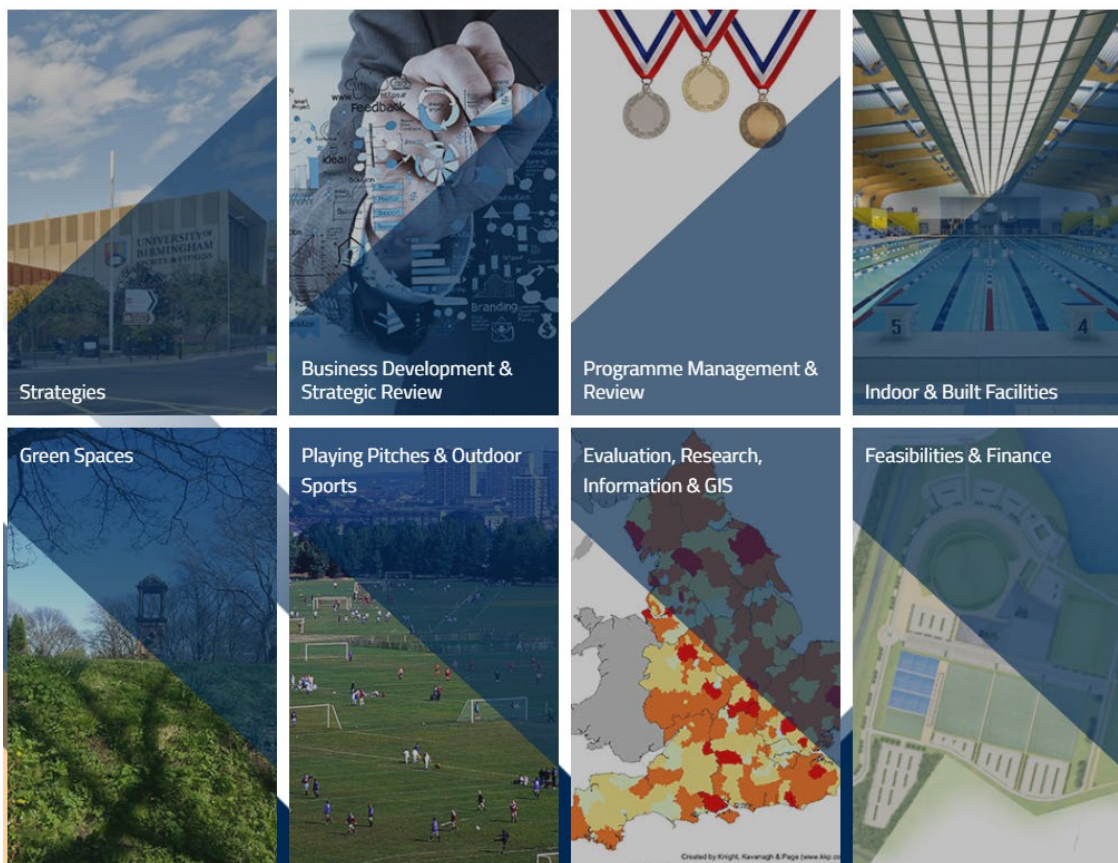


SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL INDOOR & BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES



NEEDS ASSESSMENT: SEPTEMBER 2025

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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INDOOR & BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by Swindon Borough Council (SBC) to produce its Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and Built Facility Strategy (BFS) 2023-2043. This is the BFS; the stated objectives of which are to:

- ◀ Provide a documented assessment of current needs for indoor sports and aquatics facilities within the Borough; focusing on the quantity and quality issues in relation to supply and demand.
- ◀ Identify key areas of population growth and ensure that there is sufficient facility provision to accommodate this growth, in line with the future local plan (2023-2043).
- ◀ Identify all valuable sites to ensure they can be protected and improved for the long-term benefit of sport.
- ◀ Provide a clear and justified series of recommendations and associated action plans for the provision of indoor sports and aquatics facilities (this includes all education sites, to ensure that the Council/school trusts are building fit for purpose facilities for both the curriculum and community use).
- ◀ Promote a sustainable approach to the provision of indoor sports and aquatics facilities and management of sports clubs.
- ◀ Ensure that all clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and long-term aspirations.
- ◀ Take account of indoor sport and aquatics facilities provided in neighbouring local authorities that presently service the sporting and recreational needs of Swindon residents (and vice versa).
- ◀ Ensure provision can meet future demand derived from housing growth and to guide the level of increased provision required to create a clear plan of demand for future public leisure facilities to 2043.
- ◀ Help provide the evidence to secure internal and external funding to support the Indoor and BFS action plan.

This report is, thus, a detailed assessment of current provision of indoor and built sports facilities located within Swindon, identifying needs (demand) and gaps (deficiencies in provision). The BFS therefore:

- ◀ Incorporates a robust up to date needs assessment which supports the Council and meets the requirements of the amended National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- ◀ Reflects and addresses the needs and demands of the local population that will grow in line with the changes defined by the future Local Plan.
- ◀ Should underpin action by SBC and key stakeholders with regard to potential joint investment in sport and physical activity facilities.

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1.2: Project scope

This report provides a facility breakdown of what exists in the Borough, its condition, location, availability and overall quality. It considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth and takes into consideration health and economic deprivation. The facilities/sports covered include sports halls (and associated indoor sports), swimming pools, health and fitness, squash, gymnastics, indoor tennis and indoor bowls. In delivering this report KKP has:

- ◀ Individually audited identified sports halls (conventional i.e., 3+ court halls), swimming pools (minimum size 160m²), health and fitness facilities (including, within reason, dance studios) and the wider range of facilities identified above.
- ◀ Analysed supply and demand to identify gaps and opportunities to improve provision.
- ◀ Sought to identify the extent to which delivery of leisure facilities is undertaken with full reference to the corporate strategies of the Council and other relevant strategic influences.
- ◀ Identified areas of good practice and opportunities to drive up participation levels.

The audit was conducted in autumn 2023. Specific deficiencies and surpluses are identified to inform the provision required.

The specific objectives of the audit and needs assessment are to:

- ◀ Review relevant SBC strategies, plans, reports and corporate objectives.
- ◀ Review the local, regional and national strategic context.
- ◀ Present the scale of known local housing growth.
- ◀ Analyse the demographics of the local population at present and in the future (up to 2043- in line with the future Local Plan),
- ◀ Audit indoor facilities provided by public, private, voluntary and education sectors.
- ◀ Consider potential participation rates and model likely demand.
- ◀ Analyse the balance between supply of, and demand for, sports facilities plus identification of potential under and over-provision – now and in the future.
- ◀ Identify key issues to address in the future provision of indoor sports facilities.

This process applied reflects Sport England's Guide; Assessing Needs and Opportunities for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG) methodology and accords with the most up-to-date version of the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

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1.3: Background

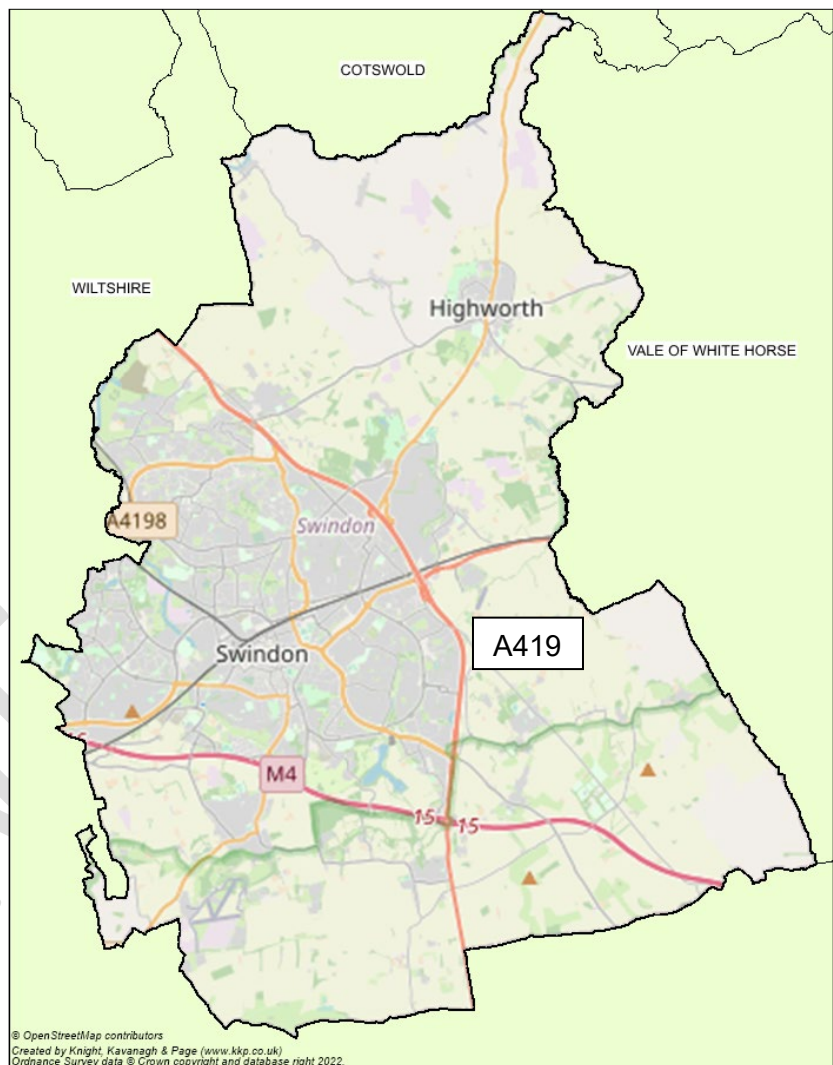
A map of Swindon is illustrated in Figure 1.1 below. Located on the M4 corridor, it is equidistant between Bristol and Reading and situated on the London to Cardiff rail line. The main road within the Borough is the A419 which runs north to south, linking the town to the M4 (to the south) and Cirencester to the north. The Borough comprises the town of Swindon itself, the market town of Highworth, the large village of Wroughton, and a number of smaller villages and hamlets.

Figure 1.1: Main towns and transport links – SBC

Swindon is known for being a regional centre for business, and is home to many technological, as well as accommodating the national headquarters for international companies such as Nationwide, Intel, and Zurich.

It is also a regional retail and leisure hub comprising the town centre and several attractions, including the Oasis Leisure Facility (currently closed) and the McArthur Glen Designer Outlet Village.

The Borough has a strong historical industrious railway history, having been the base for Brunel's Great Western Railway Company. At its peak, it employed 12,000 people and was capable of producing three train locomotives a week.



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1.4: Report structure

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) in a report entitled '*Strategic Planning: Effective Co-operation for Planning Across Boundaries (2015)*' puts the case for strategic planning based on six general principles:

- ◀ Have focus.
- ◀ Be genuinely strategic.
- ◀ Be spatial.
- ◀ Be collaborative.
- ◀ Have strong leadership and
- ◀ Be accountable to local electorates.

In the preparation of this report, KKP has paid due regard to these strategic principles, and it is, as a consequence, structured as follows:

- ◀ Section 2 - background policy, population profile and demographic characteristics.
- ◀ Section 3 - description of methodology employed to assess indoor provision.
- ◀ Section 4 - assessment of sports hall provision.
- ◀ Section 5 - assessment of swimming pool provision.
- ◀ Section 6 - assessment of health and fitness provision.
- ◀ Section 7 - assessment of squash.
- ◀ Section 8 - assessment of gymnastics.
- ◀ Section 9- assessment of indoor bowls.
- ◀ Section 10 - assessment of indoor tennis.
- ◀ Section 11 - strategic recommendations.

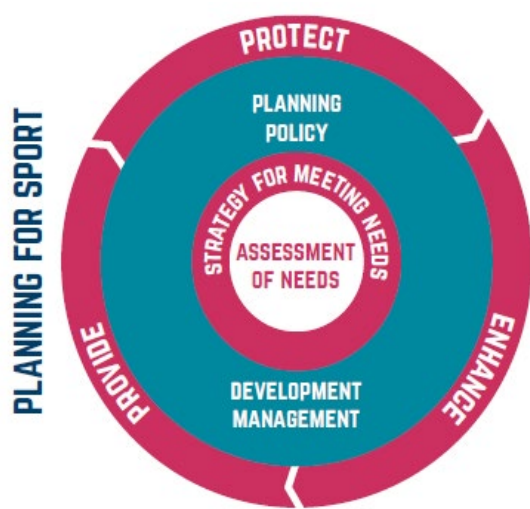
SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL INDOOR & BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

2.1: National context

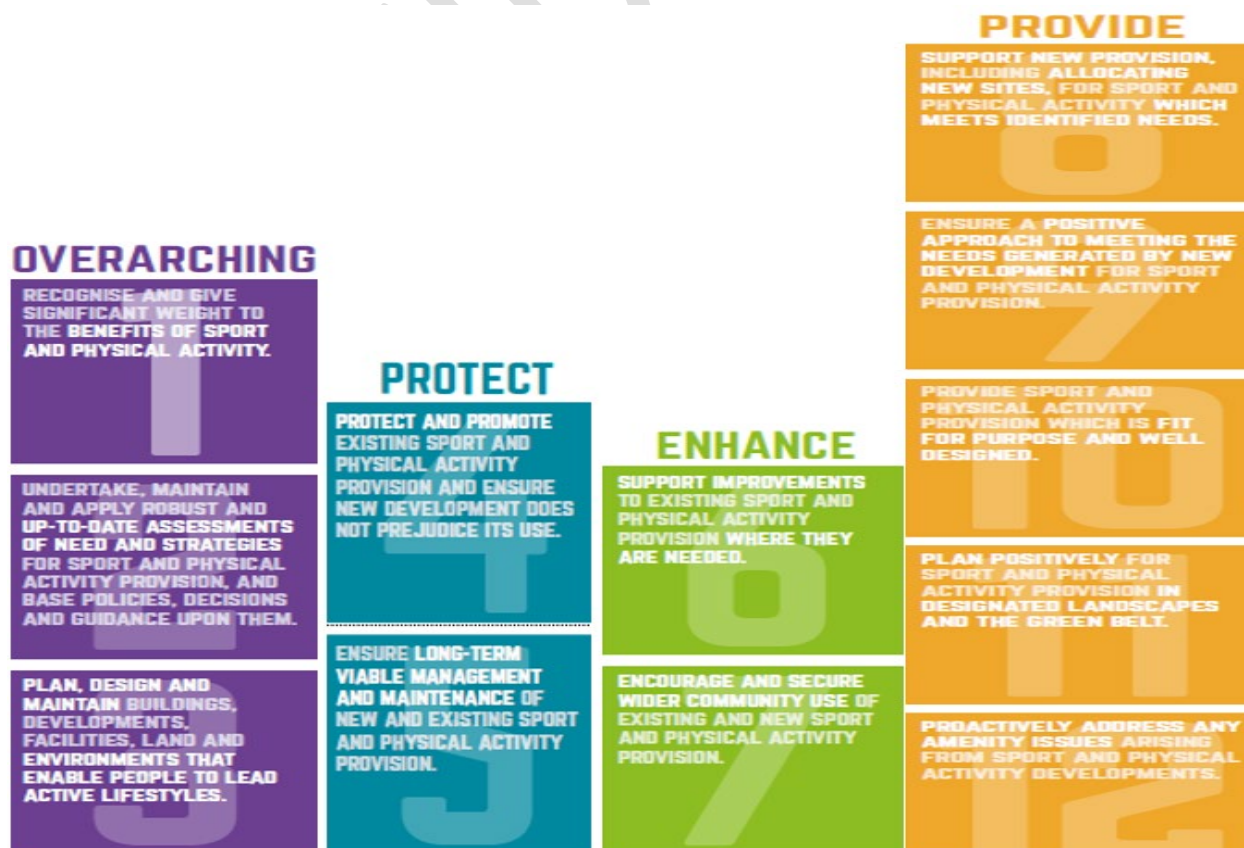
Sport England aims to ensure positive planning for sport, enabling the right facilities to be provided in the right places, based on up-to-date assessment of needs for all levels of sport and all sectors of the community. This assessment report has been produced for SBC applying the principles and tools identified in Sport England's ANOG guidance.

Figure 2.1: The Sport England Planning for Sport Model



Assessment of need is core to planning for sporting provision. It is underpinned by 12 planning-for-sport principles which help the planning system to contribute to sustainable development by fulfilling the key role of the NPPF in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities. Applying them ensures that the planning system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunity for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings. They apply to all areas of the planning system and to planning at local authority and neighbourhood levels. As such they are of relevance to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the planning system.

aFigure 2.2: Sport England's 12 planning principles



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Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021

Sport and physical activity have a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all following the global pandemic. Reflecting this, Sport England's most recent strategy, Uniting the Movement is its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It sets out its aims to tackle the inequalities that it states are long seen in sport and physical activity making the point that 'providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important'. The three key Strategy objectives are:

1

Advocating for movement,
sport and physical activity

2

Joining forces on five big
issues

3

Creating the catalysts for
change

As well as being an advocate for sport and physical activity, through the building of evidence and partnership development, the Strategy identifies five 'big issues' upon which people and communities need to address by working together. They are described as the major challenges to England being an active nation over the next decade as well as being the greatest opportunities to make a lasting difference. Each is designated as a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly. The issues are:

- ▶ **Recover and reinvent:** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- ▶ **Connecting communities:** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- ▶ **Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ▶ **Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- ▶ **Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

To address these, the right conditions for change need to be created across people, organisations and partnerships to help convert plans and ideas. This will include a range of actions, including development of effective investment models and applying innovation and digital technology to ensure sport and physical activity are more accessible. The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured via funded programmes, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, key performance indicators will be developed to help evidence overall progress being made by all those supporting sport and physical activity.

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Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure

Engagement by Sport England with the public leisure sector highlights the fact that the pandemic accelerated the appetite for local authorities to look at leisure services and re-examine the purpose of their provision, delivery against local community outcomes and consider their alignment with broader strategic outcomes, particularly health.

Key insight from the report ([Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure](#)) includes:

- 68% of sports halls and swimming pools were built 20+ years ago. Although more than £150m was invested in the opening of new public leisure and swimming facilities in 2018/19¹, with another £200m worth of assets in construction or planning there remains significant levels of ageing public leisure stock.
- 72% of all school swimming lessons take place in a public leisure facility, this included both statutory learn to swim programmes and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club usage is also predominantly based at public leisure facilities.

The leisure sector has emerged from the pandemic in a particularly fragile state. Emergency funding ² helped to avert financial catastrophe and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met. These funding sources are, however, finite and have now been virtually exhausted. At best, financial pressures risk limiting the ability of stakeholders to deliver against their commitments; at worst they may result in the permanent closure of some services or facilities.

In respect of the recovery of the sector to pre-pandemic participation levels, data generated via the [Moving Communities](#) platform suggests that in October 2021, throughput levels (13.2 million people) were still lower than the monthly average in 2019 (17.8 million people). Recovery of participation levels across different activities has been imbalanced and has leant towards those activities which deliver a faster return to pre-pandemic revenue levels.

Sites refurbished in the last 10 years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20+ years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant offer to meet current customer demands.

To address these significant challenges, a repositioning of the traditional offer of public leisure into one akin to an **active wellbeing service** is advocated (see Figure 2.3 overleaf) focusing on added value and supporting the delivery of key local priorities, alongside wider government policy around Levelling Up, net zero and health inequalities.

¹ 2 Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

² Local authorities invested £160 million The National Leisure Recovery Fund £100m, Leisure operators drew on £171 million of reserves alongside further relief measures such as the Government's furlough scheme

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Figure 2.3; Vision and commitments: Public Sector Leisure Report



Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020

Sport England has brought together evidence on the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the five outcomes identified in the Government's strategy Sporting Future. These are physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development.

Its aim was to assess the evidence base with a view to demonstrating the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the outcomes. Building on this foundation and other previous work, Sport England quantified the social and economic impact of community sport and physical activity. There are two complementary parts to the research. Part one measures the social impact (including physical and mental health) of sport and physical activity while part two measures the economic importance.

The findings reveal that community sport and physical activity brings an annual contribution of £85.5 billion to the country (in 2018 prices) through social and economic benefits.

Its social value – including physical and mental health, wellbeing, individual and community development – is more than £72 billion, provided via routes such as a healthier population, consumer expenditure, greater work productivity, improved education attainment, reduced crime and stronger communities. It also generates more than £13bn in economic value. The economic value includes more than 285,000 jobs within the community sport and physical activity sector.

Together, both parts enable Sport England to demonstrate the contribution of sport and physical activity to the five government outcomes. The research revealed that the combined social and economic value of taking part (participating and volunteering) in community sport and physical activity in England in 2017/18 was £85.5bn. When measured against the £21.85 billion costs of engagement and providing sport and physical activity opportunities, for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, a return on investment (ROI) of £3.91 was created for individuals and society in 2017/18.

Active Travel England

Active Travel England (ATE) has been established as an executive agency of the Department for Transport (DfT). It has the overall objective to enable achievement of the vision set out in the Prime Minister's long-term walking and cycling plan, [Gear Change](#), for half of all journeys in towns and cities to be cycled and walked by 2030, transforming the role that walking and cycling play in England's transport system, and making England a great walking and cycling nation.

Chief Medical Officer Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

This report updated the 2011 physical activity guidelines issued by the four Chief Medical Officers (CMOs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK CMOs drew upon global evidence to present guidelines for different age groups, covering the volume, duration, frequency and type of physical activity required across the life course to achieve health benefits.

Since 2011, the evidence to support the health benefits of regular physical activity for all groups has become more compelling. In children and young people, regular physical activity is associated with improved learning and attainment, better mental health and cardiovascular fitness, also contributing to healthy weight status. In adults, there is strong evidence to demonstrate the protective effect on physical activity on a range of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes, mental health problems and social

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isolation. Regular physical activity can deliver cost savings for the health and care system and has wider social benefits for individuals and communities.

The key factors for each age group are as follows:

- ◆ *Under-5s*: This is broken down into infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers. Pre-schoolers and toddlers should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of different exercises, whereas infants should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activities.
- ◆ *Children and young people (5-18 years)*: Children and young people should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week.
- ◆ *Adults (19-64 years)*: For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day. This could be 150 minutes of moderate exercise, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity, or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.
- ◆ *Older adults (65+)*: Older adults should participate in daily physical activity to gain health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and mental health, wellbeing, and social functioning. Each week older adults should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity.

It notes the emerging evidence base for the health benefits of performing very vigorous intensity activity performed in short bouts interspersed with periods of rest or recovery (high intensity interval exercise, HIIT). This interval exercise has clinically meaningful effects on fitness, body weight and insulin resistance and is incorporated in recommendations for adults.

It, thus, emphasises the importance of regular activity for people of all ages. It presents additional guidance on being active during pregnancy, after giving birth, and for disabled adults. The new guidelines are consistent with previous ones, introducing some new elements and allowing flexibility in achieving recommended physical activity levels for each age group.

Investment in school sport

The School Sport and Activity Action Plan (July 2019) sets out the Government's commitment to ensuring that children and young people have access to at least 60 minutes of sport and physical activity per day, with a recommendation of 30 minutes of this delivered during the school day (in line with the Chief Medical Officers guidelines which recommend an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week). It has three overarching ambitions which are that:

- ◆ All children and young people take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- ◆ Children and young people have the opportunity to realise developmental, character-building experiences through sport, competition and active pursuits.
- ◆ All sport/physical activity provision for children and young people is designed around the principles of physical literacy, focuses on fun and enjoyment and aims to reach the least active.

The PE and sport premium can help primary schools to achieve this aim, providing primary schools with £320m of government funding to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the PE, physical activity and sport offered through their core budgets. It is allocated directly to schools, so they have the flexibility to use it in the way that they think works best for their pupils.

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In 2021 the Department for Education announced a £10.1 million funding package to help more schools open their facilities to the public once the pandemic was over. The funding, which is administered by Sport England and distributed via the Active Partnership Network will help schools deliver extra-curricular activities and open their facilities outside of the school day during evenings, weekends and school holidays.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

The 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. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development.

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making, the NPPF states that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs. It is clear about sport's role delivering sustainable communities through promoting health and well-being. Sport England, working within the provisions of the NPPF, wishes to see local planning policy protect, enhance and provide for sports facilities based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need, as well as helping to realise the wider benefits that participation in sport can bring.

The promoting healthy communities theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust, up-to-date assessment of need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs, quantitative/qualitative deficiencies and surpluses should be identified and used to inform provision requirements in an area.

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Cost pressures affecting the leisure industry

Insight produced by the [Local Government Association](#) (LGA) suggests that local authorities continue to face substantial inflationary, COVID-19 related, and demand-led pressures. These are affecting their ability to efficiently operate leisure provision. This comes alongside the steep increase of living costs to households.

Whilst during 2022 the leisure sector recovery gained momentum, rising utility costs and the recent cost of living pressures on households is thought to have had an adverse impact on consumer confidence, throughput, and participation rates. Councils and leisure operators are therefore being required to address and review existing management arrangements and options to ensure the viability of the sector.

Leisure providers (both in-house and externally commissioned) are being disproportionately affected because leisure centres have high energy demands, especially those with swimming pools. Typically, energy costs are a leisure operator's second highest cost after staffing. This is further exacerbated because the leisure estate is ageing and energy inefficient. Research shows that two-thirds of public swimming pools and sports halls are in need of replacement or refurbishment, and ageing assets are contributing up to 40% of some councils' direct carbon emissions.

The LGA suggests that, in tackling the challenges presented by the current energy crisis, councils should pursue a partnership focused approach and consider solutions which may contribute to wider public health, decarbonisation, and levelling up and economic outcomes. This could include the following measures:

- ✦ Regular monthly meetings with leisure operators to review and monitor utility costs.
- ✦ Encourage leisure operators to be open and transparent about the true cost of utilities.
- ✦ Explore potential for flexibility in contractual arrangements and operating parameters: i.e. pool temperature/building temperature/reviewing pricing
- ✦ Review non-viable/low priority contractual requirements.
- ✦ Consider using any management fee to stabilise utilities and stabilise providers to ensure service continuity.
- ✦ Consider renegotiating the repayment terms of loans to enable providers to defer Covid repayments to later years when they are more stable.
- ✦ Work with the operator to include leisure projects as part of decarbonisation projects and/or council investment in energy saving projects.

Environmental sustainability

The UK Government net zero strategy 'Build Back Greener', published in October 2021, sets out how it intends to meet 2050 decarbonisation targets focusing on interventions such as:

- ✦ A fully decarbonised power system by 2035 with all electricity coming from 'low carbon sources'.
- ✦ Improved home and buildings heating efficiency, aiming for all new heating appliances to be based on low carbon technologies, such as electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers.
- ✦ Low carbon fuel supply – by scaling up the production of low carbon alternatives including hydrogen and biofuels.
- ✦ Decarbonising construction - [The Construction Playbook - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ✦ Circular economy trends

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SBC's net zero carbon commitment is set out in [The Swindon Plan](#). It aims to make the Council's operations and activities carbon neutral by 2040 and includes the aspiration to make the borough carbon neutral by 2050.

[Sport England](#) reports³ that climate change and the increased occurrence of extreme weather that it brings are already affecting sports facilities, meaning that the sector needs to build greater resilience in respect of this very real threat.

It proposes that a wide range of issues should be considered when considering project development and the resultant environmental impact of, say, a new swimming pool. This includes determining whether to refurbish an existing building with its carbon already embodied or to build anew⁴. Sport England suggests some key principles as part of a 'pathway to sustainability' and net zero carbon in respect of building design and operation – including:

- ◀ *Reduce energy consumption* - as the first measure to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- ◀ *Change behaviour* - eliminate energy waste and operate energy control systems more effectively at no extra cost.
- ◀ *Passive design* - building orientation and placement on site is critical to achieving net zero targets Harness a site's natural resources to benefit cross ventilation, natural lighting, solar gain, shelter or shading.
- ◀ *Fabric efficiency* - maximise building fabric and glazing performance.
- ◀ *Minimise initial energy demand* - to reduce demand on plant and technologies incorporated.
- ◀ *Efficient systems* - invest in appropriate energy-efficient products including heating, ventilation, fittings, controls, sensors, heat pumps and recovery systems
- ◀ *On-site renewables* - incorporate low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies to produce energy on site.
- ◀ *Off-site renewables* - only use energy providers who use renewable energy .

Summary of national context

Multiple challenges are currently impacting on the national policy context for physical activity and sport in the UK. Activity habits are continuing to be affected by rates of recovery from the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, meanwhile rising utilities costs are imposing serious financial constraints on the operation of leisure facilities.

Local authorities need to consider how sport and physical activity can be better positioned as a key driver in influencing wider corporate outcomes such as the reduction of health inequalities. This can be achieved through working more effectively with 'whole system' partners such as those in the NHS at neighbourhood level, whilst employing the skills within the physical activity sector to better connect people with opportunities to participate.

Ensuring an adequate supply of sustainable facilities to support this is also key and may require a radical re-shaping of facility stock in some areas given the age and low energy efficiency of certain facilities, particularly swimming pools. The evidence base provided within this report is intended to help SBC to make such decisions on an informed basis.

³ <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Environmental%20Sustainability%20check%20list.pdf?VersionId=7XfZPDhHKoKHpfKqk165MMWdxwCmYsPO>

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2.2: Local context

Priorities of the new administration (2023)

The final Swindon Plan was approved at meetings of Cabinet and Full Council in July 2024. It sets out three priority missions for the next decade to build a 'fairer', 'better' and 'greener' Swindon:

- ◆ Build a Fairer Swindon - Making Swindon a fairer place, reducing disadvantages and reducing big disparities in life expectancy, education levels and social justice.
- ◆ Build a Better Swindon - Creating a town ready for the challenges of the coming decades. Where possible, leading town centre improvement and creating more affordable housing with the private sector
- ◆ Build a Greener Swindon - Fully playing our part as a council and a town in combatting climate change. Working with communities to find new ways of doing things that help, not hinder, the natural environment

Swindon Local Plan (2005-2026)

Swindon's current Local Plan is the principal planning policy document for the Borough, providing the development strategy to deliver sustainable growth. It runs until 2026,

The current Local Plan vision is that; *'the Borough of Swindon will become a place where people choose to live, visit and invest. As an important regional centre, Swindon's appeal will stem from having an attractive and well-equipped town that has successfully blended traditional architecture with high quality contemporary buildings that incorporate sustainable design and construction principles'*.

This vision will be delivered through nine key themes, listed below.

Theme	Description
High quality sustainable development	To improve the image of Swindon, enable inclusive communities and address climate change by the provision of high quality, well designed and sustainable development.
Infrastructure	To meet the infrastructure needs for and arising from the growth of Swindon (including health and community needs) in a timely and co-ordinated manner and being adequately funded.
Economy	To meet the needs of local businesses and the forecast growth in the local economy, and to enhance Swindon's position as the UK's best business location.
Housing	To meet the Borough's housing needs by the provision of well-designed sustainable housing, at sustainable locations and at a range of types and densities according to local needs and circumstances, and that promotes the effective use of land.

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Theme	Description
Education	To meet the need for education provision arising from the anticipated growth in population and to enable an improvement in skills and qualifications, particularly through the provision and support of tertiary education opportunities.
Transport	To support Swindon's growth through the provision of a comprehensive and sustainable transport network that is efficient, safe, affordable, accessible and easy to understand, and offers a genuine choice of modes.
Culture and leisure	To enable the provision of high quality cultural and leisure facilities commensurate with Swindon's size and growth in population and realise Swindon's potential as a regional leisure destination.
Green infrastructure	To provide an attractive and inspirational environment to live, work, learn and play, by the provision of a far-reaching network of connected and multi-functional green spaces linked to the wider countryside.
Natural, built & historic environment -	To ensure that development respects, enhances, and conserves the best of the existing built, historic and natural environment in the Borough.

Emerging Swindon Local Plan

SBC is in the process of developing a new Local Plan. This will build upon work undertaken on the Local Plan Review and include an update to plan evidence, site information and other supporting documents. The new Plan will run from 2023-2043.

Get Swindon Active Strategy (2022-2025)

This is the latest strategy, delivered through Get Swindon Active Partnership, which aims to *'ensure physical activity or movement is a normal part of how people in Swindon live, work and play'*. Get Swindon Active Partnership is a collaboration between Swindon Borough Council, other public sector bodies, private organisations and community/voluntary groups.

This vision will be achieved through the three following themes:

1. Encouraging everyone in Swindon to be more physically active and move more, focussing particularly on groups who are less active.

2. Removing the barriers to physical activity and movement so that everyone in Swindon is able to be active.

3. Working together with partners and the local communities in Swindon.

WASP (Wiltshire and Swindon Sport)

WASP is the Active Partnership for Wiltshire and Swindon. Its latest strategy, 'Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well' (2022-2025) aims to *'Create a culture in Wiltshire where there is a togetherness to empower people and communities, to lead an active life'*.

To achieve this; the strategy identifies five key themes below. These set out how WASP will work with key partners, to deliver benefits for each group:

- ♦ *Children and young people* - create positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ♦ *Clubs and communities* - support a network of trusted sports clubs, community organisations and charities striving to create better places to live and work.

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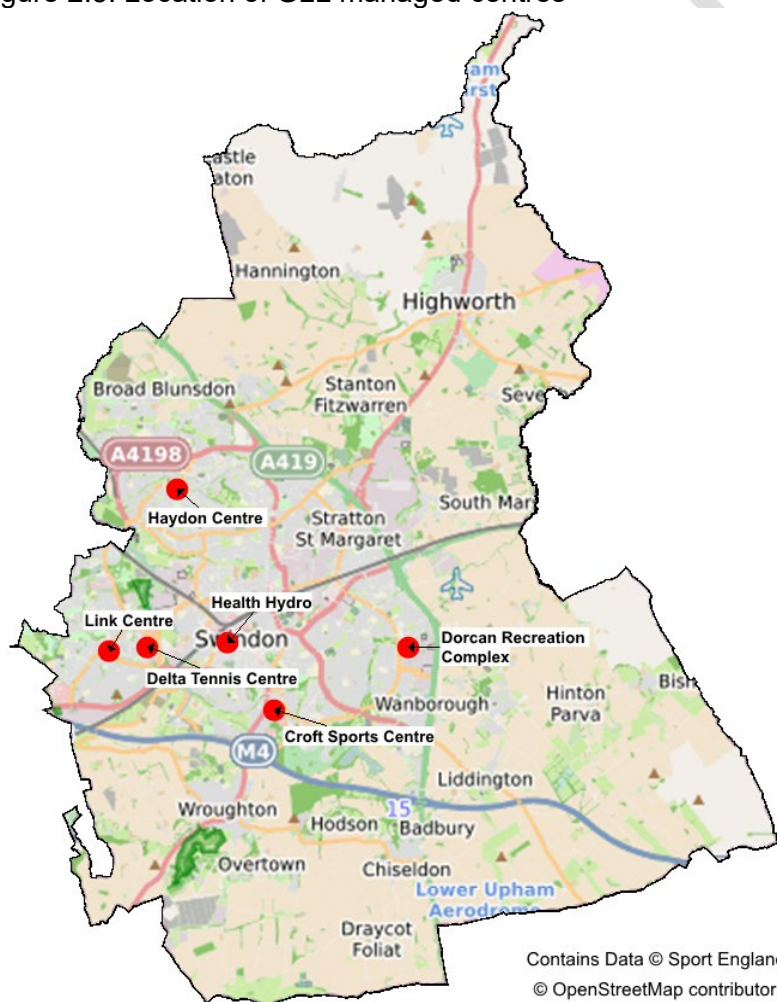
- ✦ *Older adults and long-term health conditions* - improve and expand sport and physical activity experiences and opportunities, making them inclusive, irrespective of whether you live with a health condition or what age you are.
- ✦ *Workforce* - build the capacity, capability and reach of the workforce across the county delivering in the communities that need it most.
- ✦ *Older adults and long-term health conditions* - Improve and expand sport and physical activity experiences and opportunities, making them inclusive, irrespective of whether you live with a health condition or what age you are.

Main leisure facilities and current operators

GLL (Better) has a 25-year contract with SBC (which commenced on 1 November 2014 and is due to expire on 31st October 2039) to operate the following six leisure centres in the Borough.

- ✦ Croft Sports Centre.
- ✦ Delta Tennis Centre.
- ✦ Dorcan Better Health & Recreation Complex.
- ✦ Haydon Centre and Gym.
- ✦ Health Hydro.
- ✦ Link Centre.

Figure 2.5: Location of GLL managed centres



Two other operators manage the individual sites at Highworth Recreation Centre and the Grange Leisure and Community Centre. Highworth is owned jointly by Highworth Town Council and Halo Leisure and is managed by Halo Leisure. This partnership took over management of this venue from

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SBC 10 years ago. The Grange Leisure Site is owned by Stratton Parish Council and managed by Parkwood Leisure. The operator is currently three years into a 10-year lease on the site, with an additional five years available.

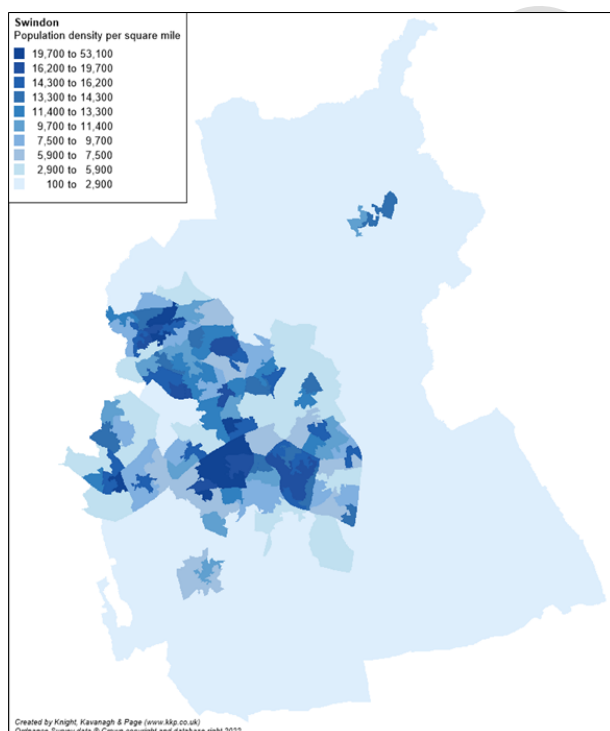
The remaining leisure facility is the Grade II listed Oasis Leisure Centre. This was a large indoor leisure facility which included a leisure pool, sports hall (8-court) and fitness provision and was a key destination site for the Town. It is owned by the Council and leased to Seven Capital. The facility has remained closed following the pandemic due to spiralling operating costs along with the need for a new roof.

A planning application to redevelop the Oasis site was approved in July 2025 subject to a section 106 agreement. The approved plans would retain the swimming pool and bring this back into public use, and would see the sports hall facility redeveloped for other leisure uses.

Summary of local policy

SBC's new administration is committed to reducing inequality, building a modern infrastructure whilst reducing the Council's carbon emissions. Improving the infrastructure evidenced through the current investment in the Health Hydro, which includes the upgrade of the Victorian pool. The Borough is also working with Seven Capital (current development partner in relation to the Oasis Leisure Centre site) to ensure that it reopens.

2.3: Demographic profile



Population and distribution:

Figure 2.5: SBC population density: 2021 MYE, ONS

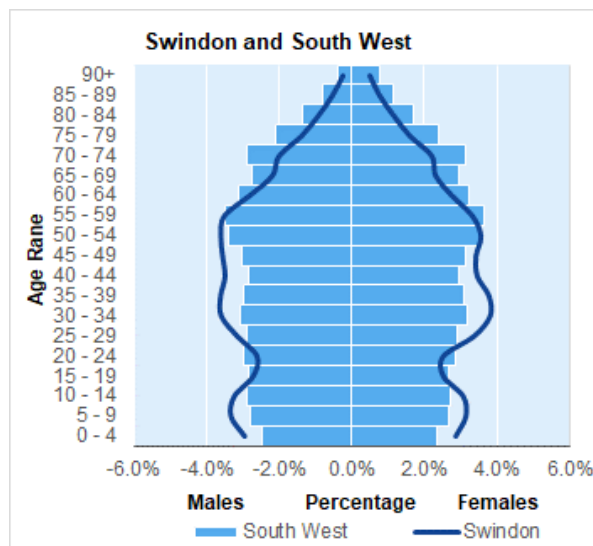
The current population is 233,000 (Census 2021). Population density is focused in and around the town centre of Swindon (collectively known as the urban centre), the small town of Highworth (northeast) and Wroughton (south). The remainder of the Borough is predominantly rural.

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Figure 2.6: Comparative age/sex pyramid and SBC population density: 2020 MYE, ONS

The proportion of 65–79-year-olds is lower in Swindon (11.7%) when compared to the Southwest region (16.2%). There are, however, more people in the age groups from 25–49 in Swindon (35.4%) compared to the Southwest (30.0%).

The proportion of 65–79-year-olds is lower in Swindon (11.7%) than it is in the South West (16.2%). There are, however, more people in the age groups from 25–49; Swindon 35.4%, Southwest 30%.



Ethnicity: (Data source: 2021 census of population, ONS): Swindon's ethnic composition reflects that of England as a whole. According to the 2021 Census of population, the largest proportion (81.5%) of the local population classified their ethnicity as White; this is similar to the overall England rate of 81.0%. The next largest population group (by self-classification) is Asian, at 11.6% this is higher than the national equivalent (9.6%).

Car ownership- (Data source: 2021 Census): According to the 2021 census, 84.8% of households have at least one car or van and 44.9% have two or more vehicles in Swindon. This is significantly above the England and Wales national average which is that 41.3% of households have at least one vehicle.

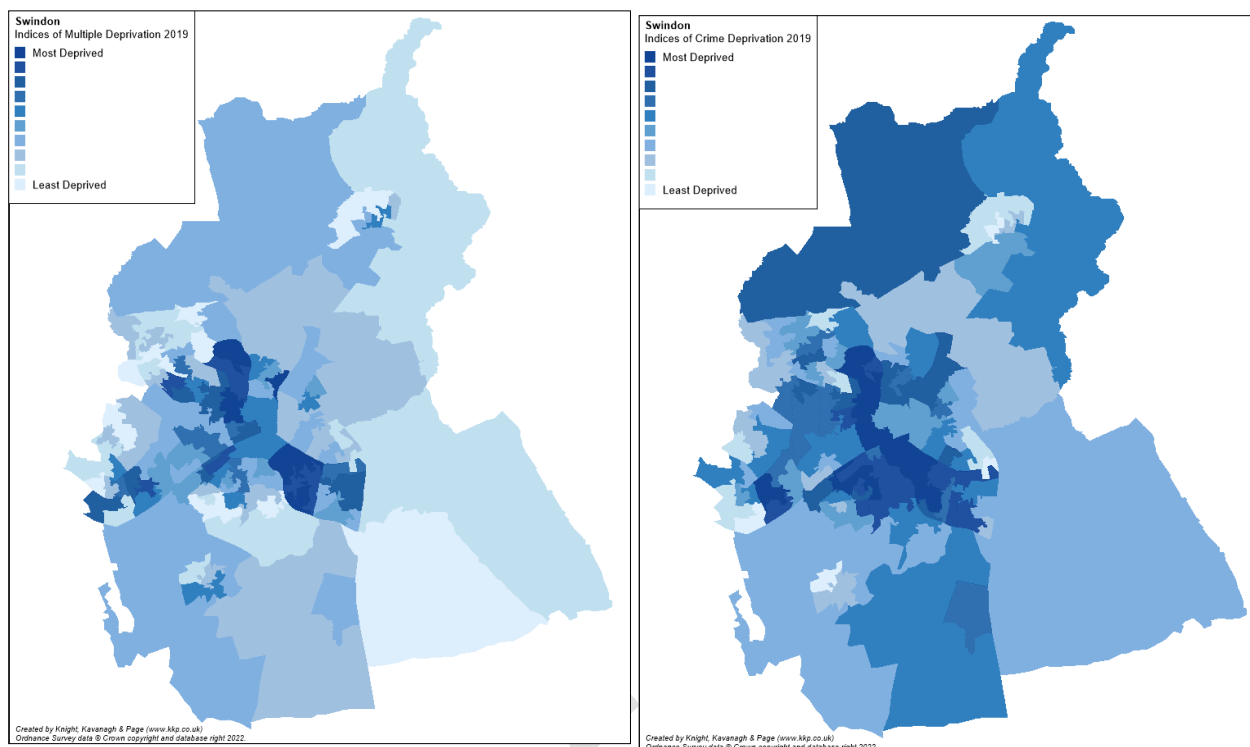
Deprivation (Data source: 2019 indices of deprivation, DCLG): Swindon experiences lower levels of deprivation; around one in five of the Borough's population (22.5%) falls within the areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts compared to a national average of c.30%. Conversely, 40.0% live in the three least deprived groupings in the country, this compares to a 'norm' of c.30%.

Table 2.2: Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and health deprivation in Swindon

IMD cumulative Norm		Multiple deprivation			Health deprivation		
		Population in band	Percent of population		Population in band	Percent of population	
Most deprived	10.0	19,384	8.9%	8.9%	13,872	6.4%	6.4%
	20.0	14,865	6.8%	15.7%	23,301	10.7%	17.1%
	30.0	14,699	6.8%	22.5%	12,513	5.8%	22.8%
	40.0	10,441	4.8%	27.3%	16,088	7.4%	30.2%
	50.0	23,412	10.8%	38.1%	26,971	12.4%	42.6%
	60.0	13,805	6.3%	44.4%	41,437	19.0%	61.7%
Least deprived	70.0	33,869	15.6%	60.0%	34,956	16.1%	77.7%
	80.0	38,012	17.5%	77.4%	27,668	12.7%	90.5%
	90.0	29,398	13.5%	90.9%	20,778	9.5%	100.0%
	100.0	19,699	9.1%	100.0%	0	0.0%	100.0%

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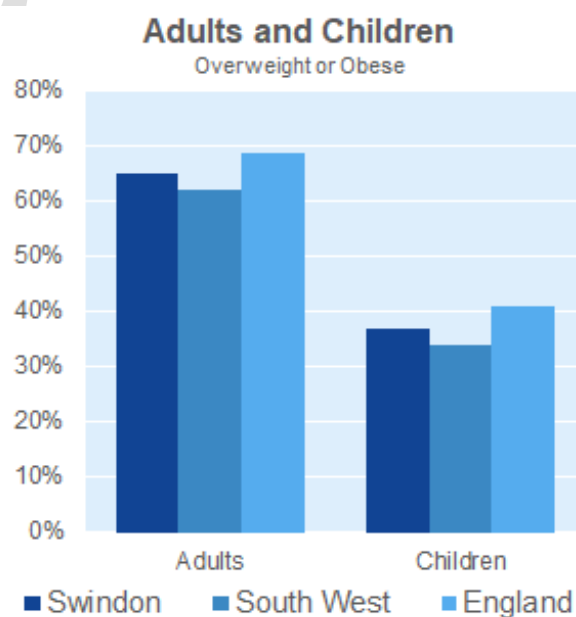
Figure 2.7: Index of multiple deprivation and health deprivation



Health data (Data sources: ONS births and deaths, NCMP⁵ and NOO⁶): In keeping with patterns seen alongside similar levels of health deprivation, life expectancy in Swindon is similar to the national figure; the male rate is currently 79.8 compared to 79.4 for England, and the female equivalent is 83.6 compared to 83.1 nationally.

Weight and obesity: Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year.

These factors combine to make prevention of obesity a major public health challenge. Adult rates of being either overweight or obese in Swindon are below national but above regional rates. Furthermore, child rates are also below national but above regional rates.

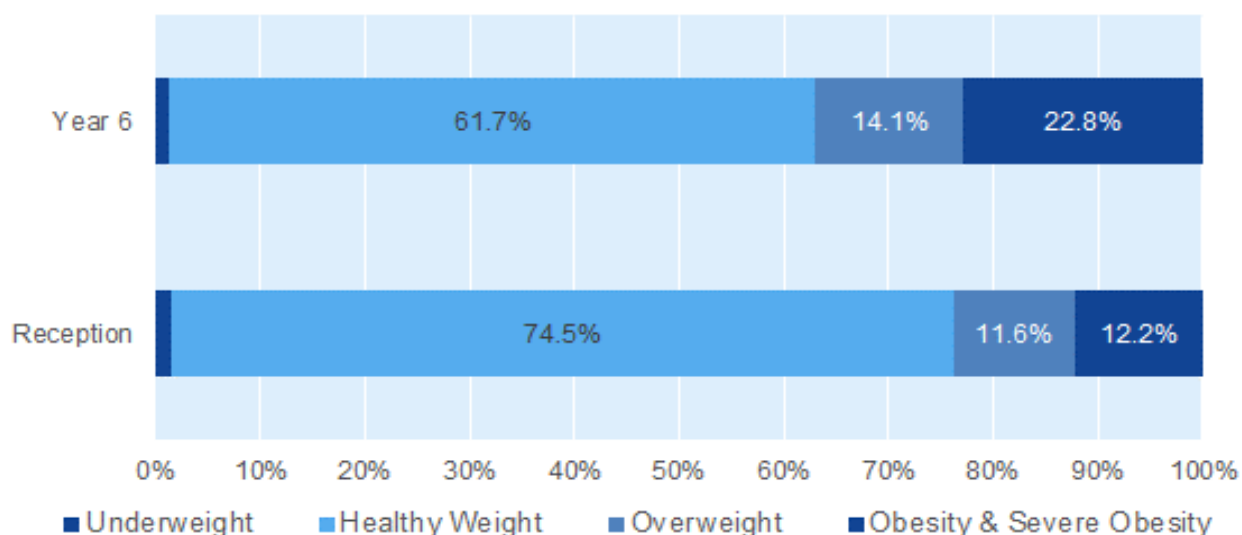


5 National Child Measurement Program

6 National Obesity Observatory

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Figure 2.8: Child weight – reception and year 6

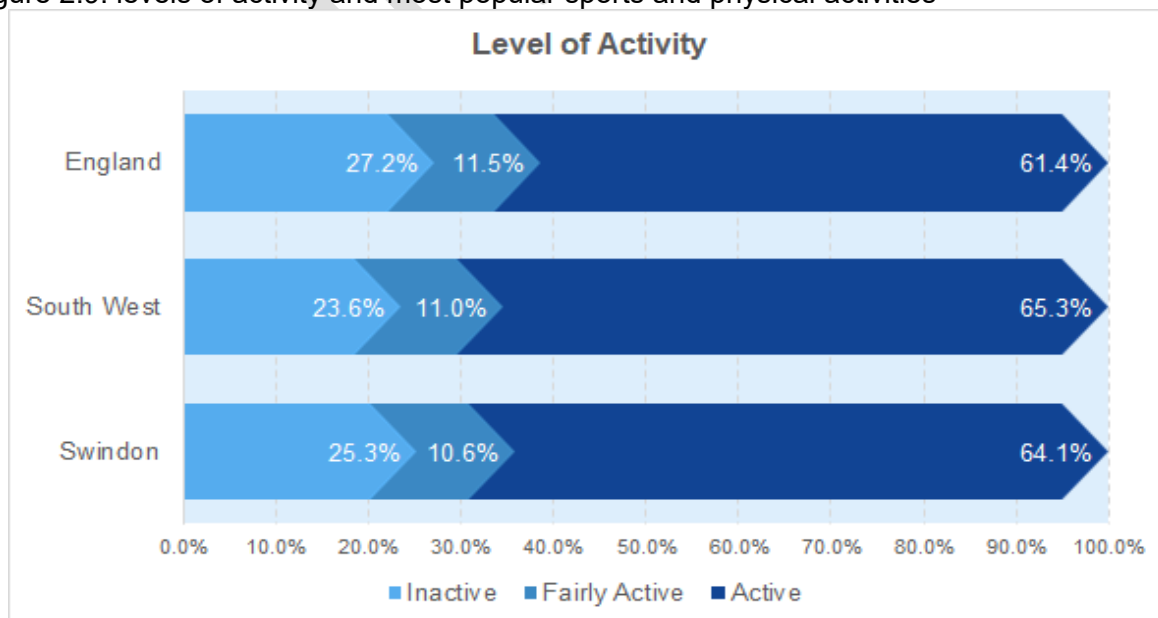


Obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4 and 11. Just over ten percent (12.2%) in Swindon are obese in their reception year at school and 11.6% are overweight. By Year 6 these figures have risen to over one in five (22.8%) being obese and 14.1% being overweight. In total by Year 6, over one third (36.9%) are either overweight or obese.

Sport England: Active Lives Survey (ALS) 2021/22

This is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity (excluding gardening). When compared to the national rates, Swindon has a lower percentage of the population classed as inactive and a higher percentage is considered to be active. It nevertheless has lower rates of activity, and higher rates of inactivity when compared to the Southwest as a whole.

Figure 2.9: levels of activity and most popular sports and physical activities



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The most popular sports and physical activities:

ALS also makes it possible to identify the top five participation sports within Swindon. As with many other areas, cycling and fitness are among the most popular activities and are known to cut across age groups and gender; in Swindon one fifth of adults take part in cycling, on average, at least twice a month. The next most popular activity is fitness which 19.2% of adults do on a relatively regular basis.

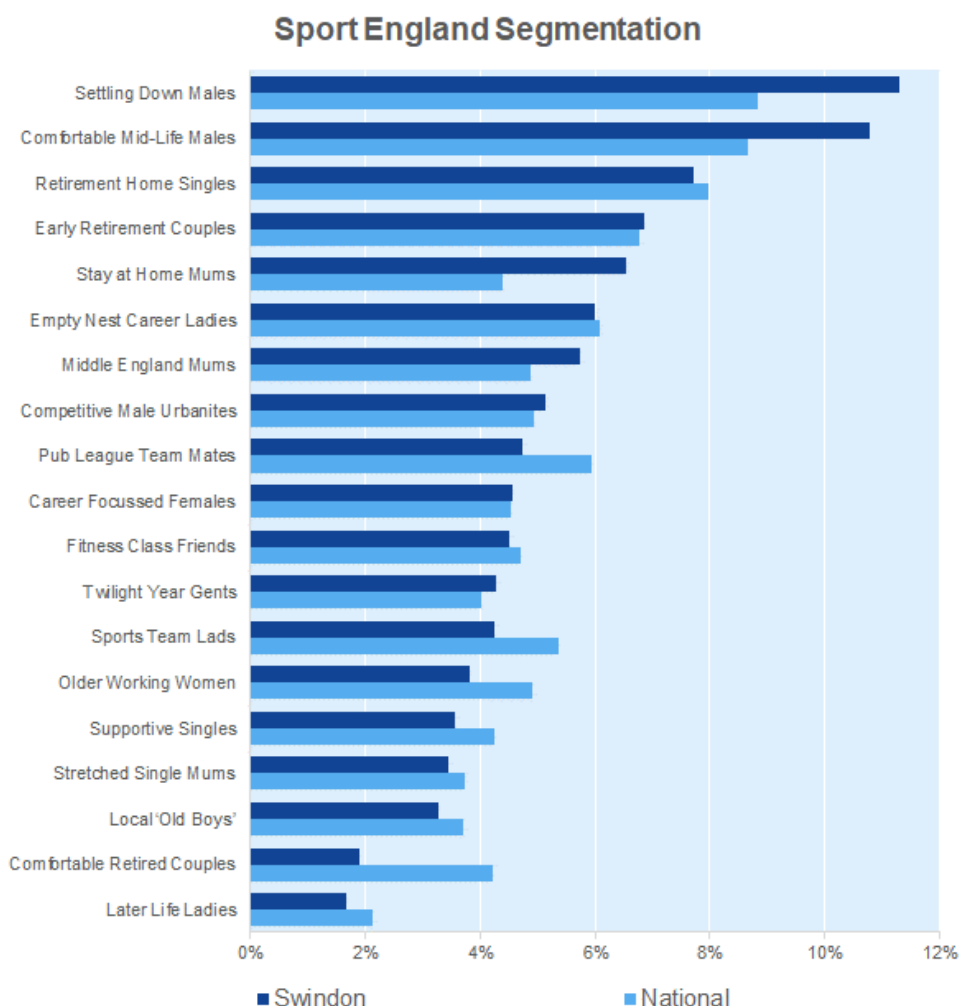


Sporting segmentation (Data source: Market segmentation, Sport England)

Sport England classifies the adult population in 19 market segments to provide insight into the sporting behaviours. The segmentation profile for Swindon indicates 'Settling Down Males' to be the largest segment of the adult population at 11.30% (16,601) compared to a national average of 8.83%. This is closely followed by 'Comfortable Mid-Life Males' (10.78%) and 'Retirement Home Singles' (7.72%).

At the other end of the spectrum, there are fewest 'Later Life Ladies' with only 1.67%, 'Comfortable Retired Couples' (1.90%) and 'Local 'Old Boys'' (3.29%).

Figure 2.10: SE segmentation –Swindon- compared to England



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Mosaic (Data source: 2020 Mosaic analysis, Experian)

This is a similar consumer segmentation product. The top five classifications in Swindon compared to the country as a whole are set out below in table 2.3. The dominance of these five segments can be seen inasmuch as they represent three in five (60.6%) of the population compared to a national equivalent rate of two in five (40.5%).

Table 2.3: Mosaic – main population segments in Swindon

Mosaic group description	Swindon		National %
	#	%	
1 - Aspiring Homemakers	44,150	19.5%	10.5%
2 - Family Basics	27,202	12.0%	8.8%
3 - Domestic Success	24,469	10.8%	8.8%
4 - Senior Security	24,360	10.7%	6.8%
5 - Suburban Stability	17,386	7.7%	5.6%

Table 2.4: Dominant Mosaic profiles in Swindon

Aspiring Homemakers		Younger households who have, often, only recently set up home. They usually own their homes in private suburbs, which they have chosen to fit their budget.
Family Basics		Families with children who have limited budgets and can struggle to make ends meet. Their homes are low cost and are often found in areas with fewer employment options.
Domestic Success		High-earning families who live affluent lifestyles in upmarket homes situated in sought after residential neighbourhoods. Their busy lives revolve around their children and successful careers in higher managerial and professional roles.

Population projections

It is important to analyse population projections. For this study, growth has been calculated till the end of the future local plan (2043). Up to this point, the ONS (2018 MYE) projections indicate a rise of 11.9% in Swindon's population (+20,859). Several key points are outlined below.

- ✦ The number of 0-15 year olds, falls by -774 (-1.7%) by 2030.
- ✦ There is a predicted increase in the number of 35–44-year-olds, +3.9% in the first period (+1,210) followed by a decline of -5.3% (-1,712) in the second period.
- ✦ There is a continuous increase in the number and proportion of persons aged 65+.

Table 2.5: Swindon - ONS projected population (2018 to 2043)

Age (years)	Number			Age structure %			Change 2018 – 2043		
	2018	2030	2043	2018	2030	2043	2018	2030	2043
0-15	45,407	43,337	43,928	20.5%	18.3%	17.7%	100.0%	95.4%	96.7%
16-24	20,757	24,023	22,007	9.4%	10.1%	8.9%	100.0%	115.7%	106.0%
25-34	29,280	27,572	31,693	13.2%	11.6%	12.8%	100.0%	94.2%	108.2%
35-44	31,240	31,892	30,242	14.1%	13.4%	12.2%	100.0%	102.1%	96.8%
45-54	33,263	31,905	32,104	15.0%	13.4%	12.9%	100.0%	95.9%	96.5%

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55-64	26,875	30,917	30,539	12.1%	13.0%	12.3%	100.0%	115.0%	113.6%
65+	35,174	47,662	57,986	15.8%	20.1%	23.3%	100.0%	135.5%	164.9%
Total	221,996	237,308	248,497	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	106.9%	111.9%

Swindon's allocated housing growth (Adopted 2026 Local Plan)

Table 2.6 lists the key growth areas (as set out in the current Local Plan) planned until 2026. This is also illustrated in Figure 2.11. The majority have already been completed, including Wichelstowe and Tadpole Farm. Both of these have seen new secondary schools created, including the Deanery Academy (Wichelstowe) and Great Western Academy (Tadpole Garden Village). Two sites are yet to be completed: New Eastern Villages and Kingsdown.

New Eastern Villages (NEV) is a significant development which will see between 8000-9000 new dwellings created. There is provision to create a new wet and dry community leisure facility, subject to funding, strategic need being defined, and the securing of land for such a facility. Work has already started on the Redlands phase. Kingsdown will comprise 1,650 dwellings and a three-form entry primary school.

The new Local Plan (2026-2043) will identify additional sites to those noted below. Consultation indicates that this will focus in and around the town centre, as part of a major initiative to regenerate the area. There will be a specific focus north of the railway station, which will include options surrounding the currently closed Oasis Leisure Centre.

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Figure 2.11: Map of key growth areas in the adopted Local Plan 2026

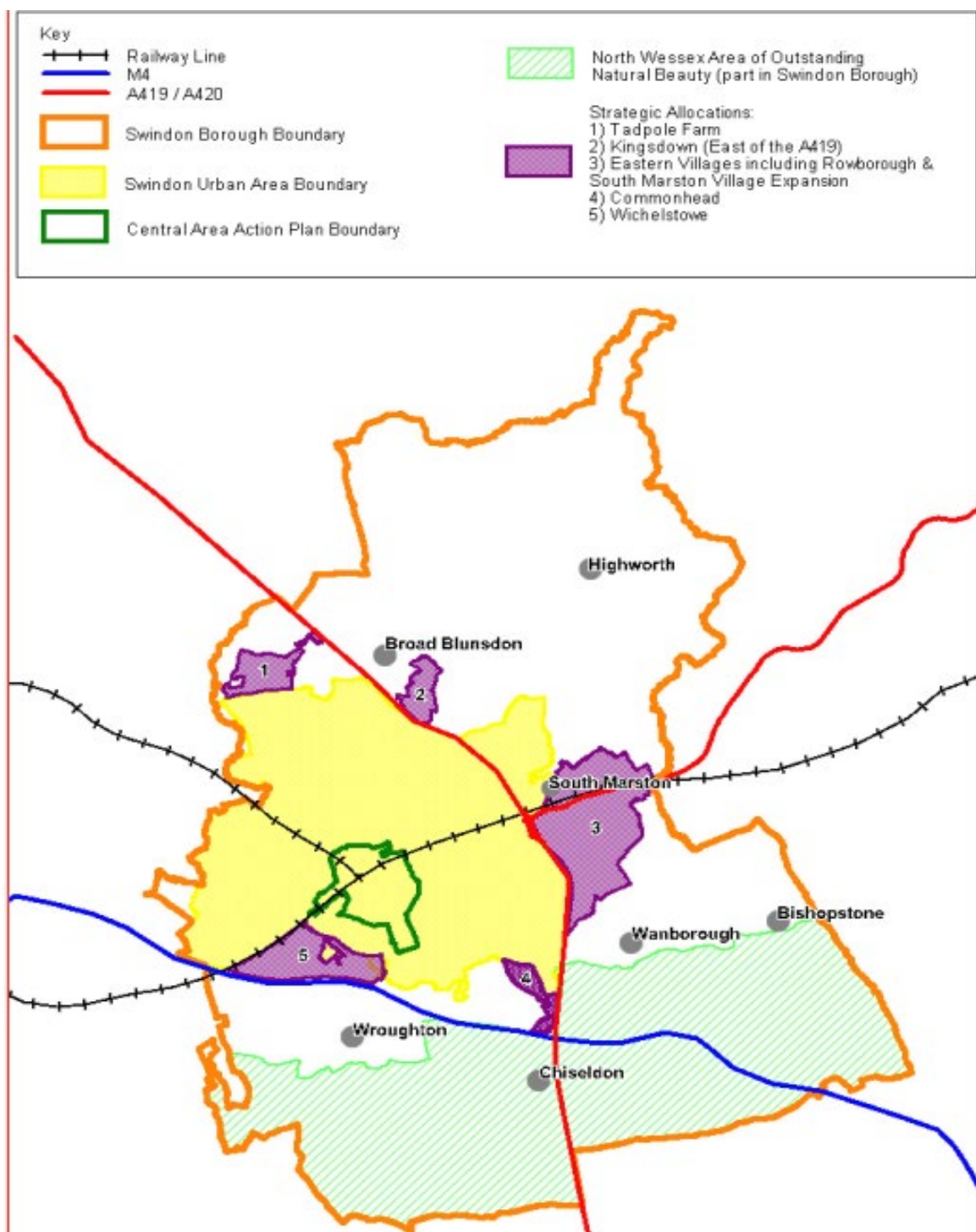


Table 2.6: Key growth areas with over 1000 dwellings allocated as identified in the existing Local Plan 2026–

Site	Number of dwellings
Swindon's Central Area	1,000
Swindon's existing urban area	3,500
Wichelstowe	4,064

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Tadpole Farm	1,695
New Eastern Villages (NEV) including Rowborough	8000
Kingsdown	1,650

Summary of the demographic profile and population projections

The population in Swindon is expected to grow by 11.9% by 2043. This growth (as allocated in the future Local Plan) will mainly be accommodated in and around the town centre (collectively known as the urban area boundary) and in the east (New Eastern Villages). Swindon experiences high levels of deprivation, particularly in and around the urban centre.

The key challenge will be to ensure the leisure provision across the Borough is as accessible as possible and can accommodate future populations, particularly the anticipated growth in the NEV. There are plans to create a new leisure centre as part of the NEV although the facility mix is yet to be determined. This needs assessment, along with supporting documents (such as a bespoke FPM) will inform SBC with regard to its future leisure offer requirements.

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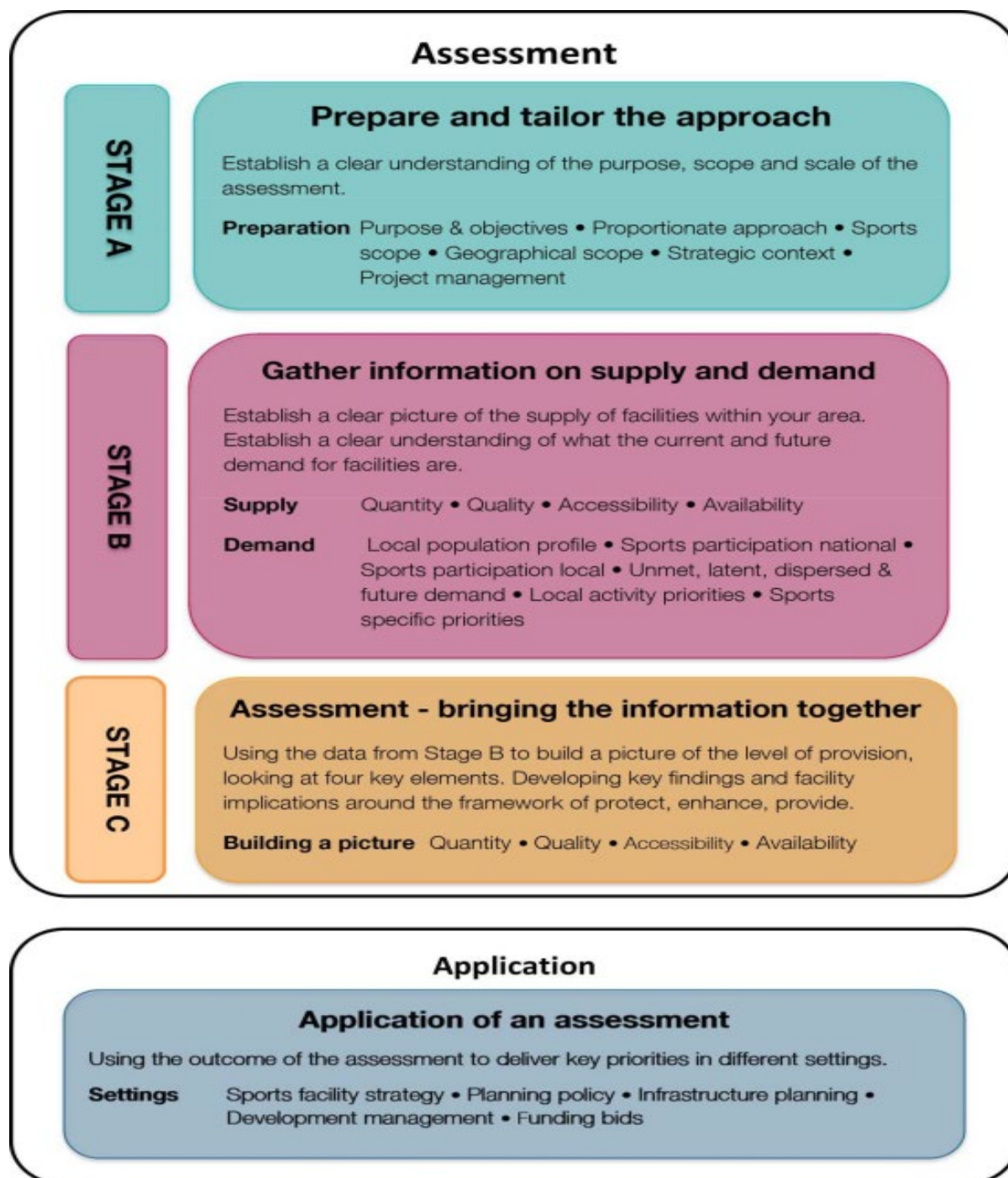
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SECTION 3: INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

3.1: Methodology

Assessment of provision is based on Sport England's ANOG for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities.

Figure 3.1: Recommended approach



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This is the recommended approach to undertaking a robust assessment of need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

It was produced to help (local authorities) meet the requirements of the Government's NPPF, which states that: 'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. 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. 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.' (NPPF, Paragraph 103).

Provision assessment involves the analysis of; quality, quantity, accessibility and availability for the identified facility types (e.g., sports halls and swimming pools). Each venue is considered on a 'like for like' basis within its own facility type, to enable it to be assessed for adequacy.

Demand background, data and consultation is variable, depending upon levels of consultation garnered. In some instances, national data is available whilst in others, it is possible to drill down and get some very detailed local information. This is evident within the demand section. This report considers distribution and interrelationship between facility types in SBC indicating areas of high demand. It identifies where there is potential for improved and/or additional facilities to meet this demand or, where appropriate, to protect or rationalise current stock.

3.2: Site visits

Active Places Power (APP) provides baseline facilities data in the study area. Site visits to indoor facilities were undertaken in autumn 2023. Where a physical visit was not possible, telephone consultation with the facility/site manager was undertaken. Via the audit and informal interviews with facility managers the report identifies 'relevance' and 'condition' describing (e.g.):

- ◆ Facility and scale.
- ◆ Usage/local market.
- ◆ Ownership, management and access arrangements (plus, as relevant, owner aspirations).
- ◆ Management, programming, catchments, user groups, gaps.
- ◆ Location (urban/rural), access and accessibility.
- ◆ Condition, maintenance, existing improvement plans; short, medium and long term lifespan.
- ◆ Existing/ planned adjacent facilities.

Table 3.1: Quality ratings of indoor sports facilities using ANOG

Rating	Description
Good	Facility is new (less than 10 years old) or recently invested in, up to date, clean, well maintained and presented. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are new or relatively new with little if any wear and tear. They are well-lit with a modern feel. Ancillary facilities are new or well maintained, fit for purpose, modern and attractive.
Above average	Facility is in reasonable condition and is well maintained and presented. May be older but it is fit for purpose and safe. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are in an acceptable condition but may show some signs of wear and tear. Ancillary facilities are good quality, but potentially showing signs of age and some wear and tear.
Below average	Facility is older and showing signs of age/poor quality. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces show signs of wear and tear. It is usable, but quality could be improved. The facility is not as attractive to customers and does not meet current expectations. Ancillary facilities are deteriorating, reasonable quality, but usable.
Poor	The facility is old and outdated. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are aged, worn and/or damaged. The facility is barely usable and at times may have to be taken out of

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commission. The facility is unattractive to customers and does not meet basic expectations. Ancillary facilities are low quality and unattractive to use.

The assessment captures quantity and quality data on a site-by-site basis and feeds directly into the main database allowing information to be stored and analysed. Quality assessment ratings are based on non-technical visual assessments. These consider facility age and condition. Surfaces, tiles and walls, line markings and safety equipment are considered and problem areas such as mould, damage, leaks etc., are noted. The condition of fixtures, fittings and equipment is recorded.

Maintenance and facility 'wear and tear' is considered as is compliant with the Equality Act, although this is not studied in detail for the purposes of this report. When all data is collated, key facility elements are rated according to the following categories.

Energy efficiency

To better understand required steps to improve energy efficiency of key leisure assets, KKP undertakes a 'health check' of main Council operated/contracted stock. As per the wider ANOG quality assessment, it provides an overall 'traffic light' rating in respect of the following criteria:

- ◀ Current age of facilities.
- ◀ Level of recent investment in swimming pool plant.
- ◀ Current pool heating method (i.e. Gas boiler or alternative).
- ◀ Level of planned investment in energy efficiency measures.

Assessment ratings are taken into consideration in the accompanying facility strategy which will detail measures which contribute to meeting the Council's net zero commitments.

Catchment areas

Applying catchments areas for different provision types enables identification of areas currently not served. These vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour. This is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment'; the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users (used in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model - FPM). Sport England data indicates that most people will travel up to 20 minutes to access sports facilities. This, coupled with KKP's experience of working in/with leisure facilities and use of local data enables identification of catchment areas for sports facilities as follows.

Table 3.2: Facility catchment areas

Facility type	Identified catchment area by urban/rural
Sport halls	20-minute walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Swimming pools	20-minute walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Health and fitness	20-minute walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Squash courts	20 minutes' drive
Dedicated gymnastics centre	30 minutes' drive
Indoor bowls centre	30-minute drive
Indoor tennis centre	30-minute drive

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SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS

Indoor multi-purpose sports halls are key facilities for community sport accommodating a range of sport and recreational activities. The standard measurement method is the number of badminton courts within the floor area. They are of greatest value if of at least three badminton court size with sufficient height to allow games such as badminton to be played. A 4-court sports hall (690 sqm) provides greater flexibility as it can accommodate major indoor team sports such as football, basketball and netball. It also has sufficient length for indoor cricket nets and indoor athletics and, thus, offers greater sports development flexibility than a 3-court venue.

Larger halls (e.g., those with 6-8 courts, can accommodate higher level training and/or competition and meet day to day need. They also provide options for more than one pitch/court increasing flexibility for both training and competition and hosting of indoor central venue leagues for sports such as netball. This assessment covers all 3+ court facilities Swindon. Halls that function as specialist venues (e.g., dance studios) are excluded.

Smaller sports halls offer an appropriate environment for mat sports, dance and gentle exercise and in some cases to deliver NHS services offering rehabilitation for people returning from injury or long-term illness.

It must be noted that several are referenced as having zero courts. These facilities have a useable space, however, not of the size/ height clearance of an official badminton court nor does it have line markings. As referenced above, they are suitable mainly for mat sports and/or fitness activities.

4.1: Supply

Quantity

There are 51 sports halls of all sizes in Swindon, distributed mainly around the Borough's urban core. These accommodate a total of 91 badminton courts. Of these, 33 have two or fewer badminton courts and 18 comprise three courts or more (including fifteen 4-court halls and three 5-court halls). There is currently no large competition sized (6/8 court) sports hall in the Borough. The Oasis Leisure Centre does have an 8-court sports hall but, as noted above, this closed pre-Pandemic and has not reopened since. The Dorcan Recreational Centre does have a large, covered facility which accommodates two netball courts (equivalent to an 8-court hall) however, this is only marked (and has surfaces suitable) for netball and is not used for other sports.

Table 4.1: All sports halls in Swindon

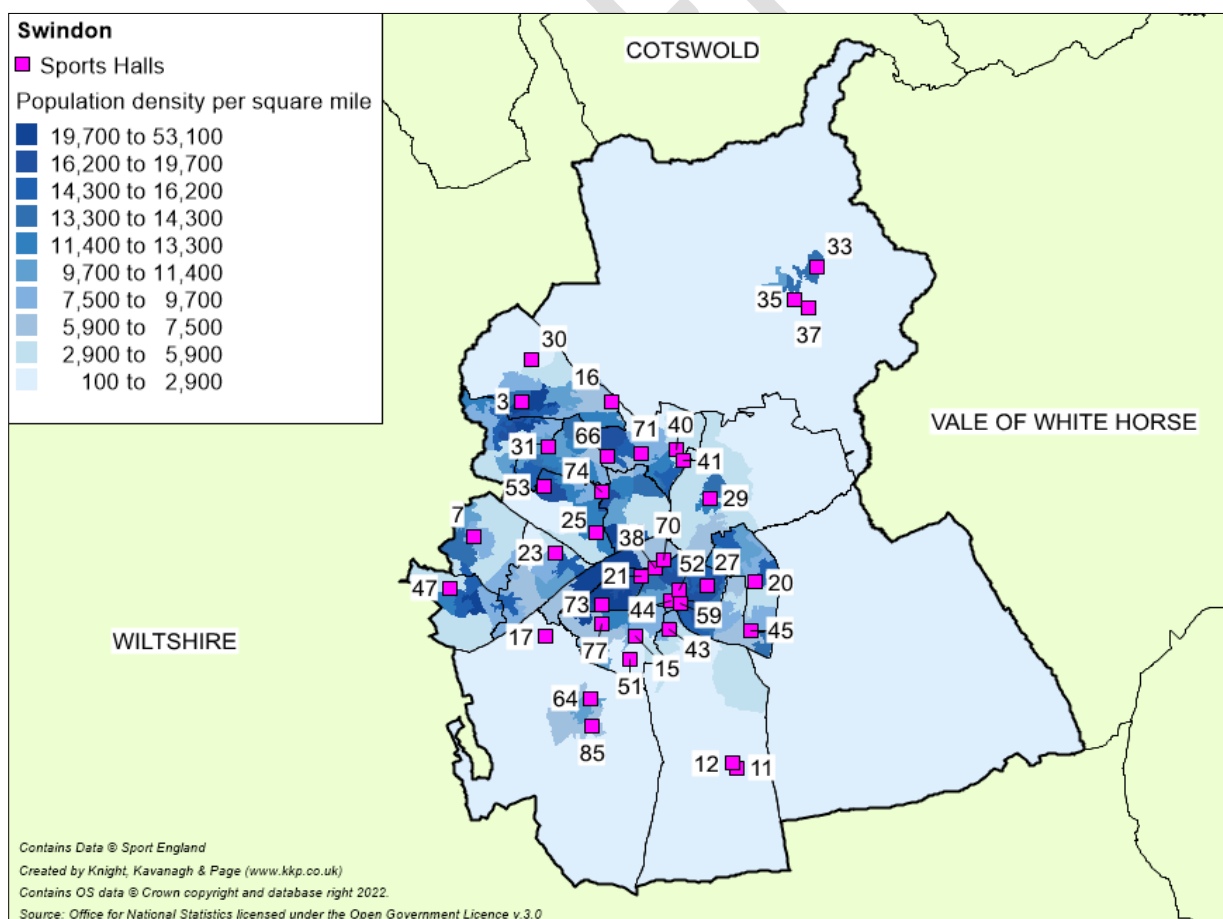
ID	Site name	Crts	ID	Site name	Crts
3	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	4	40	Kingsdown School	1
3	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	2	40	Kingsdown School	2
7	Brook Field Primary School	0	41	Kingsdown School Sports	4
7	Brook Field Primary School	0	43	Lawn Community Centre	0
11	Calley Memorial Hall	1	44	Lawn Manor Academy	1
12	Chiseldon Recreation Ground	0	44	Lawn Manor Academy	1
15	Croft Sports Centre	5	45	Liden Community Centre	0
16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	3	47	Lydiard Park Academy	4
17	Deanery Academy	4	47	Lydiard Park Academy	4

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ID	Site name	Crts	ID	Site name	Crts
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	4	51	Nationwide Building Society	0
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	1	52	New College Swindon	4
21	Drove Primary School	0	53	Nova Hreod Academy	4
23	Even Swindon Primary School	1	53	Nova Hreod Academy	0
23	Even Swindon Primary School	0	59	Polish Community Centre	0
25	Ferndale Youth & Community	0	64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	5
27	Goddard Park Community Primary	0	64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	0
29	Grange Leisure Centre	4	66	Seven Fields Primary School	1
30	Great Western Academy	4	70	St Joseph's Catholic College	4
31	Haydon Centre	4	70	St Joseph's Catholic College	0
31	Haydon Centre	0	71	St Lukes Academy	0
33	Highworth Community Centre	0	73	St. Saviours Church Hall	0
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	4	74	Swindon Academy	4
37	Highworth Warneford School	2	77	The Commonweal School	2
37	Highworth Warneford School	1	77	The Commonweal School	1
38	Holy Cross Catholic Primary	4	85	Wroughton Ellendune	1
40	Kingsdown School	0	Total		91

(0 court halls identified in Active Places but not considered large enough to accommodate 1 badminton court)

Figure 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Swindon– all sizes



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Facility quality

17 sites were subject to a non-technical quality assessment. The majority are located within the urban centre of the Borough. There are two in Highworth (Highworth Recreation Centre and Highworth Warneford School) and one in Wroughton (Ridgeway Leisure Centre).

One 3 + court hall was not audited despite repeated requests having been made to the operator visit the site (St Joseph's Catholic College site ID 70).

Figure 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ courts in Swindon

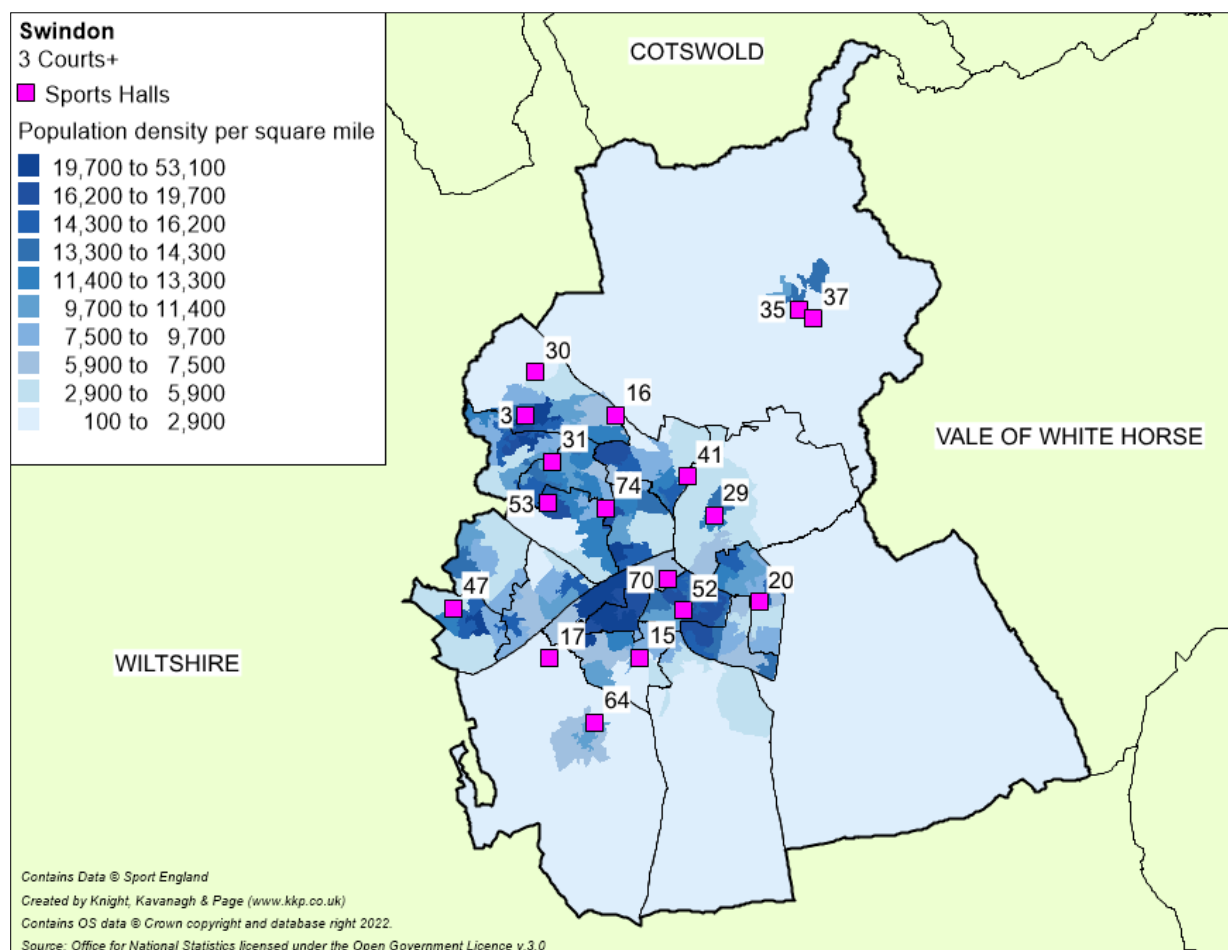


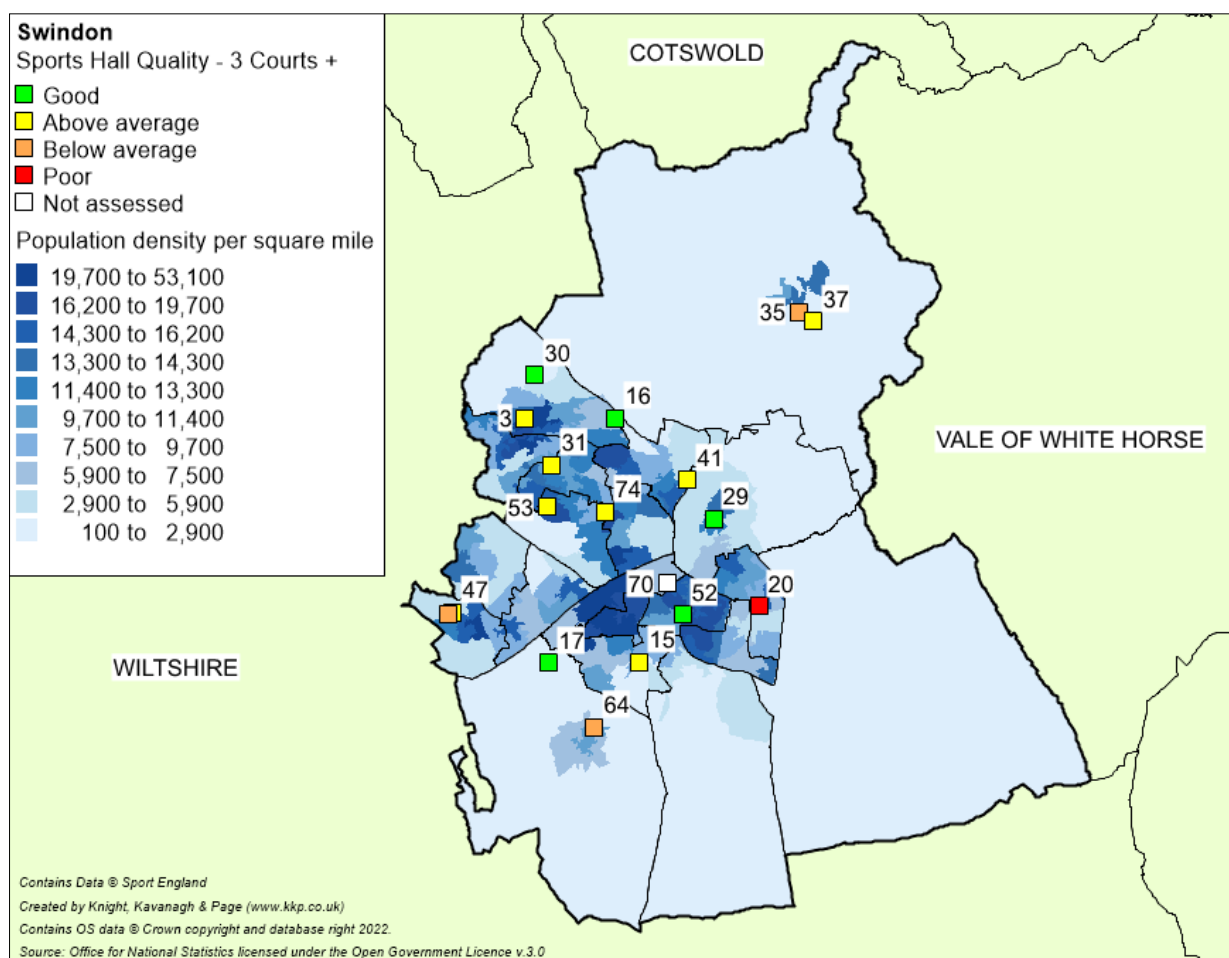
Table 4.3: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts

ID	Site	Cts	ID	Site	Cts
15	Croft Sports Centre	5	37	Highworth Warneford School	4
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	5	41	Kingsdown School Sports Centre	4
3	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	4	47	Lydiard Park Academy	4
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	4	47	Lydiard Park Academy	4
29	Grange Leisure Centre	4	52	New College Swindon	4
30	Great Western Academy	4	53	Nova Hreod Academy	4
31	Haydon Centre	4	70	St Joseph's Catholic College	4

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ID	Site	Cts	ID	Site	Cts
17	Deanery Academy	4	74	Swindon Academy	4
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	4	16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	3
			Total		73

Figure 4.3: Sports halls with 3+ courts in Swindon by condition



The majority (13/17 of those assessed) of sports halls across the Borough are either rated good or above average quality. Only four were rated either poor or below average. Quality ratings generally relate to facility age and levels of recent investment. Due to the recent large areas of new housing development throughout the Borough, a number of new schools have been created (e.g. Great Western Academy and the Deanery Academy) resulting in a good quality rating at these sites. Other sites have received recent investment, such as the Grange Leisure Centre, which replaced its sports hall floor and installed new LED lighting in 2022.

Dorcan Recreation Complex was the only site which received a poor rating. Built in 1975, it has reportedly received little investment and requires a new sports hall floor, lighting and decor. It is heavily used by Dorcan Academy which has a dual use agreement for weekday daytime use.

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Table 4.4: 3+ court sports halls with quality assessment – Swindon

ID	Site name	Courts	Court condition	Changing condition
3	Abbey Park School	4	Above average	Above average
15	Croft Sports Centre	5	Above average	Above average
16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	3	Good	Good
17	Deanery Academy	4	Good	Good
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	4	Poor	Below average
29	Grange Leisure Centre	4	Good	Above average
30	Great Western Academy	4	Good	Good
31	Haydon Centre	4	Above average	Above average
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	4	Below average	Below average
37	Highworth Warneford School	4	Above average	Above average
41	Kingsdown School Sports Centre	4	Above average	Above average
47	Lydiard Park Academy	4	Above average	Above average
47	Lydiard Park Academy	4	Below average	Above average
52	New College Swindon	4	Good	Above average
53	Nova Hreod Academy	4	Above average	Above average
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	5	Below average	Above average
70	St Joseph's Catholic College ⁷	4	Not assessed	Not assessed
74	Swindon Academy	4	Above average	Above average

Table 4.5: Summary of non-technical assessments

Good	Above average	Below average	Poor	Not assessed
5	8	3	1	1

Table 4.6: Year of construction and refurbishment of sports halls

ID	Site name	Courts	Year opened	Year of refurb	Years since open/refurb
3	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	4	1987	2015	8
15	Croft Sports Centre	5	1971	2011	12
16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	3	2007	2018	5
17	Deanery Academy	4	2019	N/A	4
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	4	1975	2004	19
29	Grange Leisure Centre	4	1977	2022	1
0	Great Western Academy	4	2017	N/A	6
31	Haydon Centre	4	1991	2006	18
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	4	1968	2004	20
37	Highworth Warneford School	4	2015	2017	6
41	Kingsdown School Sports Centre	4	1990	N/A	23
47	Lydiard Park Academy	4	1987	N/A	26

⁷ Unable to assess site- site did not respond to an invitation for consultation.

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ID	Site name	Courts	Year opened	Year of refurb	Years since open/refurb
47	Lydiard Park Academy	4	2009	2017	6
52	New College Swindon	4	2005	2017	6
53	Nova Hreod Academy	4	2007	N/A	16
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	5	1976	1995	28
70	St Joseph's Catholic College	4	2006	2017	6
74	Swindon Academy	4	2009	2015	8

Accessibility

Sports hall accessibility is influenced by how far people are willing and able to travel to/from them. Walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine facility accessibility to different communities for sites available to hire. The normal (industry) standard is a 20-minute walk time (one-mile radial catchment) for urban areas and 20-minutes' drive time for rural areas. Swindon has a large rural hinterland so both 20-minute walk and drive times are applied.

To assess how accessible the sports hall offer is in Swindon, non-community accessible sites are removed from the study. In Swindon, this has resulted in the removal of the following site:

- David Lloyd- this sports hall is part of a registered membership gym. Registered membership price is considered the higher end of the price market, and therefore not community available.

Analysis of 20-minute walk time data (residents living within the red circles), when including these community available sites reveals the following.

- 180,211 of residents live within one mile of a sports hall (82.8% of the total population).
- 48,948 people (22.5% of the population) live in areas of higher deprivation and of these, 89.9% live within a one-mile radial catchment of a sports hall.

Residents in more deprived localities are statistically less likely to participate in sport than those from more affluent areas for reasons including cost and access. In SBC, nearly nine in ten (89.9%) of those who live in areas of higher (top 30% IMD) deprivation live within a mile of a community accessible sports hall. This would suggest that sports halls are well placed to serve these residents.

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that all (100%) of Swindon's population is within a 20-minute drive of a publicly accessible sports hall with 3+ badminton courts. As car ownership is good (over 80%) and above the national average, sports halls are very accessible for residents within the Authority on this measure.

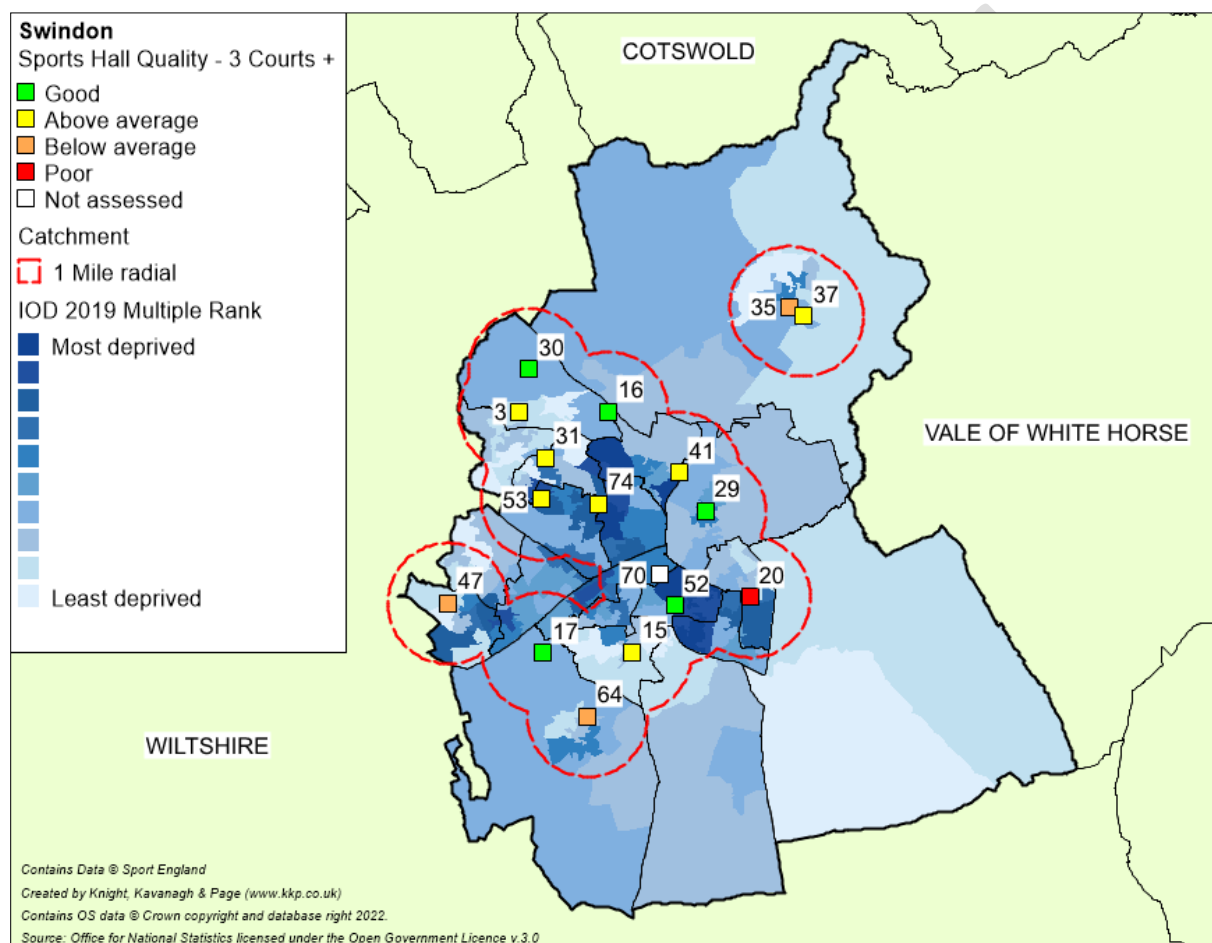
Table 4.7: Accessibility of community available sports halls (3+ courts excluding private use)

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	19,384	8.9%	18,745	8.6%	639	0.3%
10.1 - 20	14,865	6.8%	12,089	5.6%	2,776	1.3%
20.1 - 30	14,699	6.8%	13,196	6.1%	1,503	0.7%
30.1 - 40	10,441	4.8%	8,954	4.1%	1,487	0.7%

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40.1 - 50	23,412	10.8%	19,210	8.8%	4,202	1.9%
50.1 - 60	13,805	6.3%	9,703	4.5%	4,102	1.9%
60.1 - 70	33,869	15.6%	24,633	11.3%	9,236	4.2%
70.1 - 80	38,012	17.5%	33,140	15.2%	4,872	2.2%
80.1 - 90	29,398	13.5%	25,518	11.7%	3,880	1.8%
90.1 - 100	19,699	9.1%	15,023	6.9%	4,676	2.1%
Total	217,584	100.0%	180,211	82.8%	37,373	17.2%

Figure 4.4: All community available sports halls (3+ courts relative to IMD (exclude private use)



Availability

16 of the 18 assessed sports halls in Swindon are community available. Access levels vary across these sites. Four offer daytime as well as evening use (Grange Leisure Centre, Haydon Centre, Croft Sports Centre and Highworth Recreation Centre). These, along with Dorcan Recreation Complex and Ridgeway Leisure Centre all offer pay and play access. The remaining sports halls are all located at education sites. These are only available at evenings and weekends and are solely accessible via advance block bookings.

It must be noted that Lydiard Park Academy's second sports hall is dedicated for school use (exams, open evenings, etc.) thus restricting its use. It is technically available for community use but with a restricted offer. The school currently has an agreement with a netball club to use it when it is available to accommodate training demand.

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Facility management

SBC owns the three GLL managed sites (Croft, Haydon Centre and Dorcan Leisure Centre). Parish Councils own the Grange Leisure Centre and the Highworth Recreation Centre respectively. Each school site is owned by its respective multi academy trust and managed internally apart from Nova Hreod Academy, which is managed by a bookings company.

Table 4.8: Management and ownership of sports hall facilities

Site	Management	Ownership
Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	Internal	Northern Education Trust
Croft Sports Centre	GLL	SBC
Deanery Academy	Internal	Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust
Dorcan Recreation Complex	GLL	SBC
Grange Leisure Centre	Stratham Parish Council	Partwood Leisure Trust
Great Western Academy	Internal	Great Western Academy Ltd.
Haydon Centre	GLL	SBC
Highworth Recreation Centre	Highworth Town Council	Halo Leisure Trust
Highworth Warneford School	Internal	The Park Academies Trust
Kingsdown School Sports Centre	Internal	The River Learning Trust
Lydiard Park Academy	Internal	The Park Academies Trust
New College Swindon	Internal	New College Swindon University Centre
Nova Hreod Academy	School Bookings	United Learning trust
Ridgeway Leisure Centre	Internal	White Horse Federation
Swindon Academy	Internal	United Learning Trust

Daytime availability and used capacity

As described above, daytime availability is limited to four sites. The remainder solely offer evening and weekend bookings. Table 4.9 details the levels of community use available at each venue. (Figures are based either upon booking sheets from the respective sites or consultation.) Data collected relates to current utilisation at all sites in Autumn 2023.

Sites which offer the most extensive community use are New College, Grange Leisure Centre, and the Haydon Centre. All sites have a range of activities, including netball, basketball, indoor football and fitness classes. New College also has a strong disability offer, through links with Swindon Shock Wheelchair Basketball and Swindon St George Rugby League Club. The College also offers storage for equipment for these clubs.

It must be noted that netball and basketball are popular and are played in/at a number of facilities due to the fact that the design of a number of sports halls means that they have the correct run-offs to meet the technical requirements of the individual sports.

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Table 4.9: Opening hours and activities in sports halls Swindon

Community use hours		Site	Total courts	Main sports played
1-40	37.5	Great Western Academy	4	Netball, indoor football, fitness classes
	35.5	Deanery Academy (unknown hours available)	4	Netball, badminton, basketball and indoor cricket.
	15.0	Highworth Warneford School	4	Netball, martial arts, basketball.
	33.0	Kingsdown School Sports Centre	4	Netball, badminton, football, dance.
	20.0	Lydiard Park Academy (hall two)	4	Netball
	36.0	New College Swindon	4	Netball, volleyball, fitness, football, badminton, table tennis, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball.
	20.0	Swindon Academy	4	Trampolining
	36.0	Lydiard Park Academy (sports hall one)	4	Netball, basketball, martial arts, badminton.
40+	46.0	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)	4	Netball, basketball, football.
	41.0	Dorcan Recreation Complex	4	Badminton, netball.
	97.5	Grange Leisure Centre	4	Badminton, football, walking football, aerobic/fitness classes.
	88.0	Haydon Centre	4	Martial arts, walking football, netball, table tennis, badminton, short mat bowls.
	88.0	Highworth Recreation Centre	4	Badminton, football, roller hockey
	46.0	Nova Hreod Academy	4	Netball, badminton, basketball, football.
	41.0	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	5	Badminton, football, martial arts.
	88.5	Croft Sports Centre	5	Gymnastics, badminton, walking football, netball.

There is strong demand for sports halls in Swindon, with all but two sites operating at over 60% of used capacity. All schools, bar Deanery Academy, New College and Lydiard Park Academy operate between 60-80%, with limited space available. Croft Sports Centre is the only site with significant spare capacity, with reported utilisation currently at 50%. It is located in close proximity to New College and the Deanery Academy, which may affect bookings at the site.

Lydiard Park Academy has two 4-court halls. It allocates one for school use (e.g., exams) and the other for community lettings, hence the difference in capacity levels.

Table 4.10: Used capacity of sports halls based on KKP audit findings (peak hours only)

Used capacity	Site
>60%	Croft Sports Centre
	Lydiard Park Academy (Court 1) – used for exams and school priorities
60-80%	Highworth Warneford School
	Swindon Academy
	Nova Hreod Academy
	Great Western Academy
	Kingsdown School Sports Centre
	Highworth Recreation Centre

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Used capacity	Site
80%-100%	Abbey Park School (Northside Campus)
	Ridgeway Leisure Centre
	Haydon Centre
	Dorcan Recreation Complex
	Grange Leisure Centre
	Deanery Academy
	Lydiard Park Academy (Court 2)
	New College Swindon

Neighbouring facilities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside Swindon. Four (minimum 3+ court) sports halls are located within two miles (indicative of how far people may travel) of the Borough. All are close to its western border in the Authority of Wiltshire. The largest sites are Lime Kiln and Cricklade Leisure Centres; both 5-court pay and play facilities. The remaining two (Cricklade Manor Prep School and Bradon Forest School) are both dual use education sites, each have 4-court halls.

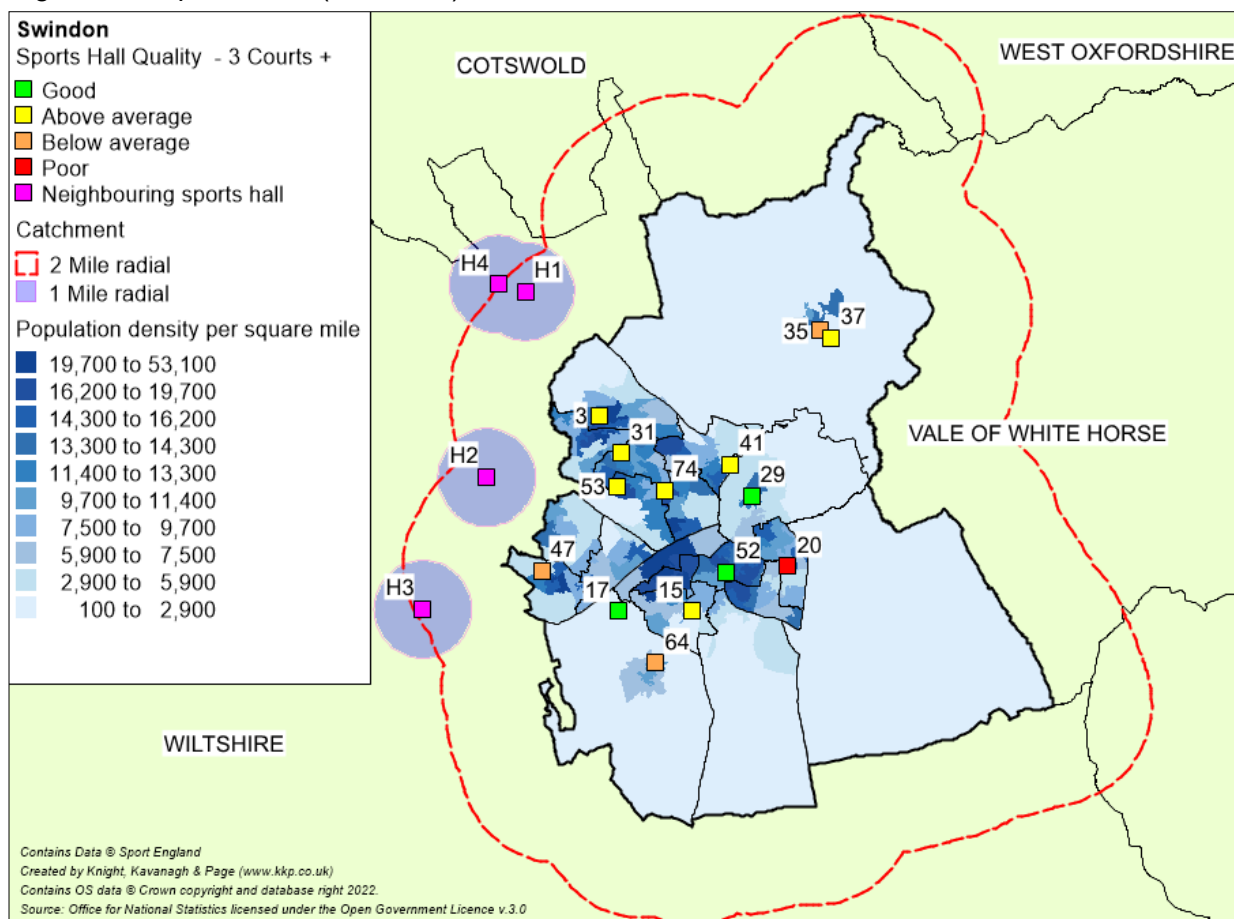
Table 4.11: Neighbouring 3+ court sports halls (excluding private use)

ID	Site name	Crts	Access type	Local Authority
H1	Cricklade Manor Prep School	4	Sports Club / CA	Wiltshire
H2	Bradon Forest School	4	Sports Club / CA	Wiltshire
H3	Lime Kiln Leisure Centre	5	Pay and Play	Wiltshire
H4	Cricklade Leisure Centre	5	Pay and Play	Wiltshire

NB: Sports Club / CA = Sports Club / Community Association use

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Figure 4.5: Sports halls (3+ courts) within two miles of Swindon



4.2: Demand

Consultation

National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) and active clubs have been consulted to ascertain and understand current use, participation trends, needs and challenges facing sports hall facilities in the area.

Badminton England

Badminton England (BE) is the NGB for badminton. Its latest strategy, Discover Badminton 2017-2025 presents a vision for the sport to become one of the nation's most popular and to consistently win medals at world, Olympic and Paralympic levels. To achieve this, it has identified three key objectives:

- ◆ Grow grassroots participation.
- ◆ Create a system that identifies and develops player potential to deliver consistent world class performers.
- ◆ Build financial resilience to become a well governed organisation and demonstrate compliance with the UK governance code.

It applies a specific strategy model to assess court quality and sufficiency by local authority.

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Overall statistics

Badminton participation statistics

- 2.70% of adults (70.97%; male and 29.03%; female) have played badminton at least twice in the last 28 days⁸. This equates to **4,700 regular adult players**.
- 6.00%⁹ of juniors⁸ have played badminton at least twice in the last 28 days. This equates to **728 regular junior players**.
- It is estimated that 9.97% of adults have played badminton at least once in the last 12 months. This equates to **12,600 occasional adult players**¹⁰ (7.26% latent demand).

Demand

- The presumption is that **regular adult players** play once per week for one hour and that their average need is for 3 adults per court. This equates to a weekly requirement for **1,567 court hours** (current demand).
- The presumption is that **regular junior players** play once per week for 45 minutes and that their average need is for 4 players per court. This equates to a weekly requirement for **138 court hours** (current demand).
- The presumption is that **occasional adult players** play four times per annum for one hour and that their average need is for 3 adults per court. This requires **324 court hours** (latent demand).
- To service all badminton demand there is a need for **2,029 court hours** per week.
- Projected increase in regular demand in 2030 is **184 court hours**.

Supply

- There are 30 sites containing 96 courts in Swindon (this includes one and two court venues).
- Three courts are private use only; thus 93 courts are available for badminton.
- The total number of court hours per week (3+ court sports halls) available in Swindon during stated peak time is **2,620**¹¹.
- 81.94%¹² of badminton courts in Swindon meet the Badminton England quality threshold (above average/good) which equates to **2,163 court hours**¹³.
- There is a need for **93.80%** of the **2,163** good quality peak time court hours, available each week, to service current and latent badminton demand.
- Additional court hours required per week in 2030 are 184, with a requirement of 2.1 additional courts.**

It is important that BE's, supply and demand assessment incorporates all courts, whereas KKP's focuses on sites with 3+ court halls. In summary, however, BE's calculation of a need for 2.1 courts to meet currently unmet demand will be addressed through the proposed new developments in the New Eastern Villages growth area.

BE states there are currently seven affiliated badminton clubs in Swindon: Consultation was not gained with any of the seven clubs; however, contact was made with Swindon and District Badminton Association. It states that badminton is popular and is played at a number of sites, including New College, Ridgeway Leisure Centre and the Dorcan Recreational Centre. It runs three leagues; men's, women's' and mixed. The challenge faced by the League is during school exam periods, as certain school sites cannot accommodate evening bookings; this affects club participation numbers.

⁸ ALS states that people that have participated at least twice in the last 28 days. For modelling purposes, it is assumed that they participate every week

⁹ ALS states that 6.0% of juniors nationally (14-15 year olds) have played at least twice in the last 28 days. For modelling purposes this has been extended to include 11-13 year olds.

¹⁰ Occasional players equates to all players minus regular players

¹¹ Peak time hours are defined as; Monday – Friday 17:00-22:00, Saturday 09:30-17:00, Sunday 09:00-14:30 & 17:00-19:30

¹² National figure: 75.0%

¹³ Assumes that all courts of all standards available during all peak hours.

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BE also states that Wiltshire County Badminton Association is active within the Authority, with a good structure and a healthy number of children attending weekly County training sessions. These take place at New College.

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 of the sport in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead. 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 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.

The elite game is in focus too, with the ambition for the Vitality Roses to be the best female sports team in the world, supporting the national team to consistently win on the world stage, with an outstanding talent pathway in place to fuel sustainable successes on court, and setting new standards for netball. The professionalisation of the game over the next decade is a priority, focusing on growing world-leading international and domestic competitions and events, and creating more careers in the sport.

Grounded in feedback from the Netball Family, with over 3,000 members and stakeholders consulted as part of the strategic process to understand what they wanted netball to 'look like' in 2031, the plan is aspirational and ambitious and sees the organisation pledge to continue to be a trailblazer for women's sport as it embarks on its new adventure.

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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.

Consultation with England Netball indicates that Swindon is a strategic development hub for the County of Wiltshire due to the facilities located in the Borough. The development hub is mainly focused on the indoor (fabric and frame) facility at Dorcan Recreational Centre. Sport England and Swindon Council jointly invested in this two-netball court indoor facility in 2010 with the aim of increasing participation and developing a talent pathway. To support these aims, England Netball employs a development officer to deliver a range of programmes, including Back to Netball sessions, social leagues and also managing the talent pathways.

The venue is used by the Dorcan Academy during the day and is available for community use from 16.00-22.00 every evening and at weekends. The community programme at the site can be broken down into the following:

- ✦ England Netball performance pathways for girls aged 7 upwards.
- ✦ Causal netball, including back to netball, social leagues, pay and play.
- ✦ Affiliated leagues
- ✦ Club training sessions, including Raychem and Vixens Netball club- two of the larger clubs in the Borough.

Consultation indicates that there is a positive relationship between GLL and England Netball, however, the facility is now over 10 years old, and in need of some investment. This includes improved lighting and an updated air handling system.

Netball is popular indoors during the winter months and this is assisted by the fact that several school sports halls have the required run offs. These include New College, the Deanery School and the Highworth Warneford School.

England Netball reported that clubs are generally happy with the facilities in Swindon due to the volume of court capacity available both indoors and outdoors.

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Basketball

Basketball England (BBE) is the NGB for the sport in England. Its latest strategy, Transforming Basketball in Britain Together (2016 - 2028) aims to improve basketball from grassroots to GB teams, by adopting a whole sport approach and working closely with the basketball community. To achieve this, a series of key objectives have been identified:

- ◆ Develop successful GB teams.
- ◆ Build high-quality men's and women's leagues and teams.
- ◆ Support talented players, officials and coaches and coach development pathways.
- ◆ Drive increased awareness and profile of the sport.
- ◆ Increase opportunities to play the game at every level.
- ◆ Transform the leadership and culture of the sport.

The aim of the BBE Facilities Strategy is to create community hubs including, as appropriate, arenas that sit at the heart of communities and are homes for the leading British Basketball League, Women's British Basketball League and community clubs. The stated intent is that as part of Strategy implementation, BBE will regularly monitor provision in schools, colleges, universities, clubs and at local authority sites and identify gaps, looking to improve connections between organisations to increase the availability and affordability of facilities of the right quality.

Consultation with BBE suggests there are three clubs in the Borough (Team Swindon Basketball Club, Shock Wheelchair Basketball Club and WSBBA (Wiltshire) Wolves Basketball Club). It also notes that there is a current positive supply demand balance of facilities in Swindon but that, by 2032, there will be a small shortfall (of 0.05 courts; calculated as three hours per week). This calculation is illustrated below.

Figure 4.7: Basketball England's demand and supply analysis



Club consultation

Swindon Basketball Club – is the largest club which has both senior male and female teams, along with a number of junior teams (88 members). Its junior team plays and trains at the Dorcan Academy and the New College. The senior teams both play and train at the Deanery School. The men's senior team plays in National League two. It competes under the title of Team Swindon Basketball Club, due to its national status.

Consultation indicates that the Club's biggest challenge is maintaining player numbers and the cost of hiring school halls. It has been forced to shop around to find the best times/prices to suit its

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needs. Ideally it would like to locate to the eight-court hall (such as the currently closed Oasis Leisure Centre) where all teams can train and play concurrently at the same venue.

Swindon Shock Wheelchair Basketball Club - is a regional standard wheelchair basketball club, which trains and competes six days a week at New College Sports Centre running nine sessions offering opportunities from under 11s to senior. Teams compete across several leagues, including the Local Wessex League and National League Division 3. It reports having a positive relationship with the College and that this has allowed the Club to have a container on site, allowing storage of equipment such as wheelchairs.

4.3 Facilities planning model (FPM) Local Run Assessment

FPM sports hall data provided by Sport England for Swindon provides analysis of the supply / demand position in 2024 and projecting forward to 2043 using ONS forecasted (2018 projections).

Five modelling runs were undertaken:

- Run 1 – a baseline assessment of provision in 2024.
- Run 2 – a forward assessment of demand for sports halls and its distribution, based on the projected changes in population between 2024 and 2043.

And three scenarios or 'runs' to assess their impact in meeting the demand for sports hall and its distribution up to 2043:

- Run 3 – provide two new four-court sports halls at NEV District Centre (New Eastern Villages) and in the town centre (Central Sports Hall).
- Run 4 - provide a new eight-court sports hall at Oasis Leisure Centre.
- Run 5 – provide two new four-court sports halls at Oasis Leisure Centre and Central Sports Hall.

Supply

- The total current supply of sports halls utilised in the FPM is the equivalent of 97 badminton courts, across 17 sites, with 74 courts available for community use in the weekly peak period. The 23 unavailable courts represent 24% of the total supply. The unavailable supply is mostly located at educational sites.
- The scenarios tested increase supply to the equivalent of 105 badminton courts across 18 or 19 sites, depending on the option considered, with 82 courts available for community use. As with the current situation, the unavailable supply is mostly located at educational sites.
- There is scope to increase availability and capacity at four public leisure centres – Croft Sports Centre, Dorcan Recreation Complex, Haydon Centre and Highworth Recreation Centre. This totals 31 hours in a weekly period.
- There are between 15 and 40 hours available for community use at the educational sites in the weekly peak period, with most available for between 27 and 37 hours. There is scope to increase the hours and capacity for community use, without further provision of sports halls.
- In 2024, the average age of sports halls is 27 years and 44 years for the public leisure centres. Of the eight sport hall sites opened before 2000, six have been modernised.

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Demand

- ◆ Demand for sports halls increases by 18% through to 2043 due to the growth in population. It grows from demand for 63.5 badminton courts in 2024 to 74.9 in 2043, allowing for a comfort factor¹⁴. In 2024, 9% of demand lies in the 10% most deprived LSOAs, decreasing slightly to 8% in 2043.
- ◆ Swindon's peak period demand in 2024 is equivalent to 69% of the Borough's existing available supply. Looking forward to 2043, with the same level of supply, demand is equivalent to 81% of the available supply. If Swindon's demand was only catered for by its supply, then demand at this level (in excess of 80% of capacity) indicates that more supply is needed to meet demand comfortably.
- ◆ A very large proportion of Swindon's demand is met both in 2024 and 2043. Population growth will not have a significant impact on levels of satisfied demand for sports halls, which are projected to fall slightly from 96% to 95% in 2043 and will remain in line with national and regional averages.
- ◆ Nearly all of Swindon's satisfied demand is met within the Borough and this continues to be the case in 2043. The most unmet demand is around Swindon town centre, and totals 1.4 courts across nine square kilometres.
- ◆ The highest density of unmet demand is southwest of the town centre at 0.4 courts per square kilometre. Other areas where unmet demand increases by 0.1 courts per square kilometre are Southeast town centre (0.2), eastern growth area, west of David Lloyd, west of Deanery Academy and west of Croft Sports Centre.
- ◆ There is sufficient current sports hall capacity in Swindon to meet peak period demand in 2024, with 71% of the overall capacity used. However, in 2043, the increase in demand in 2043 means that most of the existing sports halls are uncomfortably full at peak times (82%). In 2024, eight sports hall sites are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times (more than 80% utilised). This rises to 12 sites in 2043 when demand increases.
- ◆ Three public leisure centre halls – Croft Sports Centre, Grange Leisure Centre and Haydon Centre - are operating at 100% capacity, both in 2024 and 2043. Educational sites operating at 100% by 2043 are Deanery Academy, New College Swindon, St Joseph's Catholic College, Swindon Academy, Lydiard Park Academy and Nova Hreod Academy, with only the latter two not reaching that level currently.
- ◆ Unsurprisingly, given its location, Swindon is a net importer of demand. Imported demand accounts for 11% of the used capacity of Swindon's sports hall supply in 2024.

FPM (2043): Summary

- ◆ Swindon's supply of sports halls can meet most of its current and future demand. Unmet demand is higher in 2043 than 2024 due to population growth.
- ◆ The distribution of demand means that some sports halls are estimated to be completely full at peak times.
- ◆ One of the options tested needs to be provided to meet demand to 2043.

¹⁴ When venues are too full, the time taken to change the sports hall programme and equipment starts to impinge on the activity time itself and the changing and circulation areas become too congested. In the model, Sport England assumes that usage above 80% of capacity is busy and that the sports hall is operating at an uncomfortable level.

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Scenario testing – Key findings

In addition to assessing provision against current and future provision, three scenarios were tested through the FPM:

- Run 3 – provide two new four-court sports halls at NEV District Centre (New Eastern Villages) and Central Sports Hall.
- Run 4 – provide a new eight-court sports hall at Oasis Leisure Centre.
- Run 5 – provide two new four-court sports halls at Oasis Leisure Centre and Central Sports Hall.

Element	Run 1	Run 2	Run 3	Run 4	Run 5
Number of sports halls	25	25	27	26	27
Supply in badminton court equivalents	97	97	105	105	105
Unavailable supply in weekly peak	24%	24%	22%	22%	22%
Total supply - visits	27,132	27,132	30,076	30,076	30,076
Total demand – badminton courts	63.5	74.9	74.9	74.9	74.9
Demand as proportion of available supply	69%	81%	73%	73%	73%
Number of visits met in peak period	18,010	21,016	21,138	21,170	20,460
Satisfied demand (%)	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
Satisfied demand retained within Swindon	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%
Satisfied demand exported	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Levels of unmet demand	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Unmet demand – badminton courts	2.4	3.6	3.1	3.0	3.0
% of residents within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall	64%	57%	65%	66%	68%
% of 10% most deprived population within a 20- minute walk of a sports hall	79%	78%	79%	81%	84%
% of unmet demand due to residents outside hall catchment (as opposed to no capacity).	91.3%	82.9%	80.6%	83.9%	80.0%
Used capacity	71%	82%	75%	75%	75%

Run 3 - provide two new four-court sports halls at NEV District Centre (New Eastern Villages) and Central Sports Hall

- Reduces overall unmet demand to **3.1** badminton courts
- 35%** of residents are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall
- 21%** of residents of the 10% most deprived population are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall
- The most unmet demand is still around Swindon town centre but is lower, due to the addition of Central Sports Hall. The highest density of unmet demand is still southwest of the town centre but is lower. Unmet demand to the west and northeast of Central Sports Hall reduces, as does unmet demand north of Croft Sports Centre. Unmet demand in Gorse Hill and southeast of the town centre remains unchanged. The addition of NEV District Centre only reduces unmet demand by 0.1 courts east of its location.

Run 4 - provide a new eight-court sports hall at Oasis Leisure Centre.

- Reduces overall unmet demand to **3.0** badminton courts
- 34%** of residents are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall

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- 19% of residents of the 10% most deprived population are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall
- In Run 4 the addition of the larger sports hall at Oasis Leisure Centre reduces unmet demand around Swindon town centre. However, the highest density of unmet demand is still southwest of the town centre. Without NEV District Centre, unmet demand in the eastern housing growth area is 0.1 courts higher than in Run 3, but at the same level as in Run 2.

Run 5 – provide two new four-court sports halls at Oasis Leisure Centre and Central Sports Hall.

- Reduces unmet demand to **3.0** badminton courts
- 32%** of residents are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall
- 16%** of residents of the 10% most deprived population are not within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall
- In Run 5 there is no change to the geographical distribution of unmet demand compared to Run 4.

FPM (2043): Scenario testing summary

- All three runs meet a similar level of demand in 2043.
- There is a slightly lower level of unmet demand and a slightly higher proportion of residents within 20-minute walking distance of a sports hall in run 5 compared to run 3 however the differences are negligible. The provision of a facility at NEV District Centre has limited impact on unmet demand.
- Run 4 meets a similar level of demand to Runs 3 and 5 but provides a different offer through an eight-court hall, which can accommodate multiple sports activities simultaneously and also provide an events venue.
- Based on the FPM findings, the key sites where community use hours could be increased are:
 - Swindon Academy – potential to increase by 21 hours per week
 - New College Swindon – potential to increase by 13 hours per week
- Access for residents who require daytime access may be restricted by most sports halls in Swindon having educational ownership. It is important, therefore, to ensure maximum availability at public leisure centres. Key sites are:
 - Maximising community use is essential to meet the level of demand up to 2043. Therefore, it is paramount that the proposed sports halls are available for the maximum peak period hours for community use. Other sites where capacity could be increased include:
 - Croft Sports Centre - available for 43 hours, of which 29 are peak hours and overall scope to increase the availability of its hall by 17.0 hours in the weekly peak period, which would increase its capacity by 680 visits.
 - Dorcan Recreation Complex - available for 41 hours, of which 39 are peak hours, and Croft Sports Centre.
 - Haydon Centre - scope to increase the availability of both its halls by four hours in the weekly peak period. This will increase the site capacity by an additional 196 visits at peak times, but this is unlikely to make much of an impact to the proportion of capacity used.
 - Swindon Academy – availability can be increased by 21 hours in the weekly peak period and increase capacity by an additional 672 visits at peak times.
 - New College Swindon – availability can be increased by 13 hours in the weekly peak period and increase capacity by an additional 416 visits at peak times.
- 97% of Swindon's satisfied demand is met within the Borough in Run 5, and 96% in all the other runs.
- There are currently eight sports hall sites estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times (more than 80% utilised). This rises to 12 sites in 2043 when demand increases. With the

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increase in supply in Runs 3 and 4, the number of uncomfortably full sites decreases to 11 in Run 3, and nine in Run 4. In Run 5, 12 sites are uncomfortably full.

4.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Sports halls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Swindon has 51 sports halls of all sizes (91 courts) Of these, 16 halls (on 15 sites) have 3+ court halls are community available. The large indoor netball facility at Dorcan is a two netball court sized dedicated centre for the sport.	No 6 or 8-court facility is currently available in the Borough. Basketball clubs in particular expressed a desire for a large hall to support club development. FPM analysis suggests that modelled additional provision (totalling 8 courts) will be required in order to meet additional demand generated via population growth to 2043.
Quality	Sports hall stock is generally either rated good or above average quality. Only four sites were rated either below average or poor.	Work with sites rated poor or below average, to identify funding to upgrade the respective facilities. The Dorcan Centre was rated as poor condition and is in need of a significant programme of refurbishment.
Accessibility	82.8% of the population lives within one mile (20 minutes' walk) of a sports hall. Of those living in areas of high IMD, 89.9% live within a mile of a 3+ court sports hall.	Current accessibility to sports halls is generally good for all residents, with the three main leisure centres serving key areas of population. FPM analysis identifies that by 2043, levels of unmet demand for sports halls will rise due to population growth, with the greatest concentration of unmet demand being in the vicinity of the town centre. Providing additional provision equivalent to 8 courts will reduce overall levels of unmet demand.
Availability (Management and usage)	17 three + court sports halls are community available. Although utilisation of most of the GLL sports halls is near capacity, the majority of school halls reported some element of spare capacity.	FPM analysis suggests that the impact of population growth will be to further reduce overall available sports hall capacity across the Borough. Audit and FPM analysis suggests that there is scope to provide additional peak time community use hours within school-based sports hall provision.
Summary	The key areas of population in Swindon are well served by a 3+ court sports halls, with both pay and play and daytime accessible facilities. The stock of sports halls at education sites is generally rated as good or above average quality, however, certain key sites are rated either poor or below average. These include Ridgeway Leisure Centre, the Dorcan Recreational Centre, and Highworth Leisure Centre.	

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Facility type	Sports halls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
	<p>Basketball and netball are popular within Swindon and a high percentage of courts offer the correct court dimensions and run offs. Consultation suggests that a larger hall (6 or 8 courts) with seating would support basketball club development and competitive requirements.</p> <p>Consultation indicates that halls offer a variety of different sports and there is some spare capacity, particularly across the education sector.</p> <p>FPM analysis suggests that by 2043, the level of anticipated population growth will support demand for new provision, (equivalent to 8 courts) which would have the impact of lowering levels of overall unmet demand and used capacity.</p>	

SECTION 5: SWIMMING POOLS

A swimming pool is defined as an “enclosed area of water, specifically maintained for all forms of water-based sport and recreation”. It includes indoor and outdoor pools, freeform leisure pools and specific diving tanks used for general swimming, teaching, training and diving. Many small pools are used solely for recreational swimming and will not necessarily need to strictly follow the NGB recommendations. It is, however, generally recommended that standard dimensions are used to allow appropriate levels of competition and training and to help meet safety standards. Relatively few pools need to be designed to full competition standards or include spectator facilities.

Training for competition, low-level synchronised swimming, and water polo can all take place in a 25m pool. With modest spectator seating, pools can also accommodate competitive events in these activities. Diving from boards, advanced synchronised swimming and more advanced sub-aqua training require deeper water. These can all be accommodated in one pool tank, which ideally should be in addition to the main pool.

The NGB responsible for administering diving, swimming, synchronised swimming and water polo in England is Swim England.

Swim England’s report ‘A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England’ provides a national analysis of the current swimming pool stock across England. It notes that the average age of a pool built from 1960 onwards is 43 years. On this basis it suggests that many of these pools are now coming to the end of their lifespan.

Many pool operators were placed in a serious financial situation during the pandemic, when many local authorities provided emergency financial support through direct grants, deferred payments or loans to subsidise pool operators who had suffered loss of income due to pool closures.

The UK Government’s £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund also provided assistance to enable pools to re-open once restrictions had been lifted. Despite this, Swim England reports that 206 pools (including 68 public pools) closed, either permanently or temporarily over the period of the Pandemic.

In preparing for the future, Swim England recommend that local authorities conduct analysis of their pool stock to understand if they have the right pools in the right places to meet the needs of the local community. In the light of leisure facilities accounting for over 40% cent of some councils’ direct carbon emissions it advocates capital investment into renewal of pool stock in order to support efforts to reach net zero targets, alongside combating the predicted overall future deficit of water space nationally.

5.1: Supply

This assessment is mostly concerned with larger pools available for community use (no membership base criteria restricting access). Those less than 160m² (e.g. 20m x 4 lanes) water space and/or located at private member clubs are deemed to offer limited value in relation to community use and delivery of outcomes related to health and deprivation.

It is recognised that smaller pools do offer learning/teaching sessions, but they are, for needs assessment/modelling purposes, deemed unable to offer a full swim programme and, thus, eliminated from the supply evaluation, when considering accessibility and availability later in this section.

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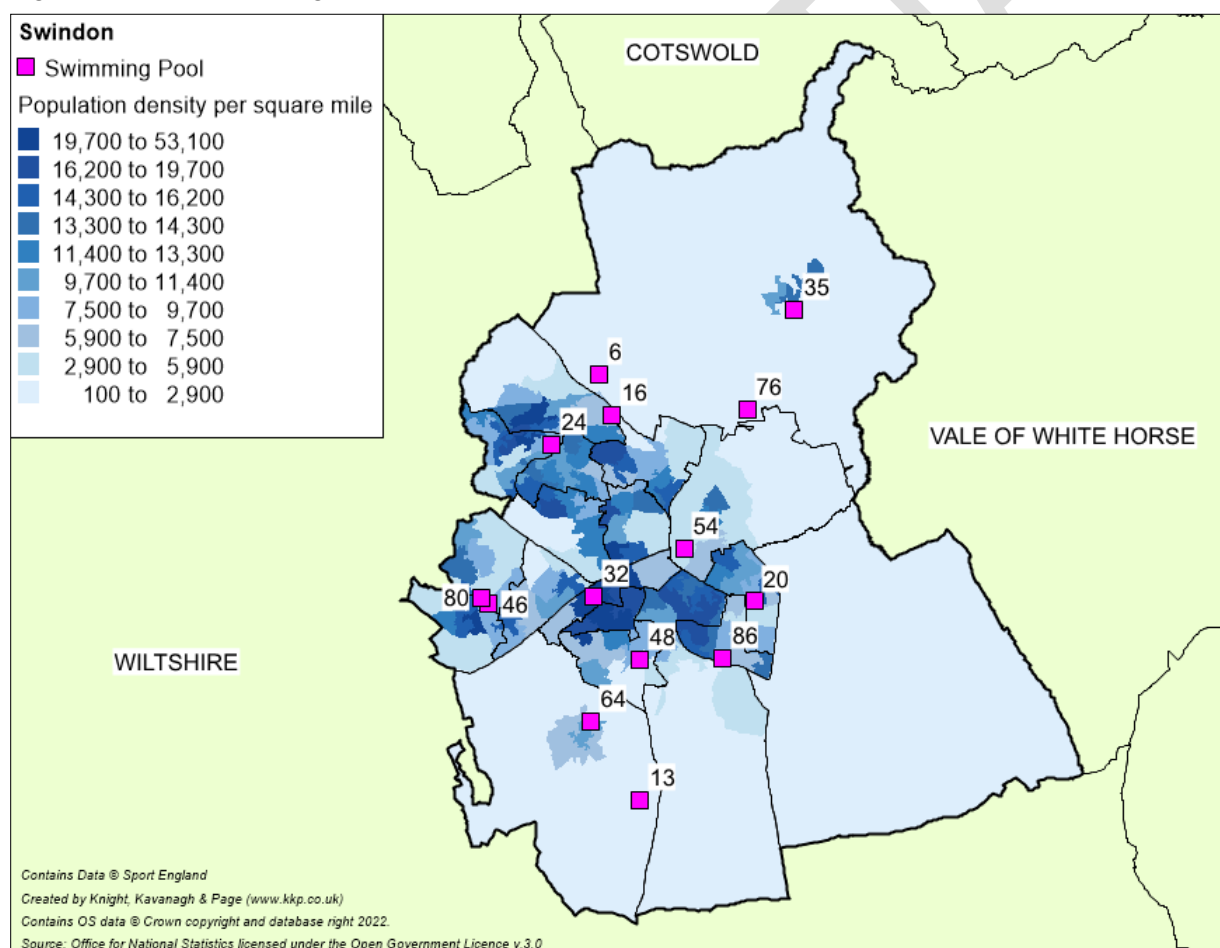
Quantity

In reference to Figure 5.1 below there are 15 swimming pools located at 14 sites in Swindon (including all pools irrespective of size and access). The majority serve the urban centre, including the largest facility: the Link. There are also swimming pools serving the settlements of Highworth (Highworth Recreation Centre site ID 35) and Wroughton (Ridgeway Leisure Centre site ID 64).

The one competition pool within the Borough is the Link (6x25m), the remaining sites do not have the capacity nor the seating to accommodate swimming competitions. There is also no site which has a learner pool in addition to its main pool, resulting in all locations being single pool sites.

Facilities serving the town centre (the Health Hydro and Oasis Leisure Centre) are currently closed. As mentioned previously, the Health Hydro (site reference id 32) is due to reopen in early 2026. Consequently, this study has included it within the analysis as an active site, whilst not having undertaken an assessment of quality. It has two pools.

Figure 5.1: All swimming pools in Swindon



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Table 5.1: All swimming pools in Swindon

ID	Site name	Facility type	Lanes/length	Area (m ²)
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 12m	144
13	Club At Alexandra House	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 12m	72
16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	Main/General	5 x 25m	250
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	Main/General	4 x 20m	140
24	Everlast Gyms	Main/General	4 x 25m	250
32	Health Hydro	Main/General	4 x 33m	413
32	Health Hydro	Learner/Teaching/Training	4 x 15m	100
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	Main/General	4 x 25m	213
46	Link Centre	Main/General	6 x 25m	313
48	Marriott Leisure Club	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 12m	72
54	Nuffield Health	Main/General	2 x 20m	160
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	Main/General	4 x 25m	188
76	Swindon Subaqua Club	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 9m	36
80	Village Gym	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 12m	144
86	You Fit (Swindon)	Learner/Teaching/Training	0 x 13m	91

The Borough is scheduled to receive funding from Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Fund, to assist with the operational running costs of both the Link Centre and Dorcan Recreation Complex. This funding will contribute directly to the cost of heating bills and staffing over the winter months to ensure these facilities remain open.

Quality

KKP completed non-technical visual assessments at all main swimming pools. This included assessment of changing provision, as this is significant in influencing and attracting users.

Table 5.2: Quality of swimming pools (more than 160m² in size) in Swindon

ID	Site name	Lanes/length	Area (m ²)	Pool condition	Changing condition
16	David Lloyd (Swindon)	5 x 25m	250	Good	Good
20	Dorcan Rec Complex	4 x 20m	160	Below average	Above average
24	Everlast Gyms	4 x 25m	250	Above average	Good
32	Health Hydro	4 x 33m	413	Not assessed	Not assessed
35	Highworth Rec Centre	4 x 25m	213	Below average	Below average
46	Link Centre	6 x 25m	313	Below average	Above average
54	Nuffield Health	4 x 20m	160	Above average	Above average
64	Ridgeway LC	4 x 25m	188	Below average	Below average

Of the sites assessed, four are rated below average, four above average and one good. The key GLL managed pools (the Link and the Dorcan) are both rated below average. This is generally reflective of their age. The Link and the Dorcan Centre are nearly 40 and 50 years old, respectively. Both have received limited investment in terms of refurbishment.

A recent condition survey of the Link concludes that it requires c. £10m worth of investment to modernise and increase energy efficiency. This includes new plant equipment and modernisation of the pool environment. Consultation indicates that the Dorcan Centre needs a new pool tank, as the original one is still in-situ (Centre was built in 1975).

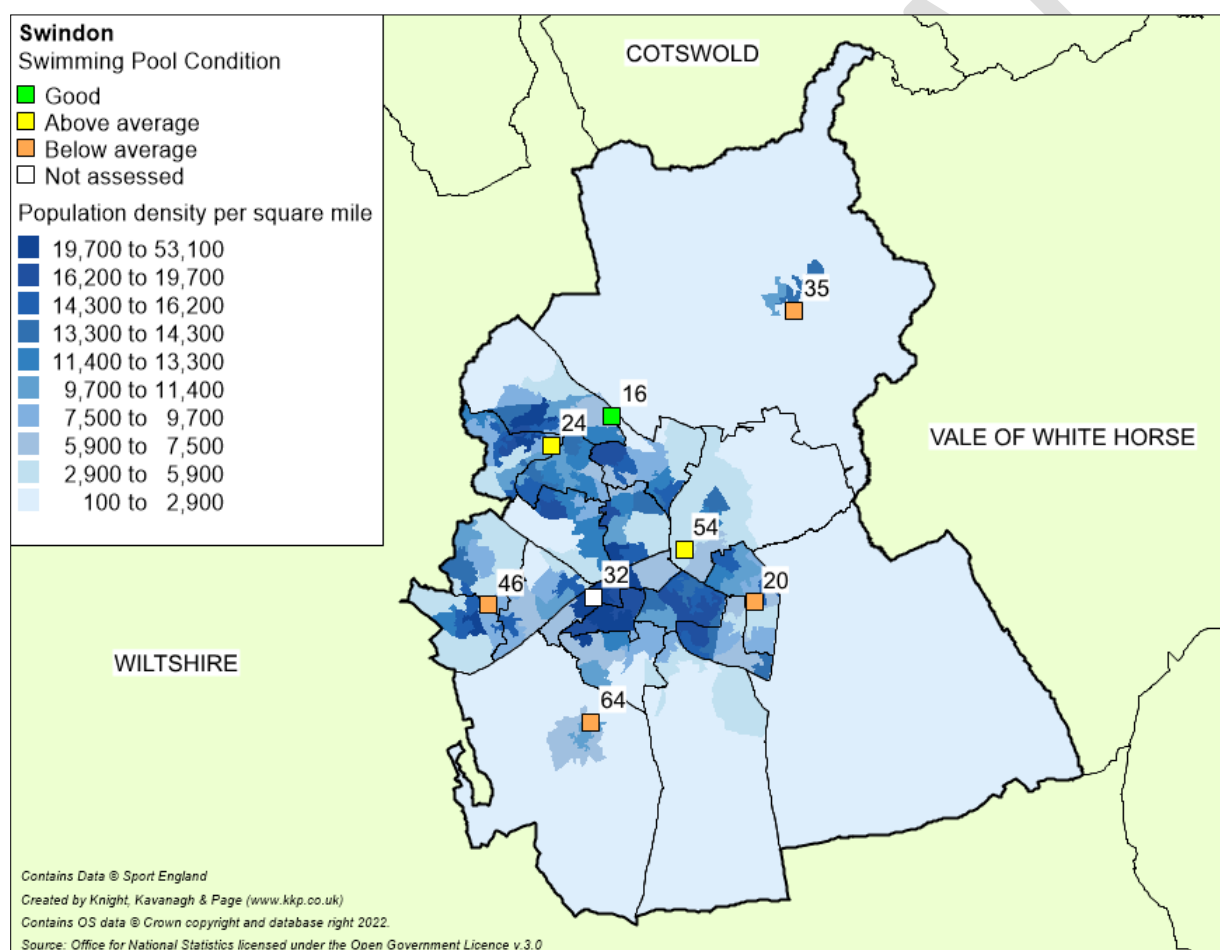
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The pool at Highworth Rec Centre was a former lido. Although it has a modern roof (installed 2008), which is retractable during the summer months, the original tank (from 1968) remains. Consultation indicates that the facility will be receiving investment in new tiles (tank and surrounds) and air handling units in 2024. Although slightly newer, Ridgeway Leisure Centre Swimming pool is also over 45 years old (installed in 1976) and has not received any investment since. The Academy Trust which owns and manages the site, indicates that it does not have any funding to upgrade the pool.

The only sites rated either above average or good are the commercially operated sites at David Lloyd, Village Gym and Nuffield Health.

The Health Hydro was not assessed, as it is currently being refurbished.

Figure 5.2: Quality of 160m²+ swimming pools in Swindon



Availability of swimming pools

Swimming pool availability differs dependent upon ownership and/or management. In Swindon this can be broken down as follows:

- Four sites offer pay and play; the two GLL managed sites (in the urban centre), Highworth Recreation Centre (north) and Ridgeway Leisure Centre which is a dual use site (south).
- Four are commercially operated pools, accessible only via membership.

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It should be noted that due to the pool demands (lessons/club swimming) at certain sites, and the fact that no site has a learner pool, the majority have restricted pay and play access. For example, the Dorcan Centre only has 4-5 hours per day available for pay and play accessible swimming, whereas Ridgeway Leisure Centre is only available during the evenings and at weekends. It is reserved for school use/swimming lesson demand during the day.

It is assumed that the re-opened Health Hydro will be a pay and play facility, increasing the number of sites providing this option to five within the Borough.

Table 5.3: Access policy of swimming pools

Site	Access policy
Blunsdon Fitness +	Registered membership
David Lloyd (Swindon)	Registered membership
Dorcan Rec Complex	Pay and play
Everlast Gyms	Registered membership
Highworth Rec Centre	Pay and play
Link Centre	Pay and play
Nuffield Health	Registered membership
Ridgeway Leisure Centre	Pay and play*
Village Gym	Registered membership

Accessibility

Swimming pool accessibility is influenced by the physical environment. Appropriate walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine accessibility to communities. The normal accepted standard is 20-minutes' walk time (1-mile radial catchment) for an urban area and a 20-minutes' drive time for a rural area. This enables analysis of the adequacy of coverage and helps identify areas currently not serviced by existing provision. As Swindon has a large rural hinterland, both a 20-minute walk and drive time are applied.

More than four fifths (82.8%) of residents live within one mile of a swimming pool in the Borough including nearly 90% of those living in areas of higher deprivation, this drops significantly when solely considering the four publicly operated facilities. When applying this measure, only one quarter of residents including those in more highly deprived areas live within a mile of a swimming pool.

The impact of re-opening the Health Hydro facility will increase pool accessibility as follows:

- ▶ 45.3% of total population living within a mile of a pay and play pool,
- ▶ 38.3% of those in areas of higher deprivation living within a mile of a pay and play facility.

It will also increase the number of hours available for play and play swimming in the Borough, which is currently restricted due to other demands for pool space.

It must be noted that there are still pay and play provision gaps, particularly for people living in areas of high IMD. The key area is north of the town centre, between sites 16 and 32 in Figure 5.3. This is where the Oasis is located.

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that all (100%) of Swindon's population is within a 20-minute drive of a publicly accessible swimming pool greater than 160sqm. As car ownership is good (over 80%) and above the national average, swimming pools are very accessible for residents within the Authority on this measure.

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Figure 5.3: Pools of 160m²+ by quality on IMD with 1-mile catchment and a 20-minute drive.

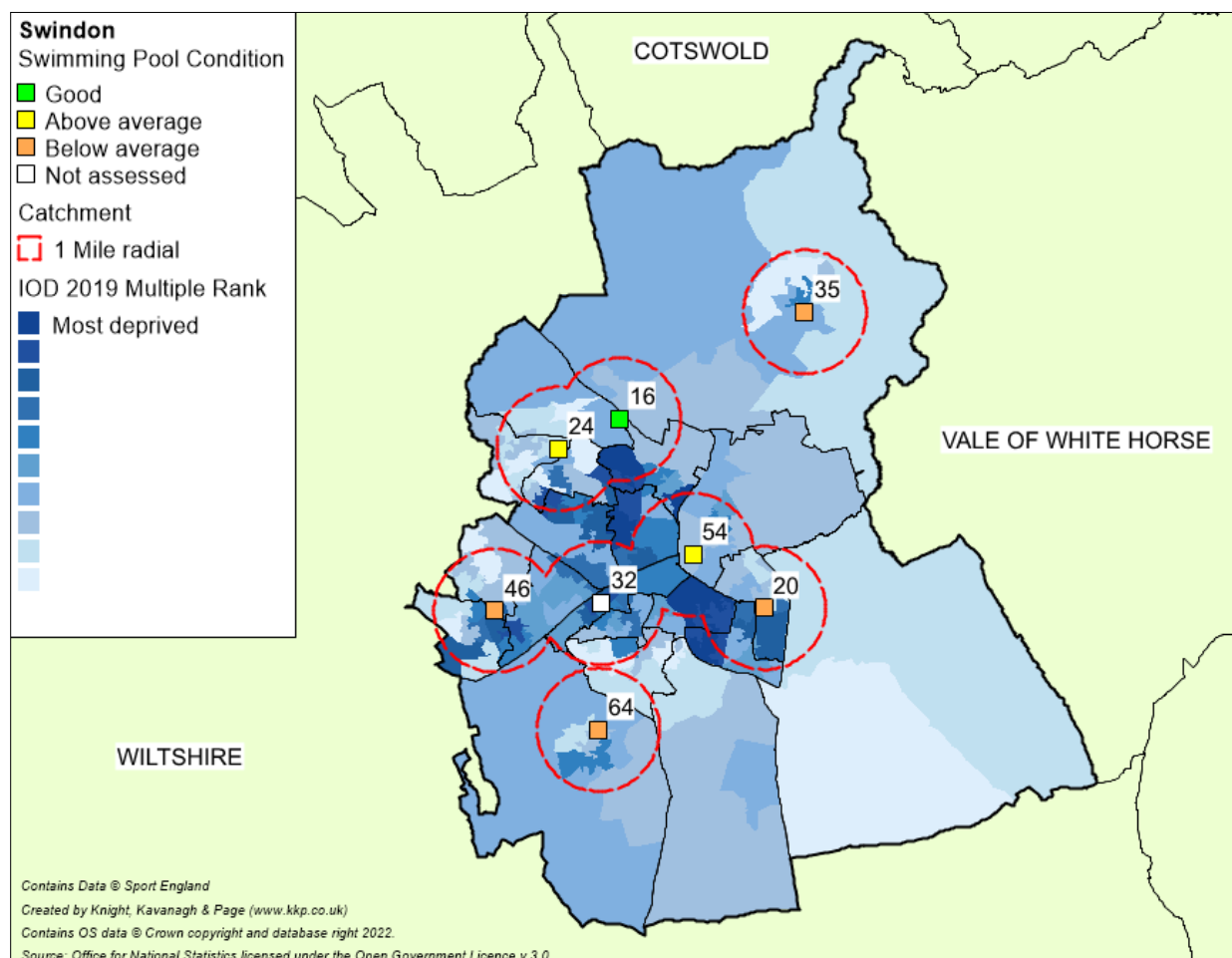


Table 5.4: Accessibility of swimming pools in Swindon

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	19,384	8.9%	18,745	8.6%	639	0.3%
10.1 - 20	14,865	6.8%	12,089	5.6%	2,776	1.3%
20.1 - 30	14,699	6.8%	13,196	6.1%	1,503	0.7%
30.1 - 40	10,441	4.8%	8,954	4.1%	1,487	0.7%
40.1 - 50	23,412	10.8%	19,210	8.8%	4,202	1.9%
50.1 - 60	13,805	6.3%	9,703	4.5%	4,102	1.9%
60.1 - 70	33,869	15.6%	24,633	11.3%	9,236	4.2%
70.1 - 80	38,012	17.5%	33,140	15.2%	4,872	2.2%
80.1 - 90	29,398	13.5%	25,518	11.7%	3,880	1.8%
90.1 - 100	19,699	9.1%	15,023	6.9%	4,676	2.1%
Total	217,584	100.0%	180,211	82.8%	37,373	17.2%

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Facilities in neighbouring authorities

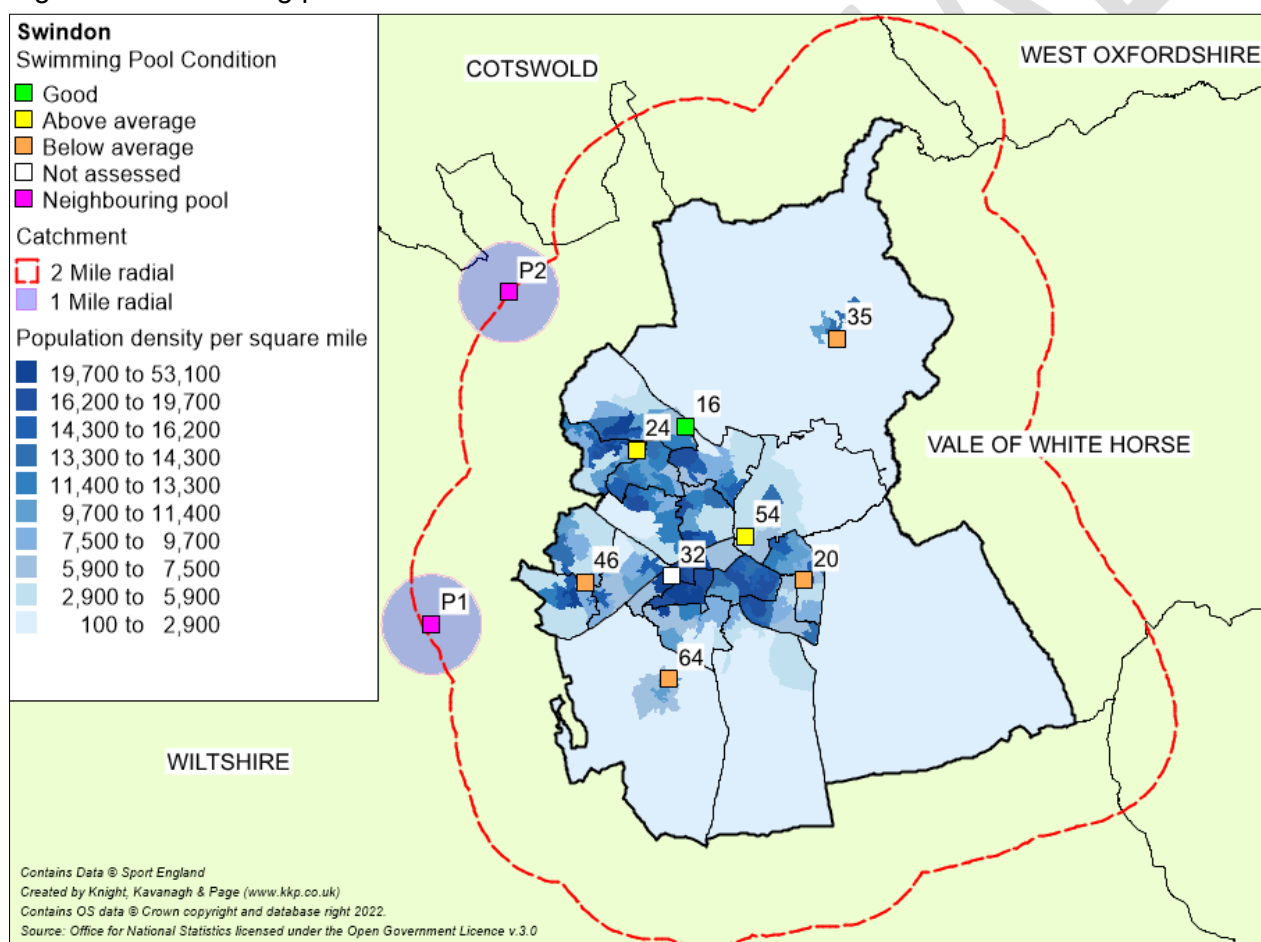
Facilities within easy reach can influence resident choices in terms of access and convenience. There are two pools located within two miles of the border. Lime Kiln and Cricklade Leisure Centres in Wiltshire.

Table 5.5: Neighbouring community available pools within 2-miles of Swindon

Id.	Active Places site name	Lanes/length	Area m ²	Access type	Authority
P1	Lime Kiln Leisure Centre	4 x 25m	200	Pay and play	Wiltshire
P2	Cricklade Leisure Centre	Learner	179	Pay and play	Wiltshire

Source: Active Places Power 12/03/2022

Figure 5.4: Swimming pools located within two miles of Swindon



Future investment

The Health Hydro is a grade II listed building. Located in the town centre, it was originally developed to serve the rail workers employed by Great Western Railway Company. It closed (31 March 2023) for redevelopment which will occur in the following phases:

- Phase 1: Redevelopment of the gym, reception area and main pool. It is planned to create a 200-station fitness facility, along with a modern open plan reception area. The pool tank will remain; however, the pool environment will be refurbished and a new energy efficient

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plant system will be installed along with a new changing village. Funding of £6.5m has been confirmed, with work starting late 2023 and lasting for 18 months. The facility will re-open after this is completed.

- ◀ Phase 2: Refurbishment of the Turkish baths, including the layout redesign.
- ◀ Phase 3: Installation of a café, and health and wellbeing studio space- to complement GLL's health and fitness programme.
- ◀ Phase 4: Reopening of the smaller pool, including new plant equipment associated with this pool.

5.2: Demand

Swim England's latest strategic plan (2023-2033), *Accessing Aquatics*, aims to *“Improve the health and success of the nation by enabling access to aquatics for all”*. To achieve this, three key strategic objectives are set under the following themes:

- ◀ **Capability:** To reduce both the number of children that are unable to swim and inequalities in swimming attainment amongst under-represented groups. This will be achieved by creating a network of financially robust clubs with the structure and partnerships in place to support communities.
- ◀ **People:** To promote and uphold a safe, positive, welcoming and inclusive culture and environment at all levels of aquatics, to ensure everyone is able to enjoy the water.
- ◀ **Water:** To ensure all areas of the country have a network of sustainable pools that provide enough water space to support all aquatic activities. This is particularly pertinent in the most economically disadvantaged areas of the country.

Swim England state that the local authority owned pools (Link and the Dorcan Centre) are both beyond the 38 years 'critical life point' of a pool and refurbishment/replacement of these sites is required to ensure the Borough has adequate water supply for public swimming, clubs, learn to swim etc. beyond the next 10 years. Swim England included the Hydro in this capacity assessment.

Club consultation

Swindon Amateur Swimming School – spreads its activity across four different sites. It currently uses the Link (2 hours per week), Dorcan (3.5 hours), Ridgeway School (7 hours) and the Hydro (when it was open). It currently has 180 members and is reported to be the oldest club in the UK.

Its view is that swimming provision in Swindon is generally poor compared to other major areas of population. It would like a high-quality facility, either a 50m or a large (minimum 8 lane) 25m provision to support both club development and leisure swimming. The Club currently travels to Bath to access a high-quality competition pool.

Tiger Sharks Swimming Club - has 150 members and uses both the Link and Ridgeway School. It notes that the Link (the only competition pool in Swindon), does not have enough capacity to support clubs and general swimming and that additional provision is required. Other pools in the Borough (including Ridgeway School and the Dorcan Centre) are considered to be of poor quality and require significant upgrades.

No response was received from Swindon Dolphins, which is presently the largest club within the Borough. Desk research indicates that the Club uses the Link, Highworth Leisure Centre and Marlborough College pool (located in Wiltshire).

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Swimming lesson provision

Swimming lessons within the Borough are delivered by GLL, Halo Leisure and a number of private operators. GLL offer lessons at the Link and Dorcan. Halo deliver sessions at Highworth and a number of private operators offer sessions at the Ridgeway Leisure Centre. below presents a breakdown of swimming lesson numbers across the Borough.

Table 5.6: Swimming lesson breakdown

Site	Monthly numbers	Capacity	Waiting list
Link Centre	700	92%	No
Dorcan Rec Centre	1200	90%	No
Highworth Rec Centre	700	70%	No

Both the GLL sites are operating nearly at capacity, with Highworth having space for 300 people per month. No data was ascertained for Ridgeway Leisure Centre as this is not delivered through a central system.

5.3 Facilities planning model (FPM) Local Run Assessment

FPM swimming pool data provided by Sport England for Swindon provides analysis of the supply / demand position in 2024 and projecting forward to 2043 using ONS forecasted (2018 projections).

Three scenarios or 'runs' were undertaken:

- Run 1 – a baseline assessment of provision in 2024
- Run 2 – a forward assessment of demand for swimming pools and its distribution, based on the projected changes in population between 2024 and 2043 provided by Swindon Borough Council and including the refurbishment of Oasis Leisure Centre (inc. new 6 lane x 25m pool) and Health Hydro.
- Run 3 – a forward assessment based on Run 2 with the modelled option of a new swimming pool site in the eastern growth area of the Borough comprising a 25m x 17m eight-lane pool and a 12m x 10m teaching pool.

Supply

- The water space available for community use during the weekly peak period is modelled to increase from 1,440 sqm in Run 1 to 1,973 sqm in Run 2, and to 2,506 sqm in Run 3.
- The proportion of unavailable water space decreases from 5% of the total in Run 1, to 4% in Run 2, and to 3% in Run 3.
- In Run 1 three public leisure centres provide 46% of the available capacity. In Run 2, with Health Hydro and Oasis Leisure Centre included, this increases to 60%, and in Run 3 when Eastern Swimming Pool is added, 69%. There are three commercial pools and one educational pool in all three runs.
- Swindon's swimming pool supply is estimated to be highly utilised. All public pools are estimated to be 100% utilised in the runs where they are included with the exception of:
 - Highworth Recreation Centre – 99% in Run 2 and 54% in Run 3
 - Link Centre – 94% in Run 3
 - Dorcan Recreation Complex – 84% in Run 3

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Demand

- Swindon's population is projected to increase by 23% between 2024 and 2043, resulting in a 18% increase in demand for swimming pools.
- In Run 1, 90% of Swindon's demand is met. While this is a large proportion, it is less than the regional and national averages of 93% and 94% respectively. In Runs 2 and Swindon's met demand increases to 95% and 97% respectively.
- Of Swindon's satisfied demand, 81% is met within the Borough in Run 1, 89% in Run 2, and almost all at 96% in Run 3. Swindon's pools are thus very accessible to the resident population.
- Swindon's unmet demand is 251 sqm of water in Run 1 (10% of demand). It is 152 sqm in Run 2 (5%) and 106 sqm in Run 3 (3%). Most unmet demand is from residents who are too far from a facility.
- In Run 3 the location where the most unmet demand can be met is Pinehurst, at 33 sqm of water. This reachable unmet demand is insufficient to consider the provision of an additional swimming pool to improve access for residents.

Scenario testing – Key findings

- The effect of population growth (2043) is to increase the density of demand per square kilometre in the same places as in 2024. The highest concentrations of demand are at Gorse Hill in the town centre (91 sqm of water) and to the southwest of the town centre (82 sqm of water)
- The impact of re-introducing provision at the Health Hydro and Oasis Leisure Centre in Run 2 is to reduce levels unmet demand around Swindon town centre. Residual unmet demand (per square kilometre) is highest in Park North, west of Dorcan Recreation Centre (8 sqm of water) , Penhill (7 sqm) and Park South (5 sqm)
- The addition of Oasis Leisure Centre and Health Hydro also increases the proportion of residents within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool (to 49% from 35%). Residents close to these sites can walk to both swimming pools within 20 minutes. The addition of Oasis Leisure Centre improves access for most deprived residents in Pinehurst.
- The addition of Health Hydro and Oasis Leisure Centre increases the number of visits met at swimming pools in Swindon by 37% from the current position. The addition of Eastern Swimming Pool in Run 3 increases the number of visits of met at pools in Swindon by a further 13% from Run 2 : the proportion of Swindon residents swimming outside of the Authority falls from 11% to 4% In Run 3 the addition of Eastern Swimming Pool also increases the proportion of residents within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool to 51%.

Element	Run 1	Run 2	Run 3
Number of Swimming pools	7	9	11
Supply (sqm water)	1,440	1,973	2,506
Unavailable supply in weekly peak	5%	4%	3%
Total supply - visits	15,881	18,670	18,670
Total demand - visits	2,611	3,070	3,070
Demand as proportion of available supply	69%	81%	73%
Satisfied demand (%)	90%	95%	97%
Satisfied demand retained within Swindon	81%	89%	96%
Satisfied demand exported	19%	11%	4%

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Overall levels of unmet demand	10%	5%	3%
Equivalent in sqm of water with comfort factor	252	151	106
% of overall population within a 20- minute walk of a sports hall	35%	49%	51%
% of 10% most deprived population within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall	20%	22%	22%
sqm of unmet demand due to residents outside catchment (as opposed to no capacity).	164	82	91
Used capacity	100%	100%	89%

5.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Swimming pools	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There 15 operational pools on 14 sites available in Swindon (this includes the Heath Hydro). Eight are equal or greater than 160m ² in size.	Two public facilities totalling c500 sqm of water space (the Health Hydro and Oasis) are currently not operational, with the Health Hydro due to re-open in early 2026.
Quality	Pools vary in quality. Private membership sites are rated good or above average, whereas the pay and play (public) sites are all rated below average quality	All pay and play facilities need to be upgraded. Highworth is being upgraded next year, however the remaining sites require significant investment.
Accessibility	Around 35% of residents currently live within a 20-minute walk of a pool according to FPM analysis. In terms of residents living in more deprived (top 10% IMD) areas, this figure falls to 20%.	FPM analysis estimates that the impact of re-opening both the Health Hydro and Oasis facilities will raise overall walk time accessibility quite significantly , to 49% of all residents living within a 20 minute walk catchment. The impact on those living in top 10% IMD areas is more limited.
Availability (Management and usage)	The four pay and play facilities in the Authority will increase to five once the Hydro opens. Remaining pools within the Borough either require a registered membership or an advance block booking Swimming lesson data suggests that there is limited capacity across the GLL pools. Lesson capacity will increase once the Hydro reopens The lack of a competition pool is hindering growth and restricting the offer in respect of competitive swimming in the Borough..	FPM analysis estimates that, when considering population growth to 2043, pools will remain very heavily utilised even when taking into account the re-opening of provision at Oasis and the Health Hydro. Providing further additional provision at the Eastern Villages development will have some impact in reducing overall levels of used capacity.
Summary	Of the 14 pools equal or greater than 160m ² in size, five (including the Hydro) offer pay and play access. The quality of pay and play pools is a concern; all operational pools are currently rated below average quality. There are no competition compliant pools in the Borough.	

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Facility type	Swimming pools	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
	Planned changes in provision at the Health Hydro and Oasis will have a beneficial impact on levels of accessibility to pool provision and will reduce levels of unmet demand. All publicly accessible pools are nevertheless estimated to remain uncomfortably busy when factoring in future population growth to 2043.	

SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

According to the most recent ALS data¹⁵, around 11.4 million adults regularly engage in some form of fitness type activity (i.e., using gym equipment, a weights session, fitness class, or interval session). The popularity of fitness activities is reflective of their taking place across wide range of facilities including larger gyms (run on behalf of the local authority by companies and/or Trusts, managed in-house or private sector operators), and also other smaller activity spaces such as village and community halls.

Fitness studios also vary in their size and function, from relatively large rooms within leisure centres often containing a sprung floor, to smaller spaces (often within community and village halls) which may serve as dedicated spinning (indoor cycling) studios or to hold virtual fitness classes. Studio based timetabled classes such as pilates, yoga, dance, step, boxercise and Zumba usually generate a significant amount of activity within publicly operated provision and comprise a core benefit of a health and fitness membership.

In terms of trends in the market, prior to the pandemic, the UK health and fitness industry was enjoying a strong period of growth. It had more gyms, more members and a greater market value than ever before. The State of the Fitness Industry Report UK for 2022 found that membership levels dropped by around 5% since 2019 as a result of the pandemic and numbers of facilities had also reduced. This correlates with ALS data which measured regular pre-pandemic activity levels at around 14 million. Pure Gym and GLL remain the UK's leading operators (by number of gyms and members).

Health and fitness facilities are a core element within the transitioning of public leisure facilities towards delivering on wider health improvement outcomes. A leisure operator's role in providing for people with long term health conditions, including via exercise referral is critical. Fitness studios may 'double up' as spaces where NHS services such as physiotherapy, health screening, and weight management can take place alongside gentle exercise classes.

Larger health and fitness gyms containing a mix of flexible spaces (such as cardio, free weights and boxing equipment, (80 stations +¹⁶) remain central to the financial viability of public sector leisure centres. When combined with multiple studio facilities offering a good mix (and sufficient number) of classes, these usually offer the most profitable spaces within a typical leisure centre.

The past decade or so has also seen a growth in the prevalence of operators offering 'functional fitness' type equipment and activities. This form of fitness is a type of strength training that readies your body for daily activities and includes lifting, loading, pushing, pulling, squatting and hauling. This is manifested both in terms of small private facilities, and the incorporation of functional fitness spaces within publicly operated health and fitness facilities.

6.1: Supply

Quantity

There are 32 health and fitness facilities in Swindon with a total of 2,528 stations. The majority are located in the urban centre, however, there are facilities serving the settlements of Highworth and Wroughton.

¹⁵ [Active Lives adult survey Nov 20-21 report](#)

¹⁶ A health and fitness 'station' is defined as a piece of static fitness equipment – KKP normally audits facilities of 20 stations or more.

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All Swindon's GLL managed sites have adapted equipment for people with mobility issues. These includes the Link, Dorcan and Croft. Staff at these sites are also trained to support those accessing the gym with certain conditions.

It must be noted that there are several large budget gyms, including Buzz and Everlast Gyms, in the town centre. Both of these two have 100+ station sites. It is anticipated that the Health Hydro when it re-opens will have a 200-station facility.

Figure 6.1: All health and fitness facilities in Swindon

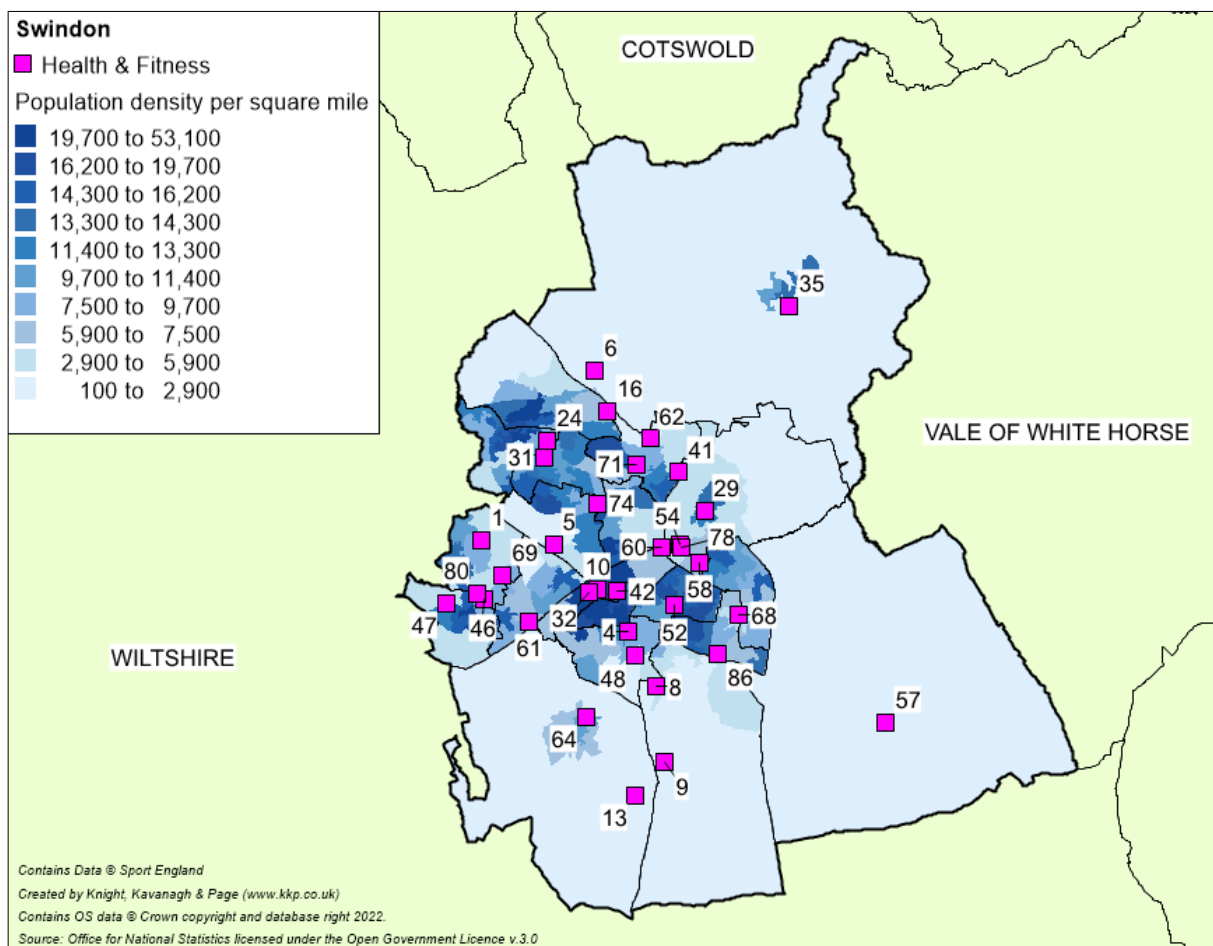


Table 6.1: All health and fitness facilities in Swindon

ID	Site name	Stns	ID	Site name	Stns
1	24 Hr Gym	140	47	Lydiard Park Academy	18
4	Anytime Fitness	50	48	Marriott Leisure Club	32
5	Battleground Fitness	100	52	New College Swindon	24
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	40	54	Nuffield Health	76
9	Burderop Park	6	57	PGL Liddington	14
10	Buzz Gym	200	60	Pro Strength And Fitness	70
13	Club At Alexandra House	20	61	PureGym; Mannington Retail Park	220
16	David Lloyd	100	62	PureGym; Stratton	170
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	35	64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	20
24	Everlast Gyms	144	68	Simply Gym (East)	200

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ID	Site name	Stns	ID	Site name	Stns
29	Grange Leisure Centre	40	69	Simply Gym (West)	135
31	Haydon Centre	40	71	St Lukes Academy	6
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	50	74	Swindon Academy	13
41	Kingsdown Sports Centre	13	78	The Gym Group	170
42	Kiss Gyms	180	80	Village Gym	72
46	Link Centre	120	86	You Fit (Swindon)	13
			Total		2551

Quality

All health and fitness sites with 20+ stations, which are community accessible received a non-technical quality assessment. The majority are rated either good or above average quality, with two sites rated below average. No sites were rated as poor.

Table 6.2: Health & fitness suites with 20+ stations on population density by condition

ID	Site name	Stations	Condition
1	24 Hr Gym	140	Above average
4	Anytime Fitness	50	Good
5	Battleground Fitness	100	Above average
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	40	Good
10	Buzz Gym	200	Good
13	Club At Alexandra House	20	Above average
16	David Lloyd	100	Good
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	35	Above average
24	Everlast Gyms	144	Above average
29	Grange Leisure Centre	40	Good
31	Haydon Centre	40	Above average
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	50	Good
42	Kiss Gyms	180	Above average
46	Link Centre	120	Good
48	Marriott Leisure Club	32	Above average
52	New College Swindon	24	Above average
54	Nuffield Health	76	Above average
60	Pro Strength And Fitness	70	Below average
61	PureGym (Mannington Retail Park)	220	Good
62	PureGym (Stratton)	170	Good
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	20	Below average
68	Simply Gym (East)	200	Above average
69	Simply Gym (West)	135	Above average
78	The Gym Group	170	Above average
80	Village Gym	72	Above average
Total		2448	

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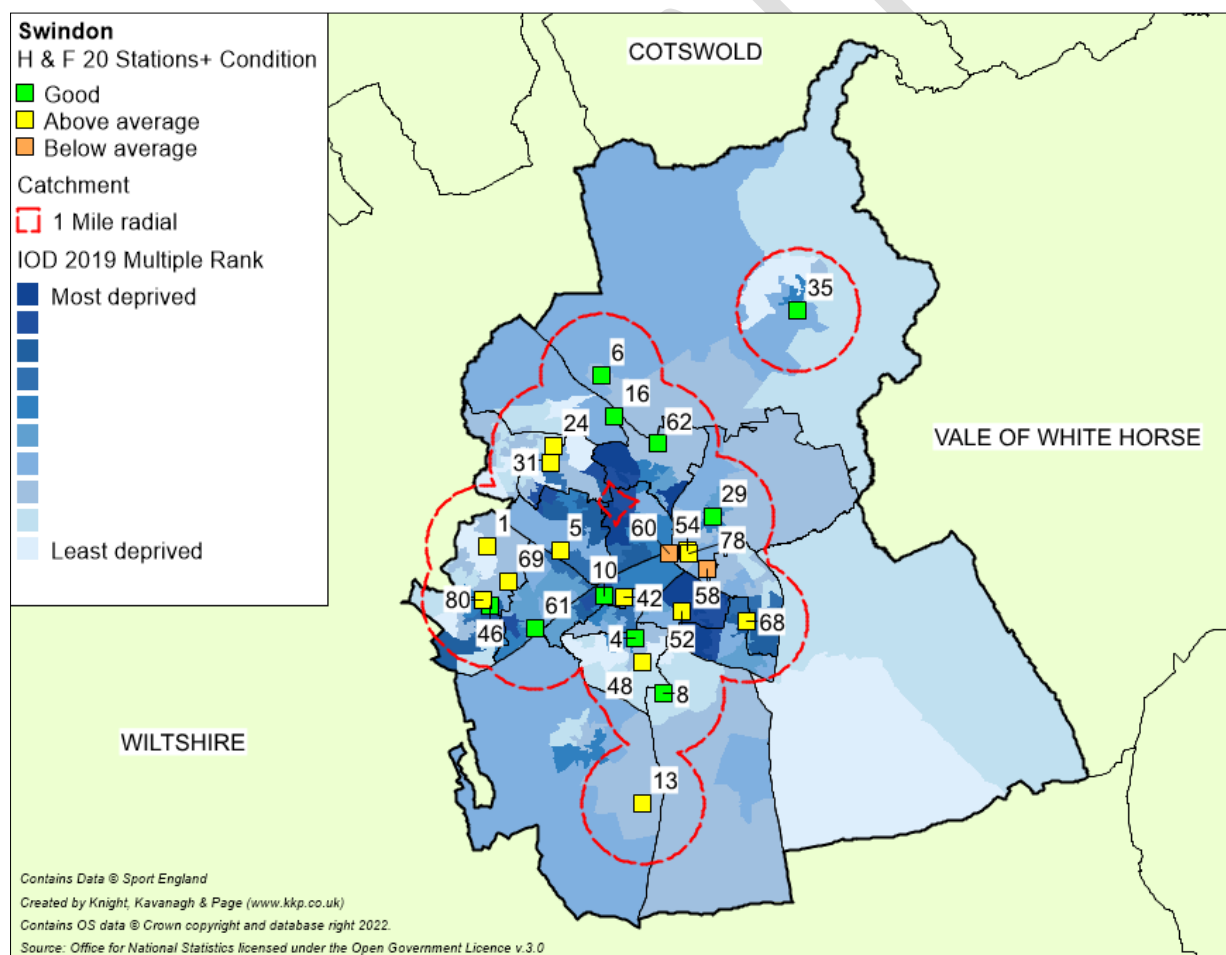
Accessibility

The Sport England classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as being publicly available. For health and fitness suites, this generally means payment of a monthly membership fee which can vary considerably.

Private operators do not have a contractual obligation to, for example, offer exercise referral nor do they necessarily actively target hard to reach groups. It is also acknowledged that some memberships are expensive while others are cheaper than those offered by public sector venues. There is little doubt that the various private operators can take pressure off the more available public facilities.

As with pools and sports halls, appropriate walk and drive-time accessibility standards are applied to health and fitness suites to determine provision deficiencies or surpluses on the basis of a one-mile radial catchment (20-minute walk). On this measure, there are good levels of access to provision; 89.1% of the population resides within one-mile of a health and fitness facility with 20+ stations. Of the residents (48,948 in total) living in areas of higher deprivation, 94.2% live within one mile of a fitness facility.

Figure 6.3: Health and fitness facilities – one mile radial catchment and condition rating



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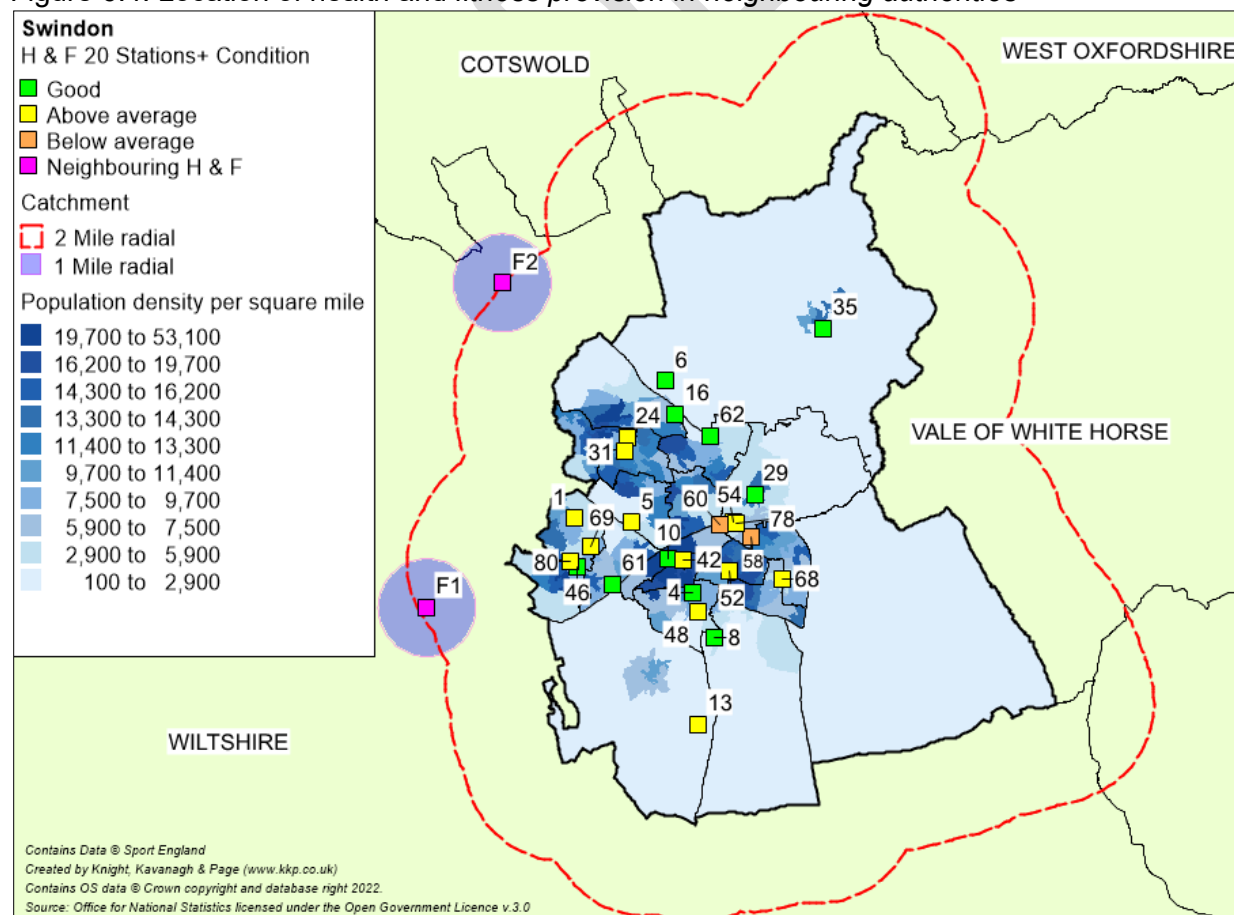
Table 6.3: IMD (2021 populations): health and fitness 20+ stations; one mile radial catchment

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	19,384	8.9%	18,471	8.5%	913	0.4%
10.1 - 20	14,865	6.8%	13,831	6.4%	1,034	0.5%
20.1 - 30	14,699	6.8%	13,821	6.4%	878	0.4%
30.1 - 40	10,441	4.8%	10,441	4.8%	0	0.0%
40.1 - 50	23,412	10.8%	21,586	9.9%	1,826	0.8%
50.1 - 60	13,805	6.3%	13,805	6.3%	0	0.0%
60.1 - 70	33,869	15.6%	28,824	13.2%	5,045	2.3%
70.1 - 80	38,012	17.5%	31,484	14.5%	6,528	3.0%
80.1 - 90	29,398	13.5%	24,277	11.2%	5,121	2.4%
90.1 - 100	19,699	9.1%	17,381	8.0%	2,318	1.1%
Total	217,584	100.0%	193,921	89.1%	23,663	10.9%

Health and fitness provision in neighbouring authorities

As with swimming and sports halls, users of health and fitness facilities do not just use venues within their own authority, consequently, those with two miles of the border are considered within the analysis. Two facilities are located close to the Swindon boundary. Both are relatively small venues, with 27 (Lime Kiln Leisure Centre) and 30 (Cricklade Leisure Centre) stations respectively.

Figure 6.4: Location of health and fitness provision in neighbouring authorities



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Table 6.4: List of health and fitness facilities in neighbouring authorities

ID	Active Places site name	Stations	Access type	Local Authority
F1	Lime Kiln Leisure Centre	27	Pay and play	Wiltshire
F2	Cricklade Leisure Centre	30	Reg. membership	Wiltshire

Availability and programming

Sport England's classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as publicly available. This generally means a monthly membership fee, the cost of which can vary considerably. It is acknowledged that memberships which might be considered expensive offer access to different market segments and can ease pressure on more available facilities (i.e., those with cheaper membership options).

18 out of the 15 main fitness facilities in the Borough are commercially run registered membership facilities. Seven health and fitness facilities currently offer pay and play availability. It is anticipated that the Health Hydro will also be pay and play. All key areas of population have access to a pay and play facility.

Table 6.5: Health and fitness gyms (20+ stations) access policy

ID	Site name	Stations	Access type
1	24 Hr Gym	140	Registered membership
4	Anytime Fitness	50	Registered membership
5	Battleground Fitness	100	Registered membership
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	40	Registered membership
10	Buzz Gym	200	Registered membership
13	Club At Alexandra House	20	Registered membership
16	David Lloyd	100	Registered membership
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	35	Pay and play
24	Everlast Gyms	144	Registered membership
29	Grange Leisure Centre	40	Pay and play
31	Haydon Centre	40	Pay and play
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	50	Pay and play
42	Kiss Gyms	180	Registered membership
46	Link Centre	120	Pay and play
48	Marriott Leisure Club	32	Registered membership
54	Nuffield Health	76	Registered membership
58	Phoenix Gymnasium	50	Registered membership
60	Pro Strength And Fitness	70	Registered membership
61	PureGym (Mannington Retail Park)	220	Registered membership
62	PureGym (Stratton)	170	Registered membership
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	20	Pay and play
68	Simply Gym (East)	200	Registered membership
69	Simply Gym (West)	135	Registered membership
78	The Gym Group	170	Pay and play
80	Village Gym	72	Registered membership

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Of the seven pay and play sites, Ridgeway Leisure Centre is the cheapest to access, costing £5.50 per visit. This is reflective of the size and quality of the venue. GLL managed sites charge £10 per visit, which is the most expensive pay and play option in the Borough.

In terms of membership prices, there is a broad price range. The cheapest is Village Gym with monthly gym membership at £15.75. The most expensive is David Lloyd at £94.50 per month. The average annual monthly membership price is c.£32-.

Table 6.6: Pricing structure of health and fitness facilities in Swindon

Venue	P&P	Annual	DD (pcm)	Activities included
24 hr Gym		£410	£35.00	Gym, classes.
Anytime Fitness (Swindon Old Town)		£299.50	£29.95	Gym only
Blunsdon Fitness +			£39.00	Gym, classes.
Buzz Gym (Swindon)			£29.99	Gym, classes.
Club at Alexandra House			£40.00	Gym and pool
David Lloyd (Swindon)			£94.50	Gym, pool, classes
Dorcan Recreational Centre	£10.00		£38.00	Gym, pool, classes
Everlast Gyms (Swindon)			£35.00	Gym, classes
Grange Leisure Centre	£6.50		£27.99	Gym, classes
Haydon Centre	£10.00		£38.00	Gym, classes
Highworth Recreation Centre	£7.75		£37.99	Gym, classes.
Kiss Gyms (Swindon)			£18.99	Gym only.
Link Centre	£10.00		£38.00	Gym, swim, classes.
Marriott Leisure Club (Swindon)			£35.00	Gym, swim.
Nuffield Health (Swindon)			£49.00	Gym, swim, classes.
Pro Strength and Fitness		£250	£40.00	Gym only.
Puregym; Swindon Mannington Retail Park			£15.99	Gym only.
Puregym; Swindon Stratton			£15.99	Gym only.
Simply gym (Swindon East)		£253	£22.99	Gym only.
Simply gym (Swindon West)		£253	£22.99	Gym only.
Ridgeway Leisure Centre	£5.50		£21.00	Gym, swim.
The Gym Group (Swindon)	£6.99		£16.99	Gym, classes.
Village Gym (Swindon)			£15.75	Gym, classes.

Health referral programmes.

Public Health Swindon has partnered with GLL to deliver its Healthwise programme in Swindon. This programme is suitable for individuals who have been referred by their GP or healthcare professional to increase their levels of physical activity.

The 12-week programme takes place in GLL managed gyms and is designed to offer support and guidance to help people make long term lifestyle changes to increase activity in a safe and enjoyable way. This includes those at risk of disease or those suffering with a health condition. Following the programme, participants are offered a reduced cost annual gym membership over a two-year period.

Consultation indicates that this is a successful programme, however, it currently lacks space to expand due to the limited sites available. With the Hydro and Link (temporary) closed, it is currently

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restricted to two sites with limited access to studio space. It is hoped that once the Hydro re-opens, the programme will be able to offer more capacity.

6.2: Demand

Exercise at a gym or class is popular, appealing to men and women across a range of age groups. To identify provision adequacy a demand calculation based upon the assumption that 'UK penetration rates' will increase slightly in the future is applied. Population increases are factored in to enable a calculation of whether current supply will meet future demand. Based upon UK penetration rates the current need is for 1554 stations in Swindon. This will grow to 1848 by 2043, taking account of a comfort factor (particularly at peak times).

Table 6.8: UK penetration rates; health/fitness in Swindon (ONS Data)

	Current (2018)	Future (2043)
Adult population (16+ years)	221,996	248,497
UK penetration rate	221,996	248,497
Number of potential members	16%	17%
Number of visits per week (1.75/member)	35,519	42,244
% of visits in peak time	62,159	73,928
No. of visits in peak time (equated to no. of stations required i.e., no. of visits/39 weeks*65%)	65	65
Number of stations (with comfort factor applied)	1554	1848

(Model applies 1.75 visits/week by members and 65% usage for 39 weeks of the year. (Figures rounded up/down))

When comparing community available stations currently available (2,448) and accounting for the comfort factor, there is a current large surplus of c.900 stations. This surplus will continue beyond 2043.

6.3: Fitness studios

Fitness studios are an important element of the wider health, fitness and conditioning market. There has been an increase in the number of people accessing fitness classes as identified in increased UK penetration rates. Activity offered varies from low impact classes such as Pilates and yoga to dance, step, boxercise and Zumba. It is worth noting that dance classes/clubs are key users of studio spaces throughout the country.

The audit identified 38 studios in Swindon, across 21 sites. All were rated either good or above average quality. Four venues are available for pay and play activities, with the remainder via registered membership.

Table 6.9: Table of studios in Swindon

Id.	Site name	Type	Access	Condition
1	24 Hr Gym	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
3	Abbey Park School	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
5	Battleground Fitness	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
5	Battleground Fitness	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	Studio	Registered membership	Good
6	Blunsdon Fitness +	Studio	Registered membership	Good
13	Club At Alexandra House	Studio	Registered membership	Above average

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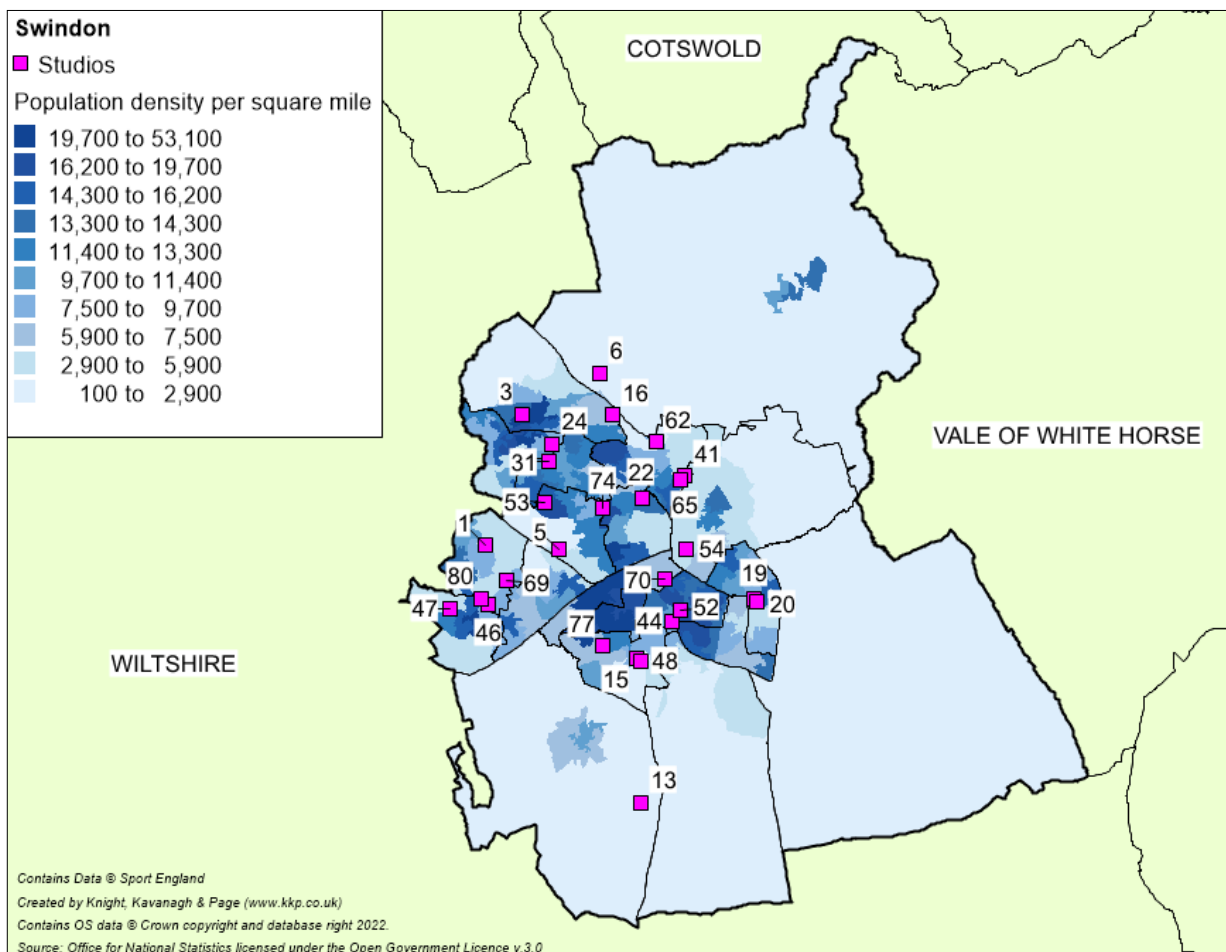
Id.	Site name	Type	Access	Condition
15	Croft Sports Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
15	Croft Sports Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
16	David Lloyd	Studio	Registered membership	Good
16	David Lloyd	Studio	Registered membership	Good
16	David Lloyd	Studio	Registered membership	Good
20	Dorcan Recreation Complex	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
22	Esprit Centre	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
22	Esprit Centre	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
22	Esprit Centre	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
22	Esprit Centre	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
24	Everlast Gyms	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
24	Everlast Gyms	Cycle studio	Registered membership	Above average
31	Haydon Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
41	Kingsdown School Sports Centre	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
46	Link Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
46	Link Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
46	Link Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Good
47	Lydiard Park Academy	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
47	Lydiard Park Academy	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
48	Marriott Leisure Club	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
52	New College Swindon	Studio	Registered membership	Good
52	New College Swindon	Studio	Registered membership	Good
53	Nova Hreod Academy	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
54	Nuffield Health	Studio	Registered membership	Good
54	Nuffield Health	Studio	Registered membership	Good
60	Pro Strength And Fitness	Studio	Registered membership	Below average
62	Puregym (Stratton)	Studio	Registered membership	Good
69	Simply Gym (West)	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
69	Simply Gym (West)	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
80	Village Gym	Studio	Registered membership	Above average
80	Village Gym	Cycle studio	Registered membership	Above average

Studios are a vital part of the health and fitness offer. All pay and play studios in the Borough, mainly the GLL operated studios, offer a varied inclusive programme, including circuits, body conditioning, and aerobics with classes available both during peak and off-peak times. For example, Link Centre runs over 50 classes a week in both the evening/at weekends and during the day.

With only four studios publicly owned, this results in limited revenue received via the leisure contract through classes. The Hydro will have studio space; however, this development is not anticipated till the latter stages of the overall upgrade. Increasing the number of studios will increase revenue across the GLL managed sites.

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Figure 6.5: Fitness studios in Swindon



6.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	<p>There are 25 health and fitness facilities with 20+ stations providing a total of 2,448 stations. This will increase to 26 and 2,648 stations when the Hydro reopens.</p> <p>There are 38 studios across 21 sites.</p> <p>The one H&F facilities in a neighbouring area is; Lime Kiln Leisure Centre in Wiltshire. It offers pay and play access.</p>	<p>There is a current and future surplus in provision (health and fitness stations) based on current and projected population levels in the Borough.</p> <p>There is a need to increase the volume of publicly available provision in terms of both health and fitness stations and studio space.</p>
Quality	All facilities are rated either good or above average quality.	Maintain quality of gyms rated good/above average.
Accessibility	<p>All main population areas have fitness facilities; 89.1% of the population lives within one mile of a gym.</p> <p>Over nine in ten (94.2%) of those who live in higher deprivation, reside within one mile of a gym.</p>	There is a need to ensure that those in rural communities have access to reliable public transport. This will ensure all can access health and fitness provision.

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Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Availability (Management and usage)	<p>There are five publicly accessible pay and play H&F facilities with 20+ stations. Two others offer pay and play access. The remaining 18 require membership to access.</p> <p>Health referral is available at the three GLL managed sites. The Health Hydro will also offer the referral programme once open.</p>	A key need is to ensure that gyms cater for the full range of market segments and that residents from hard-to-reach groups can afford them
Summary	<p>There is a good supply of H&F/studio provision in the Borough - all key areas of population are served. Each area has a range of commercial gyms and a pay and play facility.</p> <p>There is a GP/exercise on referral programme available at GLL managed sites.</p> <p>Whilst the H&F offer is generally good, primary challenges are to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once open, the Health Hydro is accessible, and serves residents in the Town Centre. Growth areas are supported by new provision, particularly within the Eastern Villages development. There is an affordable pay and play offer serving all the Borough's communities. People living in the Borough's rural communities have access to provision., particularly for those who do not drive. It is important for the Borough to ensure that all communities have good public transport serving the urban centre. 	

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SECTION 7: SQUASH

England Squash is the NGB responsible for the sport. Its latest Strategy (2021 – 2025) Squash in a Changing World aims to grow the game in England from 2021 onwards through a thriving, diverse and growing community. To achieve this, it has identified a number of objectives:

- ◆ Create a world-class workforce - inspire and train a community of world-class coaches, referees and volunteers at every level - to drive up participation and increase engagement in the game.
- ◆ Sustain world-leading pathways and programmes - for high-performing players who achieve success on the global stage and inspire others to realise their potential.
- ◆ Enhance the visibility and appeal of squash - spearhead new and creative ways to enhance the visibility and appeal of squash at local, national and international levels, including the pursuit of Olympic inclusion.
- ◆ Provide leadership for the game - nationally and internationally, including addressing the climate and ecological crisis.

The England Squash target ratio of courts per population is one court per 10,000 people. The ratio of courts to the Borough's population is 1:33,344– well below this benchmark. Based on the NGB's ratio, there is a requirement for 14 additional courts in the Borough to meet the current shortfall.

7.1 Supply

There are seven squash courts in Swindon at four sites. Wessex Squash Club is the largest venue with three courts. Croft Sports Centre, Highworth Recreation Centre and Ridgeway Leisure Centre all offer pay and play access. Ridgeway Leisure Centre is on a school site, with the court only accessible during the evening/weekends.

There is one community available squash facility within two miles of the Borough boundary at Lime Kiln Leisure Centre. It has a single pay and play court.

It must be noted that a number of courts have recently closed and/or been converted into fitness provision. The Link (two courts), Grange (two courts) and Ridgeway (one court), have all converted squash courts to become fitness studios over the last five years.

Quality

All courts were assessed. Wessex Squash Club was rated good quality, Ridgeway and Croft Leisure Centres were both rated above average, and Highworth was rated below average. The court at Highworth has a worn floor with significant marks on the walls.

Table 7.1: Quality of squash courts in Swindon

Id.	Site name	Normal	Glass backed	Total	Condition
15	Croft Sports Centre	2	0	2	Above average
35	Highworth Recreation Centre	1	0	1	Below average
64	Ridgeway Leisure Centre	1	0	1	Above average
81	Wessex Squash Club	3	0	3	Good

(Source: Active Places Power 26/05/2023)

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that all of Swindon's population lives within a 20-minute drive of the four facilities located in the Borough offering squash courts. Lime Kiln Leisure Centre (which has one court) also falls within this 20-minute catchment.

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Figure 7.1: Community available squash courts in Borough and within 20-minute drive-time (of the Borough's border)

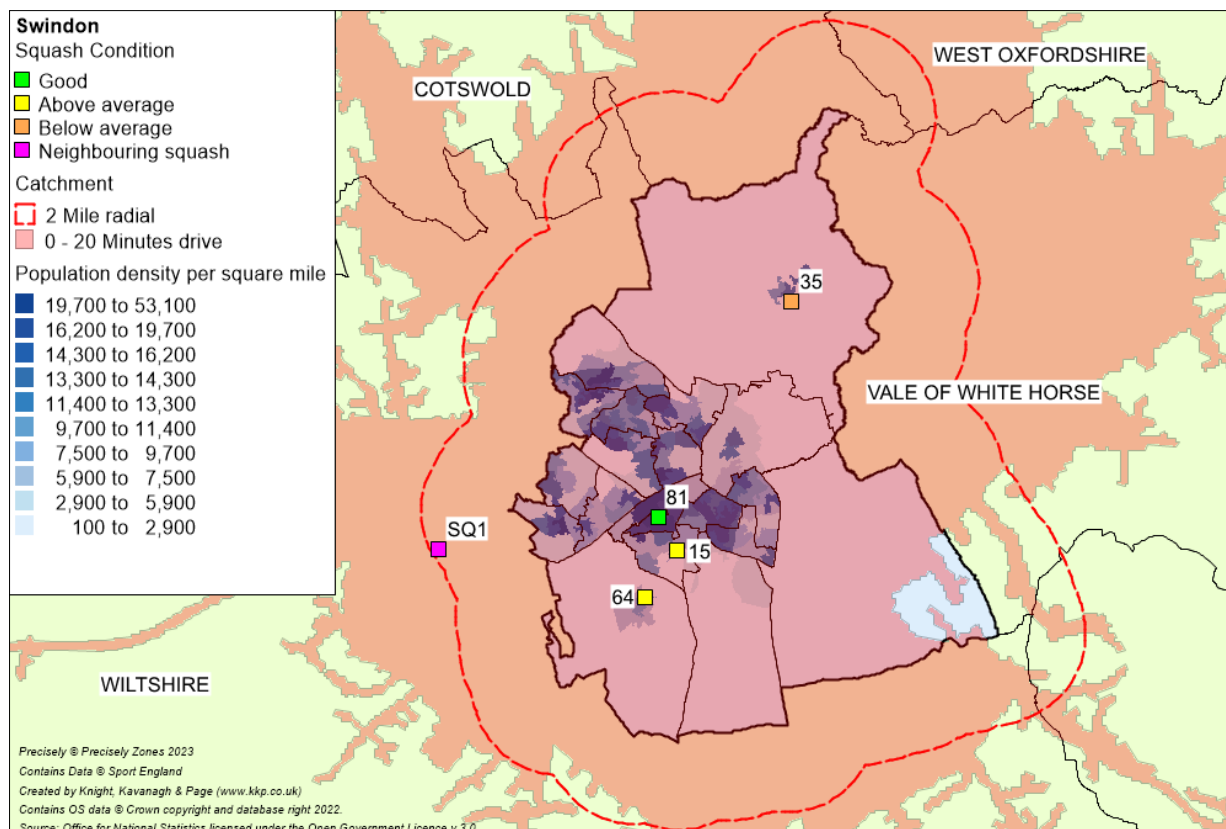


Table 7.2: Squash facilities within 20 mins drive of the Swindon border

ID	Site name	Courts		Access type	Authority
		Number	Facility type		
SQ1	Lime Kiln Leisure Centre	1	Normal	Pay and play	Wiltshire

(Source: Active Places Power 26/05/2023)

7.2: Demand

The one squash club in the Borough, Wessex Squash Club is a membership-based club which competes in various age categories within the Wiltshire Squash League. In addition, it also runs an internal box league (intra-club member competition). It currently has over 150 members and owns the facility in which it is located. Its key challenge is to ensure its membership base is strong.

GLL – there are two courts at Croft Sports Centre. These are available on a pay and play basis. No clubs are located here, and consultation with the operator suggests that there is spare capacity during peak periods.

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7.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Squash	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are four community available facilities, offering seven courts in total.	The England Squash ratio target suggests there is a shortfall of 14 courts.
Quality	All community available sites are rated good or above average, apart from Highworth Recreation Centre, which has one court rated below average.	There is a need to maintain the quality of the community available facilities and upgrade the court at Highworth.
Accessibility	All of Swindon's population lives within a 20-minute drive of a community available squash court within the Borough. There is one squash facility within two miles of the Borough's boundary.	
Availability (Management and usage)	Wessex Squash Club is available solely on a membership basis. Other courts are available on a pay and play basis, however, advance bookings are recommended at the single court sites.	
Summary	<p>There are seven community available squash courts at four sites. All are rated good or above average quality, apart from Highworth Recreation Centre which is rated below average quality.</p> <p>Wessex Squash Club requires a registered membership, the others are all accessible on a pay and play basis.</p> <p>While the Borough is, according to the England Squash ratio, currently short of 14 publicly accessible courts, consultation indicates that there is some spare capacity during peak periods.</p> <p>Wessex Squash Club is currently looking to recruit new members and increase its membership.</p>	

SECTION 8: GYMNASTICS

In 2023 British Gymnastics released its latest strategy – *Leap Without Limits: A New Vision for a New Era*. The strategy is developed as a shared vision for gymnastics across all four home nations. The Strategy focuses on five ‘leaps’:

- ◀ The Why Leap - Nurturing and celebrating the positive impact of gymnastics on individuals, communities and wider society.
- ◀ The Empowerment Leap – Supporting everyone involved in gymnastics to play their part in making a positive difference.
- ◀ The Experience Leap – Making positive experiences and memories central to everything we do, at every stage, in every role.
- ◀ The Creative Leap – Encouraging and welcoming new ideas to support meaningful change.
- ◀ The Together Leap – Uniting the community, existing and new partners to maximise impact, learning and growth.

To deliver these five ‘leaps’, British Gymnastics is working on the following:

- ◀ Membership – Develop a new more relevant membership offer that provides value for all its members, and an improved membership system.
- ◀ Education - Implement a reformed and reimagined approach to supporting the learning and development of the gymnastics workforce, ensuring it feels valued and supported by British Gymnastics and the clubs and delivery environments you operate within.
- ◀ Community – Celebrate and recognise the contribution and stories of those in the gymnastics community on British Gymnastics channels and more widely, including further developing the British Gymnastics Awards as an annual platform for this.
- ◀ Reform - Deliver all of the 40 actions British Gymnastics has committed to in Reform '25 over the next two years to create safe, positive and fair experiences for all in gymnastics, including a major Safe Sport campaign.
- ◀ Events - Work with its Technical Committees to agree a clearly defined and sustainable long-term national event programme for each discipline, and develop new competitions and events at a recreational level.
- ◀ Disability- Work to build international support for our ambition for gymnastics to become a Paralympic sport, with the aim of agreeing a plan and pathway for this to become a reality.
- ◀ Building capacity- We will look to develop facilities, and will work to bring together clubs, schools, leisure providers and local authorities to provide city wide plans for gymnastics.

BG note a national trend towards clubs moving into dedicated facilities; however many areas lack gymnastics provision due to limited access to space and challenges recruiting a qualified workforce. Most clubs report waiting lists and restricted club growth.

Improving access and creating high-quality spaces is a key priority within the sport . Club feedback generally highlights limitations of existing facilities and challenges in securing long-term premises. BG is committed to exploring long-term solutions and potential investment through its Club Capital programme . British Gymnastics Facility Strategy Focus on, improving inclusivity and accessibility, enabling capacity for all disciplines, especially in underserved communities.

BGs strategic approach is guided by the following outcomes:

- ◀ Gymnasts are safe, empowered, and have positive experiences in the sport.
- ◀ Coaches and the workforce feel supported, trusted, and valued.

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- ◀ A culture of inclusion and belonging is embedded across all environments.
- ◀ Clubs are aligned with BG's mission and receive meaningful support.
- ◀ Members and parents/carers see clear value in their experience and engagement.
- ◀ A positive performance sport culture enables athletes to thrive.
- ◀ Staff feel inspired and their wellbeing is actively supported.
- ◀ Trust in British Gymnastics is strengthened through transparency, governance, and impact-led initiatives.

8.1: Supply

There are five affiliated clubs in the Borough, four of which are located in dedicated facilities.

Of the four clubs with dedicated facilities, three are located at converted industrial units. These are Swindon School of Gymnastics, Evoke Gymnastics and Delta Gymnastics. Esprit Gymnastics Club is part of a larger performing arts organisation and it uses dedicated rooms within the Centre.

Quality assessments were undertaken at Esprit Gymnastics Club (good) and Swindon School of Gymnastics (above average).

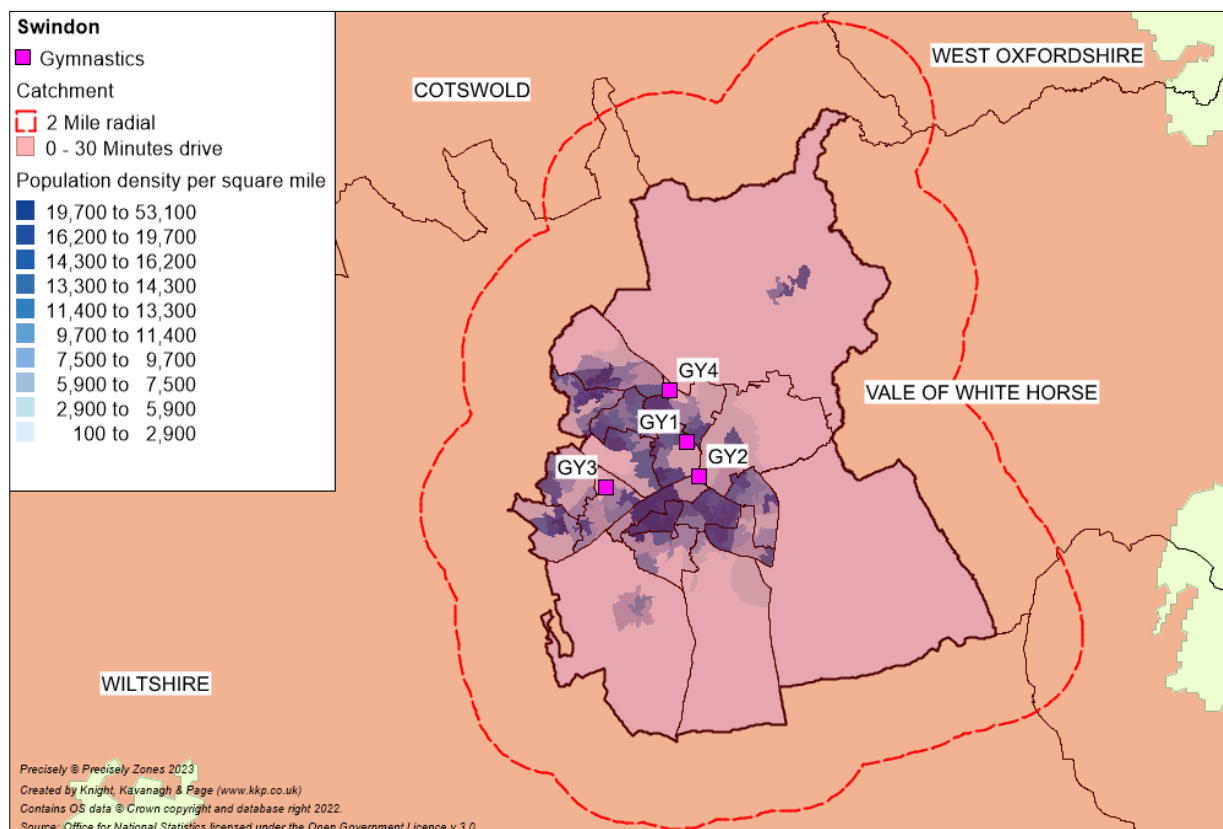
There are no facilities within a 30 minute drive, which is due to the area being predominately rural.

Table 8.1: Gymnastics centres in Swindon

ID	Site name	Quality rating
GY1	Esprit Gymnastics	Good
GY2	Swindon School of Gymnastics	Above average
GY3	Evoke Gymnastics	n/a
GY4	Delta Gymnastics	n/a

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Figure 8.1: Gymnastics facilities in Swindon and within 30-minute drive of these facilities



8.2: Demand

Consultation with British Gymnastics indicates that there are five affiliated clubs in the Borough.

- ◆ Swindon School of Gymnastics
- ◆ Evoke Gymnastics
- ◆ Esprit Gymnastics
- ◆ Delta Gymnastics
- ◆ Aquila Trampolining Club

The study was successful in contacting the following clubs as part of the consultation process:

Swindon School of Gymnastics - is located in an industrial estate in the town centre. It rents a large unit which currently has ten years left on the lease. It is generally happy with the site; however, car parking is an issue, especially during evening peak periods. The Club has c. 300 members with an additional 180 on the waiting list.

Esprit Gymnastics - is part of a wider organisation, Esprit Performing Arts Centre. It focuses on artistic and rhythmic gymnastics and has a membership of 200 children, with no waiting list. It has two large gymnastics halls, along with two studios. It also has strong links with Wilkes Performing Arts College.

Aquila Trampolining Club - is a dedicated trampolining club located at Swindon Academy. It was formed in 2012 and offers trampolining to all people of all ages, from 5 years to adult, and competes both regionally and nationally. It has an agreement with the School to use the large 4-court hall and the School also provides storage space. The Club report a good relationship with the

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school which has allowed it to grow. It currently has c.150 members with a small waiting list in certain age ranges.

Although there are no dedicated facilities within a 30-minute drive beyond the Borough, there are a number of clubs within this catchment, all located at schools. Examples include: Cotswold Gymnastics Club is located at Cirencester Deer Park School, and Tetbury Gymnastics Club is located at Sir William Romney School.

8.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Gymnastics	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are four dedicated facilities in Swindon. Three are located in industrial units and one (Esprit Gymnastics Club) has a dedicated facility located within a performing arts centre. Aquila Trampolining Club is the only club not to have its own facility- it is located at Swindon Academy.	No club highlighted any additional facility requirements.
Quality	Facilities at Esprit Gymnastics Club are rated good and at Swindon School of Gymnastics they rate as above average quality. The other two sites were unassessed.	
Accessibility	All Swindon residents live within a 30-minute drive of a facility. There are other clubs outside the Borough within the 30-minute drivetime catchment. Most of these are located at school sites.	
Availability (Management & usage)	Gymnastics is popular in the Borough. Two of the three clubs consulted have waiting lists.	There is an opportunity to consider a dedicated gymnastics facility within any new leisure provision.
Summary	There are five affiliated clubs in the Borough, four of which are located in dedicated facilities. Those clubs which were consulted with, are generally satisfied with the facilities they have, with no reported concerns.	

SECTION 9: INDOOR BOWLS

The five forms of bowls that are played indoors (flat/level green, crown green, long mat, short mat and carpet mat) each require a different venue and each format of the game has a different technical specification for their indoor facility.

Indoor flat / level green bowls is played on a purpose-built indoor green which complies with the Laws of the sport of Bowls. The NGB is EIBA (English Indoor Bowling Association). It requires a standard bowling green; a flat area 31-40 metres long divided into playing areas called rinks. The number of these varies, depending on the width of the green.

Crown Green bowls requires a standard crown green, artificial grass (carpeted) area of approximately 38m square which is crowned i.e. higher in the centre than round the perimeter. Indoor crown greens are relatively rare – substantially less common than those provided for flat green bowls. The NGB is the British Crown Green Bowling Association.

Carpet bowls is played on a rectangular carpet (13.7 x 1.8m) that is rolled out. It can take place in any indoor space large enough to accommodate the mats which come in different lengths. It tends to be played at a recreational level. The NGB is the English Carpet Bowls Association.

Short mat bowls is typically played in sports halls, parish council rooms, outdoor bowls club pavilions; on indoor flat green bowls club greens. The NGB is the English Short Mat Bowling Association. Long mat bowls is played on a rolled carpet typically laid on a sports hall floor. There are no ditches in this game. It is typically found in areas of low flat-green supply and/or where Crown Green bowls is played outdoors. There is no NGB for this version of the game.

An indoor bowling centre typically comprises a single flat green with several rinks and ancillary accommodation such as changing rooms, lounge/bar, viewing area, kitchen, office/ meeting rooms and stores plus designated car parking. The scale of ancillary accommodation varies according to the number of rinks. A successful centre requires a combination of the right location, design, and financial and general management. Sport England¹⁷ guidelines on indoor bowls centres catchments are set out to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances:

- ◆ Assume the majority of users live locally and not travel more than 30 minutes.
- ◆ Assume that 90% of users will travel by car, with the remainder by foot.
- ◆ As a guide, calculate demand on the basis of one rink per 14,000-17,000 total population.
- ◆ The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members, assume 80-100 members per rink.

The stated priorities of EIBA are:

- ◆ Recruitment of participants.
- ◆ Retention of participants.
- ◆ Clubs obtaining “Clubmark Accreditation”.
- ◆ Retention and improvement of facilities.
- ◆ New indoor facilities in areas of low-supply and high-demand.

EIBA Outline Plan 2022-2025

The EIBA plan is focused on: recruit and retain 45+ and recruit and retain 70+. Both markets require growth. The idea is that people aged 45+ need new versions/formats of the game to play and the 70+ will wish to continue with current formats.

¹⁷ Sport England Design Guidance Note Indoor Bowls 2005

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Its focus areas are:

- 45-59 year old participants
- Volunteers
- Health and Wellbeing
- Inclusivity – Women, Ethnic Communities
- Facilities: build, improve, retain.
- Youth and the family.
- Disability.
- Competitions.
- Internationals.
- Promotion.
- Commercial partnerships.

The “Recruit and Retain Strategy” is to concentrate on encouraging and supporting clubs to increase participation and improve the experience of all participants. Its objectives include:

- Growing participation across the adult population in local communities. Targeted work to increase female participation.
- Growing participation in the 12-18 age range as part of the EIBA Development Pathway.
- The provision of an excellent sporting experience for new and existing participants.
- A growth in Indoor Bowls participation by people who have disabilities.

Running alongside this is the Sport England funded development work provided jointly by the Indoor NGB (EIBA); Outdoor NGB (Bowls England) and the “Bowls Development Alliance” (BDA). Each NGB has two directors on the Board of BDA.

The Sport England funding for the 2022-2025 period, focuses on the delivery of:

- Club hubs:** ensure that all clubs remain sustainably positioned at the heart of the communities, and there are good pathways to increase membership.
- Communities:** Develop healthy bowling communities, with good quality competitions, options to increase coaches and volunteers and healthy relationships between clubs.
- Health and wellbeing:** support clubs promote health and wellbeing of members with a range of programmes and activities.
- Inclusion:** ensure clubs are as inclusive as possible, promoting the sport to all including; females and people from diverse communities.

Alongside these core objectives the BDA works with key partners on:

- Safeguarding:** ensuring the sport is safe for everyone to play by working across all five National Governing Bodies (NGBs) [BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA, English Short Mat BA and English Bowling Federation] to have policies and processes in place. Training is also available to support the network of Club Safeguarding Officers.
- Disability:** the BDA works in partnership with Disability Bowls England, Activity Alliance, BE and the EIBA to ensure everyone regardless of disability can access the sport of bowls.
- Women Can:** the BDA are driving a campaign alongside BE and the EIBA to encourage more women to play bowls, coach bowls and volunteer in bowls.
- Equality & Diversity:** the BDA, BE and the EIBA are all striving to ensure the sport of bowls is as diverse as it can be.

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9.1: Supply

There are two indoor facilities in Swindon plus two within a 30-minute drive of the Borough boundary. Of the two outside Swindon, one is in Wiltshire and one in the Cotswolds.

Figure 9.1: 30-minute drive time catchment from facilities near to Swindon

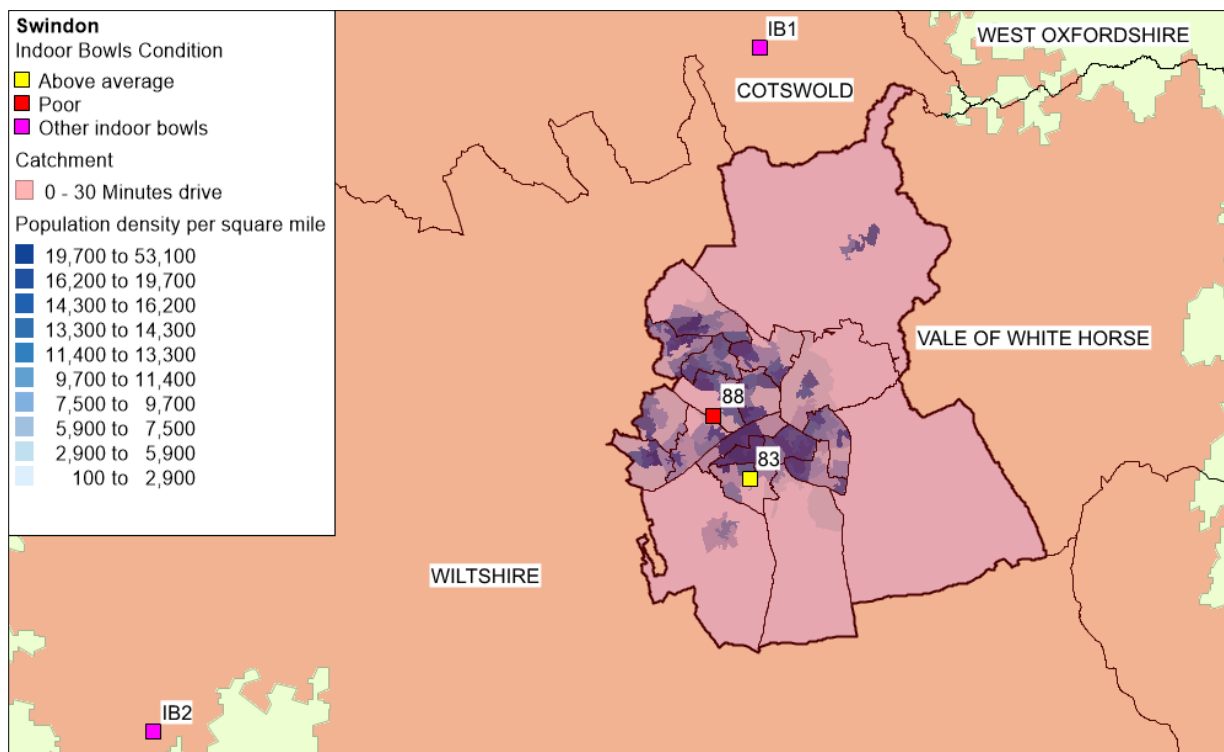


Table 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities in Swindon

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Condition
83	Westlecot Bowls Club	5	Sports club / CA	Above average
88	Swindon Manor Bowls Club	4	Sports club / CA	Poor

Table 9.2: Indoor bowls facilities in neighbouring authorities within a 30 min drive

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Authority
IB1	Fairford Bowling Club	2	Sports club / CA	Cotswold
IB2	North Wilts Bowls Club	6	Registered membership	Wiltshire

Quality

Quality assessments were undertaken at both sites within the Borough. Swindon Manor Bowls Club (rated poor) is located in a former industrial unit, which has been converted into an indoor bowls facility. It was originally in the large 8- rink indoor facility at the Oasis Leisure Centre, however, when that closed, it was forced to relocate.

The roof at Swindon Manor's facility leaks and, as a consequence, two of its rinks are presently closed. It is currently working with the Council (leaseholders) to address this issue.

Westlecot Bowls Club is rated above average and has pressing structural issues.

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Accessibility

A 30-minute drive time catchment was applied to the two facilities located in the Borough. It is calculated that the whole of Swindon's population has access to these facilities through this catchment, along with three facilities in neighbouring authorities.

Availability

Of the two facilities located in the Borough, both are membership accessible. Neither offer pay and play options.

9.2: Demand

Consultation with EIBA confirms the two indoor bowls facilities in Swindon and the further two facilities in adjoining areas, within the recommended drive-time of 30 minutes. The EIBA considers that there are sufficient purpose-built indoor bowls sites to accommodate both current and future demand. It does acknowledge that Swindon Mannor Bowls Club is a poor-quality site and is currently working with the Club to identify options for investment.

Consultation was undertaken with both clubs:

Westlecot Bowling Club - owns its own facility which comprises five rinks, along with a bar, social space and changing provision. Membership numbers have reduced since the Pandemic. Pre 2020, it had 650 members. Currently, it has 300. Consequently, it is undertaking a number of measures to increase this, including open day events and social media advertisements.

Swindon Manor Bowls Club – is based in a facility which is a converted former industrial unit. The building is owned by SBC and leased to the Club on a peppercorn rent. The Club reports that the facility is in a poor condition, with a leaking roof which has reduced it from a four to a two-rink facility. The Club is currently working with the Council to address the problem with the leak.

It reports having c. 400 members and 15 years remaining on the lease for the building. It was located within the sports hall section of the Oasis Leisure Centre until it closed. The Club would like to have its own dedicated facility, similar to Westlecot Bowling Club. The Club boasts one of the cheapest annual membership prices, £25 per year, ensuring that it is inclusive to all.

9.3: Summary

Facility type	Indoor bowls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are two indoor bowls facilities in the Borough and three within a 30-minute drive.	Due to the presence of these five facilities, the EIBA suggests that there is no requirement for additional facilities to accommodate current and future populations.
Quality	Quality assessments were undertaken at the two facilities. Westlecot Bowling Club is rated as above average quality, Swindon Manor Bowls Club is rated as poor.	The Borough should continue to work with Swindon Manor Bowls Club and the EIBA to address the structural facility issues.
Accessibility	A 30-minute drivetime catchment was applied from all facilities in the Borough. The whole Swindon population has access to the	

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	two facilities within the Borough, along with two in neighbouring authorities.	
Availability (Management and usage)	The two facilities within Swindon are available on a registered membership basis only. There are no pay and play opportunities for indoor bowling within Swindon.	Although there are no pay and play facilities, annual club membership prices are relatively affordable. It is important that the Borough continues to support the clubs to enable these prices to remain low.
Summary	<p>There are two well run clubs in the Borough, with accessible membership prices. Both are within the desired 30-minute drivetime catchment for residents in the Borough.</p> <p>The key challenge is to ensure the facilities are of the highest standard, supporting the sport within the Borough. The Swindon Manor Bowls Club venue roof repair needs to be completed. The Borough, in partnership with EIBA need to work with the Club to address this issue.</p>	

SECTION 10: INDOOR TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) governs tennis in Britain, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. The work that it does includes a focus on the following areas:

Making tennis a sport for anyone to play, through increasing participation and access – for instance, through [LTA Youth](#), its innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis; through [Open Court](#), its disability tennis programme which has helped a record number of disabled people enjoy the benefits of tennis; through [SERVES](#), its programme that takes tennis right in to the heart of new communities across Britain; or through the range of national, regional and local tennis [competitions](#) that it delivers for hundreds of thousands of players throughout the year.

Transforming tennis in Britain by working with everyone in the sport – for instance, through its [Inclusion Strategy](#) for tennis in Britain that aims to see tennis to lead the way for inclusion and diversity in sport; through its [safeguarding](#), ensuring it remains safe for all; by working with Government and local authorities to deliver a multi-million pound investment programme in [parks tennis facilities](#) for local communities across the country; and through the development of [padel](#) as an exciting new form of tennis that's easy to play, fun for all ages and abilities and extremely sociable, and will help to engage new audiences.

Tennis Opened Up

The LTAs strategic vision is 'Tennis Opened Up'. This is based on an approach that anyone can play; whatever their motivation or ability, from all communities and backgrounds. At any age and for a whole lifetime, tennis provides physical, social and mental rewards both on and off the court. The LTA wants tennis and the benefits it provides to be open to as many people as possible, across the whole of Britain.

The LTAs mission is to grow tennis by making it welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone.

Volunteers, coaches, officials and tennis venues all play an essential role in the future of the sport; without them, tennis can't exist. It is committed to supporting them and working with a whole range of other organisations and individuals connected to tennis, so that together it can grow tennis and open it up to many more people.

Padel tennis

Padel is one of the fastest growing sports in Great Britain and there has been significant investment in the sport since the LTA became the national governing body in 2019. It is played on an enclosed court that is around a third of a size of a tennis court, in a doubles format 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.

The LTA recently launched an updated LTA Padel Strategy to outline its plans for 2024 – 2029. ([LTA Padel Strategy](#)). The vision and mission align to the tennis strategy and the focus is on growing the infrastructure, increasing and diversifying the coaching workforce and building on the performance pathway as well as increasing visibility and driving participation.

There are currently over 1000+ courts in GB of which 60% are indoor (March 2025) and a recent survey reported the following findings:-

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- An estimated 145,000 people have played padel in British venues in the past year with around half this number playing regularly / monthly.
- At present, most players are adults, with juniors accounting for less than 1 in 10 of the total.
- Most venues reported strong growth, with high interest in taster sessions, and players enjoying the fun / sociability offered by the sport.
- Currently demand is outstripping supply, with many venues keen to add courts, or cover existing facilities, though costs, and the complexity of local planning rules, can be prohibitive.

In terms of future supply, a variety of environments can be considered. Padel courts are often situated next to or managed by those running existing tennis facilities (tennis clubs, parks, indoor tennis centres). In addition, padel court development at leisure centre sites, golf clubs and rugby/football sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model.

The LTA are 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.

Padel Court Demand

To assist LAs in strategically planning padel provision across the authority, the LTA has established by LA the number of padel courts that can be sustained – based on population density and padel demand. The figures provided form a start point for conversation and strategic planning. It does not mean that the suggested number should be seen as a cap, but that the has LTA confidence that there is sufficient demand for the number of courts identified. Some areas where the sport is more established will create higher levels of demand. In Swindon, the LTA estimates demand for 17 padel courts currently.

10.1: Supply

The two indoor facilities in the Borough are Delta Tennis Centre (a pay and play facility managed by GLL) and David Lloyd - a registered membership facility. Both have four courts.

The Delta centre, which contains 4 indoor courts and 3 outdoor courts (2 with floodlights), is a public/community tennis facility of strategic importance for both Swindon and Wiltshire. It supports grassroots participation, programmes for people with disabilities, county and regional competitions, performance training, and a range of workforce qualifications and development courses. As such, the LTA wishes to ensure that the indoor courts remain protected for tennis.

There are no other facilities within a 30-minute drive of the Borough.

In respect of padel tennis, the LTA notes concern that the Swindon padel landscape is becoming very commercially focused, with 2 outdoor courts open at David Lloyd, 8 being built at Greenbridge by Slazenger Padel, and a planning permission being submitted for a further 3 courts by Nova Padel in Westlea. It recommends that the Council considers developing community use agreements with commercial operators in order to broaden access to residents.

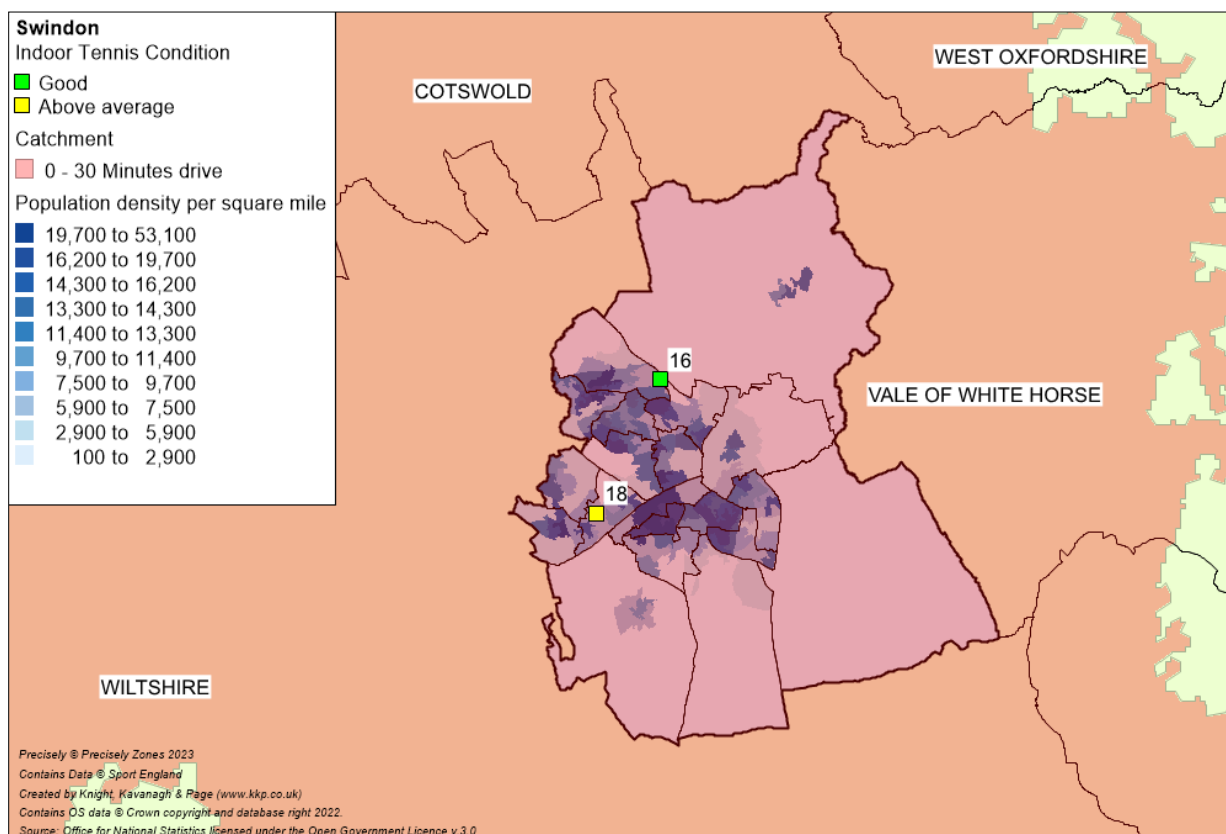
SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

INDOOR & BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Table 10.1: Indoor tennis centres in Swindon

ID	Site name	Courts	Access type	Condition
16	David Lloyd	4	Registered membership	Good
18	Delta Tennis Centre	4	Pay and play	Above average

Figure 10.1: Indoor tennis facilities in Swindon, along with a 30-minute drive time catchment



Accessibility

A 30-minute drive time catchment was applied to the two facilities in neighbouring authorities. It is calculated that nearly all of Swindon's population has access to these facilities within this catchment.

Availability

Delta Tennis Centre is available on a pay and play basis, whereas the David Lloyd facility is solely available through a registered membership (£94.50 per month).

10.2: Demand

Consultation with GLL states that there is no club which uses the Indoor Tennis Centre as either a training or competition venue, however, it is well used for recreational tennis, particularly during the winter months. In partnership with the LTA, GLL also delivers a significant amount of disability tennis, including wheelchair tennis and a club for people with downs syndrome. It also supports pickleball.

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10.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Indoor tennis	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are two indoor venues in the Borough.	The LTA note a recent growth in the supply of commercially operated padel tennis facilities in Swindon. The Council should consider negotiating community use agreements with padel operators in order to broaden access to this form of tennis across the Borough.
Quality	The David Lloyd facility was rated good, whereas the Delta Tennis Venue was rated above average.	
Accessibility	All of Swindon's residents live within a 30-minute drive of an indoor facility.	
Availability (Management & usage)	Delta Indoor Tennis facility is pay and play accessible, whereas David Lloyd requires a registered membership to access the facility.	The LTA note that Delta facility should be protected from development as the sole indoor publicly accessible facility in the Borough.
Summary	Swindon has two indoor tennis facilities, one of which offers pay and play access. The key challenge is to ensure that Delta Indoor Tennis facility is promoted throughout the community, supporting tennis development within the Borough, with clear pathways for talented players.	

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GLOSSARY

ANOG- Assessing needs and opportunities guide for indoor and outdoor sports facilities
DCLG- Department for Communities and Local Government
SBC- Swindon Borough Council
NPPF- National Planning Policy Framework
MYE- Mid Year Estimate
ONS- Office of National Statistics
WASP- Wiltshire and Swindon Sport
IMD- Index of Multiple Deprivation
NCMP- National Child Measurement Programme
ALS- Active Lives Survey
NEV- New Eastern Villages
FPM- Facilities planning model