue.

#### **Rugby league - supply summary**

- ▶ There are two rugby league pitches in Swindon Borough, located at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club and Swindon Rugby Football Club.
- ▶ The pitch at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club was previously used Swindon St George RLFC; however, it has relocated for the 2024 season due to the operator no longer wanting to mark out the provision.
- ▶ The Club now uses Swindon Rugby Football Club, where a dual use pitch has been marked out (it is otherwise used for rugby union).
- ▶ The pitch at Nalگو Sport & Leisure Club is assessed as poor quality, as is the onsite clubhouse, whilst provision at Swindon Rugby Football Club is standard.
- ▶ Swindon St George RLFC is without security of tenure at Swindon Rugby Football Club as the rugby league provision could be removed at any point, as was the case at Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club.

#### **Rugby league - demand summary**

- ▶ There is a single affiliated rugby league club located in Swindon Borough, Swindon St George RLFC.
- ▶ The Club currently fields two senior men's team (one open age and one master team), one junior boys' team and two mini teams (there are no women's and girls' teams).
- ▶ All match and training demand takes place at Swindon Rugby Football Club, with Nalگو Sports & Leisure Club no longer accessed.
- ▶ The Club has aspirations to field a senior women's team in the future.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 7: HOCKEY

#### 7.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH).

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on sand filled, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on third generation turf pitches (3G), 40mm pitches may be suitable for introductory level hockey, such as school curriculum low level hockey. EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy details suitability of surface type for varying levels of hockey, as shown below.

*Table 7.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey*

Category	Surface	Playing Level	
		Essential	Desirable
1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	International hockey (training and matches).	Domestic National Premier League competition; Higher levels of player pathway (performance centres and upwards).
2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	Domestic National Premier League competition; Higher levels of player pathway (academy centres and upwards).	All adult and junior league hockey; Intermediate or advanced school hockey; EH competitions for clubs and schools.
3	Sand filled surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	All adult and junior club training and league hockey; EH competitions for clubs and schools; Intermediate or advanced school hockey.	Lower level hockey (introductory level).
4	All 3G surfaces	No hockey.	Lower level hockey (introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

In addition to the above pitch types, EH is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand on a pitch that is also suitable for other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2<sup>8</sup>, is a versatile surface that will ensure that the sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience; it is a sand dressed synthetic turf with a compatible shock pad. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including at schools, with a dynamic carpet which reduces the amount of space required and enables the provision to be utilised to its full potential.

For senior teams, a full-size pitch for matches must measure at least 91.4 x 55 metres excluding surrounding run off areas which must be a minimum of two metres at the sides and three metres at the ends. England Hockey preference is for four metre side and five metre end run offs, with a preferred overall area of 101.4 x 63 metres.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.englishhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2596&sectionTitle=Gen+2+Playing+Surface>

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on one day, providing that it has sports lighting. Training is generally midweek for senior activity and requires access to a pitch and sports lights, whereas many junior teams train on a Sunday as well as during midweek.

### Consultation

There are two affiliated hockey clubs based within Swindon Borough. Of these, both have responded to consultation requests resulting in a response rate of 100%.

Table 7.2: Summary of consultation

Name of club	Responded?
North Wilts HC	Yes
Swindon HC	Yes

## 7.2: Supply

### Full size pitches

There are four full size hockey pitches in Swindon Borough across four sites, with all serviced by sports lighting and all available for community use. There are two located in the Central East Analysis Area, with one in the North Analysis Area and one in the South Analysis Area.

Table 7.3: Summary of full size hockey suitable pitches

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	SN25 2AN	North	Yes	Yes	96 x 58
14	Deanery Academy	SN1 7DA	South	Yes	Yes	105 x 70
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	SN3 5DA	Central East	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
80	St Josephs Catholic College	SN3 3LR	Central East	Yes	Yes	96 x 61

In addition, there is also 10 smaller sized sand based AGPs located across seven sites, as shown in the following table. Eight of these are available for community use, whilst seven are serviced by sports lighting.

Table 7.4: Summary of smaller sized hockey suitable pitches

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Community use?	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
1	Abbey Meads Community Primary School	SN25 4GY	North	2	Yes	Yes	40 x 18
20	Even Swindon Primary School	SN2 2UJ	Central North	1	No	No	55 x 20

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Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Community use?	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
23	Goddard Park Community Primary School	SN3 2QN	Central East	2	Yes	Yes	40 x 18
24	Gorse Hill Primary School	SN2 8BZ	Central North	1	No	No	27 x 18
62	Orchid Vale Primary School	SN25 1UG	North	2	Yes	Yes	40 x 18
63	Peatmoor Community Primary School	SN5 5DP	West	1	Yes	Yes	40 x 20
66	Pgl Liddington	SN4 0DZ	South East	1	Yes	No	35 x 30

Nationally, most smaller sized pitches are considered too small to accommodate any purposeful hockey demand, although some larger ones are utilised for training demand and junior play. In Swindon Borough, none are considered suitable as they are too small, unavailable for community use or without sports lighting. Based on this, the stock is discounted from this point forward as the pitches are not relevant from a hockey perspective.

The supply of full size pitches is shown Figure 7.1 overleaf.

**Management and security of tenure**

Of the full size hockey pitch in Swindon Borough, three of the four (75%) are owned and managed by the education sector and are located at either school or college sites. Elsewhere, the Council's leisure provider GLL manages the pitch at Dorcan Recreation Complex.

Table 7.5: Summary of management of full size pitches

Site ID	Site name	Management
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	School
14	Deanery Academy	School
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	GLL
80	St Josephs Catholic College	School

Notwithstanding the above, only two of the pitches are currently in use for community hockey matches, with those at Dorcan Recreation Complex and Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) not currently accessed by clubs, despite being available.

North Wilts HC accesses St Josephs Catholic College but does not have a secure arrangement, with access only agreed via seasonal rentals. Unsecure tenure is particularly common for hockey clubs at education sites as the providers can theoretically stop external usage at any point outside of existing short-term arrangements.

Conversely, Swindon HC accesses Deanery Academy where a community use agreement is in place linked to the creation of the site and its pitch. However, the Club reports that its anchor agreement has expired (December 2023), with this causing concerns in relation to future price rises.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT



Figure 7.1: Location of full size hockey suitable AGPs within Swindon Borough

### Availability

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The availability at each site is summarised in the table below. However, please note that this only refers to overall availability and opening hours, rather than considering current capacity, which is instead accounted for within the demand part of this section. A pitch may theoretically have good availability but may currently be operating at capacity, especially during peak times, based on existing usage levels.

*Table 7.6: Availability and usage across full size AGPs across Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Availability	Midweek availability in the peak period (hours)	Weekend availability in the peak period (hours)
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	Mon to Fri - 17:00 – 21:00 Weekend - 09:00 - 17:00	18/18	16/16
14	Deanery Academy	Mon to Fri - 17:00 – 22:00 Saturday - 09:00 – 18:30 Sunday - 09:00 – 18:00	18/18	16/16
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	Mon to Thur - 18:00 – 22:00 Friday - 17:00 – 22:00 Saturday - 09:00 – 16:00 Sunday - 09:00 – 15:00	18/18	13/16
80	St Josephs Catholic College	Mon to Fri - 16:30 – 22:30 Weekend - 08:00 - 18:00	18/18	16/16

As seen, each pitch is available throughout the peak period.

### Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, together with maintenance levels, that most commonly affects quality. An issue for hockey nationally is that some providers did not financially plan to replace the carpet when first installed, leading to many pitches now being outside of their recommended lifespan and, consequently, poor quality.

For the PPOSS, each pitch has been assigned a quality rating of good, standard or poor following site assessments and provider/user consultation. This rating is linked to the condition and age of the playing surface, as well as surrounding hard areas and the maintenance that is undertaken. For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

The following table indicates when each hockey suitable AGP in Swindon Borough was installed or last resurfaced, together with the quality ratings assigned. As seen, the pitches at Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College are assessed as good quality, the pitch at Dorcan Recreation Complex is assessed as standard, and the pitch at Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) is poor.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 7.7: Summary of hockey suitable AGP quality

Site ID	Site Name	Number of pitches	Community use?	Date of installation / last resurface	Quality
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	1	Yes	2007	Poor
14	Deanery Academy	1	Yes	2019	Good
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	1	Yes	2011	Standard
80	St Josephs Catholic College	1	Yes	2022	Good

The pitch at Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) is considered to be poor quality as it as far exceeded its recommended lifespan having not been resurfaced since 2007. The pitch however, is not currently utilised by a hockey club and instead is utilised for football training on a weekly basis.

The pitch at Dorcan Recreation Complex has also exceeded its recommended lifespan, with imminent resurfacing required before quality further deteriorates. It is also not currently used for hockey.

Where pitches are assessed as good or standard quality, sinking funds should still be put into place (where not already provided) to ensure that refurbishment can go ahead if and when required.

### Ancillary provision

The supporting provision at both Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College have adequate supporting ancillary facilities, with neither club reporting any issues. However, whilst not currently used for hockey, the changing facilities at Dorcan Recreation Complex are considered to be poor quality having not been refurbished in 20 years.

### 7.3: Demand

There are two hockey clubs based in Swindon Borough. These are both relatively large and collectively cater for 29 teams, as summarised by gender and age group in the following table.

Table 7.8: Summary of team numbers

Name of club	Analysis area	Senior men	Senior women	Juniors	Other	Total
North Wilts HC	Central East	2	2	6	-	10
Swindon HC	South	4	3	10	2	19
<b>Total</b>		6	5	16	2	29

In total, there are six senior men's, five senior women's and 16 junior teams currently provided as well as two other team variations (including veteran's and mixed teams). The largest club is Swindon HC (19 teams), whilst the smallest is North Wilts HC (10 teams).

The junior teams are made up of dedicated girls' teams, dedicated boys' teams and mixed teams.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Across the clubs, there are currently 376 total members, with 240 assigned to Swindon HC and 136 assigned to North Wilts HC. Within this, there are 117 senior men's, 112 senior women's, 70 junior boys' and 77 junior girls' members.

*Table 7.9: Summary of club membership*

Name of club	Analysis area	Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
North Wilts HC	Central East	42	61	16	17	<b>136</b>
Swindon HC	South	75	51	54	60	<b>240</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>117</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>376</b>

### ***Additional demand***

Away from club-based match play and training demand, there are also several initiatives supported by EH that operate across the Country, including:

- ◀ Back to Hockey
- ◀ Flyerz Hockey
- ◀ Hockey Heroes
- ◀ Quicksticks
- ◀ Rush Hockey
- ◀ In2 Hockey
- ◀ Walking Hockey

Where undertaken, these initiatives add to the hockey demand at sites. Each is summarised below.

#### *Back to Hockey*

Back to Hockey sessions are fun, social and informal and are aimed at people who either have not played for a number of years or that are looking to play for the first time. They are generally hosted by clubs, with EH providing guidance on how to deliver the programme.

Benefits of clubs being involved with Back to Hockey include:

- ◀ More members
- ◀ More casual players
- ◀ Additional income
- ◀ Extra publicity
- ◀ New volunteers

In Swindon Borough both hockey clubs operate Back to Hockey sessions at their primary venues.

#### *Flyerz Hockey*

Flyerz is the name widely associated with grassroots disability hockey in Great Britain. There are now more than 50 Flyerz sections across England, Wales, and Scotland, providing inclusive hockey for disabled people.

There are no Flyerz Hockey sessions within Swindon Borough, with the nearest clubs to accommodate Flyerz hockey located in Wiltshire at Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett hockey clubs.

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### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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#### *Hockey Heroes*

Hockey Heroes is a six-week hockey programme aimed at beginners (children aged five to eight) that not only focuses on helping children develop some physical hockey skills such as dribbling, passing and goal scoring, but also places as much emphasis on character development including teamwork, communication, perseverance and respect.

No Hockey Heroes sessions currently operate in Swindon Borough or nearby.

#### *In2Hockey*

In2Hockey is England Hockey's adapted game format aimed at players 10-14 years old and is played as a 6-a-side game without goalkeepers, or as a 7-a-side game with goalkeepers.

In Swindon Borough, Swindon HC has In2Hockey teams.

#### *Quicksticks*

Quicksticks is designed to introduce young people (aged 7-11) to the game of hockey. It is 4-a-side, can be played on any surface, and uses a larger, lighter and safer ball. It is a fun, fast, safe and exciting game that has been designed so that anyone can deliver the game, regardless of previous hockey experience.

North Wilts HC offer dedicated Quicksticks delivery sessions/games, in addition junior hockey festivals in Wiltshire County at the U8 age group play to Quicksticks rules.

#### *Rush hockey*

Rush hockey is a new way to play hockey, designed as a small-sided hockey game for adults. It can be played by men and women in mixed or single gender teams, indoors or outdoors and on pitches of varying sizes. Teams are four or five aside and it is played with a standard hockey stick but with unique goals and balls.

No Rush hockey activity is identified in Swindon Borough or nearby.

#### *Walking hockey*

Increasing in popularity, walking hockey is perfect for players looking for a less physically demanding version of the game but still enjoy showing their skills and being involved in the team and social aspect.

Swindon HC currently offers Walking Hockey sessions.

#### ***Imported/exported demand***

No imported or exported demand is identified in Swindon Borough, with no clubs travelling into or outside of the Borough for home matches.

#### ***Latent/unmet demand***

From consultation, no latent or unmet demand in Swindon Borough is reported. In effect, both clubs are adequately accommodating their current demand across the two venues accessed.

### ***Future demand***

Growing participation is a key aim within EH's Strategic Plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities, schools and regional and local leagues as well as developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Overall, it has an aim to double participation over the next ten years, meaning that it does not consider team generation rates to provide an accurate representation of potential growth.

Notwithstanding the above, no clubs identify that they are currently looking to increase their number teams, which suggests that no future demand is likely in Swindon Borough.

### **7.4: Capacity analysis**

When assessing the capacity of AGPs, all usage needs to be taken into account. This is because, in addition to hockey activity, there is often heavy football usage of the provision and occasionally other sporting use which can take capacity away from hockey-based demand. The table below therefore details the usage at all sites providing full size hockey suitable pitches in Swindon Borough, comparing availability during peak time against hockey use and other activity as well as taking into consideration any remaining spare capacity.

Peak time for senior hockey matches is Saturday, whilst it is Sunday for junior hockey matches. For training, it is Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, with Mondays and Fridays generally not considered as teams do not want to train in such close proximity to weekend matches. Spare capacity is considered to exist for matches if there are currently less than eight teams assigned to a pitch on a Saturday or Sunday (and if the remaining capacity is not being utilised for other purposes). It exists for training if at least a section of a pitch is available for at least an hour during midweek evenings (Tuesday-Thursday).

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Table 7.10: Summary of available full size hockey pitch usage

Site ID	Site	No. of pitches	Availability in the peak period (hours)	% of hockey usage	% of other usage (e.g., football)	Hockey club users	Training capacity comments (mid-week)	Match capacity comments (weekend)	Capacity summary
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	1	34	-	100%	-	Limited usage for some formal football training and informal recreation five a side football.	Limited usage for some formal football training and informal recreation five a side football.	Spare capacity for additional hockey training and match play demand, although quality will need to be improved.
14	Deanery Academy	1	34	60%	40%	Swindon HC	Used as Swindon HC's primary venue, but also used for football training demand and extra-curricular use.	Used as Swindon HC's primary venue, but also used for small-sided football activity and extra-curricular use.	Spare capacity for additional hockey training and on Sundays for matches; however, the pitch is nearly played to capacity on Saturdays.
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	1	31	-	100%	-	Limited usage for some formal football training and informal recreation five a side football.	Limited usage for some formal football training and informal recreation five a side football.	Spare capacity for additional hockey training and match play demand.
80	St Josephs Catholic College	1	34	30%	70%	North Wilts HC	Used as Swindon HC's primary venue, but also used for football training demand and extra-curricular use.	Used as Swindon HC's primary venue, but also used for small-sided football activity and extra-curricular use.	Spare capacity for additional hockey training and match play demand on Saturdays and Sundays.

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### 7.5: Supply and demand analysis

#### Match play analysis

It is suggested that a full size, sports-lit hockey pitch is able to accommodate four match equivalent sessions on one day. With teams playing on a home and away basis, this means that one AGP is able to cater for eight 'home' teams at peak time (as one team equates to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week).

Using the above calculations, on the basis that there are currently four community available pitches in Swindon Borough, there is theoretical capacity to accommodate up to 32 hockey teams. However, quality issues mean that some of the provision cannot be used. The table below therefore further explores the level of capacity actually provided, firstly for senior hockey (i.e., on a Saturday).

Table 7.11: Summary of hockey pitch capacity for match play

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Potential capacity (teams)	Actual capacity (teams)	Comments
2	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	North	1	8	0	Capacity is discounted due to poor quality.
14	Deanery Academy	South	1	8	8	Full availability.
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	Central East	1	8	8	Full availability.
80	St Josephs Catholic College	Central East	1	8	8	Full availability.
-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>24</b>	-

As seen, it is determined that the current provision can accommodate up to 24 senior teams on a Saturday, with this equating to 12 match equivalent sessions per week. With 11 senior teams currently provided (equating to 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week), this suggests that supply is sufficient to meet demand, with ample spare capacity remaining for growth and an increase in usage.

Furthermore, when studying supply and demand by analysis area, overall spare capacity remains for an increase in demand, although there is limited availability within the South Analysis Area. Spare capacity for just one further senior team on Saturdays exists at Deanery Academy.

Table 7.12: Match play capacity by analysis area (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Current capacity (teams)	Current demand (teams)	Supply and demand balance (teams)
Central East	16	2	14
Central North	0	0	0
Central South	0	0	0
North	0	0	0
North East	0	0	0
South	8	7	1

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Analysis area	Current capacity (teams)	Current demand (teams)	Supply and demand balance (teams)
South East	0	0	0
West	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>

For junior hockey matches, the need for pitches is generally less than it is for senior hockey. This is because younger age groups can play on half a pitch (meaning two fixtures can take place at one time). As such, provision adequate to accommodate senior demand is also likely to be adequate to accommodate junior demand, although the same capacity pressures are likely to apply where existing usage is significant.

### *Training analysis*

In terms of capacity for training, both sites utilised by clubs (Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College) are close to capacity during midweek, with the hockey demand competing for booking slots with football activity and other users. However, both are currently being adequately accommodated, suggesting that supply is sufficient.

In addition, if the supply of 3G pitches is increased in line with Part 3 of this report, this should free up additional midweek capacity on sand-based pitches for hockey demand. This is because some existing football users will likely transfer demand to the more preferential surface type.

### **7.5: Conclusion**

Overall, there is currently a sufficient supply of hockey suitable pitches in Swindon Borough, although capacity pressures do exist in addition to security of tenure issues. Priority should therefore be placed first and foremost on protecting the pitches that are currently in use to ensure that the situation does not worsen, with this therefore relating to provision at Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Hockey – supply and demand summary**

- Overall, there is currently a sufficient supply of hockey suitable pitches in Swindon Borough, although some capacity pressures do exist in addition to security of tenure issues.
- Priority should be placed on protecting the pitches currently in use for hockey, with this therefore relating to provision at Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College.

### **Hockey – supply summary**

- There are four full size hockey suitable AGPs in Swindon Borough, with all serviced by sports lighting.
- There are also ten smaller size sand-based pitches provided, although none are suitable for purposeful hockey usage.
- Of the full size hockey pitches, three of the four are owned and managed by the education sector and are located at either school or college sites, with the remaining managed by GLL.
- An unsecure arrangement exist for North Wilts HC at St Josephs Catholic College, with access only agreed via seasonal rentals.
- There is no current hockey usage of the pitches at Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) or Dorcan Recreation Complex.
- All pitches that offer community use have good availability throughout peak periods.
- The pitches at Deanery Academy and St Josephs Catholic College are assessed as good quality, the pitch at Dorcan Recreation Complex is assessed as standard, and the pitch at Abbey Park School (Northside Campus) is poor.
- Ancillary provision is generally considered to be adequate, although issues are identified at Dorcan Recreation Complex.

### **Hockey – demand summary**

- There are two hockey clubs based in Swindon Borough collectively catering for 29 teams.
- In total, there are six senior men's, five senior women's and 16 junior (mixed) teams currently provided as well as two other team variations (including veteran's and mixed teams).
- The largest club is Swindon HC (19 teams), whilst the smallest is North Wilts HC (10 teams).
- Across the clubs, there are currently 376 total members, with 240 assigned to Swindon HC and 136 assigned to North Wilts HC. Within this, there are 117 senior men's, 112 senior women's, 70 junior boys' and 77 junior girls' members.
- Various EH initiatives are implemented by both Swindon and North Wilts hockey clubs.
- No imported or exported demand is identified.
- No latent or unmet demand has been discovered.
- There is no specific future demand expressed by clubs.
- Based on current demand, all full size pitches have some level of spare capacity to accommodate additional usage.

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## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### PART 8: OTHER GRASS PITCH SPORTS

#### 8.1: Baseball/softball

##### *Introduction*

The British Softball Federation (BSF) and British Baseball Federation (BBF) are responsible for the administration and governance of softball and baseball in the UK and are part of the overarching body for the sports, known as Baseball Softball UK (BSUK). BSUK has aligned its strategic goals to Sport England's Uniting the Movement, an initiative concentrated on increasing the sporting activity levels across under-represented communities, in the hope of securing investment for 2022-2027.

Baseball, the more commonly known of the two sports, is played between two teams of nine players, both of which alternate between batting and fielding across nine innings. In contrast, three forms of softball exist in the UK: slow pitch, fast pitch, and indoor.

##### *Consultation*

Consultation has been carried out with the Swindon Softball League to inform this section of the report.

##### *Supply*

There are no dedicated, formal baseball or softball diamonds located in Swindon Borough. However, the Deanery Academy in the South Analysis Area is used by The Swindon Softball League via its playing field.

##### *Demand*

There is no formal demand for baseball identified within Swindon Borough.

For softball, the Swindon Softball League was founded in 2002. It currently hosts nine teams in slow pitch softball, consisting of a championship division containing four teams and a development division with five teams. It is recognised by BSUK.

Both divisions are gender inclusive, social, and feature a variety of abilities for those aged over 14. Teams are made up by a minimum of 10 players in a squad and are further outlined below.

##### *Championship Teams:*

- ◀ Aries
- ◀ Panthers
- ◀ Cubs
- ◀ Spitfires

##### *Development Teams:*

- ◀ Centurions
- ◀ Dodgers
- ◀ Hawks
- ◀ Hurricanes
- ◀ Phoenix

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### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Outdoor fixtures take place at the Deanery Academy on Monday and Thursday evenings typically from May until August depending on scheduling. Training also takes place on the same days at the same venue from April until September.

In addition, winter training and matches also take place at the site from January until March, subject to venue availability. However, this is via its indoor provision.

Over the years, the Swindon Softball League has hosted over 20 teams in total, fluctuating from three to 10 teams in any given season. It openly welcomes new players and teams as part of its quest to share softball with as many people as possible.

#### ***Supply and demand analysis***

The Deanery Academy appears to provide adequate facilities to satisfy the demand for baseball/softball participation in Swindon Borough via the Swindon Softball League. As such, long-term, continued access to the site should be sought to ensure that this remains the case.

### **8.2: American football**

#### ***Introduction***

The British American Football Association (BAFA) is responsible for the governance of the sport which is continuing to grow in popularity in the UK. There are now hundreds of clubs and thousands of players competing regularly across the Country.

The American football season in England generally runs from May until August. Teams play either the full contact version of the sport or a version known as flag football, which follows the same principles but with the removal of a players' flag constituting a tackle. This makes it more suitable for younger players and beginners.

#### ***Consultation***

There is one American football club in Swindon, known as Swindon Storm. Attempts have been made to consult with the Club; however, these have been unsuccessful.

#### ***Supply***

There is one dedicated American football pitch within Swindon located at Southbrook Playing Fields in the Central North Analysis Area, which is regulation standard (100 yards in length). Because of this, the Club also has access to two junior pitches via halving the full-size pitch.

The quality of the pitch is considered to be standard, with no significant issues identified. Furthermore, it should be noted that as the pitch is dedicated to American football, its condition should remain consistent throughout and between playing seasons. Nationally, many American football pitches are dual use (often with rugby union), which can result in added wear and tear and a lack of post-season remedial work. That is not the case here.

Onsite ancillary facilities are also accessible at the site for both training and matchdays. This includes changing rooms and toilets.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***Demand***

Swindon Storm fields four teams in total. This consists of one senior men's, one senior women's, one U19s and one U16s team. The teams all play the full contact version of the sport and compete in the BAFA National League.

The Club carries out all its training sessions and matches at Southbrook Playing Fields, where it moved to in 2020. Matches are played on Sundays and training sessions are held on an ad hoc basis.

### ***Supply and demand analysis***

In isolation, the provision at Southbrook Playing Fields is sufficient to cater for the needs of American football in Swindon Borough due to it supplying a dedicated pitch and with only one club accessing it. That being said, with four teams accessing it for matches, this equates to two match equivalent sessions per week, which is likely close to its capacity (although no clear guidance exists). Quality improvements and/or access to additional provision may therefore be required if demand increases.

#### **Other grass pitch sports - supply and demand summary**

- ◀ In isolation, the provision at Southbrook Playing Fields is sufficient to cater for the needs of American football due to it supplying its own dedicated pitch; however, it is likely close to its capacity based on current demand levels during the season.
- ◀ The Deanery Academy appears to provide adequate facilities to satisfy the demand for baseball/softball participation via the Swindon Softball League; continued access to the site should be sought to ensure that this remains the case.

#### **Other grass pitch sports - supply summary**

- ◀ There is one dedicated American football pitch, located at Southbrook Playing Fields and assessed as standard quality.
- ◀ There are no formal baseball/softball diamonds identified in Swindon Borough; however, the Swindon Softball League accesses the Deanery Academy and uses its playing field.

#### **Other grass pitch sports - demand summary**

- ◀ There is one American football club, known as Swindon Storm, which fields four teams (one senior men's, one senior women's, one U19s and one U16s) at Southbrook Playing Fields.
- ◀ There is no baseball demand identified, whereas for softball, the Swindon Softball League currently caters for nine teams across two divisions, with fixtures and training taking place at the Deanery Academy every Monday and Thursday evening.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 9: TENNIS

#### 9.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally across Swindon Borough. It has recently restructured its strategic approach to target several national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites.

#### Consultation

Six tennis clubs are identified in Swindon Borough, all of which have responded to consultation requests. This results in an 100% response rate.

Table 9.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Chiseldon TC	Yes
Delta Tennis Centre	Yes
Highworth TC	Yes
Nationwide House TC	Yes
Swindon Tennis Centre	Yes
Wanborough TC	Yes

#### 9.2: Supply

There are 81 tennis courts identified in Swindon Borough across 21 sites. Of these, 46 courts across 13 sites are available for community use and 35 courts across eight sites are unavailable. All unavailable courts are located at schools.

The North East Analysis Area contains the highest number of community available courts with 11 (24%), followed by the Central North Analysis Area with ten (22%) available courts. The Heysham and West Analysis Area has the fewest number of community available courts with only three (7%).

Table 9.2: Summary of the number of courts in Swindon Borough

Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use	Total	%
Central East	5	-	5	6
Central North	10	12	22	27
Central South	6	10	16	20
North	3	4	7	9
North East	11	-	11	14
South	4	3	7	9
South East	4	-	4	5
West	3	6	9	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the above, the LTA reports that the central and southern areas of the Borough are relatively well provided for in relation to public tennis courts, with good facilities provided and online booking available. However, in contrast, the northern parts have limited accessible provision, particularly in areas of large population and housing.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Please note that courts are classified as being available for community use provided that they are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a mixture of both). All unavailable courts in the Borough of Swindon are located at school sites.

Figure 9.1 shows the location of the courts servicing Swindon Borough, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 9.3.

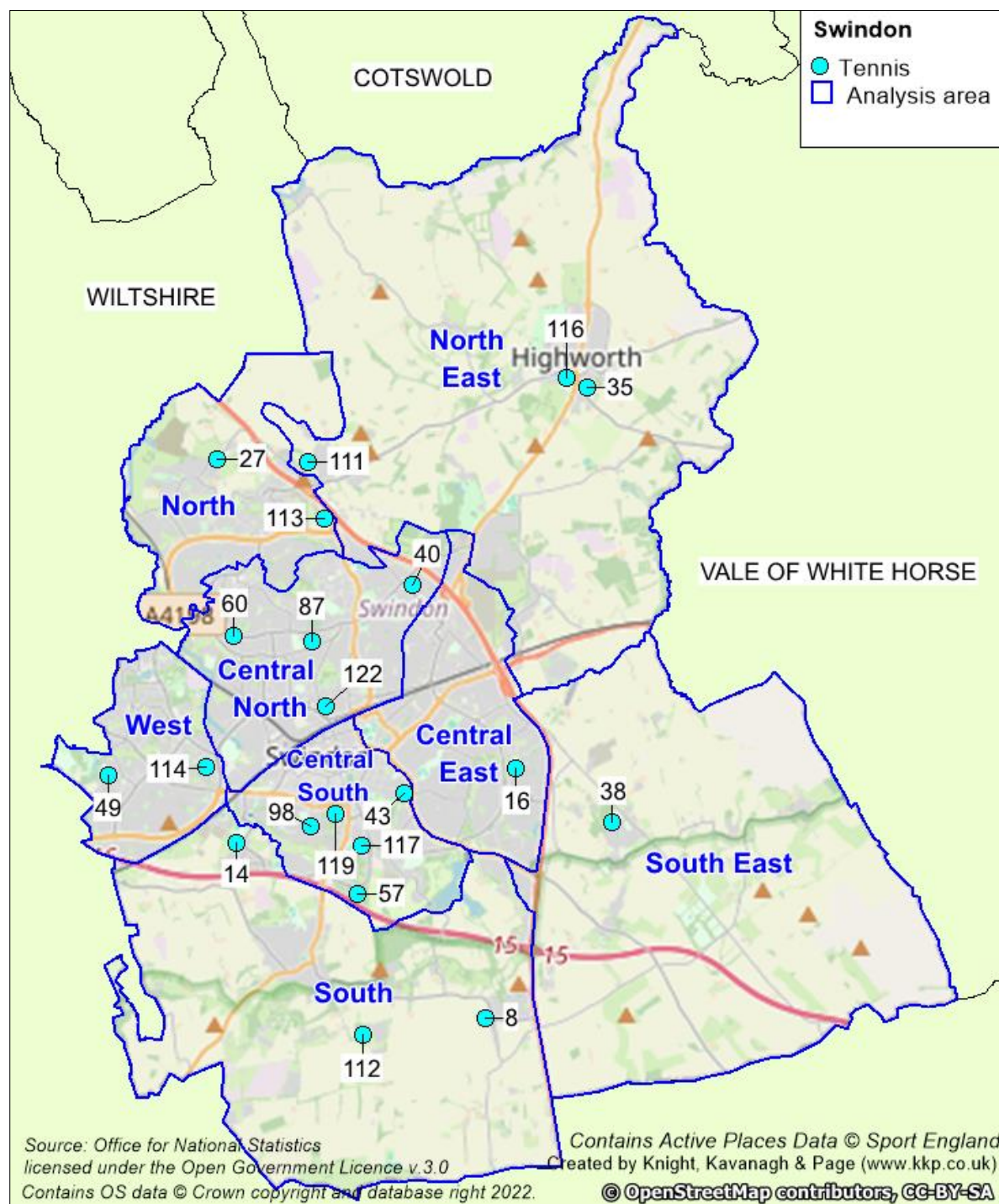


Figure 9.1: Location of tennis courts in Swindon Borough



PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 9.3: Tennis courts in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Club user	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	SN4 0LE	South	Chiseldon TC	Parish council	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
14	Deanery Academy	SN1 7DA	South	-	Education	No	3	No	Polymeric	Good
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	SN3 5DA	Central East	-	Council	Yes	5	Yes	Macadam	Standard
27	Great Western Academy	SN25 2PP	North	-	Education	No	4	No	Polymeric	Good
35	Highworth Warneford School	SN6 7BZ	North East	-	Education	Yes	5	No	Macadam	Good
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Wanborough TC	Council	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
38	Hooper's Field	SN4 0AN	South East	Wanborough TC	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Good
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	-	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Standard
43	Lawn Manor Academy	SN3 1ER	Central South	-	Education	No	6	No	Macadam	Poor
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	-	Education	No	6	No	Macadam	Standard
57	Nationwide Sports Club	SN38 4LN	Central South	Nationwide House TC	Sports club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
60	Nova Hreod Academy	SN2 2NL	Central North	-	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Poor
87	Swindon Academy	SN2 1JR	Central North	-	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Standard
98	The Commonweal School	SN1 4JE	Central South	-	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Poor
111	Blunsdon Fitness +	SN26 7AS	North East	-	Commercial	Yes	1	No	Artificial turf	Good
112	Club at Alexandra House	SN4 0QJ	South	-	Commercial	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
113	David Lloyd	SN25 4DL	North	-	Commercial	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial turf	Good
114	Delta Tennis Centre	SN5 7XF	West	Delta Tennis Centre	Council	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Standard
116	Highworth Tennis Club	SN6 7BW	North East	Highworth TC	Sports club	Yes	5	Yes	Macadam	Standard
117	Marriott Leisure Club	SN3 1SH	Central South	-	Commercial	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Poor
119	Quarry Road	SN1 4EN	Central South	-	Council	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Good
122	St Marks Recreation Ground	SN2 1DB	Central North	Swindon Tennis Centre	Community organisation	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
122	St Marks Recreation Ground	SN2 1DB	Central North	Swindon Tennis Centre	Community organisation	Yes	6	No	Macadam	Good

In addition to the above courts, two courts are marked out at Goddard Avenue. These courts have not had nets up or been utilised for tennis in over ten years and now standard as open courts for public access. Due to the courts not being considered to cater for tennis demand they have not been included within the supply.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### ***LTA Youth provision***

LTA Youth provides children with an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. It utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques. This has five levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

- ◆ Blue: Learn the Basics – tennis lessons for ages 4-6
- ◆ Red: Serve, Rally and Score – tennis lessons for ages 6-8
- ◆ Orange: Develop a Rounded Game - tennis lessons for ages 8-9
- ◆ Green: Test your Skills - tennis lessons for ages 9-10
- ◆ Yellow: Take your Skills Further – tennis lessons for ages 10+

Four smaller courts have been identified in Swindon Borough that are suitable for the above, all provided at St Marks Recreation Ground. In addition, all full size courts can also be used via temporary markings or cones.

### ***Padel tennis***

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

In order to grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, whereas there were 350 at the end of 2023 and 129,000 identified participants, with this illustrating significant growth. It is therefore envisaged that the infrastructure and participation in padel will continue to increase substantially in the next five years, with the LTA identifying an aim to grow the number of courts to 1,000 and the number of players to 400,000.

There are currently no padel tennis courts in the Swindon Borough. However, plans are in place to establish provision as part of wider site proposals at Broome Manor Golf Club, with a planning application recently submitted that includes four padel courts.

Given the lack of current provision, the LTA reports that padel facilities should be considered in the near future to offer playing opportunities for residents. Linked to this, it has recently carried out a mapping exercise that sets out the level of provision that could be sustained within a local authority, based on population and demand, with this identifying that 17 courts are warranted in Swindon Borough.

In terms of future supply, the LTA states that a variety of tennis environments can be considered, with padel courts often situated next to or managed by those running existing tennis facilities. To that end, padel court development at leisure centre sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model. Furthermore, they can benefit clubs and particularly those that may be otherwise struggling due to the additional revenue that they can provide.

Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging clubs or local authorities to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of traditional courts remains sufficient.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Indoor tennis**

Although not covered by the scope of this study, it should be referenced that there are also two indoor tennis facilities in Swindon Borough, located at David Lloyd and Delta Tennis Centre. These provide four courts each and are therefore capable of accommodating additional tennis demand, above and beyond the capacity of the outdoor courts.

Delta Tennis Centre in particular is considered to be a strategic priority by the LTA, with a need to retain and develop it as a publicly bookable facility. Further information is included in the Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

### **Pickleball**

Generally following the basic principles of tennis, pickleball is a racket or paddle sport in which two players (singles) or four players (doubles) hit a plastic ball net over a net. It is governed nationally by Pickleball England.

In Swindon Borough, Delta Tennis Centre provides for the sport, generally via its indoor provision. Further information regarding this can therefore be found in the Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy.

### **Management and security of tenure**

The table below highlights the management of tennis courts within Swindon Borough. Most are provided by education sites, although only five of these are reportedly available for community use (at Highworth Warneford School). There are 17 courts managed by sports clubs or community organisations, 18 managed by the Council or a parish council, and six courts managed commercially.

*Table 9.4: Tennis courts by management type (number of courts)*

Community use status	Education	Council	Sports club / community organisation	Commercial
Available	5	18	17	6
Unavailable	35	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>

With only 18 council-owned courts, it should be noted that this is a relatively low figure when compared to most local authorities nationally.

Chiseldon TC reports that it currently has a lease for its courts at Chiseldon Recreation Ground the local parish council. However, this agreement is entering into its last few years, with it due to expire in late 2026. As a result, the Club is looking into the process of extending arrangement in order to increase its security of tenure.

### **Court type**

Most courts in Swindon Borough have a macadam surface, with 70 being of this type. There are then seven polymeric courts (four at Deanery Academy and three at Great Western Academy) and four artificial turf courts (one at Blunsdon Fitness and three at David Lloyd).

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The estimated lifespan of macadam, polymeric and artificial turf courts is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put in place for eventual refurbishment.

Less common surface types nationally are grass and clay courts, although none are found in Swindon Borough. These can be harder to maintain, particularly during inclement weather spells.

### ***Sports lighting***

Courts with sports lighting enable use throughout the year and are identified by the LTA as being a key priority for growing participation nationally. The LTA reports that sports lighting allows for a 35% increase in available court time on an annual basis.

In Swindon Borough, 26 tennis courts are serviced by sports lights, representing under half (32%) of the total provision. Moreover, all of these are available for community use, with the provision of sports lighting often key in determining accessibility.

Access to courts with sports lighting is also considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision, which in turn can help accommodate more members. To that end, it should be noted that of the six clubs in Swindon Borough, only Nationwide House TC is currently without such provision. It aspires to add lighting to both its courts at Nationwide Sports Club.

Similarly, Wanborough TC also aspires to add sports lighting to its two courts that are currently not serviced. This is at Hooper's Field. Additionally, Delta Tennis Centre reports that it has plans to update and replace the existing lights on the outdoor courts at Delta Tennis Centre.

### ***LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme<sup>9</sup>***

The LTA's mission is to grow tennis and padel by making them accessible, welcoming, and enjoyable. Ensuring local communities have access to quality facilities is critical to attracting and retaining more players. As such, the LTA's Quick Access Loan Scheme aims to provide interest-free loans to support venues investment in facilities, prioritising the installation and construction of covered courts. The objectives of the fund are to:

- ✦ Provide covered or sports-lit playing facilities to encourage community play all year.
- ✦ Retain and increase the number of participants at the venue.
- ✦ Offer and increase both non-members pay and play usage and coaching opportunities.
- ✦ Grow the numbers of adults and juniors on the coaching programme.
- ✦ Provide seamless booking of tennis courts and lessons through an [online booking system](#).

As part of the fund, the LTA will fund:

- ✦ Lighting upgrades to LED (outdoor and indoor)
- ✦ New sports lights
- ✦ New court provision
- ✦ Outdoor padel courts
- ✦ Covered padel (courts and cover)
- ✦ Covered tennis courts

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<sup>9</sup> [Quick Access Loan Scheme for tennis facilities \(lta.org.uk\)](#)

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### **Over marking**

Tennis courts, particularly within schools, are often over marked by netball, basketball and/or football courts. Courts which are over marked tend to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as creating capacity issues if there is community demand from more than one sport.

In Swindon Borough, 52 courts (66%) are overmarked by netball provision, with most of these located at school sites where curriculum activity makes this necessary. Community available courts at Dorcan Recreation Complex, Nationwide Sports Club and Highworth Tennis Club are also overmarked.

See Part 10: Netball for further information.

### **Quality**

The quality of tennis courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (e.g., vandalism and/or littering).

For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

Of the courts in Swindon Borough, 36 (46%) are assessed as good quality, 29 (34%) as standard quality, and 16 (20%) as poor quality. Of the good quality courts, 29 are available for community use, compared to 15 of the standard quality courts and only two of the poor quality courts.

*Table 9.5: Quality of tennis courts in Swindon Borough*

Community use status	No. of good courts	No. of standard courts	No. of poor courts
Available	29	15	2
Unavailable	7	14	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>

The poor quality courts in the Borough are located at Lawn Manor Academy, Nova Hreod Academy, The Commonweal School, Club at Alexandra House and Marriott Leisure Club (Swindon). Common issues relate to worn line markings, the presence of loose gravel and limited signs of ongoing maintenance.

Of club courts, those at Chiseldon Recreation Ground, Hooper's Field and St Marks Recreation Ground are assessed as good quality, whilst the remainder at Nationwide Sports Club, Delta Tennis Centre and Highworth Tennis Club are considered to be standard quality. As such, no clubs access poor quality courts.

In addition, Wanborough TC (at Hooper's Field), Nationwide House TC (at Nationwide Sports Club) and Highworth TC (at Highworth Tennis Club) all state that over the next few years their courts will require repainting or resurfacing to ensure the quality of the courts are maintained and improved.

The mapping below further details quality by showing the distribution of courts based on their good, standard or poor quality ratings.



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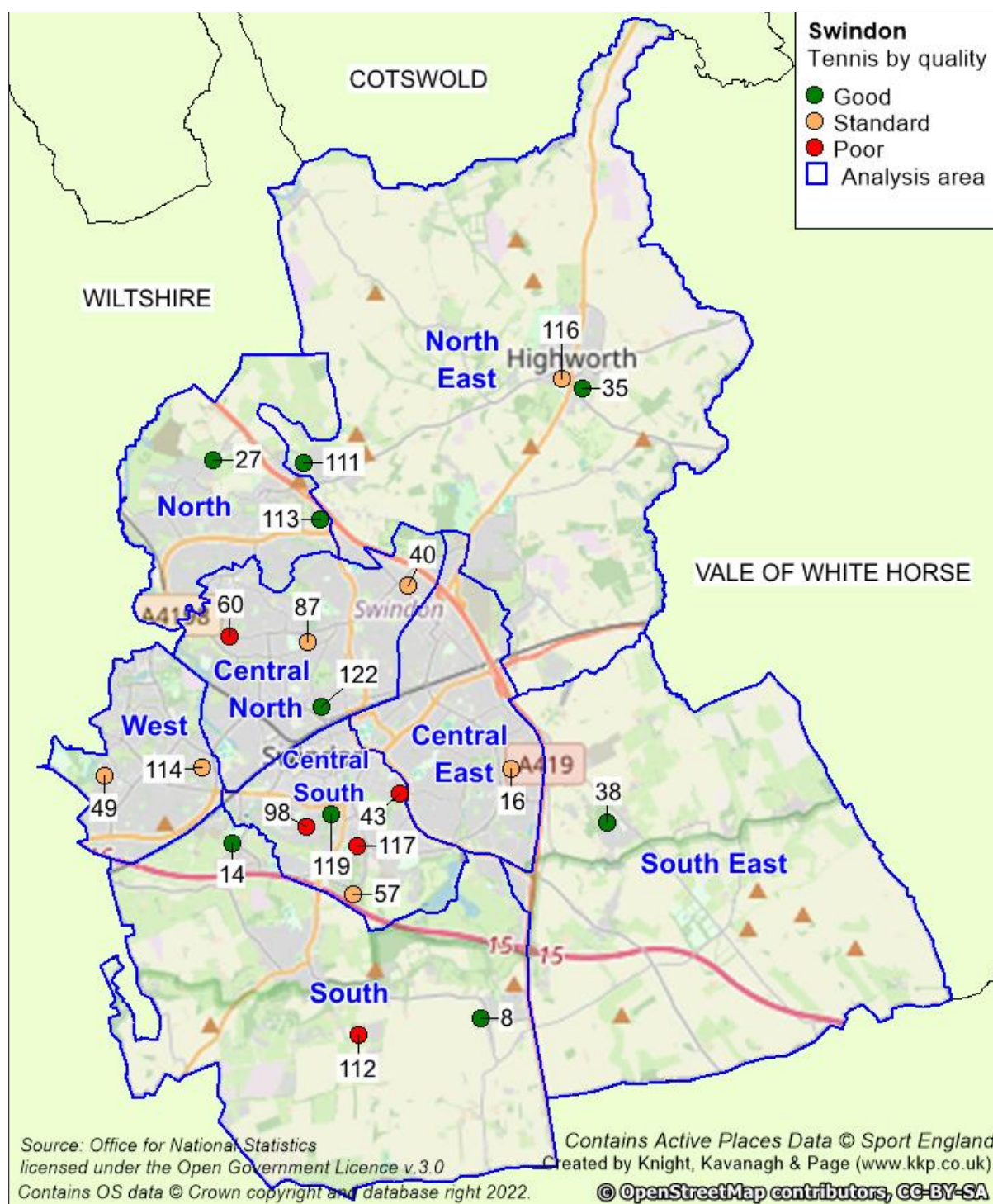


Figure 9.2: Location of tennis courts by quality

## Renovation fund<sup>10</sup>

The LTA has secured a £22 million investment fund to be put into public tennis courts across Britain, together with an £8.5 million investment from the LTA. This will see thousands of public park tennis courts that are in poor or unplayable condition improved for the benefit of the local communities.

<sup>10</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-package-to-refurbish-4500-public-tennis-courts-in-deprived-parts-of-uk-announced>



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The LTA's ambition is to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. As well as paying for the refurbishment of public park courts, the new investment will also pay for the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes and support, to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

Quarry Road has recently been part of a renovation project. The site now accommodates three good quality courts with a GateAccess system following investment in 2024.

### ***Ancillary provision***

For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not always specific for tennis which means that access can be limited, even at sites that allow for community use. Insight from the LTA indicates good quality ancillary facilities such as toilets, changing rooms and cafes encourage players to visit community available provision and stay for extended periods of time. Therefore, a potential way to increase usage of such provision would be to invest in suitable ancillary amenities, which can then also provide a source of income.

For club activity, Nationwide House TC reports that its clubhouse at Nationwide Sports Club is of good quality. However, due to the nature of the site and the management, it states that it does not always have access, which is problematic.

Chiseldon TC highlights that the pavilion is in need of updating and improving at Chiseldon Recreation Ground. The Club suggests that it has plans to either replace or refurbish the existing building, although it notes that some funding support will be required to enable such a development.

Swindon Tennis Centre reports that its main issue at St Mark's Recreation Ground is the car parking on site. It indicates that there is not enough car parking to cater for its current levels of demand, particularly at peak times (e.g., weekday evenings and weekends).

### **9.3: Demand**

Adult Participation (YouGov)	October 2022 12MR	Year End 2022 12MR	October 2023 12MR	Child Participation (Netfluential)*	October 2022 12MR	Year End 2022 12MR	October 2023 12MR
Past Year	4,356,980	4,736,980	5,715,608	Past Year	3,601,784	3,634,305	3,628,088
Past Month	1,894,792	2,014,518	2,607,942	Past Month	1,367,789	1,357,420	1,382,301
Parks (Past Year) (Target 2.1 million)	1,756,734	1,910,424	2,147,926	Weekly	527,887	532,105	614,054

Nationally, the LTA has worked to gain a better understanding of where people play tennis and to understand some of the barriers that restrict participation levels. The chart below shows its findings, with this identifying significant growth in demand levels from 2022-2023:

The following is then identified for club tennis:

- ✦ The club environment is a very important sector for regular, frequent and long term participation.
- ✦ Whilst the level of participation is higher in parks, the regularity of play generally increases in the club market.
- ✦ The club market has a higher focus on organise activity both via coaching and competition.
- ✦ There has an increase in the number of clubs that are looking to implement online booking systems and the gate access technology; this not only offers the ability to

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increase the amount of court usage at a venue but acts as a key marketing tool locally in the quest to attract more users to a venue initially and create a higher level of exposure locally.

- ◀ A clear environment for the further development of padel, working alongside existing tennis provision.

And for parks tennis:

- ◀ The majority of participation in the UK takes place in a park environment (40-45%).
- ◀ The park environment is the most common place where new participants will start their tennis journey.
- ◀ For those that do not play, the majority of people who have expressed an interest in playing would see the park environment as their first option for play - representing an opportunity for growth.
- ◀ Participation in parks is often less frequent and generally aligns with the seasonal participation peaks in the summer months. This trend is not helped by the lack of sports-lit provision that currently exists in the park environment.
- ◀ Park players are generally more interested in recreational play and are less reliant on organised activity.
- ◀ Park players are most dissatisfied with the condition of the courts, the number of courts available and the journey from booking a court to the actual play.
- ◀ The LTA in partnership with the government are upgrading 4,500 park courts to enable greater levels of participation within park environments.
- ◀ The LTA has successfully implemented technology that improves the customer journey to court - this involves the use of an access gate with key pad entry which is connected to the Clubspark venue management system.
- ◀ Where implemented, the system has been successful in increasing participation rates, whilst also generating income that helps to improve the financial sustainability of a venue.
- ◀ The LTA is looking to significantly increase the number of gate access systems that are installed national as part of the Digital Participation Pathway.
- ◀ Padel is still very early in development in parks, however the LTA is keen to see this development and see this as a natural offer alongside multi-sport and tennis provision.

The following section further explores such aspects in Swindon Borough.

### **Club tennis**

Where known, membership across the clubs in Swindon Borough totals 640 members, as shown in the table below. Swindon Tennis Centre operates a different model to traditional tennis clubs, with the total number of members (131) listed considered to be members which pay a premium subscription to the courts to access all times of the week (a senior/junior breakdown has not been provided).

*Table 9.6: Current tennis demand by club in Swindon Borough*

Name of club	No. of senior members	No. of junior members	Total no. of members
Chiseldon TC	52	55	107
Delta Tennis Centre	22	167	189
Highworth TC	25	60	85
Nationwide House TC	12	-	12
Swindon Tennis Centre	N/A	N/A	131
Wanborough TC	27	89	116

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The largest known club in Swindon Borough is Delta Tennis Centre, with 189 members, whilst Nationwide House TC has only 12 members. The average membership across the clubs is 107.

It should be noted that in addition to the above memberships, Swindon Tennis Centre also operates an annual pass for non-club members for access to courts outside of core club hours. This currently totals 564 passes, showing that the courts on site at St Marks Recreation Ground have the potential to successfully cater for a number of social tennis bookings through the Gate Access system, outside of core tennis club hours.

#### ***Informal and parks tennis***

Away from club courts, usage can be difficult to quantify as it is not always monitored, especially at sites that are free to access as is the case at Dorcan Recreation Complex and Quarry Road. Demand for such provision is generally at its highest during summer months, especially following events such as Wimbledon, but significant capacity is likely to exist outside of this.

The LTA has recently developed a support package for local authorities to grow use of tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation; products known as ClubSpark, Play (previously Rally) and Gate Access have been established. These represent what the LTA calls a major improvement to the customer journey and provide a clear revenue stream to reinvest into court provision.

The LTA products are further summarised below.

#### ***ClubSpark – Improving the booking process***

ClubSpark is a flexible and simple venue management platform with multiple products and applications to help venues, local authorities and coaches manage their sport. ClubSpark is a tool that is offered for free as part of LTA venue registration and allows administrators to manage all functions at their venue(s), including:

- ◆ Managed website - create and manage a mobile friendly website tailored to LA/club requirements to promote events and activities.
- ◆ Managed coaching – set up coaching lessons and courses online.
- ◆ Membership management - improve membership engagement by making it easier for the venue and for members to pay, renew and keep in touch (includes online payments, direct debits and the monitoring of revenue streams; membership modules can also be used to take season ticket payments for venues operating a non-traditional annual fee).
- ◆ Organise payments - set the way payments are taken, whether it's immediate pay and play, or bookable as part of a membership package.
- ◆ Court bookings – reduced administration for managing bookings; give staff, coaches, members and the general public access to book and pay for courts, classes or other resources online.
- ◆ Scheduling - set unique booking and price rules to suit the venue and enable lights to switch on/off automatically when linked to the LTA Premium Gate Access system.
- ◆ Book and pay remotely - customers can make bookings and payments for a venue anytime, anywhere via the real-time booking app.
  
- ◆ Reporting - ClubSpark allows administrators to view reports highlighting income, court usage, revenue and number of members and season ticket holders; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

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### *LTA Play*

LTA Play is an aggregator that collects all booking and coaching information via ClubSpark pages and displays it for participants in one easy to view page. It allows players to search for venues close to them and provides booking options, removing the barriers of not knowing where courts are or how to book.

LTA Play provides a helpful customer journey, with a personal profile to review and manage bookings, and helpful reminders. Courts can be set to book for free of charge or at a fee agreed by the provider.

### *Gate access*

The LTA has developed two gate access systems that work in association with ClubSpark to secure courts and to allow access to booked customers only. Members of the public can book a court online (making payment if required) and receive a four-digit access code via email to enter using a courtside keypad. The gate access system then allows entry for the time booked if a correct code is entered.

Two gate options are available; SmartAccess Premium and SmartAccess Lite. The demands and needs of users plus the setup of the venue determines the most appropriate system for each site.

Nationally, the LTA report that in the last three years, sites with a gate access system installed have attracted 64,841 unique players, leading to 609,671 courts being booked. This has generated income of over £1 million.

### ***Additional demand***

The LTA operates various tennis initiatives across the Country which result in some courts receiving additional demand. Furthermore, there are other formats away from traditional tennis that can result in increased usage. These are all detailed below.

### *Local tennis leagues*

Recreational tennis leagues are less formal than established club play, offering greater flexibility and an opportunity for people of all abilities to engage in competition at local venues. They are available to all aged 18 years and above and are run by an organisation called Local Tennis Leagues, which affiliates to the LTA. Players are organised into mixed sex leagues of eight based on similar ability levels, with matches arranged between the two players at whatever time and court is agreed. The flexibility of play is conducive to the use of park sites which are typically more easily accessible.

A league operates in Swindon Borough. Courts for these are utilised at:

- ◀ Delta Tennis Centre
- ◀ Quarry Road
- ◀ St Mark's Recreation Ground

### *LTA Youth Start*

This is a six-week coaching offer for children who have never played tennis and is identified as a priority by the LTA. For £25, young people get coaching from an LTA accredited coach, a free racket, a pack of balls and personalised t-shirt so that they can continue playing.

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In Swindon Borough, there is currently an LTA Youth Start course at St Mark's Recreation Ground as well as at Chiseldon Recreation Ground.

### *Free Parks Tennis*

The LTA is due to launch the LTA Free Parks Tennis offer. This is due to the following needs:

- ◀ Player Trends:
  - ◀ 35% of people who play tennis once per year or more do so in a park.
  - ◀ The most common type of play for park players is socially with friends or family.
- ◀ Barriers:
  - ◀ 25% of players cite not having anyone to play with as a barrier to playing more tennis.
  - ◀ 24% of players cite having nowhere to play or difficulty in accessing local courts as reasons why they do not play tennis more often
  - ◀ 32% of these players say local courts are not affordable.
  - ◀ 75% of parks players consider themselves to be of beginner (41%) or improver (36%) standard, which is significantly lower than club players
  - ◀ 22% of players state that a lack of equipment prevents them from playing tennis.

The key points of a free park tennis session are:

- ◀ Free for all players to book and attend
- ◀ Run by a minimum of two trained and DBS checked Activators
- ◀ Sessions should run all year round (weather depending)
- ◀ Run on a Saturday or Sunday morning at 10.00-11.00am

Court requirements are for three courts minimum in parks that have this many, or two courts at two court sites – a three court site can have up to 34 players attending. The sessions are designed for those aged eight and over, but under eights can attend when accompanied by a parent.

Future consideration should be given to offer Free Parks Tennis in Parks across Swindon Borough.

### ***Padel demand***

As of the end of 2023, 129,000 people reportedly play padel more than once a year in England, which represents a significant increase compared to 2021 data when the number was 15,000. This exemplifies the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for. One of the LTAs key strategies is to find new ways to grow participation and padel is an innovative format of tennis that is fun, flexible, easy to play and extremely sociable.

As mentioned previously, there are currently no padel tennis courts in the Swindon Borough, although it is said that provision should be pursued in the near future, with 17 courts said to be sustainable. As such, no demand is recorded, although that is not to say that no demand exists. It is likely the creation of courts would lead to high levels of use providing they were well located and advertised.

### ***Pickleball demand***

Swindon Pickleball is a local pickleball club that plays the sport in Swindon Borough. It utilises Delta Tennis Centre; however, as detailed earlier, this relates more so to the indoor facilities at the site.

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### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Latent demand for tennis nationally is reported to be high by the LTA, which has an insight tool that suggests that 18% of the five million players that pick up a racket each year would play more often if key barriers such as poor promotion of opportunities to get on court, unclear booking journeys (especially those that are 'offline') and low quality facilities were addressed.

Furthermore, the LTA conducted some research to understand how the public feels about tennis and the main barriers to accessing the sport. The research was split into club, community and education sectors. The headline findings of this are as follows:

- ◀ Around five million people play once per year with the majority of this in parks.
- ◀ 46% of tennis played by those over 14 years old is on park courts.
- ◀ 80% of those that do not play tennis but would like to see parks as their first option.
- ◀ Barriers preventing use of courts located in parks include the quality of the courts, ease of booking and the number of courts available to play.
- ◀ Demand for tennis amongst those who stopped playing in the last five years is from 14 years old upwards.
- ◀ Although there is demand for tennis amongst working class individuals, the highest latent demand is from upper middle, middle and lower middle classes.

Further research carried out by the LTA suggests that many more people would play tennis if they knew where courts were located, particularly local authority courts. Its assertion is that better promotion would increase demand.

In addition, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis but that 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 3,719 people within Swindon Borough, which represents approximately 1.6% of the Borough's population compared to a national average of 1.7%.

Notwithstanding the above, no clubs in Swindon Borough report any unmet or latent demand, with all stating that they would welcome new members. This aligns to the assertion that the latent demand that does exist is more so for access to local authority and park courts (i.e., outside of the club environment).

It should also be reiterated that at present, there is a limited supply of easily accessible courts for residents within northern parts of the Borough. This is likely to lead to higher levels of unmet and latent demand to the north when compared to the south and centrally.

### ***Future demand***

Nationally, the LTA has announced participation figures for 2022 showing sustained success in getting more people playing tennis more often, with growth across all demographics, regions and nations of Great Britain. This is particularly amongst 16-34 year-olds and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The number of adults reporting that they had played tennis during the year increased 43% compared to the previous year (2021), rising from 3.3 million to 4.7 million from January through to December. This is the highest total recorded since 2017 and has continued the growth seen in 2018-19 before being interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.



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In addition, more than two million adults play monthly, and this is the highest level recorded since the LTA started tracking this measure seven years ago. This means that the LTA has achieved the targets set out in its five-year 2018-23 strategy for adult annual and monthly participation one year ahead of schedule.

Finally, children's weekly participation in tennis has seen positive growth in the past year with over three and a half million children playing tennis and with an extra 328,000 children playing tennis in schools.

Based on the above, it is clear that demand for tennis has grown substantially in recent years and this growth is expected to continue in the future. This links to four of the six responding clubs identifying aspirations to increase their demand, with this potential growth totalling 97 members.

*Table 9.7: Future tennis demand by club*

Name of club	No. of senior members	No. of junior members	Total no. of members
Chiseldon TC	6	6	12
Delta Tennis Centre	40	15	55
Highworth TC	10	-	10
Wanborough TC	10	10	20

Neither Swindon Tennis Centre nor Nationwide House TC report growth plans.

In addition, the LTA also expects future growth via its insight tools, with much of this demand likely to include participation outside of the club environment. To that extent, it is key that the local authority and park sites in Swindon Borough allow such increases in demand to be achieved. Utilisation of products such as Clubspark will also help enable growth to be monitored.

Padel demand is also likely to continue increasing in the future. As referenced previously, the LTA has an ambition to increase participation levels from 129,000 people (as of 2023) to 400,000. To achieve this, the creation and increase of provision will be required.

### 9.4: Supply and demand analysis

#### ***Club tennis***

The LTA suggests that a non-floodlit court can accommodate 40 members, whereas a floodlit court can accommodate 60 members. However, it must be noted that this should only be used as a guide as capacity can, in reality, vary from site to site depending on how the demand operates and the programmes of use in place. Some clubs can comfortably operate over capacity guidance, whilst others may have pressures without theoretically being over capacity.

Using the above, the table below identifies the capacity balance at all sites currently used by clubs in Swindon. This takes into account current demand as well as future demand aspirations.

*Table 9.8: Capacity analysis (club courts)*

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Site ID	Site	Club user	Current demand (members)	Capacity (members)	Current capacity balance (members)	Future demand (members)	Future capacity balance (members)
8	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	Chiseldon TC	107	180	73	12	61
38	Hooper's Field	Wanborough TC	116	200	84	20	64
57	Nationwide Sports Club	Nationwide House TC	12	80	68	-	68
114	Delta Tennis Centre	Delta Tennis Centre	189	180	9	55	64
116	Highworth Tennis Club	Highworth TC	85	300	215	10	205
122	St Marks Recreation Ground	Swindon Tennis Centre	131	480	349	-	349

As seen, for club-based tennis, there is considered to be sufficient provision to meet the majority of current and future demand, where existing levels are known. It should be noted that although Delta Tennis Centre is considered to be oversubscribed the Club also has four indoor tennis courts which support the Club's demand, therefore, the Club is considered to have enough provision to cater for all its current and future demand.

### **Non-club tennis**

For non-club provision, whilst no courts are identified as having any capacity issues, it cannot be said that supply is sufficient to meet demand due to the large amount of unmet and latent demand evidenced both nationally and in Swindon Borough. There is instead a clear need improve court quality to attract and better accommodate users, with an increase in sports lighting also key to this as this increases court accessibility and capacity, especially outside of summer months.

There are also currently only 18 council-owned courts in Swindon Borough, which is a low amount when compared to most authorities. Furthermore, 10 of these courts have a club attached to them, which further limits capacity for non-club users. The creation of additional courts at strategically located sites could therefore be of benefit e.g., popular parks / recreation grounds.

In particular, there is a clear need for additional, easily accessible court space in the northern parts of Swindon Borough, with residents centrally and to the south better provided for via existing facilities. There is also no padel provision which will be preventing activity.

### **9.5: Conclusion**

It is considered that there is sufficient provision to cater for club-based tennis demand in Swindon Borough; however, there are shortfalls both in terms of quantity and quality when assessing the supply for recreational and informal tennis, particularly to the north of the Borough.

Away from club-based tennis, there is a shortfall of local authority courts to meet growing recreational demand. There are also no padel courts despite significant levels of increasing demand both national and locally.

#### **Tennis – supply and demand summary**

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

- For club-based tennis, there is considered to be sufficient provision to meet all current and future demand, with no clubs operating close to recommended capacity limits.
- For non-club provision, whilst no courts are identified as having any capacity issues, it cannot be said that supply is sufficient to meet demand due to the large amount of unmet and latent demand evidenced, particularly to the north of the Borough.
- There is no padel provision which will be preventing activity.

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- There are 81 tennis courts identified in Swindon Borough across 21 sites, with 46 courts across 13 sites available for community use.
- The LTA reports that the central and southern areas of the Borough are relatively well provided for in relation to public tennis courts; however, the northern parts have limited accessible provision.
- There are also four ‘mini’ courts located at St Marks Recreation Ground.
- No padel courts are provided despite growing demand nationally, with the LTA reporting that the creation of provision should be considered in the near future (it is said that 17 courts would be sustainable in the Borough).
- Pickleball has a presence, although this is generally via indoor provision at Delta Tennis Centre.
- David Lloyd Club and Delta Tennis Centre provide indoor courts, with the latter considered to be a strategic priority by the LTA.
- Most courts are provided at education sites, although only five are available for community use, and there are only 18 council-owned courts, which is relatively low figure when compared to most local authorities nationally.
- Most courts have a macadam surface, with 70 being of this type, in addition to seven polymeric courts and four artificial turf courts.
- In total, 32 courts are serviced by sports lights, representing under half (39%) of the total provision.
- Of the courts in, 36 are assessed as good quality, 29 as standard quality and 16 as poor quality, with 29 of the good quality courts, 15 of the standard quality courts and only two of the poor quality courts available for community use.
- Ancillary facilities are reportedly an issue at most local authority sites as well as for Nationwide House TC at Nationwide Sports Club, Chiseldon TC at Chiseldon Recreation Ground and Swindon Tennis Centre at St Mark’s Recreation Ground.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- Where known, membership across the clubs in Swindon Borough totals 640 members.
- Non-club court usage is difficult to quantify due to the open access nature of provision, although it is thought to be relatively high at Council-operated venues.
- A recreational tennis league is in operation, utilising courts at Delta Tennis Centre, Quarry Road and St Mark’s Recreation Ground.
- There is currently an LTA Youth Start course at St Mark’s Recreation Ground as well as at Chiseldon Recreation Ground.
- Latent/unmet demand is considered to be high, although this is for tennis outside of the club-environment, with no clubs reporting any capacity issues.
- Chiseldon, Highworth and Wanborough tennis clubs report future growth aspirations amounting to 42 members, whilst increases outside of the club environment are also considered likely.
- No padel activity is currently identified, although this is due to a lack of provision rather than a general lack of interest giving the growing prominence of the sport nationally and locally – 129,000 participants are now identified across England, with a growth target of up to 400,000 identified.
- Pickleball demand is identified via Swindon Pickleball (indoor facilities).

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### PART 10: NETBALL

#### 10.1: Introduction

England Netball is the governing body with overall responsibility for ensuring the effective governance of the sport.

Whilst often played indoors, there are far more outdoor courts provided and in use by the netball community than there are indoor. Nationally, England Netball reports that the challenge is that the supply of outdoor netball courts is generally not of a good enough standard for use by the community, whilst accessibility and a lack of floodlighting can also be problematic.

#### Consultation

Information to inform this section of the report was primarily obtained through discussions with England Netball and the Swindon Netball League.

#### 10.2: Supply

In total, 44 netball courts have been identified in Swindon Borough across 13 sites, although only 15 are available for community use across four sites (Dorcan Recreation Complex, Nationwide Sports Club, Highworth Tennis Club and Highworth Warneford School).

The community available courts are identified in the Central East, Central South and North East analysis areas. This means that five areas are without such provision.

*Table 10.1: Summary of the number of courts in Swindon Borough*

Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use	Total	%
Central East	6	3	9	20
Central North	-	11	11	25
Central South	2	6	8	18
North	-	3	3	7
North East	7	-	7	16
South	-	4	4	9
South East	-	-	0	-
West	-	2	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>

A traditional netball court is 30.5 metres long and 15.25 metres wide. As such, please note that some additional courts are not included in the above figures due to them being undersized, especially those located at primary schools. Such courts are generally marked out on generic playgrounds and are not considered to be permanent or conducive for formal play. It is, however, recognised that the provision can meet a curricular and extra-curricular needs.

Figure 10.1 overleaf shows the location of the netball courts included within the study. For a key to the map, please see table 10.2.

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Figure 10.1: Location of netball courts in Swindon Borough



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Table 10.2: Netball courts in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Over-marked?	Court quality
14	Deanery Academy	SN1 7DA	South	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Good
16	Dorcan Recreation Complex	SN3 5DA	Central East	Trust	Yes	6	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
27	Great Western Academy	SN25 2PP	North	Education	No	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Good
35	Highworth Warneford School	SN6 7BZ	North East	Education	Yes	5	No	Macadam	Yes	Good
40	Kingsdown School	SN2 7SH	Central North	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Good
43	Lawn Manor Academy	SN3 1ER	Central South	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
49	Lydiard Park Academy	SN5 6HN	West	Education	No	2	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
57	Nationwide Sports Club	SN38 4LN	Central South	Sports Club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
60	Nova Hreod Academy	SN2 2NL	Central North	Education	No	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
87	Swindon Academy	SN2 1JR	Central North	Education	No	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
80	St Joseph's Catholic College	SN3 3LR	Central East	Education	No	3	No	Macadam	No	Standard
98	The Commonweal School	SN1 4JE	Central South	Education	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard
116	Highworth Tennis Club	SN6 7BW	North East	Sport Club	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Standard



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### **Indoor netball**

Although not covered by the scope of this study, it should be referenced that there are also several indoor sports halls that are setup for netball across Swindon Borough, with these more commonly accessed than the outdoor provision. This includes facilities at:

- ◆ Abbey Park School
- ◆ Croft Sports Centre
- ◆ Deanery Academy
- ◆ Dorcan Recreation Centre
- ◆ Highworth Warneford School
- ◆ Kingsdown School Sports Centre
- ◆ Lydiard Park Academy
- ◆ New College Swindon
- ◆ Nova Hreod Academy

Further information is included in the Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

### **Management**

Most outdoor netball courts in Swindon Borough are operated by education providers, with 34 of the 44 (76%) courts falling under this management type. However, only Highworth Warneford School has courts that are available to the community.

Of the remaining courts, six are managed by a trust (at Dorcan Recreation Complex) and four are managed by sports clubs (two at Nationwide Sports Club and two at Highworth Tennis Club). All of these are available to the community.

*Table 10.3: Courts by management type*

Community use status	No. of courts			
	Club	Council	Education	Other
Available	4	-	5	6
Unavailable	-	-	29	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>

### **Court type**

All of the outdoor netball courts in Swindon Borough have a macadam surface. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. For long-term sustainability, it is recommended that sinking funds are in place to allow for resurfacing works to take place when required.

### **Sports lighting**

Despite 44 outdoor netball courts being provided in Swindon Borough, only two (4%) are serviced by sports lighting. These are at Highworth Tennis Club.

An absence of sports lighting on courts is an issue nationwide, with England Netball's national database (updated in 2020) identifying that only 1,941 of 5,108 outdoor netball courts are serviced by sports lighting throughout the Country (38%). Despite this being identified as problematic, the percentage is substantially higher than that identified in Swindon Borough, evidencing a particular issue within the Borough.

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### **Over markings**

Netball courts, particularly at school sites, are often overmarked, predominately by tennis courts but also on occasion by basketball and/or football courts. Provision such as this tends to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as potentially causing capacity issues when there is external netball demand.

In Swindon Borough, 39 netball courts are overmarked compared to only five that are dedicated for netball use. This represents a comparatively low number of standalone courts and can be attributed to most of the provision being located at secondary schools where tennis markings are also often provided.

The standalone courts are provided at St Joseph's Catholic College and The Commonweal School, with three standalone courts provided at the former and two at the latter. However, neither of these sites have courts that are community available.

### **Quality**

The quality of netball courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (e.g., vandalism and/or littering).

For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

Of the courts in Swindon Borough, 16 courts are assessed as good quality, 22 as standard quality and six as poor quality. Of the community available courts, five are good quality and 10 are standard quality (none are poor quality).

*Table 10.4: Quality of all courts in Swindon Borough*

Community use status	No. of good quality courts	No of standard quality courts	No. of poor quality courts
Available	5	10	0
Unavailable	11	12	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>

The poor quality courts are located at Lydiard Park Academy and Nove Hreod Academy, where there is poor grip underfoot, evidence of moss and worn line markings.

In contrast, the good quality courts are located at Deanery Academy, Great Western Academy, Highworth Warenford School and Kingsdown School.

### **Ancillary provision**

Ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic for community netball. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for netball and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Moreover, given that most courts are located at schools, the facilities predominately service sports halls or grass pitches and are therefore not readily available or suited to netball court users. Access can then also be limited, even at sites that allow for community use as this may entail opening the main school buildings.

Notwithstanding the above, no issues are reported across the three community available netball sites in Swindon Borough.

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### 10.3: Demand

Demand for outdoor netball tends to come in two forms; league and club-based netball that consists of matches and training, and the various netball-based initiatives such as Back to Netball and walking netball.

All activity identified is for ladies netball, with no men's or mixed activity evidenced.

#### **Club demand**

The main provider for club-based netball in Swindon Borough is the Swindon Netball League. This currently consists of 16 clubs playing across four divisions, with winter, summer, junior and over 35s leagues in operation. All activity takes place via a central venue at Dorcan Recreation Complex.

The winter league runs on Saturdays from September until the beginning of May, whilst the summer league runs on Wednesday and Thursday evenings from May until August.

The list below shows the clubs that participate in the Swindon Netball League:

- ◆ Abbey Meads NC
- ◆ Burmah NC
- ◆ Calne NC
- ◆ Chippenham NC
- ◆ Corsham NC
- ◆ Croft NC
- ◆ Delta NC
- ◆ Fairford NC
- ◆ Gazelles NC
- ◆ Lawn NC
- ◆ Moonraker NC
- ◆ Moredon NC
- ◆ Nationwide NC
- ◆ Pinehurst NC
- ◆ Raychem NC
- ◆ RWB NC

In addition, some of the clubs also train within Swindon Borough through booking courts, although many do so outside of the Borough. The venues used are summarised in the following table.

*Table 10.5: Summary of training venues accessed*

Club name	Venue/s accessed
Abbey Meads NC	Bradon Forest School (in Wiltshire)
Burmah NC	Lydiard Park Academy
Calne	St Mary's School (in Wiltshire)
Chippenham NC	Chippenham Sports Club Dome (in Wiltshire)
Corsham NC	Springfield Community Campus (in Wiltshire)
Croft NC	Croft Sports Centre
Delta NC	Kingsdown School
Fairford NC	Fairford Sports Centre (in Cotswolds)
Gazelles NC	Unknown
Lawn NC	Highworth Warneford School, Dorcan Recreation Complex
Moonraker NC	Unknown

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Club name	Venue/s accessed
Moredon NC	Lydiard Park Academy
Nationwide NC	Deanery Academy
Pinehurst NC	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (in Wiltshire)
Raychem NC	Deanery Academy, Dorcan Recreation Complex
RWB NC	Lime Kiln Leisure Centre (in Wiltshire)

As seen, Burmah, Croft, Delta, Lawn, Moredon, Nationwide and Raychem netball clubs all utilise training venues within Swindon Borough. However, this is predominately via indoor provision at the respective sites, although the outdoor courts at Highworth Warneford School are commonly used during summer months.

### **Commercial league**

In addition to affiliated demand, there are also commercial netball leagues operating across England, with these catering for teams outside of the normal club environment on more of a casual/recreational basis. The leagues generally run all-year round (a new season begins as soon as the previous one ends) and, in addition to welcoming already established teams, individual players are also encouraged to sign up before being within a team that suits their ability.

In Swindon Borough, Play Netball operates a league at Abbey Park School, although this utilises the indoor provision at the site (no outdoor courts are provided). There are 24 teams currently catered for across four divisions.

Additionally, Leisure Leagues operates at two venues, with one league running at Dorcan Recreation Complex on Monday evenings and two running on Mondays and Thursdays at Nova Hreod Academy. However, this is again via indoor provision at both sites.

### **Back to Netball**

Back to Netball is a scheme put into place by England Netball in 2010, with participation increasing ever since. Sessions are running weekly by qualified coaches across England with the aim of re-introducing female players over the age of 16 to the sport.

In Swindon Borough, no Back to Netball sessions are currently running.

### **Walking netball**

Walking netball is a lower version of the sport, designed so that anyone can play regardless of age or fitness level. It can give those who are isolated an outlet, provide an activity for those who do not deem themselves fit enough and offer a stepping-stone for those looking for a pathway back into traditional netball.

Within Swindon Borough walking netball takes place outdoors at Dorcan Recreation Complex on Sunday mornings, as well as at multiple indoor venues.

### **Netball Now**

Netball Now is a simple, straight forward way to play netball. It is not a competition led by rules or scores but rather a simple session where players can play a variety of positions and even have a go at umpiring.

In Swindon Borough, Netball Now sessions take place at Dorcan Recreation Complex on Mondays evenings.

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### ***Bee Netball***

A new initiative by England Netball, Bee Netball is a programme for children all about friendship, inclusion, fair play and teamwork.

No Bee Netball sessions are in operation in Swindon Borough.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

Due to the central venue nature of the Swindon Netball League, several clubs otherwise based outside of the Borough import into Swindon to compete. As identified previously in Table 10.5, this includes:

- ✦ Abbey Meads NC
- ✦ Calne NC
- ✦ Chippenham NC
- ✦ Corsham NC
- ✦ Fairfold NC
- ✦ Pinehurst NC
- ✦ RWB NC

Of these, Fairfold NC is based in Cotswolds, whilst the remainder are based in Wiltshire.

No clubs based in Swindon Borough are identified as exporting any demand.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but that 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 597 people within Swindon Borough, which represents approximately 0.41% of the Borough's population compared to a national average of just over 0.2%. This therefore suggests that such demand is marginally higher in Swindon than what would otherwise be expected.

Notwithstanding the above, no consultation responders express any form of latent demand. This suggests that other barriers are preventing participation, or that most latent demand is being expressed outside of the club environment (at which point initiatives such as Back to Netball or commercial leagues are pivotal).

### ***Future demand***

It is hoped by England Netball that there will be an increase in the number of its initiatives held in Swindon Borough and the demand for them. However, it states that this is reliant on volunteers running and organising the sessions.

## **10.4: Supply and demand analysis**

Via the Swindon Netball League, there is a large degree of netball demand in Swindon Borough, with the majority of this being met via provision at Dorcan Recreation Complex. However, there is scope to better cater for activity at the site via improving quality from standard to good and through exploring the installation of sports lighting.

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Elsewhere, most other demand is seemingly taking place via indoor provision, although it is not clear as to whether this is through choice or due to a lack of suitable outdoor courts. With only 15 community available courts and only two sports-lit courts across the Borough, supply is extremely limited and this is likely hindering activity. There are also five analysis areas without any community available provision which should be seen as a particular issue.

### 10.5: Conclusion

The current stock of outdoor netball courts requires investment and greater levels of accessibility in order to adequately accommodate for the demand that exists. This can be achieved through improving quality, installing sports lighting and enabling community use where provision would accommodate and attract greater levels of demand.

#### **Netball - supply and demand summary**

- There is a large degree of netball demand in Swindon Borough, with the majority of this being met via provision at Dorcan Recreation Complex; however, there is scope to better cater for activity at the site via improving quality and through exploring the installation of sports lighting.
- With only 15 community available courts and only two sports-lit courts across the Borough, supply is extremely limited and this is likely hindering additional activity, especially in the five analysis areas without accessible courts.
- The current stock of outdoor netball courts requires investment and greater levels of accessibility in order to adequately accommodate for the demand that exists.

#### **Netball - supply summary**

- In total, 44 netball courts have been identified in Swindon Borough across 13 sites, although only 15 are available for community use across four sites (Dorcan Recreation Complex, Nationwide Sports Club, Highworth Tennis Club and Highworth Warneford School).
- Most outdoor courts are operated by education providers, with 34 of the 44 courts falling under this management type; however, only Highworth Warneford School offers community use.
- All of the courts have a macadam surface.
- Only two courts are serviced by sports lighting (at Highworth Tennis Club).
- 39 courts are overmarked (e.g., by tennis courts) compared to only five that are dedicated for netball use (at St Joseph's Catholic College and The Commonweal School).
- Of the courts, 16 are assessed as good quality, 22 as standard quality and six as poor quality.
- No ancillary facility issues are reported.

#### **Netball - demand summary**

- The main provider for club-based netball in Swindon Borough is the Swindon Netball League, with this currently catering for 16 clubs playing across four divisions, with winter, summer, junior and over 35s leagues in operation.
- All activity takes place via a central venue at Dorcan Recreation Complex.
- In addition, Burmah, Croft, Delta, Lawn, Moredon, Nationwide and Raychem netball clubs all utilise training venues within the Borough, although this is predominately via indoor provision.
- Play Netball and Leisure Leagues operate commercial leagues, although this is via indoor courts at Abbey Park School, Dorcan Recreation Complex and Nova Hreod Academy.
- Walking Netball and Netball Now sessions take place on the outdoor courts at Dorcan Recreation Complex.
- Seven clubs import demand into Swindon Borough to play in the Swindon Netball League, with these mostly emanating from Wiltshire.
- Whilst latent/unmet demand is identified, none is reported via consultation, which suggest that other barriers are preventing participation.
- Future demand is expressed by England Netball, particularly in relation to growing its initiatives.
- All identified activity is for ladies netball, with no men's or mixed activity evidenced.



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### PART 11: BOWLS

#### 11.1: Introduction

All bowling greens in Swindon Borough are flat greens. Flat green bowls is governed nationally by Bowls England, whilst Bowls Wiltshire oversees flat green bowls locally. A typical season running in the summer from May until September.

#### Consultation

There are 12 bowling clubs playing in Swindon Borough. Through online survey and telephone consultation, a total club response rate of 67% (8 of 12 clubs) has been achieved, as seen in the following table. Unresponsive clubs are Swindon Town Gardens, Swindon West End, Westlecot and Wroughton bowls clubs.

Table 11.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Response
Haydon Wick BC	Yes
Highworth BC	Yes
Rodbourne Cheney BC	Yes
Stratton Churchway BC	Yes
Supermarine BC	Yes
Swindon BC	Yes
Swindon North End BC	Yes
Swindon Town Gardens BC	No
Swindon West End BC	No
Wanborough BC	Yes
Westlecot BC	No
Wroughton BC	No

#### 11.2: Supply

There are 13 bowling greens in Swindon Borough located across 12 sites. This includes one double green site at Westlecot Bowling Green, with this therefore a particularly important site.

Table 11.2: Summary of greens by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of greens
Central East	2
Central North	3
Central South	4
North	-
North East	2
South	1
South East	1
West	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

The Central South has the most greens with four, whilst the North and West analysis areas are without any bowling provision.

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Figure 11.1 below highlights the location of all outdoor bowling greens in Swindon Borough. For a key to the map, see Table 11.3.



Figure 11.1: Location of bowling greens in Swindon Borough

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Table 11.3: Breakdown of bowling greens in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Wanborough BC
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	Supermarine BC
115	Highworth Bowls Club	North East	Highworth BC
118	North End Bowls Club	Central North	Swindon North End BC
120	Rodbournne Cheney Bowls Club	Central North	Rodbournne Cheney BC
121	Shrivenham Road Bowling Green	Central East	Swindon BC
123	Stratton Churchways Bowls Club	Central East	Stratton Churchways BC
124	Swindon West End Bowls Club	Central South	Swindon West End BC
125	Thames Avenue Bowling Green	Central North	Haydon Wick BC
126	Town Gardens Bowling Green	Central South	Swindon Town Gardens BC
128	Westlecot Bowling Green	Central South	Westlecot BC
129	Wroughton Bowls Club	South	Wroughton BC

### Indoor provision

Although not covered by the scope of this study, it should be referenced that there are also two indoor bowls facilities in Swindon Borough, located at Westlecot Bowls Club and Swindon Manor Bowls Club. These provide five and four rinks, respectively, are therefore capable of accommodating additional bowls demand, above and beyond the capacity of the outdoor greens. It is not uncommon for members of outdoor greens to also be members of indoor greens as this enable year-round play.

Further information is included in the Indoor & Built Sports Facilities Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

### Ownership/management

Where known, five greens are owned and managed by the respective club on site, whilst the remaining greens are managed by clubs but owned by either the Council or local parish councils. However, due to no consultation response, the arrangements at Swindon West End Bowls Club, Town Gardens Bowling Green, Westlecot Bowling Green and Wroughton Bowls Club are currently unknown.

Table 11.4: Ownership and management agreements of bowls sites in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Users	Agreement
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Wanborough BC	Rolling annual lease agreement from Wanborough Parish Council
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	Supermarine BC	Freehold
115	Highworth Bowls Club	North East	Highworth BC	Freehold
118	North End Bowls Club	Central North	Swindon North End BC	Long term lease agreement from the Council (21 years remaining)

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Users	Agreement
120	Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club	Central North	Rodbourne Cheney BC	Freehold
121	Shrivenham Road Bowling Green	Central East	Swindon BC	Freehold
123	Stratton Churchways Bowls Club	Central East	Stratton Churchways BC	Freehold
124	Swindon West End Bowls Club	Central South	Swindon West End BC	Unknown
125	Thames Avenue Bowling Green	Central North	Haydon Wick BC	Long term lease agreement from Haydon Wick Parish Council (25 years remaining)
126	Town Gardens Bowling Green	Central South	Swindon Town Gardens BC	Unknown
128	Westlecot Bowling Green	Central South	Westlecot BC	Unknown
129	Wroughton Bowls Club	South	Wroughton BC	Unknown

Where lease agreements are in place, most provide long-term security of tenure based on their length. However, this is not the case for Wanborough BC, which has only a yearly rolling lease agreement from Wanborough Parish Council at Hooper's Field. This can be detrimental to site development, primarily because a condition of any funding agreement often requires a longer term arrangement (usually over 25 years).

### Quality

The quality of bowling greens across Swindon Borough has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use. For further detail regarding the criteria, please see Appendix 2.

In Swindon Borough, 11 greens (85%) are rated as good quality, with two greens (15%) rated as standard quality (none are considered to be poor quality).

Table 11.5: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site name	Number of greens	Quality of green
38	Hooper's Field	1	Good
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	1	Good
115	Highworth Bowls Club	1	Good
118	North End Bowls Club	1	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Number of greens	Quality of green
120	Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club	1	Standard
121	Shrivenham Road Bowling Green	1	Standard
123	Stratton Churchways Bowls Club	1	Good
124	Swindon West End Bowls Club	1	Good
125	Thames Avenue Bowling Green	1	Good
126	Town Gardens Bowling Green	1	Good
128	Westlecot Bowling Green	2	Good
129	Wroughton Bowls Club	1	Good

The standard quality greens are located at Shrivenham Road Bowling Green at Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club. At the latter, the Club reports that the green has decreased in quality in recent years. This is due to out of season repairs not going to plan, with this leaving patches of the green with limited grass growth.

At Shrivenham Road Bowling Green, Swindon BC reports that the green has sections that have over the years become uneven. However, the Club states that it has plans to undertake work to look at levelling the entire green, which it reports should improve the quality.

Even though the remaining greens across Swindon Borough are good quality, they still require substantial levels of dedicated maintenance to sustain this standard. Therefore, clubs need to be given continued support, where necessary. A green is considered good quality if it has a high percentage of grass coverage, an even playing surface and limited signs of wear and tear on surrounding ditches/boarding and hard standing areas. In addition, there must be little to no evidence of litter, dog fouling, leaves and inappropriate usage of the green.

### Ancillary facilities

Most clubs in Swindon Borough have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site. However, the quality of these ranges from purpose-built, good quality brick pavilions to basic wooden huts and shelters. It is therefore important to recognise the importance of such provision to bowling clubs as, if the facilities onsite are of suitable quantity/quality and meet players' needs, this can help sustain membership levels. This is also acknowledged by Bowls England as it offers potential grants for clubs looking to making ancillary facility improvements.

Of the 12 bowls sites in Swindon Borough, five (42%) are accompanied by good quality ancillary provision, six (50%) by standard quality provision and one (8%) by poor quality provision. This is at Highworth Bowls Club.

Table 11.6: Summary of ancillary facility quality at bowls sites

Site ID	Site name	Ancillary provision quality
38	Hooper's Field	Standard
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	Good
115	Highworth Bowls Club	Poor
118	North End Bowls Club	Standard
120	Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club	Standard
121	Shrivenham Road Bowling Green	Good
123	Stratton Churchways Bowls Club	Standard
124	Swindon West End Bowls Club	Standard
125	Thames Avenue Bowling Green	Good



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Site ID	Site name	Ancillary provision quality
126	Town Gardens Bowling Green	Standard
128	Westlecot Bowling Green	Good
129	Wroughton Bowls Club	Good

The reason for the poor quality rating at Highworth Bowls Club is due to the toilet facilities being outdated. The provision is in need of development, although the Club does not have the funding to undertake such a project at present.

Supermarine BC reports that it has plans to modernise its changing facilities at Supermarine Sports & Social Club in the coming years, despite already being considered good quality. The Club reports that in order to maintain the provision, ongoing work is required.

Similarly, Swindon North End BC cites plans to improve its changing facilities at North End Bowls Club. This is in order to improve the provision to a good quality.

Stratton Churchways BC also reports that it is currently looking into the feasibility of replacing its current clubhouse at Stratton Churchways Bowls Club.

### **Sports lighting**

Four of the 13 operational greens in Swindon Borough are serviced by sports lighting. The sites with sports lighting are:

- ✦ North End Bowls Club
- ✦ Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club
- ✦ Shrivenham Road Bowling Green
- ✦ Stratton Churchways Bowls Club

Bowling greens that are serviced by sports lighting can enable increased usage, especially during evenings outside of summer months. However, the presence of such provision is relatively rare, meaning the level of supply in Swindon Borough is comparatively high.

### **11.3: Demand**

#### **Current demand**

There are 12 bowling clubs playing in Swindon Borough. Where known, membership of these clubs totals 538, broken down by club in the table below. However, the membership of Swindon Town Gardens, Swindon West End, Westlecot and Wroughton bowls clubs is not known due to the clubs being unresponsive.

*Table 11.7: Membership for bowls clubs across Swindon Borough*

Club name	Analysis area	Current membership
Haydon Wick BC	Central North	101
Highworth BC	North East	79
Rodbourne Cheney BC	Central North	40
Stratton Churchway BC	Central East	66
Supermarine BC	North East	80
Swindon BC	Central East	57
Swindon North End BC	Central North	55
Swindon Town Gardens BC	Central South	Unknown



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Club name	Analysis area	Current membership
Swindon West End BC	Central South	Unknown
Wanborough BC	South East	60
Westlecot BC	Central South	Unknown
Wroughton BC	South	Unknown
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>538</b>

The largest club is Haydon Wick BC with 101 members, followed by Supermarine BC with 80 members. The smallest club is Rodbourne Cheney BC with 40 members, which still represent a relatively healthy level of demand.

The average membership across Swindon Borough is 67.

### ***Additional demand***

No clubs report offering pay and play on their greens. The most prominent reason for pay and play not being offered is that there is no one on site at required times to manage the process. There is also a perceived lack of demand to make it financially viable.

### ***Play Bowls***

Play Bowls is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play users. Clubs are able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website. The aim is for this to help greens become more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 302 people who would like to participate in the sport within Swindon Borough, which aligns to the national average of just over 0.01% of the population.

Notwithstanding the above, none of the bowling clubs in Swindon Borough are reported as operating at capacity, with all clubs willing to accept new members and none currently operating waiting lists. As such, it is considered that anyone within the Borough who would like to start participating could do so at the clubs and greens already in existence.

### ***Future demand***

Bowls England is actively working to negate the stereotype that bowls is a sport for the older generation. As such, it is taking active steps at a county and national level to encourage younger players. The future growth for the sport is therefore in a state of flux due to the growing professionalism of the NGB.

Of responding clubs, six clubs highlight aspirations to increase membership by a total of 127 members across the Borough. The largest aspiration comes from Swindon BC and amounts to 40 members.

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Table 11.8: Future demand aspirations

Club	Analysis area	Future demand aspiration (members)
Haydon Wick BC	Central North	20
Highworth BC	North East	25
Rodbourn Cheney BC	Central North	10
Supermarine BC	North East	12
Swindon BC	Central East	40
Swindon North End BC	Central North	20

In addition, using ONS projections, the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase over the coming years. Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for greens could increase, although exactly to what extent is unclear as there is also a requirement for clubs to continually recruit new members to replace those who become unable to play.

### Bowls Bash

To assist with increasing participation, Bowls England has recently launched a product known as Bowls Bash. This is an exciting, new form of lawn bowls that is easy to play, shortened and fun for all ages and abilities. The aim is to roll the ball at the Jack; the closer you get, the more points you earn for your team, and bonus points are given for kissing the target. It is normally played in teams of two, with players delivering 30 bowls each per match, and generally lasts an hour.

### 11.4: Supply and demand analysis

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be unused for the rest of the week. However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Bowls England does not have any specific rules on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-club. However, as a guide, it states that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 80 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting its required level of demand. Therefore, capacity ratings for bowling greens in Swindon Borough are classified as follows:

<b>Within capacity range</b>	Membership ensures green is sustainable and without capacity issues
<b>Outside capacity range</b>	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green in Swindon Borough receives, where the information is known. Where no membership information is known, further communication is required with clubs to fully understand their needs and any potential capacity or sustainability issues.

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Table 11.7: Bowling green supply and demand analysis

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of greens	Current demand (members)	Current capacity (members)	Future demand (members)	Future capacity (members)
38	Hooper's Field	South East	Wanborough BC	1	60	20	-	0
86	Supermarine Sports & Social Club	North East	Supermarine BC	1	80	0	12	12
115	Highworth Bowls Club	North East	Highworth BC	1	79	1	25	24
118	North End Bowls Club	Central North	Swindon North End BC	1	55	24	20	4
120	Rodbournne Cheney Bowls Club	Central North	Rodbournne Cheney BC	1	40	40	10	30
121	Shrivenham Road Bowling Green	Central East	Swindon BC	1	57	23	40	17
123	Stratton Churchways Bowls Club	Central East	Stratton Churchways BC	1	66	14	-	14
124	Swindon West End Bowls Club	Central South	Swindon West End BC	1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
125	Thames Avenue Bowling Green	Central North	Haydon Wick BC	1	101	21	20	41
126	Town Gardens Bowling Green	Central South	Swindon Town Gardens BC	1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
128	Westlecot Bowling Green	Central South	Westlecot BC	2	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
129	Wroughton Bowls Club	South	Wroughton BC	1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

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The table above shows there is currently one club operating above the recommended capacity limit, with this being Haydon Wick BC at Thames Avenue Bowling Green. However, when factoring in future demand, Supermarine, Highworth and Swindon bowls clubs are also projected to exceed the threshold.

Notwithstanding the above, none of the clubs reference any capacity issues or mention a need for additional green space, suggesting no serious issues. Nevertheless, clubs which have a substantial level of demand need to be monitored to ensure that they continue to have sufficient provision to meet their needs.

At the other end of the spectrum, no clubs are operating below the recommended membership threshold and no clubs are close to it. This suggests that sustainability is not an issue at any of the sites.

### 11.5: Conclusion

There is currently sufficient capacity for bowls in Swindon Borough to meet both current and future demand, with no capacity issues reported. However, demand is also relatively high and each green is in use. This means that all provision requires continued protection to ensure the supply remains adequate.

#### **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- There is currently one club operating above capacity limits, with this being Haydon Wick BC at Thames Avenue Bowling Green, whilst Supermarine, Highworth and Swindon bowls clubs are also projected to exceed the threshold when accounting for future demand.
- At the other end of the spectrum, no clubs are operating below the recommended membership threshold and no clubs are close to it, with this suggesting that sustainability is not an issue at any of the sites.
- There is currently sufficient capacity for bowls to meet both current and future demand, with no capacity issues reported; however, demand is also relatively high and each green is in use, meaning that all provision requires continued protection.

#### **Bowls – supply summary**

- There are 13 bowling greens in Swindon Borough located across 12 sites.
- Westlecot Bowling Green has two greens, making it particularly important in the area.
- Five greens are owned and managed by the respective club on site, whilst the remaining greens are managed by clubs but owned by either the Council or local parish councils.
- Security of tenure is not an issue for most clubs, although it is limited for Wanborough BC at Hooper's Field as it has only an annual agreement in place.
- In total, 11 greens (85%) are rated as good quality, with two greens (15%) rated as standard quality (none are considered to be poor quality).
- Of the 12 sites supplying greens, five (42%) are accompanied by good quality ancillary provision, six (50%) by standard quality provision and one (8%) by poor quality provision (Highworth Bowls Club).
- Supermarine BC has plans to modernise the changing facilities at Supermarine Sports & Social Club, whilst Swindon North End BC and Stratton Churchways BC also have plans at their sites.
- Four of the 13 greens are serviced by sports lighting (at North End Bowls Club, Rodbourne Cheney Bowls Club, Shrivenham Road Bowling Green and Stratton Churchways Bowls Club).

#### **Bowls – demand summary**

- There are 12 bowling clubs playing in Swindon Borough, with known membership totalling 538 members.
- The largest club is Haydon Wick BC with 101 members, whilst the smallest is Rodbourne Cheney BC with 40 members, although this still represents a relatively healthy level of demand.
- No clubs report any latent or unmet demand in that no sites are said to be at capacity, with all clubs willing to accept new members.
- Six clubs highlight aspirations to increase membership by a total of 127 members across the Borough.

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### PART 12: PÉTANQUE AND BOCCE

#### 12.1: Introduction

Pétanque in England is governed by England Pétanque, which is a member of the World Governing Body, the Fédération Internationale de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal. The NGB splits the Country into 16 regions and identifies that there are over 2,800 members of 177 clubs nationally.

Pétanque can be played on any surface, although for competition play, a marked and defined terrain is required with minimum dimensions of 15 metres by four metres (although 12 by three metres can be acceptable for lower-level play). The playing area can comprise of an indeterminate number of lanes, generally defined by strings. Similar to bowls, the aim of pétanque is for players to play their boules/ball towards a smaller target ball (the Jack).

Bocce is closely related to pétanque, although a larger area is generally used (courts up to 27.5 metres in length and four metres in width are accepted). A variant known as bocchia is also prevalent for people with disabilities; however, this generally takes place indoors.

#### **Consultation**

There are three clubs/groups within Swindon Borough identified as playing pétanque and/or bocce. These are known as Swindon North End Bowls Club, Wanborough Pétanque Club and Broome Manor Pétanque. Of these, Swindon North End Bowls Club and Broome Manor Pétanque responded to consultation requests, whereas Wanborough Pétanque Club did not.

#### 12.2: Supply

There are two formal outdoor pétanque facilities within Swindon Borough. One is located at Swindon North End Bowls Club in the Central North Analysis Area, where two pistes are available and with this area also doubling up as a single bocce court. The provision was installed in 2023 after the Club received a grant from the Swindon Sports Forum.

The other terrain is at Broome Manor Golf Club in the Central South Analysis Area. This is used by an informal group known as Broome Manor Pétanque. It is currently subject to a planning application in relation to a wider site development that will entail the relocation of the provision (within another area of the site).

In addition, it is known that Wanborough Pétanque Club aspires to establish a terrain with five lanes at Wanborough Bowls Club for social play, coaching and competitive games. As it stands, the Club utilises three different venues for play including Hooper's Field, Swindon Town Football Club Community Foundation and The Plough Inn. However, it should be noted that these facilities do not have specific, formalised provisions for the sport.

#### **Quality**

No quality assessment guidance is in place for pétanque or bocce. However, the nature of pétanque in particular means that surface quality is not considered overly important when compared to similar sports such as bowls, with balls being thrown towards the jack, rather than rolled (meaning a flat, even surface is less important).

Whilst no consultation has taken place to determine the quality of the playing surface at either Swindon North End Bowls Club or Broome Manor Golf Club, both are thought to be of good quality. This is especially the case at the former given that it has only recently been installed.

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### 12.3: Demand

Wanborough Pétanque Club is the only formal pétanque club within Swindon Borough. However, current demand is unknown as there has been no response from consultation regarding membership numbers, fixtures and frequency of play. However, the Club's use of multiple venues for participation is seen as less than ideal.

In addition, pétanque activity also takes place at and via Swindon North End Bowls Club given the existence of provision at the site, with bocce demand also recorded. However, this is not currently formalised (i.e., via teams and matches).

The same also applies at Broome Manor Golf Club, where an informal pétanque group accesses the provision. Weekly sessions are organised every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning as well as on Thursday afternoons.

### 12.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion

Demand from Wanborough Pétanque Club is not currently being adequately supplied given that the Club is split across several venues, none of which provide formal provision. As such, it is considered that aspirations for the creation of facilities at Wanborough Bowls Club should be supported.

Elsewhere, provision at Swindon North End Bowls Club and Broome Manor Golf Club is well positioned to pick up any demand outside of the more formal setting at Wanborough Pétanque Club. Due to usage of both sites, it is imperative that the provision is retained, especially given wider site plans at Broome Manor Golf Club.

#### **Petanque and bocce - supply and demand summary**

- ❖ Demand from Wanborough Pétanque Club is not currently being adequately supplied given that the Club is split across several venues, none of which provide formal provision.
- ❖ Provision at Broome Manor Golf Club and Swindon North End Bowls Club is well positioned to pick up any demand outside of the club and it is therefore imperative that such provision is also retained.

#### **Petanque and bocce - supply summary**

- ❖ There are two formalised pétanque terrains within Swindon Borough.
- ❖ One is located at Swindon North End Bowls Club, where two pistes are available, with this area also doubling up as a single bocce court.
- ❖ The other is at Broome Manor Golf Club, although this is currently subject to a planning application in relation to a wider site development that will entail the relocation of the provision.
- ❖ In addition, Wanborough Pétanque Club aspires to establish a terrain with five lanes at Wanborough Bowls Club for social play, coaching and competitive games.
- ❖ The Club currently utilises three different venues for play including Hooper's Field, Swindon Town Football Club Community Foundation and The Plough Inn, with none of these having specific provisions for the sport.

#### **Petanque and bocce - demand summary**

- ❖ There is one formal pétanque club known as Wanborough Pétanque Club; however, its use of multiple venues for participation is seen as less than ideal.
- ❖ Pétanque activity also takes place at Swindon North End Bowls Club given the existence of provision at the site, with bocce demand also recorded
- ❖ The same also applies at Broome Manor Golf Club, where an informal pétanque group accesses the provision, with weekly sessions organised every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning as well as on Thursday afternoons.



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### PART 13: CROQUET

#### 13.1: Introduction

The Croquet Association is the NGB for croquet in England. The sport is continuing to grow in popularity with over 200 clubs now registered with the Croquet Association. A full-size croquet lawn measures 32 metres by 28 metres.

There are two types of croquet which include association croquet and golf croquet.

#### *Consultation*

There is one club identified as playing croquet within Swindon Borough, known as Swindon Croquet Club. The Club has been consulted to inform this section of the report.

#### 13.2: Supply

There are three croquet lawns in Swindon Borough, all provided at Moredon Playing Fields in the Central North Analysis Area. These are accessed by Swindon Croquet Club, although the Club's lease agreement for use of the provision has recently expired. It is in discussions with the Council to enter into a new 15-year arrangement.

In addition, Swindon Croquet Club aspires to increase its supply to five lawns in the near future so that it can host national competitions and events from the venue. It states that Moredon Playing Fields is currently undergoing a redevelopment and that it will be given the space to enable this to happen.

The existing lawns at Moredon Playing Fields are considered to be good quality, as determined via site assessments and through consultation with the Club. Maintenance is carried out by the Club and its members to a high standard and no issues are reported.

There is also a purpose built container on site which acts as a clubhouse, with changing rooms included. This is also considered to be good quality.

#### 13.3: Demand

Swindon Croquet Club currently has 50 members. However, the Club states that demand has steadily declined in recent years due to players ageing. Moving forward, it would like to increase its membership but notes that this will not be possible until the site development is completed and additional lawns are provided.

The Club has four teams competing in the Federation League, with two playing association croquet and two playing golf croquet. In addition to league fixtures, there are also two competitions per season for association croquet as well as several golf croquet competitions.

Other variations of the sport including one-ball and short croquet are also played as season openers at the site.

#### 13.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion

The Croquet Association recommends an average of 25 participants per lawn as a capacity guideline. As such, based on Swindon Croquet Club currently having 50 members, its supply is considered sufficient to meet demand given that it has capacity for 75 members via its three lawns.

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Notwithstanding the above, the Club has aspirations to develop two additional lawns which it believes will enable it to grow its membership, not only through increased capacity but also by increasing interest in the sport via hosting prestigious competitions/events. This is therefore something that can be supported to ensure future growth and sustainability.

No additional demand for croquet has been identified and therefore no additional supply is required outside of Moredon Playing Fields. By creating additional capacity at the site, any demand that does exist across Swindon Borough should be able to be accommodated, especially given its relatively central location.

#### **Croquet - supply and demand summary**

- Based on Swindon Croquet Club currently having 50 members, supply is considered sufficient to meet demand given that it has capacity for 75 members via its three lawns.
- Nevertheless, aspirations to create two additional lawns can be supported to ensure future growth and sustainability and to ensure that all demand across Swindon can be accommodated at the site.

#### **Croquet - supply summary**

- There are three croquet lawns in Swindon Borough, all provided at Moredon Playing Fields.
- Swindon Croquet Club access the site, although the Club's lease agreement for use of the provision has recently expired; it is in discussions with the Council to enter into a new 15-year arrangement.
- The Club aspires to increase the supply to five lawns in the near future so that it can host national competitions and events from the venue.
- The lawns are considered to be good quality, with maintenance carried out by the Club and its members to a high standard.
- There is also a good quality purpose built container on site which acts as a clubhouse, with changing rooms included.

#### **Croquet - demand summary**

- Swindon Croquet Club currently has 50 members.
- Membership has steadily declined in recent years due to players ageing.
- The Club has future demand aspirations but notes that this will not be possible until the site development is completed and the new lawns are provided.
- The Club has four teams competing in the Federation League, with two playing association croquet and two playing golf croquet.

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### PART 14: ATHLETICS

#### 14.1: Introduction

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing.

Locally, the sport is governed through England Athletics, which is the development and membership body for athletics and running clubs in England. It has a National Head of Clubs and Participation as well as a team of five club support managers across the Country, with one of these covering activities in Swindon Borough as part of the south-west region.

#### **Consultation**

Consultation took place with England Athletics to inform this section of the report. Club's in Swindon Borough have been contacted to take part in consultation but no club's responded.

#### 14.2: Supply

In Swindon Borough there is one dedicated athletics facility, with this being Swindon Athletics Track. It provides a purpose-built synthetic 400-metre track with eight lanes that is available for community use and is serviced by sports lighting.

*Table 14.1: Summary of community available athletics tracks in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Length	No. of lanes	Sports lit?
89	Swindon Athletics Track	Central East	400m	8	Yes

Swindon Athletics Track is located centrally within the Borough, which provides accessibility to the facility via various transportation methods. Swindon Train Station is adjacent and multiple road routes reach the venue.

The location can be seen via the mapping overleaf.



Figure 14.1: Location of athletics provision in Swindon Borough

### Management

Swindon Athletics Track is managed in house by the Council.

### Quality

Key factors impacting upon the quality ratings of athletics facilities include the condition and age of the track surface, the prominence of the line markings and any signs of wear and tear or unofficial use. For the full site assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

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Swindon Athletics Track is assessed as good quality, with the facility having been refurbished in 2017. No significant issues have been identified as part of this study. However, England Athletics highlight that the track is likely to require a re-top in 2027.

*Table 14.2: Summary of the quality of athletics tracks in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site	Year built / last refurbished)	Surface type	Quality
89	Swindon Athletics Track	2017	Synthetic	Good

### *TrackMark<sup>11</sup>*

TrackMark is UK Athletics' quality assurance scheme for outdoor track and field athletics facilities. A venue that achieves TrackMark is recognised by UK Athletics as having well managed, compliant facilities that are accessible to participants of all abilities. From 2021, venues that actively choose not to pursue accreditation are not eligible to apply for a competition licence at any level.

The Swindon Athletics Track is an accredited TrackMark facility until 30/10/2024. This enables it to host both track and field events throughout the year.

### ***Ancillary provision***

The ancillary facilities servicing the Swindon Athletics Track are provided by Swindon Town Community Foundation, located opposite the athletics track at Foundation Park. The site was redeveloped in 2020 and provides up-to-date modern ancillary facilities that are good quality.

### ***Future provision***

There are no known new athletics tracks proposed to be constructed in Swindon Borough. In addition, consultation with England Athletics reveals that, nationally, no new standard 400-metre athletics tracks are planned to be established, with focus instead on the retention of existing 400-metre facilities and the development of new, innovative, entry level facilities such as mini tracks and endurance loops. This is particularly the case if they can be provided as part of sports-lit, multi-sport developments.

Linked to the above, England Athletics is currently exploring three alternative approaches in designing new athletics provision. These three designs, outlined below, present more affordable and feasible means of creating athletics tracks.

### ***Compact Track***

The first of the three alternative designs is a 'compact track' featuring a 60m sprint straight with an accompanying jump lane and shot put space. This provision is the smallest of the three and is installed at sites with limited available land.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.uka.org.uk/about/what-we-do/facilities/>



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### *Mini Track*

A 'mini track' features a 140m four lane oval track with a six lane 60m sprint, as well as accompanying shot put and jumping provision. An advantage to a mini track design is it leaves a large space in the centre of the oval track to be used for either various field events such as long jump/ triple jump, or alternatively it can be used for other sports such as football pitches or an outdoor gym.

Mini track sites also feature a new design of shot-put practice areas in which it flattens a natural slope and athletes throw into a hill allowing for the put to roll back to the participant thus reducing time spent retrieving the put after each throw.

### *Active Track*

Finally, an 'active track' is a synthetic loop with no fixed shape or distance (similar to a formula one circuit), in which a track is drawn to fit its natural surroundings such as an existing park or school field. This is installed at sites where a 400-metre oval would not be feasible as it allows for adaptations to the shape in order to suit land in its current state. It is identified by England Athletics that Swindon is an area of potential investment for an active track, this would be to support new housing developments and should be explored further.

### **14.3: Demand**

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

Within Swindon Borough there are a total of nine clubs that are affiliated with England Athletics. These are shown in the table below.

*Table 14.3: Summary of Running Clubs in Swindon Borough*

Club name	Analysis area	Postcode (home base)
Swindon Harriers	Central East	SN1 2ED
Swindon Striders	West	SN5 7DL
Slinn Allstars	Central North	SN25 1QP
Highworth Running Club	North East	SN6 7HJ
Far Runners	North	SN25 4EH
Infineum	West	SN5 6DZ
Emily's Run Along Gang	Central South	SN1 3LQ
Rex Runners	North	SN25 2LQ
Wichelstowe Runners	Central South	SN1 7BU

Each club is further summarised via the sections below with the exception of Rex Runners (as no information could be found).



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#### ***Swindon Harriers***

Swindon Harriers is an athletics club based out of Swindon Athletics Track. It is a large club with over 400 members aged seven and upwards of mixed abilities. The Club is multi-disciplinary, competing in both track and field events as well as road running and cross country.

The track and field season runs from April to September, with sessions taking place on a Tuesday evening. Cross-country activity then takes place from October to March, with road running events also taking place throughout the year.

In addition, Swindon Harriers currently runs a special Olympics inclusive athletics session, targeting 8-16 year olds with a learning disability. This takes place on a Tuesday from 16:45 at Commonweal School during the winter and from Swindon Athletics Track in the summer.

#### ***Swindon Striders***

Swindon Striders is a road and trail running club welcoming all levels and types of runner. It meets on Monday evenings at Croft Leisure Centre and Friday evenings at The Link Centre, with different paced groups running between four to seven miles. Additionally, there are more structured coach lead interval and conditioning training session on a Wednesday evening as well as informal weekend runs organised by members.

#### ***Slinn Allstars***

Slinn Allstars is a club with 260 members and growing. It meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings as well as on Sundays, running routes from three miles to half marathons along roads, trails and country parks in Swindon Borough.

#### ***Wichelstowe Runners***

Wichelstowe Runners is a running club aimed at residents of the Wichelstowe community and across Swindon as a whole. The Club consists of 180 members and meets on a Saturday morning at The Bayberry at 8:30am.

#### ***Highworth Running Club***

Located on the periphery of Swindon Borough, Highworth RC is a small running club catering for runners of all ages and abilities. It meets on a Wednesday evening at during the winter months, offering two groups which differ in pace, as well as on Saturday mornings. Additionally, throughout the summer months, the Club meets on a Monday evening at Swindon Athletics Track for track sessions.

#### ***Far Runners***

Far Runners is a small road running club located in the north of the authority area. All activity takes place via the local road network.

#### ***Infineum***

Infineum is a small road running club located in the south of the authority area, with all activity taking place via the local road network.

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### ***Emily's Run Along Gang***

A qualified UK Athletics running coach which offers run coach sessions for those wanting to improve their form and fitness. The aim is to work with individuals or groups to work on technical improvements to help runners become more efficient and effective.

### ***Run Together<sup>12</sup>***

Run Together is an official England Athletics recreational running project which aims to get the whole nation running. Its aim is to provide fun, friendly, supportive and inclusive running opportunities for everyone, regardless of ability and availability. It believes that running is more fun and easier to become part of a lifestyle when shared with others.

In Swindon Borough, there are five Run Together groups, all of which are referenced above:

- ◆ Emily's Run Along Gang
- ◆ Wichelstowe Runners
- ◆ Infineum
- ◆ Far Runners
- ◆ Rex Runners

This is a large number of registered groups for one authority.

A key focus for England Athletics is increasing demand for participation in initiatives such as Run Together, meaning this could be targeted moving forward, especially given the number of other clubs that could be involved.

### ***Parkrun***

Parkrun is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 1,063 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online in order to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Parkrun events.

There are currently two Parkrun events in Swindon Borough, with one that is to the north of the Borough and one that is to the south. The runs at Lydiard Park are the most popular, with an average attendance of 335, whilst an average of 120 attend the runs at Seven Fields.

*Table 14.4: Summary of Park Runs within Swindon Borough*

Location	Post code	Event	Number of events	Average attendance
Seven Fields	SN25 3AQ	Park Run	139	120
Lydiard Park	SN5 3PA	Park Run	604	335

There are currently no Junior Parkrun events in Swindon Borough. For reference, those aged between 4 and 14 participate in Junior Parkrun events.

<sup>12</sup> <https://runtogether.co.uk/>

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### ***Couch to 5k***

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise.

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the NHS particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

It is believed that an increase in people running through the Couch to 5k plan may increase interest and possibly have a knock-on effect of leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs as people may wish to continue developing their running further.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 4,395 people within Swindon Borough, working out at 3% of the population. This is above the 2% national average.

Notwithstanding the above, all clubs suggest that they are open to accommodating new members, suggesting that most people wanting to participate can do so. As such, access to clubs is not considered to be a barrier preventing participation, with most latent demand therefore likely to be for athletics and running outside of the club environment.

### ***Future demand***

All clubs consulted with express an aspiration to grow membership, although the majority state that this is difficult to quantify as they will do their utmost not to turn demand away. Often, future growth can be limited by a lack of coaches rather than being due to facility issues, particularly for track based clubs (e.g., Swindon Harriers).

England Athletics also believes that demand for initiatives such as Park Run is likely to continue to increase in the future, although again to what extent is difficult to quantify.

## **14.4: Supply and demand analysis**

Swindon Borough is relatively well provided for in relation to athletics tracks, with the synthetic 400-metre facility provided at Swindon Athletics Track and with this being located centrally within the Borough. However, demand for the facility is also high, primarily from Swindon Harriers which has a large membership base. As such, priority should be placed on protecting the provision and ensuring quality is sustained.

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Away from track and field activity, emphasis should also be placed on supporting the other activities taking place in Swindon Borough, with a focus on retaining and increasing participation and growing the various initiatives that are in place. This, however, does not require dedicated provision.

### 14.5: Conclusion

The existing 400-metre track at Swindon Athletics Track requires protecting to ensure that existing demand can continue to be met.

#### **Athletics - supply and demand summary**

- Swindon is relatively well provided for in relation to athletics tracks, with the synthetic 400-metre facility provided at Swindon Athletics Track; however, demand is also high, primarily from Swindon Harriers.
- The provision requires continued protection, with focus on ensuring quality is sustained.

#### **Athletics - supply summary**

- There is one dedicated athletics facility, with this being Swindon Athletics Track.
- It provides a purpose-built synthetic 400-metre track with eight lanes that is available for community use and is serviced by sports lighting.
- Swindon Athletics Track is managed in house by the Council.
- It is assessed as good quality, with the facility having been refurbished in 2017 and no issues identified. The track is likely to need a re-top in 2027.
- The ancillary provision is also good quality via facilities at Swindon Town Community Foundation.

#### **Athletics - demand summary**

- There are nine clubs in Swindon Borough that are affiliated to England Athletics.
- Swindon Harriers is primarily a track and field club based at Swindon Athletics Track; it caters for over 400 members.
- All remaining clubs are road running clubs, although Highworth Running Club also accesses Swindon Athletics Track for some sessions.
- Five of the clubs' form part of Run Together, an England Athletics recreational running project.
- There are two weekly Parkrun events held, with one at Seven Fields and one at Lydiard Park.
- Whilst latent demand is theoretically high, no clubs report any capacity issues, suggesting that most unmet activity is for outside of the club environment.
- All clubs consulted with express an aspiration to grow membership, although the majority state that this is difficult to quantify as they will do their utmost not turn demand away.

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### PART 15: CYCLING

#### 15.1: Introduction

British Cycling is the NGB for all forms of cycling. It oversees six sporting disciplines, with each having a dedicated facility type:

- ✦ Track cycling – velodromes
- ✦ Road cycling – closed road circuits
- ✦ Mountain biking – trails
- ✦ BMX racing – race/pump tracks
- ✦ Cycle speedway – cycle speedway tracks
- ✦ Cyclocross – non-dedicated, non-permanent venues

British Cycling aids in the development of all six formats, helping to safeguard those that wish to participate in a competitive and compelling environment. The popularity of cycling has increased since recent elite sporting success in the Olympics and Paralympics as well as in other major championships.

#### Consultation

Information for cycling was gathered through online research and via consultation with British Cycling.

#### 15.2: Supply

There are three dedicated cycling facilities in Swindon Borough. This consists of two BMX pump tracks and one mountain bike trail.

Both BMX tracks have been installed within the last five years – the one at Maunsell Way Playing Fields BMX track was installed in 2018, whilst the other at West Wheels Track opened in 2022. This extended the already existing Rivermead Skatepark.

The mountain bike trail in Swindon Borough is known as Croft Trail. Its 5km in length and has a mixture of trails that vary in difficulties for riders to use and test their abilities, each with individual features. It is open all year round and is free to use.

*Table 15.1: Cycling facilities within Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site Name	Analysis Area	Postcode	Type of Provision	Year Built
51	Maunsell Way Playing Fields	South	SN4 9JF	BMX pump track	2018
127	West Wheels Track	West	SN5 7EX	BMX pump track	2022
130	Croft Trail	Central South	SN1 4ED	Mountain bike trail	2007

The location of the facilities can be seen in the figure overleaf. The three sites are located in the South, West and Central South analysis areas.





Figure 15.1: Location of formal cycling provision in Swindon Borough

### Future developments

A wider development of Moredon Playing Fields includes a one kilometre regional standard cycling closed road circuit with a number of internal loops and cross over points. This will allow three separate groups to use the track at one time and will also provide a learn-to-ride offer for younger users. It is due to be completed Summer 2024.



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### Quality

The tracks at Maunsell Way Playing Fields and West Wheels Track have been installed within the last five years and are deemed to be of a high standard.

Croft Trail is maintained by volunteers through specific trail building and manicuring days, supported by any donations that have been contributed. This ensure that it continues to be safe to use.

### 15.3: Demand

#### Club demand

There are 11 established cycling clubs that are based within Swindon Borough. The table below outlines the names of the clubs, membership levels (where known) and relevant types of cycling activity that they provide.

The clubs include Swindon Triathlon Club, which affiliates to British Cycling in addition to British Triathlon. This is due to level of cycling involved within triathlon as a sport.

Table 15.2: Summary of cycling demand in Swindon Borough

Club Name	Members	Types
BMX Wroughton	Unknown	BMX racing
Cotswold Veldrijden	71	Club training rides, Coaching, Competitive Time Trials, Cyclo-Cross racing, MTB Cross Country racing, Road racing, Track racing, Women only sessions
Darkroom Espresso Cycling Club	75	Club training rides, Competitive rides, Sportives, Recreational rides
Defence Academy Velo Club	80	Club training rides, Recreational rides, Sportives
League of Swindon Cycles RT	6	Road racing, Criteriums, Competitive Time Trials
Mountain Biking Swindon	139	Charity rides, Club training rides, Coaching, Recreational rides, Women only sessions
Swindon Cycle Touring Club	Unknown	Recreational rides
Swindon Road Club	129	Charity rides, Club training rides, Competitive Time Trials, Cyclo-Cross racing, Recreational rides, Road racing, Sportives, Track racing
Swindon Triathlon Club	72	Club training rides, Road Racing, Recreational Rides
Swindon Wheelers	245	Charity rides, Club training rides, Competitive Time Trials, Cyclo-Cross racing, Recreational rides, Road racing, Sportives
360VRT	14	Team Time Trials, Road racing, Stage races, Criteriums, Hill climbs

As seen, Swindon Wheelers is the largest club, catering for 245 members.

Each club is further summarised via the sections below, where information is known (it is not for 360VRT or League of Swindon Cycles). As part of this, it should be noted that only BMX Wroughton and Mountain Biking Swindon regularly accesses a formal cycling facility, with all other clubs generally using the road network.

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#### *BMX Wroughton*

BMX Wroughton is a dedicated BMX club located in Wroughton. The Club puts on free events for children to learn to cycle as well as specific coaching on Monday evenings tailored to becoming accustomed with the track. Additionally, it provides maintenance to the track ensuring that it stays in good condition for those using it.

#### *Cotswold Veldrijden*

Cotswold Veldrijden currently has 71 members. The Club has also brought together riders from the local Cotswold area to create a race team in various disciplines across cycling including road, time trials, mountain biking and track. Additionally, it competes in the Wessex League CX, fielding riders in all categories.

Regular coaching sessions, races and turbo training sessions take place to get people to ride and race their bikes. The Club also offers a mini riders' session for those aged over five.

#### *Darkroom Espresso Cycling Club*

Darkroom Espresso Cycling Club was founded in 2015. The Club states that it is inclusive and friendly, meeting every Sunday for social rides and utilising the local road network. With over 75 active riders, members also take part in sportive, audax, touring, cyclocross, mountain biking and track cycling sessions. During the spring, an extra social ride is also held on Thursdays.

#### *Defence Academy Velo Club*

Defence Academy Velo Club is designed around members of the Athletics Union of the Defence Academy of the UK. The Club's focus is about getting riders together to train and socialise in a fun and inclusive environment. Current membership numbers are at 80, with membership available for those that are part of the defence academy (military, civilian and students) and their dependents.

#### *Mountain Biking Swindon*

Mountain Biking Swindon is a friendly and non-competitive club that emphasises no rider being left behind. Affiliated to British Cycling, the aim of the Club is to promote mountain biking, fitness and an enjoyment of the great outdoors to members via regular and ad-hoc organised events.

The Club rides throughout the year regardless of weather conditions, utilising Croft Trail for all activity.

#### *Swindon Cycle Touring Club*

The Club runs social rides every Saturday, with varying lengths according to the time of the year. The pace of the ride is determined by the slowest rider to ensure that no one is knowingly left behind. Additionally, there is a Wednesday evening ride with the details of this being decided each week.

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#### *Swindon Road Club*

Established in 1930, the Club caters for aspiring, serious, or sporting cyclists. Rides take place on both days of the weekend as well as Tuesday and Thursday evenings, with the Club offering various activities, from social café rides to structured training. In addition, in the summer, the Club often has post ride socials.

The Club also runs a time trial series with other local clubs and participates in the west district TT series.

#### *Swindon Triathlon Club*

Swindon Triathlon Club is an affiliated and insured club that caters for all abilities of triathletes from novice to those who compete at a national level, aided by professional coaches. The Club states that it is in an ideal location for training with access to outstanding running and cycling routes and equally great swimming pool and lake venues.

All cycling activities take place via the road network.

#### *Swindon Wheelers*

A road cycling club established in 1923 and with a current base of 245 members. Its members are a mix of males and female riders ranging from 16-80, with several different ride groups organized based on ability. Regular club rides take place on both days at the weekend and during midweek in the summer months.

#### ***Additional demand***

##### *Go-Ride*

Go-Ride is a British Cycling's development programme for young people. It offers a fun and safe way to introduce young people to the sport and provides a platform to improve cycling skills. People can get involved through holiday coaching programmes or through their local accredited club which allows them to sample the various disciplines of the sport. Progression is obtainable with Go-Ride Racing, offering competition for riders to transition from school or club coaching to inter club and open regional competitions.

Within Swindon Borough, Swindon Wheelers are an accredited Go-Ride club.

##### *Breeze*

Breeze is a British Cycling's development programme for women. It offers three categories (easy going, steady and challenging) to allow women of all abilities to get involved. The programme offers exercise whilst also creating a comfortable environment to meet new people.

There are no Breeze programmes currently operating in Swindon Borough.

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#### *Cycling UK*

Cycling UK is a charity with a mission to enable millions more to cycle. It wants cycling to become a safe and popular mode of transport for people of all backgrounds and abilities, where air pollution is not an issue, obesity has been eliminated and traffic congestion is gone. As such, it promotes all forms of cycling, protects the interests of existing and would-be cyclists and inspires people across the Country to take-up cycling.

Across the UK, Cycling UK has around 1,000 member and affiliated cycling groups offering rides and events for all abilities. Within Swindon Borough, there are three groups incorporated, one known as Swindon, one known as Friends of Lethbridge Primary School and one known as Great British Bike Off.

#### ***Future/latent demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in cycling but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 8,776 people who would like to participate in the sport within Swindon Borough which equates to 3.8% of the Borough's population. This is marginally higher when compared to the national average of approximately 3.4%.

Notwithstanding the above, the nature of cycling likely means that most of the latent and future demand will not require space within a club or at a dedicated facility. Instead, most new participants will likely take up cycling by themselves (or with friends) on a recreational basis and will utilise the local road network to fulfil this. It is therefore likely that other barriers are preventing participation.

In addition, no clubs in Swindon Borough report any existing capacity issues, with all seemingly open to increased membership.

#### **15.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion**

Relatively high demand for cycling is identified within Swindon Borough, especially when observing current demand within clubs such as Swindon Wheelers. Whilst most of the demand does not require dedicated provision, protecting and sustaining what is provided within the Borough should be seen as particularly key to ensure that a broader range of activities remains available and can be catered for. There is, however, no apparent need for any additional facilities, especially considering the upcoming development at Moredon Playing Fields.

Based on the above, formal cycling provision at Maunsell Way Playing Fields BMX track, West Wheels Track and Croft Trail requires protection to ensure off-road cycling demand in Swindon can continue to be met. This will also be the case at Moredon Playing Fields when operational.

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### **Cycling - supply and demand summary**

- There is relatively high demand for cycling in Swindon Borough, but it is considered that there is sufficient provision to meet this, with no apparent need for any additional facilities.
- Formal cycling provision at Moredon Playing Fields, Maunsell Way Playing Fields BMX track, West Wheels Track and Croft Trail requires protection to ensure off-road cycling demand can continue to be met.

### **Cycling - supply summary**

- There are three dedicated cycling facilities in Swindon Borough, with two BMX pump tracks at Maunsell Playing Fields and West Wheels Track, as well as a mountain bike trail known as Croft Trail.
- The provision is considered to be of good quality.
- A wider development at Moredon Playing Fields will see the creation of a regional standard one kilometre closed road circuit track.

### **Cycling - demand summary**

- There are 11 established cycling clubs that are based within Swindon Borough.
- Only BMX Wroughton and Mountain Biking Swindon regularly accesses a formal cycling facility, with all other clubs generally using the road network.
- Swindon Wheelers is the biggest club with 245 members and it is an accredited Go-Ride club.
- In addition, there are three Cycle UK groups within Swindon.
- Whilst levels of future and latent demand are identified, the nature of cycling means that most of this will not require space at a dedicated facility or within a club and no clubs in the Borough report any existing capacity issues.

### PART 16: SPEEDWAY

#### 16.1: Introduction

Speedway bikes have no brakes, just one gear, a clutch and 500cc engines which run on methanol fuel. They race around oval circuits of around 300 metres in length in an anti-clockwise direction and to get around the tight corners at high speed, the riders have to accelerate to bring the rear wheel out and initiate a “skid”. Speedway meetings can be run as individual events, although most commonly there are two teams racing against each other. The teams have seven riders each and compete over 15 heats, with two riders from both teams in each heat and a scoring system giving riders three points for winning, two points for coming second and one point for third (nothing for coming last).

British Speedway is responsible for organising speedway fixtures and events in the United Kingdom, including The Premiership, The Championship and The National Development League as well as youth activity and overall management of the Great Britain speedway team. By way of supplementary context, each professional speedway club is managed by a promoter and these promoters are members of the British Speedway Promoters Association.

In addition, speedway venues across the Country are also commonly utilised for other motor sport activity, including stock car racing, and they can also double up as a venue for greyhound racing. Greyhound racing nationally is overseen by the Greyhound Board of Great Britain, whilst stock car racing is governed by the British Stock Car Association.

#### **Consultation**

To inform this section of the report, consultation has been undertaken with the Chairman of Gaming International, which is responsible for Swindon Stadium.

#### 16.2: Supply

There is one speedway venue in Swindon Borough, known as Swindon Stadium (or also Abbey Stadium). However, it has not been used for speedway since 2019, with meetings cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19, followed by Swindon Robins withdrawing from subsequent seasons. This was reportedly due to uncertainty over the future of the venue.

Linked to the above, a re-development of the stadium has been planned for several years, with outline planning permission first granted in 2008 for the development of houses on part of the site and the re-positioning of the track and stadium. Work began on the housing in 2016, but the stadium plans were delayed and then ultimately scrapped in 2019. The track ended up being reduced in circumference to make way for more housing, but this has not yet been allowed.

Due to the ongoing stand-off, Gaming International is now looking to develop a new motorsport venue and is currently searching for a viable site. It wants to establish a 5,000 capacity stadium as part of this and reports an announcement will soon be made in relation to a preferred location. It also states that a separate, formal pre-application is to be submitted for the development of the existing stadium.

Gaming International notes that the proposed new stadium will provide for multiple motorsport disciplines in addition to speedway and that much more activity will be allowed to take place when compared to the existing provision. This is primarily because the current stadium has a noise-restriction imposed and a subsequent limit on the number of meetings that can take place in a year (reportedly 25). As such, little capacity existed outside of fixtures for Swindon Robins.



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Without the track at Swindon Stadium, the nearest active location for motorsport activity is in Oxford, which is approximately a 50-minute drive away. This is not considered to be a reasonable distance for travel.

In addition to motorsport activity, Swindon Stadium has also historically been used for greyhound racing and still is to this day, with four meetings currently held weekly (every Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday). However, Gaming International states that this will soon be stopped. Furthermore, it reports that the new stadium will not be able to be used, meaning the future of the sport in the area is in jeopardy.

### 16.3: Demand

#### **Local demand**

Swindon Robins is the name of the speedway team and promotion in Swindon Borough, although as referenced previously it has not competed since 2019. Nevertheless, it remains an active promotion and the plan is for it to be part of the development of a new stadium and for it to re-enter the league system once complete.

There is also clear demand for greyhound racing at Swindon Stadium, with four meetings held weekly. That being said, Gaming International reports that there is little to no attendance at the events, with income for the promotion instead driven by participation, broadcasting and advertising.

No other activity has regularly taken place at Swindon Stadium, although the proposed new stadium, if it comes to fruition, will reportedly be more amenable to alternative motorsports. This includes the likes of stock car racing and go-karting.

#### **National demand**

More broadly, demand for speedway and speedway venues is seemingly in a state of decline nationally, with many promotions ceasing to exist in recent years and several teams currently up for sale and/or seeking alternative owners. There are also plans within the sport to merge the top two leagues and reduce the overall number of teams in an attempt to provide a more sustainable future.

The above is reflected by British Speedway fixture data, as shown in the table below. From a high of 43 teams competing in 2006, there are now just 24, although levels have been more static in recent years.

*Table 16.1: – Number of speedway teams nationally*

Year	Premiership	Championship	National Development League	Total
2006	11	14	18	43
2007	10	10	10	30
2008	9	16	8	33
2009	9	14	10	33
2010	9	14	10	33
2011	10	10	10	30
2012	10	13	8	31
2013	10	13	8	31
2014	9	13	9	31
2015	8	13	10	31

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Year	Premiership	Championship	National Development League	Total
2016	8	13	12	33
2017	8	10	11	29
2018	7	11	10	28
2019	7	11	8	26
2020 <sup>13</sup>	-	-	-	-
2021	6	11	6	23
2022	6	10	8	24
2023	7	9	8	24

A total of 18 speedway teams have ceased operations since 2005. These are evidenced in the following table.

Table 16.2: Speedway teams/promotions no longer competing

Team	Last competed (year)
Exeter Falcons	2005
Hull Vikings	2005
Wimbledon Dons	2005
Oxford Cheetahs	2007
Boston Barracudas	2008
Reading Bulldogs	2008
Weymouth Wildcats	2010
Hackney Hawks	2011
Newport Wasps	2011
Coventry Bees	2018
Lakeside Hammers	2018
Rye House Rockets	2018
Workington Comets	2019
Stoke Potters	2019
Swindon Robins	2019
Cradley Heathens	2019
Eastbourne Eagles	2021
Newcastle Diamonds	2022

Added to this, the quality of speedway stadia in the UK is generally considered to be poor, with the possible exception of the National Speedway Stadium in Manchester which received significant investment from Manchester City Council in 2016. The challenges and general decline has led to a number of stadia closures, with the primary drivers cited being unsustainable revenue streams due to declining attendances and fewer broadcasting deals.

Conversely, many sites are seemingly remaining viable, and sites are successfully re-opening after years of closure. This has been the case recently in Workington and Oxford.

<sup>13</sup> Season cancelled due to Covid-19.

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Greyhound racing is also seemingly in decline, with only four speedway venues now doubling up to service both. Moreover, there are now just 20 active facilities that host greyhound racing regularly across the Country, despite there being over 100 in the 1950's.

#### **16.4: Supply and demand analysis**

Assessing supply and demand for speedway and speedway venues can be difficult due to the nature of the relevant sports, with most activity being at elite and professional level. This means that need can come more from spectators than participants, with riders able to join other teams in the event of a promotion becoming defunct but with fans having limited alternatives. Furthermore, the national picture suggests dwindling demand for speedway provision; however, with every facility that closes, the need to retain what remains increases as venues become more and more spread out.

Based on the above, there is seemingly a clear need for speedway provision within or near to Swindon Borough given the presence of Swindon Robins. Despite it not competing since 2019, the promotion remains active and seeks to rejoin the league system following the proposed development of a new stadium. Without this, or without being able to re-access Swindon Stadium, it has nowhere else to base itself from. Furthermore, fans of Swindon Robins, or more broadly fans of speedway within Swindon Borough, have nowhere else within a reasonable distance that they can attend instead.

There could also be a requirement to consider greyhound demand given its current usage of Swindon Stadium, which is problematic given that no provision for the sport is proposed as part of the development of a new venue. However, the nature of greyhound activity suggests that this is less of an issue given that there is little to no current spectatorship.

#### **16.5: Conclusion**

There is a requirement for a speedway facility within or in close proximity to Swindon Borough to meet the needs of Swindon Robins and its fanbase. This could be achieved via supporting plans for the creation of a new stadium, or through bringing the existing Swindon Stadium site back into use. As a result, without an alternative venue being established, the current provision should continue to be protected.

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### **Speedway - supply and demand summary**

- There is a requirement for a speedway facility within or in close proximity to Swindon Borough to meet the needs of Swindon Robins and its fanbase.
- This could be achieved via supporting plans for the creation of a new stadium, or through bringing the existing Swindon Stadium site back into use.
- There could also be a requirement to consider greyhound activity moving forward, although the nature of the sport suggests that this is less of an issue given that there is little to no current spectatorship.

### **Speedway - supply summary**

- There is one speedway venue in Swindon Borough, known as Swindon Stadium (or also Abbey Stadium); however, it has not been used for speedway since 2019 as Swindon Robins stopped competing.
- A re-development of the site has been planned for several years.
- The site is owned by Gaming International, which is now looking to develop a new motorsport venue and is currently searching for a viable site.
- The current stadium has a noise-restriction imposed and a subsequent limit on the number of meetings that can take place in a year, meaning little capacity existed outside of fixtures for Swindon Robins.
- Without the track at Swindon Stadium, the nearest active location for motorsport activity is in Oxford, which is approximately a 50-minute drive away.
- In addition to motorsport activity, Swindon Stadium is also used for greyhound racing, with four meetings currently held weekly; however, Gaming International states that this will soon be stopped.

### **Speedway - demand summary**

- Swindon Robins is the name of the speedway team and promotion in Swindon Borough, although as it has not competed since 2019.
- It remains an active promotion and the plan is for it to be part of the development of a new stadium and for it to re-enter the league system once complete.
- There is also clear demand for greyhound racing at Swindon Stadium, with four meetings held weekly.
- There is little to no attendance at the greyhound events, with income for the promotion instead driven by participation, broadcasting and advertising.
- No other activity has regularly taken place at Swindon Stadium, although the proposed new stadium, if it comes to fruition, will reportedly be more amenable to alternative motorsports (e.g., stock car racing and go-karting).
- More broadly, demand for speedway and speedway venues is seemingly in a state of decline nationally, with many promotions ceasing to exist in recent years, although some facilities have successfully re-opened more recently.
- Greyhound racing is also seemingly in decline, with only 20 active facilities now hosting events across the Country compared to there being over 100 in the 1950's.

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### PART 17: GOLF

#### 17.1: Introduction

Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in England, with around 730,000 members belonging to one of 1,800 affiliated clubs and a further two million people playing independently outside of club membership. There are an estimated 3,000 golf courses across the Country, with approximately 90 designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because apart from the intensively managed trees and greens they have other habitats with high wildlife value. Many other courses also exist within designated Heritage Coast sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or listed Historic Parklands.

Nationally, the sport is governed by England Golf. Its role includes providing competitions for players of all ages and abilities, identifying and developing the most talented golfers, maintaining a uniform system of handicapping, administering and applying the rules, and introducing new golfers via its initiatives such as 'Get into Golf'.

#### Consultation

This section was informed via consultation with England Golf, which provided information relating to all facilities and clubs within Swindon Borough.

#### 17.2: Supply

There are three different types of golf facilities recognised by Sport England and governed by England Golf, as defined in the table below. Facilities such as pitch and putt courses and miniature/crazy golf courses not included as these are not considered to be traditional formats of the game and are not comparable offerings.

*Table 17.1: Definition of golf facilities*

Facility type	Description
Standard	A standard par course, with a minimum of 9 holes but normally associated with 18-hole courses; many 9-hole courses have different tee boxes which allow the provision to be played as an 18-hole course. Some courses provide 27 holes, with any two loops of 9-holes played to make up an 18-hole round.
Par 3	Shorter length of holes than a standard course, with no hole longer than Par 3. Most likely to be a 9-hole course although 18-hole offerings do exist. Does not include pitch and putt courses, which are even shorter offerings and are not considered to be a traditional version of the sport.
Driving Range	Includes covered and uncovered driving range bays but not practice areas within golf courses; ranges are based on the hiring of balls, with users not required to retrieve, whereas practice areas are generally for members to use with their own balls (although a growing number have dispensers). Does not include 'entertainment' ranges or virtual offerings, although some driving ranges have expanded to also provide these features.

Within Swindon Borough there are two golf venues that provide facilities with the above definitions. Broome Manor Golf Club has a driving range and 27 holes in total (made up of an 18-hole course and 9-hole course), whilst Wrag Barrn Golf & Country Club provides an 18-hole course.

The sites are mapped in the figure overleaf. Please see Table 17.2 for a key to the map.



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Figure 17.1: Location of golf provision

Table 17.2: Golf facilities in Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Standard hole course?	Par 3 course?	Driving Range?
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	SN3 1RG	Central South	Yes	No	Yes
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club	SN6 7QQ	North East	Yes	No	Yes



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### ***Disused provision***

There are two disused golf facilities in Swindon Borough. These are Highworth Golf Course and Moredon Golf Course.

Highworth Golf Course was a 9-hole golf course owned by the Council prior to closure in December 2019. Plans are in place for its development, with a mitigation package set out that includes smaller sized 3G provision (no golf facilities).

Moredon Golf Course previously provided a 9-hole Par 3 golf course that was also originally part of the Council's leisure portfolio. This closed in 2016, although it has recently been used to host disc golf activity, with a large competition hosted in 2022. It was attended by 62 competitors.

Disc golf, formerly known as frisbee golf, entails players throwing a disc at a target via similar rules to golf. It is usually played on a course with nine or 18 holes, with players completing a hole by throwing the disc, starting from a tee area, towards an elevated target until it is reached. It is seemingly growing in popularity, with 74 recognised venues across the United Kingdom (most of which are also traditional golf courses).

### ***Standard hole golf courses***

Both active golf sites within Swindon Borough provide standard hole courses that are summarised below. Broome Manor Golf Club supplies both an 18-hole and a 9-hole course, whilst Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club has an 18-hole course.

*Table 17.3: Summary of standard hole provision in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Holes	Par	Yardage <sup>14</sup>			Slope rating
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	9	33	-	2,690	2,378	-
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	18	71	6,283	5,989	5,557	124-129
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club	18	72	6,622	6,389	5,732	123-133

Of the two 18-hole courses, Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club provides the longest offering, although both are in range of what you would expect from traditional provision. Shorter courses tend to offer some variety that may appeal more so to a defined market that would not feel comfortable playing lengthier provision e.g., beginner and or casual golfers.

Nationally, many 9-hole courses are shorter than the front or back nine of an 18-hole course, primarily to attract and cater for a different userbase. This is the case with the 9-hole course at Broome Manor Golf Club as is it only 2,690 yards long.

### ***Slope ratings***

Slope ratings are new to golf across the World. The intention is for them to allow the handicap system to reflect course difficulty and the difference in difficulty for all players compared to scratch golfers. In effect, this enables each player to have a handicap that will vary from course-to-course, depending on difficulty, as well as a general handicap.

The maximum slope rating is 155, whereas the minimum is 55. The standard difficulty is deemed to be 113, which means that the courses in Swindon Borough are considered to be more difficult than the mean.

<sup>14</sup> White denotes Championship tees, yellow denotes men's tees and red denotes ladies' tees.

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### **Par 3 golf holes**

Most commonly, Par 3 provision is used by beginner and casual players, although they are also utilised by more traditional golfers wanting to practice their short game. There are, however, no Par 3 courses in Swindon Borough following the closure of the provision at Moredon Golf Course.

### **Driving range bays**

Collectively, there are 47 covered driving range bays within Swindon Borough, with 36 provided at Broome Manor Golf Club across two levels and 11 at Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club. The facility at Broome Manor Golf Club is particularly large.

*Table 17.4: Summary of driving range bays in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	No. of bays	Sports lighting	Pay and play?	Price (50 balls)
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	36	Yes	Yes	£5
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club	11	No	Yes	£5

At Broome Manor Golf Club, the site has recently submitted a planning application to extend the driving range on the site and add a new adventure golf course. The two courses will be retained as part of this.

### **Management and ownership**

There are three main types of ownership and management models of golf facilities in England: members clubs, proprietary clubs and municipal facilities, as summarised in the table below.

*Table 17.5: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities*

Management type	Description
<b>Members</b>	Traditionally owned by members and run by committees. They are likely to hire caterers and green staff. Most members' clubs offer some level of pay and play and encourage golf societies but are mostly focused on membership numbers.
<b>Proprietary</b>	Owned or managed by businesses or individuals, these can include country club type facilities at the high end of the golfing market alongside more localised facilities. Many have clubs operating within them but can also take a much more relaxed attitude to dress and traditions of golf. Pay and play opportunities tend to be a key feature of the business plan.
<b>Municipal</b>	These are generally owned by a local authority, although in a growing number of instances, management has been contracted and externalised to private companies. Due to a lack of financial viability, many have closed across the Country in recent years and many that remain are under threat.

It is recognised that members clubs and visitors to such clubs are normally expected to dress appropriately, have a registered handicap certificate (a certificate issued by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU)) and be familiar with the rules and etiquette of the game. This is not uncommon at some proprietary clubs, but municipal courses tend to be more relaxed and do not require people to have handicaps, making golf much more accessible.

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Consequently, municipal courses are, in many instances, seen as entry level facilities, with players using them before having the confidence to move on to a members' or high-end proprietary club (although many people can and do stay attached to a particular course). They also tend to offer a more affordable golfing experience.

The business model for members clubs tends to rely heavily on income through membership subscriptions and use of ancillary facilities, rather than from pay and play usage, although attention has somewhat switched at many sites in recent years due to demand falling. The same can be said for some proprietary clubs, although, in general, more emphasis is placed on supplementing regular activity with green fee sales. Conversely, municipal sites have always been heavily reliant on visitors even though membership packages are normally available (often in the shape of season tickets). On occasion, these can be linked to access to other local authority operated sports facilities, such as leisure centres and swimming pools.

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability. In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment.

In Swindon Borough there is one proprietary course (Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club) and one municipal course (Broome Manor Golf Club). This is owned by the Council but currently operated by Twigmarket Ltd.

*Table 17.6: Summary of ownership/management in Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Course type
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	Municipal	Parkland
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club	Proprietary	Parkland

### Pricing

A key issue for the wider golf population is whether golf courses are available to the general population at a price point which is accessible to the majority of residents. Better quality courses tend to cost more to use, whilst 18-hole provision is generally more expensive to access than 9-hole provision.

Nationally, over the past few years, many facilities have altered their pricing structures to allow for discounts following a previous decline in golf membership. England Golf has positively encouraged this as its view is that clubs are more likely to experience growth when flexible packages are available. For instance, some now offer five and/or six-day memberships (whereby members can access the course on specific days but not on one or both weekend days), whilst others provide discounts that are no longer limited solely to junior players (e.g., discounts for those aged 18-21 and 21-30 or for those aged 65 and over).

England Golf reports that the average cost of a full adult membership across the Country is currently £1,086. In Swindon Borough, a full playing membership at Wrag Barn & Country Club is £1,275 which is above the national average, reflecting its higher end status as a good quality proprietary club. Contrastingly, membership at Broome More Golf Club is £975 which is just below the national average despite the inclusion of an additional 9-hole course and the large driving range.

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Pay and play at Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club is also significantly more expensive than the fees associated with accessing Broome Manor Golf Club.

*Table 17.7: Pricing structures at golf facilities within Swindon Borough*

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Full membership (per year)	Green fee (per round)	
				Weekday	Weekend
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	Municipal	£975	£35	£35
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club	Proprietary	£1275	£65	£80

### Quality

There are no official national or county golf facility rankings. Generally, the better course quality and supporting infrastructure is, the higher the joining/membership and green fees are likely to be. Some sites gain status through hosting county, national and international golf events and some tend to feature in ranking articles put together by golf magazines.

Quality of the golf courses in Swindon Borough are seemingly of a good quality with Broome Manor Golf Club being voted the number one public golf course in the Southwest of England for the last five years. Similarly, Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club was designed by Simon Gidman, a renowned golf course architect within the golf community.

The ancillary facilities for the sites in Swindon are also thought to be of a good quality, as both clubs are used as event venues to help generate further revenue. Golf clubs often need such revenue sources to operate effectively and the provision of a good quality, well equipped clubhouse is a key opportunity to provide a secondary income stream. This emanates from a variety of sources including bar and catering income from members and visitors as well as venue hire for special occasions including weddings, christenings and funerals.

As part of the planning application at Broome Manor Golf Club, an extension and reconfiguration of the clubhouse is also included, as is the creation of an on-site hotel.

### 17.3: Demand

Prior to the recent growth in demand, participation in golf had generally been in decline, with only recent signs showing that the reduction may have been levelling off. The landscape of demand has also changed, with fewer users taking up membership packages and more golfers becoming nomadic and using a range of courses on a pay and play basis. The following section examines current demand for golf in Swindon Borough as well as recent trends and potential future demand.

### Membership

England Golf suggests that the average membership of a golf club nationally was 407 (as of 2022), which is based on a national handicap platform. In Swindon Borough, the average is significantly above this and equates to 655 members. The reason for such a high percentage is likely to be due to there only being two sites within the Borough.

The table below provides the membership numbers within Swindon since 2015, based on the England Golf affiliation data.

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Table 17.8: Summary of golf membership within Swindon Borough

Site ID	Site name	2015 Average	2016 Average	2017 Average	2018 Average	2022 Average	2023 Average
136	Broome Manor Golf Club	521	528	521	556	652	655
137	Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club						

As can be seen, not only is demand at an overall high level, but it has also increased substantially since 2015.

### **Pay and play**

In recent years, pay and play usage has increased across England, although usage figures within Swindon are unknown as it is not something that is tracked by England Golf. However, it can be assumed that levels are greater at Broome Manor Golf Club given its operation model and lower price point.

If facilities with low membership numbers do not have high green fee demand, long-term viability is questionable, with pay and play usage key to the business model and sustainability of such sites. However, this is unlikely to be the case across the two sites in Swindon given the membership levels that are present.

### **Exported/imported demand**

Cross-boundary demand for golf is common nationally due to the nature of the sport. Golfers do not necessarily recognise local authority borders, and many will choose a facility for a whole range of reasons other than where it is located, with factors including quality, availability, cost and where friends/family play. This can be especially pronounced at venues located close to neighbouring authorities and if there is a comparative lack of provision within those authorities.

For Swindon Borough, exported demand is expected to be higher than what would ordinarily be considered given that only two sites are provided within the Borough and given the lack of certain types of facilities (e.g., a members-ran club or a Par 3 course). Many neighbouring local authorities (e.g., Wiltshire) have a wider variety of facilities and some of these are located in closer proximity to residents of Swindon than the Swindon-based facilities themselves.

Notwithstanding the above, some imported demand will also be present given the high-end and good quality courses provided at both Broome Manor Golf Club and Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club. Furthermore, some nearby authorities are without accessible driving ranges and will therefore travel into the Borough for this purpose.

### **Unmet demand**

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to golf facilities. This could be reflected via a waiting list at a club, although it is likely that people on a waiting list are still playing golf elsewhere, either via membership of another club or through pay and play access. As such, unmet demand in Swindon Borough is considered to be minimal, with none of the sites having any known capacity concerns, despite high demand levels.

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#### ***Latent demand***

Latent demand is demand for golf that is not currently being realised. This could be for numerous reasons, such as time constraints, financial reasons and a lack of suitable, available provision. To that end, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in golf but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 2,359 people within Swindon Borough.

In addition, England Golf also has a mapping tool that enables an assessment of potential demand within a 20-minute drive time of each golf facility (which is considered to be a reasonable travel distance). This is based on research undertaken that identifies that 24% of adults in England are potential players, amounting to circa 9.6 million people and equating to 9% current players, 8% lapsed (former) players and 7% latent players. It can be used by providers to identify what demand may exist for their facilities, thus helping inform marketing, development and investment decisions.

Using the tool with Swindon Borough, Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club is identified as having a larger potential demand with 52,657 people falling within the segments within a 20-minute drive time. However, Broome Manor Golf Club also has a large potential demand base, with this equating to 48,384 people.

The tool also breaks the potential playing population down into nine golfing segments, with these defined to help provide an indication as to what type of golfing offer each would be most likely to access. They are:

- ◀ Relaxed members
- ◀ Older traditionalists
- ◀ Younger traditionalists
- ◀ Younger fanatics
- ◀ Younger actives
- ◀ Late enthusiasts
- ◀ Occasional time pressed
- ◀ Social couples
- ◀ Casual fun

There are similar demand trends across the nine segments for both sites in Swindon Borough. The highest demand is from "relaxed members" (12,104 people), whilst the lowest is from "old traditionalists" (10,273 people).

Whilst the reasoning for the latent demand is unknown and is likely to be varied, the data does show relatively high demand which would significantly increase membership and/or pay and play usage across facilities if realised. England Golf is supportive of clubs/sites that proactively target new audiences in an attempt to tap into such demand i.e., through developing a variety of golfing offers, coaching programmes and a range of membership options.

#### ***Future demand***

England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally; however, after reaching its previous target, it no longer has a fixed goal in terms of growth. Nationally, many clubs, especially the most established ones, will be happy to retain current demand levels, whilst others will be open to growing and some considerably so. In that regard, England Golf reports that many providers are proactively targeting new audiences through coaching programmes and a wider range of membership and playing options.



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In Swindon Borough, both facilities will have different aspirations in terms of future growth, although given high existing demand levels, both are also likely to be satisfied with current usage levels.

### 17.4: Supply and demand analysis

Within Swindon Borough, there is a relatively low amount of golf provision provided, with only two sites supplying facilities. This is leading to high demand levels and a clear need to protect the provision that is in place. Furthermore, there is a lack of variety in what is offered, with this likely to be leading to levels of exported and latent demand.

### 17.5: Conclusion

Existing golf provision in Swindon Borough requires protection given the demand levels that are being serviced. Furthermore, opportunities to improve the variety of facilities provided should be explored, with a focus on establishing a clear pathway from beginner golfers to low handicap players.

#### **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- There is a relatively low amount of golf provision provided in Swindon Borough, with only two sites supplying facilities, and this is leading to high demand levels.
- Existing provision requires protection, and opportunities to improve the variety of facilities provide should be explored.

#### **Golf – supply summary**

- There are currently two active golf sites in Swindon Borough, provided at Broome Manor Golf Club and Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club.
- In addition, disused provision is identified at Highworth Golf Course and Moredon Golf Course, the latter of which has more recently been used to host disc golf activity.
- Broome Manor Golf Club supplies one 18-hole and one 9-hole course, whilst Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club supplies an 18-hole course.
- Both sites also provide driving range bays, with 36 sports-lit bays at Broome Manor Golf Club and 11 (non-lit) bays at Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club.
- No Par 3 courses are provided (Moredon Golf Course has a disused one).
- Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club operates as a proprietary course, whilst Broome Manor Golf Club is owned by the Council (municipal) and ran by Twigmarket Ltd.
- Both courses are considered to be good quality.
- Broome Manor Golf Club operates slightly below the national membership price figure at £975, whilst Wrag Barn Golf & Country Club operate above it, charging £1,275 per annum.

#### **Golf – demand summary**

- The two clubs in Swindon Borough have an average membership of 655, which sees demand significantly higher than the national average (407 members).
- Membership has also increased significantly in recent years, growing from an average of 521 in 2015 and 556 in 2018.
- Pay and play opportunities are more limited as both sites have a focus on membership, although it is expected to be highest at Broome Manor Golf Club given its price point.
- Exported demand is expected to be relatively high, especially to Wiltshire given the number of courses provided and the relatively limited offering in Swindon Borough – this is especially the case for users looking for non-traditional or more affordable access.
- Latent demand is also high, whilst future demand is expected to be somewhat limited given existing high membership levels.

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### PART 18: VOLLEYBALL

#### 18.1: Introduction

Volleyball England is the recognised NGB for volleyball, beach volleyball and sitting volleyball in England. It is responsible for the development, promotion and delivery of the disciplines across England.

As a game for all ages, volleyball is one of the most popular non-contact team sports across the globe and has been part of the Olympic Games since 1964. According to the statistics from the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB), 500-800 million people participate in either indoor or beach volleyball games and competitions worldwide, which is about 10% of the world population.

Although volleyball is the second most played team sport in the world, it remains as only the 29th of most participated sports in England. The growth of the volleyball community strongly relies on the development of sport facilities and venues.

#### *Consultation*

Swindon Reds Volleyball Club is the only volleyball club within Swindon Borough. Attempts to consult with the Club have, however, been unsuccessful.

#### 18.2: Supply

For outdoor volleyball, Swindon Reds Volleyball Club currently operates primarily from one venue in Swindon Borough. This is located at Lydiard Park in the West Analysis Area, where temporary provisions are erected for training sessions.

In addition, there is also a beach volleyball facility provided at Coate Water Country Park. This is also accessed occasionally by Swindon Reds Volleyball Club for events / open days.

The Club more commonly accesses indoor courts at Abbey Park School, which falls outside of the remit of this study. Instead, this is picked up in the Indoor Built Facilities Strategy which is being carried out in conjunction with this study to form an Integrated Sports Assessment.

#### 18.3: Demand

Swindon Reds Volleyball Club offers multiple teams including senior men's, senior women's and mixed. It competes in local leagues, the National Volleyball League and various tournaments throughout the year.

As mentioned above, most activity takes place via indoor provision at Abbey Park School. However, during summer months, Lydiard Park and occasionally Coate Water Country Park are also used.

The provision at Coate Water Country Park is also accessed by Fireball Beach Volleyball for footvolley activity (a sport combining volleyball and football).

#### 18.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion

In conclusion, it is considered that overall demand for volleyball within Swindon Borough is low and that the majority of activity takes place indoors. As such, additional provision is not required for the sport, providing facilities continue to be accessible as and when required at Lydiard Park and Coate Water Country Park (or at suitable alternative venues).

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### **Volleyball - supply and demand summary**

- Overall demand for volleyball within Swindon Borough is low with the majority of activity taking place indoors.
- Additional provision is not required for the sport, providing facilities continue to be accessible as and when required at Lydiard Park and Coate Water Country Park (or at suitable alternative venues).

### **Volleyball - supply summary**

- For outdoor volleyball, Swindon Reds currently operates primarily from Lydiard Park, where temporary provisions are erected for training sessions.
- There is also a dedicated beach volleyball facility at Coate Water Country Park.
- All remaining volleyball activity takes place via indoor provision.

### **Volleyball - demand summary**

- Swindon Reds Volleyball Club is the only volleyball club within Swindon Borough.
- The Club offers multiple teams including senior men's, senior women's and mixed.
- The Club competes in local leagues, the National Volleyball League and various tournaments.
- Most activity takes place via indoor provision at Abbey Park School, although during summer months, Lydiard Park and occasionally Coate Water Country Park are also used.
- The provision at Coate Water Country Park is also accessed by Fireball Beach Volleyball for footvolley activity (a sport combining volleyball and football).

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### PART 19: SKATEBOARDING

#### 19.1: Introduction

Skateboarding is an action sport which involves riding and performing tricks using a skateboard. Since the 1970s, skate parks have been constructed specifically for use for skateboarding as well as other action sports such as freestyle BMX, aggressive skating and, more recently, scooters.

The sport is governed nationally by Skateboard GB, which is a membership organisation with recognised NGB status. Its principal function is to provide support for individual skaters, clubs, and skate schools and to provide structure and guidelines to ensure that skating is being practiced in a safe and fun environment.

Skateboarding made its Olympic debut at the 2020 Tokyo Games which has helped to significantly boost the profile of the sport. Skateboard GB secured UK Sport funding to aid its participation in this and has secured further funding for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympics following its success. It estimates that there are currently around 750,000 skaters in the UK based on equipment sales over a 12-month period.

Skateboard GB's other key roles are to:

- ◀ Support and improve performance to enable skaters to remain competitive.
- ◀ To raise money and allocate funds.
- ◀ To inform and educate.
- ◀ To provide greater accessibility to the sport.

In October 2021, it launched its Strategic Plan (2021-2033) with a vision that by 2033 it “will celebrate and champion everything that is positive about skateboarding heritage and culture and work with the skateboarding community to develop more opportunities and better environments to skate”. Moreover, it states that it will “inspire future generations of skateboarders as a result of success on the world stage”.

In the Strategic Plan, Skateboard GB highlights an aspiration for sufficient accessible indoor and outdoor safe skateable spaces to meet the needs of the whole skateboarding community. As part of this, it has an aspiration to achieve the following space objectives by 2025:

- ◀ Support the provision of skateable spaces.
- ◀ Build insight and a strategic plan that reflects current skateboarding spaces, need and gaps and supports the provision of inclusive shareable skateable spaces in urban areas.
- ◀ Develop and build a National Centre to support grassroots and elite skateboarding and which can deliver national and international events.
- ◀ Contribute to the funding of skateable spaces.

Linked to the above, Skateboard GB identifies that the overall quality of existing skateparks nationally is generally poor, with the large majority being owned by local authorities and receiving little maintenance. It also reports that there are insufficient skateparks of a size and standard to support the talent pathway and world class performance programme.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### 19.2: Supply

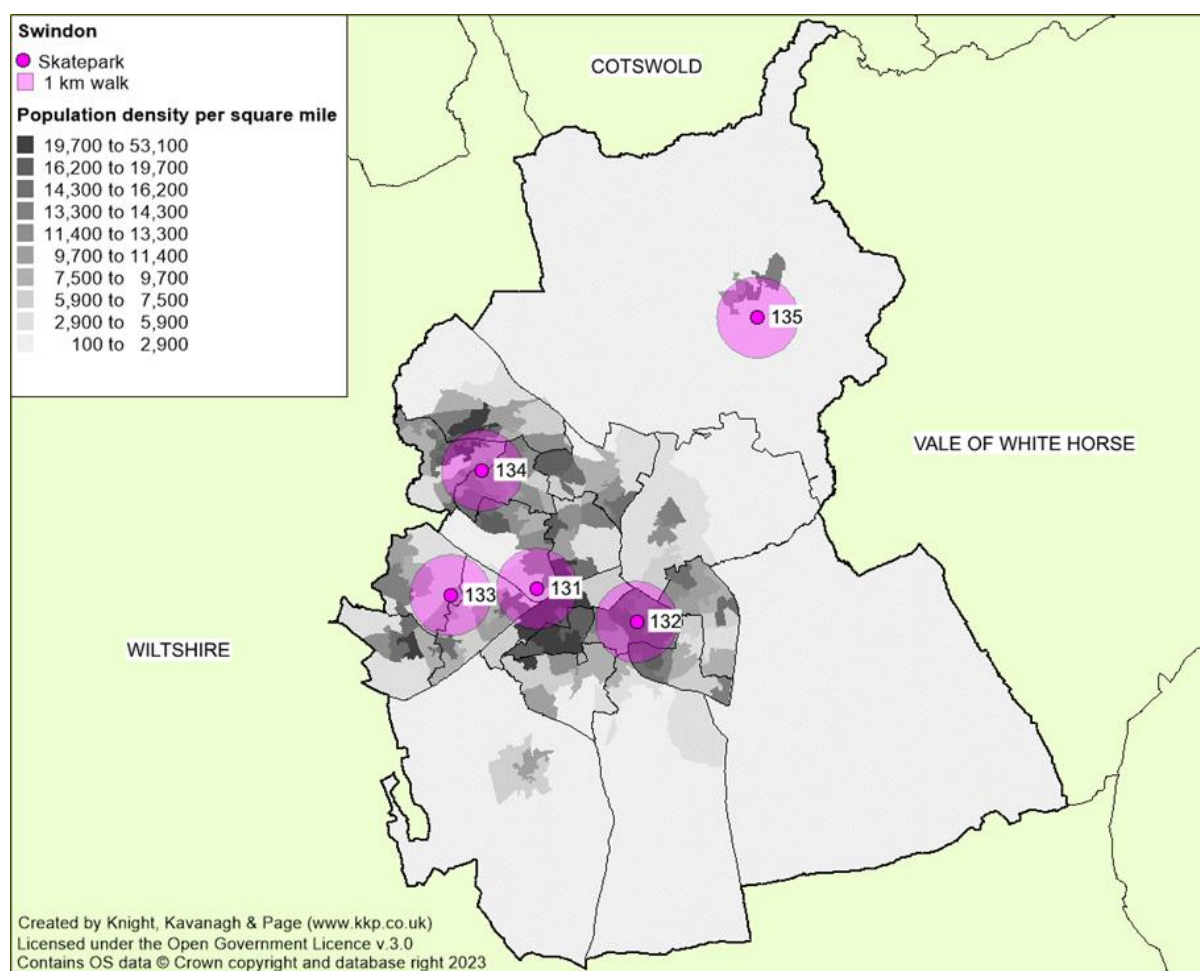
There are approximately 1,700 skateparks in the UK, although the flexible nature of activity means that there are also thousands of street and informal spots catering for demand.

In Swindon Borough there are five formal skatepark facilities currently provided, as summarised in the table below and subsequently shown in Figure 19.1. They are spread across the Central North, Central East, North East and West analysis areas.

*Table 19.1: Summary of skatepark provision*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Postcode	Management
131	Oasis Skatepark	Central North	SN2 1EN	Local authority
132	Buckhurst Skatepark	Central East	SN3 3BS	Local authority
133	Rivermead Skatepark	West	SN5 7UT	Local authority
134	Haydonleigh Skatepark	Central North	SN25 1QT	Local authority
135	Highworth Skatepark	North East	SN6 7DE	Local authority

*Figure 19.1: Map of skatepark provision with 1km radial catchments*



Each skatepark is further summarised via the table below. This details the type of equipment and surface that is provided for the user.

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Table 19.2: Summary of skatepark equipment

Site Name	Description
Buckhurst Skatepark	The provision is an all-concrete park with a mixture of transition and street elements. The skatepark starts on one side with a small bowl with metal coping and an open side that leads into the main body of the skatepark and has a hipped edge. Following from this is a jumpbox that is joined to a hubba, stair set and flat bank and after these is a quarter pipe that acts as a return ramp. It is a small and simple park that has a basic selection of obstacles arranged in a back-and-forth arrangement. However, the surfaces are smooth and fast, making it suitable for beginners.
Haydonleigh Skatepark	Located in a supermarket car park, Haydonleigh Skatepark is made up of metal ramps on a tarmac base. It comprises of a set of quarter-pipe ramps with a funbox in the middle.
Highworth Skatepark	A new facility opened in 2022 featuring various banks and pipes.
Oasis Skatepark	Oasis Skatepark is made up of metal ramps on a tarmac base. The skatepark features a back and forth run with a quarter pipe and flat bank either side of a funbox, as well as a mini ramp.
Rivermead Skatepark	Rivermead Skatepark opened in 2015 and is a concrete park featuring a back-and-forth layout with quarter pipes, ledges, rails, stair set and flat banks.

Each skatepark is open access and all are managed and maintained by the Council. Quality is generally considered to be good with no issues identified.

### 19.3: Demand

Levels of demand for the skateparks in Swindon Borough is unknown, particularly as all the skateparks are open access meaning that usage is not monitored.

Nationally, Skateboard GB reports that access to skatepark facilities particularly appeals to young males, with circa 95% of demand coming from those in the 14-30 age bracket. It is therefore important to note that skateboarding does not fit the traditional membership sports organisation model, with participants instead being individuals who want control and flexibility over their activities rather than structure and rules to follow.

### 19.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion

It is evident that Swindon Borough has a good supply of skatepark provision, with high density population areas in the central parts of the Borough well serviced (as seen in Figure 19.1). Furthermore, no formal issues have been raised with the quality of provision, particularly in relation to the new provision at Highworth Skatepark.

Based on the above, protecting and sustaining the current facilities should be seen as a priority, with no evidence existing for the creation of any further provision.



## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### **Skateboarding - supply and demand summary**

- It is evident that Swindon Borough has a good supply of skatepark provision, with high density population areas in the central parts of the Borough well serviced.
- Protecting and sustaining the current facilities should be seen as a priority, with no evidence existing for the creation of any further provision.

### **Skateboarding - supply summary**

- There are five formal skatepark facilities currently provided across Buckhurst, Haydonleigh, Highworth, Oasis and Rivermead parks/recreation grounds.
- All are open access and maintained and managed by the Council.
- No quality issues have been identified.

### **Skateboarding - demand summary**

- Levels of demand for the skateparks is unknown, particularly as they are all open access meaning that usage is not monitored.
- Nationally, Skateboard GB reports that access to skatepark facilities particularly appeals to young males, with circa 95% of demand coming from those in the 14-30 age bracket.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy. However, some NGBs do not have specific strategies relating to their sports, meaning not all sports are covered within this section.

#### National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

#### ***Department of Media Culture and Sport Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)***

The Government published its new strategy for sport in August 2023. The 2015 government sport strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for a More Active Nation, was a fundamental re-framing of sport and physical activity in the UK. It set out five outcomes delivered by sport and physical activity:

- ◀ Physical wellbeing
- ◀ Mental wellbeing
- ◀ Individual development
- ◀ Social and community development
- ◀ Sustainable economic development

This new strategy builds on the foundations of Sporting Future and retains these five outcomes at its core. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of three core priorities, with seven indicators to achieve these priorities as follows:

- ◀ **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active-**
  - ◀ Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030
  - ◀ Focusing on evidence, data and metrics
  - ◀ Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active
- ◀ **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport-**
  - ◀ Helping the sector to be welcoming to all
  - ◀ Improving how issues and concerns are dealt within the sector
- ◀ **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust-**
  - ◀ Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment
  - ◀ Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector

Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences. The vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country.

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### ***Sport England Uniting the Movement: Our 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport (2021-2031)***

Sport and physical activity makes people happier and healthier, and movement is the lens through which we can make that happen. It does the same thing for our communities, with life-changing, sustainable benefits that have huge economic and social value. That's why Sport England wants sport and physical activity to be recognised as essential to help overcome these national challenges.

The Strategy recognises the need to invest in sport and physical activity through NGBs, other sports bodies and local sports clubs, organisations and community groups to increase engagement for different groups as part of our core purpose. It states that there is now a need to go further in promoting movement in general as the means to unlock sport and activity for some people.

#### ***Tackling inequalities***

There are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which means that there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities aren't there. These inequalities are at the very core of the Uniting the Movement.

Sport England plans on having a laser focus on tackling inequalities in all that it does, because providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity is vitally important.

#### ***National Planning Policy Framework***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown that the open space, buildings or land is surplus to requirements.
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

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In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

#### ***The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the FF.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◆ Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◆ Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents' (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◆ Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ◆ Support access to flexible indoor spaces, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◆ Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◆ Support testing of technology and innovation, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

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#### ***The FA: Survive. Revive. Thrive. (2020-24)***

This new strategy aims to ensure the grassroots game in England will survive, revive, and thrive over the next four years.

The strategy outlines seven transformational objectives through to 2024:

- ◀ **Male Participation:** Modernised opportunities to retain and re-engage millions of male participants in the game.
- ◀ **Female Participation:** A sustainable model based on a world-class, modernised offer.
- ◀ **Club Network:** A vibrant national club network that delivers inclusive, safe local grassroots football and meets community needs.
- ◀ **Facilities:** Enhanced access to good quality pitches across grassroots football.
- ◀ **Grassroots Workforce:** A transformation in community football by inspiring, supporting and retaining volunteers in the game.
- ◀ **Digital Products and Services:** An efficient grassroots digital ecosystem to serve the administrative and development needs of players, parents, and the workforce.
- ◀ **Positive Environment:** A game that's representative of our diverse footballing communities, played in a safe and inclusive environment.

This strategy was launched as grassroots football was able to safely return after lockdown from Monday 29 March, it also identifies the immediate challenge, in light of COVID-19, to get grassroots football back on its feet.

The new strategy sets out a number of goals to revive the game by addressing the areas that require particular attention. This includes increasing opportunities to ensure girls have the same access as boys to football in schools and clubs, and improving quality of pitches, with the aim of seeing 5000 good quality pitches added to the current number by 2024.

#### ***The FA: Time for Change Strategy (2020-24)***

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in January 2021 which aims to 'unite the game and inspire the nation'. It will do this in two ways, by 'changing the game to maximise its impact' and by 'serving the game to deliver football for all'.

To achieve this, the strategy will focus on six Game Changer objectives, to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead:

- ◀ Win a major tournament
- ◀ Service > two million through a transformed media platform
- ◀ Ensure equal opportunities for every girl
- ◀ Delivery of 5,000 quality pitches
- ◀ A game free of discrimination

These are underpinned by eight Serve objectives, ensuring maintenance of brilliant business-as-usual services to support the growing and evolving needs of the game:

- ◀ Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- ◀ Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- ◀ Personalised and connected learning experiences
- ◀ Maximum investment into the game
- ◀ Diverse, high-performing workforce and inclusive culture
- ◀ World class venues and events
- ◀ Strong reputation and clear brand identity

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- Technology enabled and insight driven

#### ***England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)***

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ▶ **Grow and nurture the core**
  - ▶ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
  - ▶ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
  - ▶ Invest in club facilities
  - ▶ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
  - ▶ Further invest in County Competitions
- ▶ **Inspire through elite teams**
  - ▶ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
  - ▶ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
  - ▶ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
  - ▶ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ▶ **Make cricket accessible**
  - ▶ Broaden cricket's appeal through the New Competition
  - ▶ Create a new digital community for cricket
  - ▶ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
  - ▶ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
  - ▶ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- ▶ **Engage children and young people**
  - ▶ Double cricket participation in primary schools
  - ▶ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
  - ▶ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people
- ▶ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**
  - ▶ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
  - ▶ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
  - ▶ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
  - ▶ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme
- ▶ **Support our communities**
  - ▶ Double the number of volunteers in the game
  - ▶ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
  - ▶ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
  - ▶ Increase participation in disability cricket

#### ***The Rugby Football Union Strategy (2021 Onwards)***

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.



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## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

### Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field.
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby.
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players.
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society.

### Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society.
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game.
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences.
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce.

### ***Rugby Football League – National Community Facilities Strategy (2024 – 2030)***

The RFL has developed a new National Facilities Strategy which will guide investment into the game from 2024 through to 2030. The proposed investment package aligned to the Strategy will not only transform facilities, but also bolster the sport's social impact, reinforcing its position as a vital part of the nation's sporting and social fabric.

The four focus areas of the Strategy are:

- ◀ **Security of Tenure** – allowing clubs to plan for the long-term
- ◀ **Accessible and Inclusive Facilities** – providing suitable facilities for all and creating safe spaces for the wider community
- ◀ **Adequate and Appropriate Pitch Provision**– investment both in playing surfaces, and in upskilling a volunteer workforce to maintain them
- ◀ **Sustainability**– both environmental and financial

The Strategy will deliver on the four focus areas by delivering against a set of five recommendations which are set within the Strategy and are detailed below. These recommendations reflect the wider strategic aspirations across the sport and are for the RFL to work to deliver:

- ◀ **Focus Community Clubs**
  - ◀ Ensure the RFL has sufficient capacity and resource to deliver the recommendations identified within this Strategy to support its community clubs.
  - ◀ Ensure all community clubs have the knowledge and resource to provide good quality grass pitches.
  - ◀ Supporting clubs to have good quality changing and social facilities which can support the scale of need at each club. These must be inclusive for all participants and benefit target user groups such as women and girls' participants.
  - ◀ Ensure clubs can accommodate a sustainable operational programme for clubhouses to ensure the longevity of provision.
  - ◀ Work with clubs and key partners to increase the number of clubs with secured tenure of their club facilities.

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- ◀ Develop a dedicated funding programme which is specifically aimed at supporting clubs to gain security of tenure at their respective site.
- ◀ Highlight success stories and best practices from community clubs to inspire others and showcase the positive impact of these efforts.
- ◀ **Deliver positive social and environmental impact**
  - ◀ Support clubs through training and advice on how to promote facilities for non-rugby league purposes.
  - ◀ Work with Active Partnerships across England to enable higher usage and activation of rugby league assets for non-rugby league activity.
  - ◀ Prioritise clubs for wellbeing hubs which may offer the widest social benefit (relative to local need) – particularly those in high deprivation areas.
  - ◀ Use the activation of club facilities as a prerequisite to capital funding for club house improvements / new development.
  - ◀ Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies
- ◀ **Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies**
  - ◀ Ensure continued working with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of other sports to capitalise on shared investment opportunities.
  - ◀ Work with the Football Foundation to maximise Multi-Sport funding opportunities – utilising the framework provided in this Strategy as the baseline of shared investment.
  - ◀ Work closely with Active Partnerships in areas with high club densities to establish opportunities for pitch access via the Open School Facilities programme.
- ◀ **Technological solutions**
  - ◀ Ensure the RFL gathers greater levels of information from clubs via affiliation. To include security of tenure information and an integrated self-assessment audit of community facilities.
  - ◀ Continue expanding the use and application of PitchPower so all clubs can self-assess provision and support clubs to make positive contributions to improving the quality of grass pitches.
  - ◀ Promote technological solutions which progress clubs into being more sustainable, energy efficient and ensure their long-term viability as community assets.
  - ◀ Create a platform or resource hub where clubs can access information on funding opportunities, facility management, and sustainable operational practices.
- ◀ **Working with Charitable Community Organisations and Wheelchair Rugby League**
  - ◀ Develop an investment package to support the operational delivery of professional club foundation led wheelchair activity focusing on storage and logistical solutions.
  - ◀ Prioritise capital investment into community club sites which also accommodate professional club foundations as tenants for community Rugby League activity.
  - ◀ Begin work on the feasibility of developing a national wheelchair centre which includes exploring partnership opportunities with other sports to maximise multisport value and return on investment.
  - ◀ Consult with professional club foundations, where possible, to understand the need for 3G access and work to ascertain sufficient access hours during peak times of need.

#### ***Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme***

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of an ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

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### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

#### ***England Hockey Strategy***

The vision of the Strategy is for “every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players”, whilst its missions is for “More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities.”

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

- ◀ **PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**

There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

- ◀ **IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)**

The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. EH works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

- ◀ **DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.**

EH has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

#### ***LTA – Tennis Opened Up***

Following extensive research and collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders, the insight informing the Strategy points to many challenges for tennis. There is a perception that tennis is costly, difficult to access, and difficult to play, with too many people thinking that tennis starts and finishes with Wimbledon. As with many traditional sports that are struggling to compete with people’s time and attention, there is a concern that tennis is losing its relevance.

In order to address these challenges, the LTA has a vision of ‘Tennis Opened Up’ – aiming to grow tennis by making it more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable. It wants tennis to be open to as many people as possible, across the whole of Britain. Linked to this is the emergence and growth of padel, a new showing a huge multi-sport, all age group appeal.

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Key elements connected to growing participation include:

- ◀ Widening the appeal of tennis through inclusion of flexible formats of the game
- ◀ Emergence of padel.
- ◀ Improving the customer journey by making it easier to find a court, book it, and find somebody to play with
- ◀ Developing more relevant and enjoyable competitions at grass roots level for all abilities and ages
- ◀ Supporting community facilities & schools to provide more opportunities to play
- ◀ Helping clubs grow & retain members
- ◀ Creating more opportunities for children to play at school
- ◀ Facilitating partnerships to further increase rate of participation in parks
- ◀ Supporting venues to provide a welcoming and enjoyable experience
- ◀ Increasing awareness of affordability.

The LTA's vision for 2019 – 2023 also includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around its mission 'to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable'.

### Objectives:

- ◀ Increase the number of fans on our database from [623,602] to [1,000,000] by 2023.
- ◀ More people playing more often;
  - Increase the number of adults playing tennis each year from [7.7% (4,018,600)] of the population to [8.5% (4,420,460)], and the frequency of adults playing tennis twice a month 2.5% 1,311,800 to 1.9% 1,500,000 by 2023.
  - The number of children playing tennis once a week from 550,000 to 700,000 (7.9% to 10% of the population) by 2023.
- ◀ Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.

### Strategies:

1. Visibility - Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
2. Innovation - Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
3. Investment - Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play
4. Accessibility - Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone
5. Engagement - Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.
6. Performance - Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
7. Leadership - Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

### *England Netball*

In November 2021 England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.

England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead.

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:

- ▶ Accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,
- ▶ Elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- ▶ Lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, England Netball, with its proud and unique female foundations, will remain dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority, working tirelessly to address the gender participation gap in sport that has widened since the global pandemic.

Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, the organisation pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation. The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

### *Facility Development*

The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- ▶ Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- ▶ Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- ▶ Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- ▶ For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:-
- ▶ Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- ▶ Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- ▶ Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
- ▶ Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.

### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

- Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

#### ***Bowls England: Fit for the Future (2021-2026)***

Bowls England's Strategy; 'Fit For The Future' frames an exciting course for the sport. The five-year plan has been designed with the ultimate goal of getting more people playing & enjoying bowls. It sets out its vision for the sport, how it plans to achieve its objectives and what success looks like in 2026. The priorities that will get it to the target of 1 million bowls experiences per year by 2026 are:

- Building the brand of bowls by increasing focus on international & top domestic bowls, and utilizing opportunities such as Birmingham 2022 to achieve larger media coverage;
- Ensuring the sport is truly accessible to all by offering different formats of the game which suit all time constraints, as well as driving more people to clubs in new ways;
- Creating positive playing experiences for everyone who steps on the green, both for casual and competitive players, as well as growing our events calendar and introducing a Performance Pathway
- Putting volunteers first, as the lifeblood of our sport, by increasing our support for clubs in order to empower them to thrive;
- Leading the sport with purpose by developing our Governance structures, diversifying our revenue streams, and work collaboratively with all the sport's key stakeholders.

#### ***England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond***

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

- To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
- To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.



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### PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

#### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims "To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England".

#### ***England Golf Course Planner – Strategic Direction (2021-2025)***

England Golf has always had a mission to lead, support, inspire and deliver for its community of golfers, golf clubs and counties. To help enable this, its Course Planner forms the core of its strategy, with 18 guiding principles established that are designed to best position growth in the game:

- ◆ Strengthen governance in all aspects of the sport
- ◆ Deliver safeguarding throughout the golfing community
- ◆ Utilise data and technology to enhance decision making
- ◆ Drive equality and equity in everything it does
- ◆ Support golf clubs with member recruitment and retention
- ◆ Connect and engage with all golfers
- ◆ Inspire and educate golf's network of volunteers
- ◆ Increase golf's influence
- ◆ Advocate and inform on all elements of sustainability
- ◆ Drive diversity at all levels of golf
- ◆ Create more opportunities for junior and young adults
- ◆ Promote the health and wellbeing of golf
- ◆ Inspire more women and girls to play golf
- ◆ Develop greater access for disabled people
- ◆ Enthuse all golfers through relatable role models
- ◆ Communicate a positive perception change for golf
- ◆ Deliver an excellent talent development pathway
- ◆ Host best-in-class competitions for all golfers

<https://www.englandgolf.org/englandgolfstrategy/>

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### *British Cycling Lead our Sports – Inspire our communities<sup>15</sup>*

British Cycling's Strategy identifies seven key priorities for cycling before the Paris Olympics in 2024. These priorities are:

- ◀ Inspiring Performances
- ◀ Grow Communities
- ◀ Engage the Next Generation
- ◀ Flagship Events
- ◀ Cycling for Everyone
- ◀ Work Together
- ◀ Equipped for Success

The seven priorities are not everything that British Cycling will do, but that can have the greatest impact over the next 36 months. The priorities are all interconnected and are cross interdependencies – achieving one strategic priority is often reliant upon achieving the other.

For each of the priorities, the Strategy sets out the measures of success:

Priority	Sub priority	Measures
Inspiring Performances	Sustain inspirational global elite cycling success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Win 10 Olympic and 15 Paralympic medals.</li> <li>◀ Creation of a development plan to support elite non Olympic and Paralympic disciplines.</li> <li>◀ Increase by 10% the number of riders in the talent pathway across ethnic communities, disability and low socioeconomic backgrounds.</li> </ul>
Grow Communities	Grow and serve our cycling communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Diversify and grow our cycling communities.</li> <li>◀ Grow membership from 150k to 250k.</li> <li>◀ Increase affiliated clubs and groups by 20%</li> </ul>
Engage the Next Generation	Encourage more children and young people to make cycling a lifelong habit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Increase the number of children and young people in clubs or groups by 20%.</li> <li>◀ Increase by 10% the number of children and young people participating across ethnic communities, disability and low socioeconomic backgrounds.</li> <li>◀ Increased awareness and perception of British Cycling in a younger audience through yearly tracking.</li> </ul>
Flagship Events	Host world class major events to excite and inspire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Achieve major event hosting targets across disciplines.</li> <li>◀ Support the legacy impact of both the 2022 Commonwealth Games and the Cycling World Championships 2023.</li> <li>◀ Increase the opportunities for British riders to perform on home soil.</li> </ul>
Cycling for Everyone	Ensure cycling is open to everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Put in place robust tracking and increased diversity in facilitators and governance.</li> <li>◀ 90% of our communities to believe cycling is an inclusive activity and a sport for them.</li> <li>◀ Increase participation in our sport across genders, ages, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and low socioeconomic backgrounds by 10%.</li> </ul>
Work Together	Work together with everyone who makes cycling happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ A 25% increase in the percentage of cycling facilitators that feel appreciated for the work they do.</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> [British Cycling Lead our Sports](#)

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Priority	Sub priority	Measures
Equipped for Success	Deliver our strategy effectively and efficiently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain, grow and diversify the range of partners in line with our strategic priorities.</li> <li>100% increase in the diversity of the industries represented in the British Cycling partnership portfolio.</li> <li>Grow and diversify income streams.</li> </ul>

### **Baseball/Softball UK's Strategic Plan (2020-24)**

This Strategic Plan aims to have more people playing baseball and softball in more places. Its strategic priorities to achieve this include:

**Targeted participation growth** - to encourage and enable growth, working with a range of partners and organisations to reach new audiences:

- Coordinating a children and young people participation plan that establishes local youth leagues particularly for baseball and girls fastpitch, underpinned by strong school-club links.
- Further developing adult baseball and softball in the Higher Education and the workplace.
- Facilitating and enhancing playing opportunities for LGBTQ+ people, women and girls, lower socio-economic communities, BAME people and those with a disability.

**Talent development** - to build an effective and efficient talent identification and development pathway:

- Supporting home-grown talent from all communities, reducing financial barriers that prevent talent from blossoming.
- Developing and communicating clear performance pathways from grassroots to elite.
- Delivering regular high-quality coaching opportunities, in appropriate facilities.

**Efficient grassroots support services** - spanning baseball and softball, to support grassroots organisations to be stronger, safer and sustainable:

- Offering services that add value in safeguarding, integrity, administration, technology and marketing, through collaborative working.
- Coordinating UK-wide and home country development plans for baseball, and for slow-pitch and fast-pitch softball, spanning grassroots, talent and workforce development.
- Supporting grassroots organisations to become an important part of their local community.
- Taking a leading role in enabling the improvement and creation of appropriate local playing facilities.

**Organisational sustainability** - build the organisation and sports to be more financially sustainable, including:

- Increasing and diversifying our partnerships and funding sources.
- Realising the potential of our workforce, assets, services and relationships.
- Increasing funding from events, fundraising and sponsorship.

# PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

## APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football									
Please complete one form per pitch									
Site reference:				Site Name:					
6 figure grid reference				Pitch ID(s):					
Number of football pitches on site:				Pitch size:	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)				
Availability				Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?					
				If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on a adult pitch) in Pitch Issues					
Weather at time of visit & date of visit									
Pitch Issues:									
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element (Gathered via a non technical site assessment)	Rating						Guidance notes	Comments	
Playing surface									
Grass Cover	Good >80%		Adequate 60-80%		Poor <60%		Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch		
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size		Within FA recommended guidelines		No		See size chart below for recommended dimensions		
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Moderate		Severe				
Length of grass	Good		Too long		Too short		Good 30mm-50mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less		
Evenness of pitch	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage		Some evidence of poor drainage		Yes, poor drainage				
Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)								Section total	
Grass cutting	Yes, as required		Yes, but not frequent enough		No				
Seeded	Yes, as required		Not known		No				
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times		Once/ twice		No				
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No				
								Section total	
NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.									
PITCH SCORE				0.0%	RATING	Poor			

Grass football pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Cricket non-technical assessment

# PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Element	Rating				Guidance notes	Comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)
<b>About the cricket outfield</b>						
Grass coverage	Good		Acceptable		Poor	<80% falls below the ECB basic standard
Length of grass	Good		Acceptable		Poor	Ideally 42mm - 25mm
Evenness	Even				Uneven	Ball should run without deviation or ramp
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	Flag plus which to refer to more survey. If yes, refer to member/s site manager
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	eg informal, casual use, unauthorised use, kids kickabout etc. Flag plus which to refer to more survey. If yes, refer to member/s site manager
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None		Yes		Immediate action required	eg from general vehicles - rubbish, spills and faeces etc may also wish to refer to more survey
<b>Artificial wickets</b>						
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes				No	There should be no trip points
Evenness of wicket	Even				Uneven	There should be no unevenness in surface levels
Stump holes	Yes				No	Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes				No	There should be none
Rips or surface lifting	Yes				No	If "yes" notify site manager
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes				No	If "yes" notify site manager
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes				No	
<b>Grass wickets</b>						
Presence of line markings	Yes				No	
Evidence of rolling - is wicket smooth and uniform	Yes				No	
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes				No	3mm or more wicket/42mm oval of square
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes				No	
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes				No	<80% falls below the ECB basic standard
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surface rebound?	Yes				No	
<b>Changing/ Pavilion</b>						
Umpires provision	Yes				No	
Toilets	Yes				No	
Hot/cold water	Yes				No	
Heating	Yes				No	
Condition of building	Good		Acceptable		Requires attention	
<b>NTP</b>						
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes				No	
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even				Uneven	
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes				No	
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes				No	
No rips or surface lifting	Yes				No	
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes				No	
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes				No	
Is the steel frame/posts upright?	Yes				No	
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes				No	
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes				No	
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes				No	
Is appropriate safety/supervisory signage present?	Yes				No	

# PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union										
Please complete one form per pitch										
Site reference				Site Name						
6 figure grid reference				Pitch ID(s)						
Date of assessment				Pitch size	(Senior, Mini/Midi)					
Number of pitches on site				Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?						
Availability				If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one mini/ midi pitch is overmarked on a senior pitch) in Pitch Issues						
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused										
Weather at time of visit										
General comments/observations										
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)										
Qualitative information (gathered on site)	Rating					Guidance notes	Comments			
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor			
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.			
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm			
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots					
<b>GOALPOSTS</b>										
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No							
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No							
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No							
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No							
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No							
<b>ANCILLARY</b>										
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No							
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No							
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No							
<b>Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below</b>										
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never			
<b>Pitch Maintenance Score</b>										
Drainage	Natural (adequate) SCORE D0		Natural (adequate) SCORE D1		Pipe drained SCORE D2		Pipe and slit drained SCORE D3		Unknown SCORE D0	<p>Natural (adequate) = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season</p> <p>Natural (adequate) = 4 or more training match cancellations per season</p> <p>*Based on a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years</p> <p>**Based on a slit drained system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.</p>

Rugby pitch non-technical assessment sheet

Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)



# PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artificial grass pitches									
Site reference			Site Name						
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID						
Number of AGPs on site			Pitch size	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)		Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)			
Availability									
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused									
Type of pitch	{	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)		Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)		Short Pile 3G (40mm)			
		Sand Dressed		Sand Filled		Water based			
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)									
Element	Rating						Guidance notes	Site comments	
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years		
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots				
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		If no evidence, assume none.		
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor				
Adequate safety margins (w here appropriate)	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate				
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes		No						
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes		No						
Are there dug outs?	Yes		No						
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes		No						
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes		No						
Maximum score	93	Scoring:	Poor	<=50	Total Score	0			
			Standard	51-79	Potential Rating	Poor			
			Good	80+					