KNIGHT, KAVANAGH & PAGE

THURROCK BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT
OCTOBER 2025

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd
Company No: 9145032 (England)

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Registered Office: 1 -2 Frecheville Court, off Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0UF
T: 0161 764 7040 **E:** mail@kkp.co.uk **www.kkp.co.uk**

Cert Num: 6543-QMS-001

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ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance
BC	Bowls Club
BE	Bowls England
CC	Cricket Club
CFA	County Football Association
CFS	County Facilities Strategy
DCMS	Department of Culture, Media and Sport
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
ECCB	Essex County Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
EN	England Netball
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GMA	Grounds Management Association
GMPF	Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGB	National Governing Body (of sport)
NHS	National Health Service
NLS	National League System
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PPOSS	Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy & Outdoor Sports Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106 agreement
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1: Introduction

Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) has been commissioned to deliver a Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) for Thurrock Council. This will provide the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions affecting relevant provision within the local authority area. It will replace the previous study, which was completed in 2020.

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

- Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (1)
- Stage B: Gather information and views on supply of and demand for provision (2 & 3)
- Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (4, 5 & 6)
- Stage D: Develop the strategy (7 & 8)
- Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (9 & 10)

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

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

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

The commission also encompasses an Indoor Built Facilities Strategy. The inter-relationship between these must be noted as some of the sports covered by the PPOSS also access indoor facilities for matches/training or use such areas on an informal basis.

1.2: Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

Management arrangements

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

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

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

- Be a champion for provision in the area and promote the value of the PPOSS.
- Ensure implementation of the recommendations and action plan.
- Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the study and ensure that the PPOSS is updated.

The lifespan of a PPOSS is considered to be three years, although this can be increased if it is kept up to date.

Why the Strategy is being developed

The PPOSS is required as the existing study, completed in 2020, is now considered to be at the end of its purposeful lifespan.

Additionally, the PPOSS will form part of the evidence base for the Council's Local Plan. It will provide a strategic framework to ensure that the provision of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities meets the needs of residents and visitors to the Thurrock area. It will also support those organisations, including the Council, involved in the delivery, provision and protection of outdoor sports facilities across the Borough. It will provide robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision and enhancement throughout Thurrock.

Thurrock Council's new Local Plan will shape the future of development in Thurrock up to 2044, with the aim for this to be adopted by Summer 2026. The Local Plan will contain a spatial strategy which identifies specific locations for delivering development needs such as housing, employment, retail, education facilities, open and green space, transport infrastructure improvements, healthcare provision and provision for leisure facilities. Strategic policies, site allocation policies, and development management policies will be used in the determination of planning applications which will help to realise the overall strategy.

The Local Plan will also have an important role to play in encouraging active lifestyles through the provision of sufficient quality open spaces, sports and leisure facilities and active travel opportunity.

The PPOSS will be a robust evidence base document for the Local Plan and will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth. Infrastructure priorities for the Local Plan are identified through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Other local context relating to the PPOSS can be found in Appendix 1.

National context

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section eight of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities, with Paragraph 102 stating that "planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."

Paragraph 104 sets three criterion that ensures existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless:

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

Paragraphs 107, 108, and 109 set the parameters for the designation of Local Green Space. Such spaces may include playing fields and outdoor sport facilities.

Scope

The scope of the PPOSS focuses geographically on all local provision, regardless of ownership and management arrangements. The sports included within the scope of work are as follows:

- Football
- Cricket
- Rugby union
- Hockey
- Tennis (including padel)
- Bowls
- Athletics
- Netball

Furthermore, specific 3G pitch detail is also be included due to the range of sports that can be accommodated on the provision. This primarily pertains to football but in Thurrock is also be relevant to rugby union.

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

Rugby league is also generally included as standard in PPOSS work. However, the sport has not been identified as currently having a presence within Thurrock.

Study area

The study area comprises the full local authority area of Thurrock. In addition, the Borough has been divided into sub areas to allow KKP to produce both a broad and localised assessment on the supply and demand position for each sport included within the scope of work.

The previous PPOSS included three analysis areas, with these known as Central, East and West. However, these have been altered for this commission in order to provide a more suitable breakdown from a sports participation and local planning perspective.

The four analysis areas now utilised are as follows:

- Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet
- Grays
- Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham
- Tilbury & Chadwell

Figure 1.1: Map showing analysis areas within Thurrock



Figure 1.2: Map showing settlements and wards within each analysis area



Cross-boundary aspects are also recognised throughout the study in regard to neighbouring (and nearby) local authorities, most pertinently including Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point and Havering. This involves reference to imported and exported demand into and from Thurrock as well as key sites and developments that sit close to boundary lines.

1.3: Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision

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

Gather supply information and views – an audit of provision

Quantity

Where known, all outdoor sports facilities are included within the PPOSS, irrespective of ownership, management and use. Sites were initially identified using Thurrock's previous PPOSS and Sport England's Active Places web-based database, with the Council and NGBs supporting this process by checking and updating this initial data as well as by supplying their own affiliation data and booking information.

For each site, the following details are recorded in the project database:

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

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

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

Sport England's PPS guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2015 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'.[1]

- ***Playing pitch*** **–** a delineated area which together with any run off area, is of 0.2ha or more, and is used for association football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, American football, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo.
- ***Playing field*** **–** the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch.

[1]. www.sportengland.org>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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

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

Accessibility

Not all outdoor sports facilities offer the same level of access to the community. The ownership and accessibility of provision also influences actual availability for community use. Each site is assigned a level of community use as follows:

- ***Community use*** - facilities in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for hire and currently in use by teams playing in community leagues.
- ***Available but unused*** - facilities that are available for hire but are not currently used by teams which play in community leagues; this most often applies to school sites but can also apply to sites which are expensive to hire.
- ***No community use*** - facilities which as a matter of policy or practice are not available for hire or used by teams playing in community leagues. This should include professional club pitches along with some semi-professional club pitches, where play is restricted to the first or second team.
- ***Disused –*** provision that is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either.

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

Quality

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gather demand information and views

Current demand

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

- Organised competitive play
- Organised training
- Informal play

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

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

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

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

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

Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPOSS to assess whether the future demand for provision can be met. One method for calculating this is by using Office of National Statistics (ONS) population projections and proposed housing growth to provide an estimate of the likely future demand for relevant facilities. Assumptions can then be made as to whether existing provision can cater for such growth via the use of team/member generation rates. This involves using an existing participation ratio and applying it to predicted growth to help estimate the change in demand for each sport that may arise in the future.

Other information sources used to help identify future demand include:

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

All future demand projections across the PPOSS for Thurrock covers the period up until 2043, which aligned as close as possible with the Council's emerging Local Plan (this is projected to run to 2044; however, projections currently only run up to 2043).

1.4: Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views

Supply and demand information gathered is used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision in Thurrock. It focuses on how much use each site could potentially accommodate (on an area by area basis) compared to how much use is currently taking place.

Understand the situation at individual sites

Qualitative pitch ratings are linked to a pitch capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. The quality and use of each pitch is assessed against the recommended pitch capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket) a pitch could accommodate. Each pitch is then said to have potential spare capacity, be at capacity, or be overplayed – as follows:

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

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

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

Table 1.1: Capacity of playing pitches

Sport	Pitch type	No. of match equivalent sessions		
		Good	Standard	Poor
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	0 per season
Hockey AGPs	One AGP	4 matches per day	4 matches per day	0 matches per day

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

Develop the current and future picture of provision

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

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

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

Once current capacity is determined, future capacity can be calculated via incorporating the future demand identified plus any unmet, latent and exported demand.

Identify the key findings and issues

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

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

1.4: Develop the strategy (Stage D)

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

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

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

PART 2: FOOTBALL

2.1: Introduction

The organisation responsible for the development of football in Thurrock is Essex County FA. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions and representative matches, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees and delivering national football schemes.

Facility development for football is largely the responsibility of the Football Foundation (FF), which is a charity, linked to and funded by the Premier League, The FA and the Government (via Sport England). Working in partnership with Essex County FA, it helps communities improve their local football facilities through grant funding.

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

Table 2.1: Football grass pitch formats

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

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

Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Game Strategy, the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project in 2018. As part of this, a LFFP has been produced for every local authority across England, with each plan being unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation. LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require potential funding through the FF.

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

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

The LFFP for Thurrock was produced in May 2025 However, an update process is now being undertaken which will see this re-visited, with consideration given to the findings of this study. It is a 'live' document that will account for an up-to-date supply and demand assessment as this may present findings and recommendations that need to be incorporated for investment purposes.

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

Consultation

In total there are 300 football teams across 73 clubs that emanate from Thurrock. In addition to face to face and video consultation with key clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all of these, with this process supported via Essex County FA.

A team response rate of 68% has been achieved. This includes discussions with the following clubs that are identified as being particularly key in the Borough:

- Aveley FC
- Corringham Athletic FC
- Grays Athletic FC
- Tilbury FC

2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 116 grass football pitches across 42 unique sites in Thurrock. Of the pitches, 103 across 30 sites are available for some level of community use (although not necessarily used), as shown in the table below. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites.

Table 2.2: Number of grass football pitches available for community use by analysis area

Analysis Area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	5	5	7	3	5	**25**
Grays	5	5	4	9	2	**25**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	6	11	7	7	7	**37**
Tilbury & Chadwell	4	4	3	2	2	**15**
Total	**20**	**25**	**21**	**21**	**16**	**103**
2020 Total	**45**	**9**	**17**	**24**	**18**	**113**

The highest concentration of community available pitches is found within the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area with 37 (36%), followed by the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet and Grays analysis areas with 25 pitches (24%). The Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area has the fewest pitches with 15 (15%).

There are more youth 11v11 pitches (25) identified when compared to other pitch sizes, which suggests high demand for youth 11v11 football. The least represented pitch type is mini 5v5 (18 pitches).

Since the 2020 PPOSS was completed, there are ten fewer community available pitches within Thurrock. This is partly due to some becoming disused (see section below), combined with some providers now marking out less provision.

The biggest reduction has been experienced in relation to adult pitches, although there are subsequently more youth 11v11 pitches due to re-configuration at several sites.

Disused site/provision

There are several football pitches which are disused in Thurrock, either at sites where no formal sports pitches are now provided (disused sites), or that previously accommodated football pitches but still accommodate some other form of sports pitches (disused pitch). These are summarised in the table below.

Of particular note are Aveley Sports & Social Club and Thurrock Football Club. The former has a planning application against it that proposes the loss of the site, with mitigation in the form of two 3G pitches at Belhus, whilst the latter is to be brought back into use by Grays Athletic FC.

Table 2.3: Summary of disused sites/provision within Thurrock

Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Disused pitches	Comments
Aveley Sports & Social Club	RM15 4DT	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	4 x Adult Youth 9v9 2 x Mini 7v7 Mini 5v5	**Disused site –** a current planning application proposes the re-development of the site for an employment scheme, with off-site mitigation proposed in the form of two 11v11 3G pitches at Belhus Park.
Blackshots Recreation Ground (King Geroge's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	6 x Adult	**Disused pitch –** site is still community accessible, but pitches are not formally marked out.
Bulphan Recreation Ground	RM14 3RU	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Mini 7v7	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitch not marked out.
Chadfields (Tilbury Football Club)	RM18 8NG	Tilbury & Chadwell	Youth 11v11 Mini 7v7 Mini 5v5	**Disused site** – pitches lost to development plans circa 2022.
Daisy Field Tilbury	RM18 8HH	Tilbury & Chadwell	Adult	**Disused pitch –** site is still community accessible, but pitch is not formally marked out
East Thurrock United Football Club (Rookery Hill)	SS17 9LB	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Adult Youth 9v9 Mini 5v5	**Disused pitch** – previously used by East Thurrock United FC until 2023 and subsequently by Romford FC for the 2023/2024 season.

Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Disused pitches	Comments
Linford Recreation Ground	SS17 0RF	Tilbury & Chadwell	Youth 11v11 Youth 9v9 Mini 5v5	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitches are not formally marked out.
Lofthall	RM16 3BD	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Adult Youth 9v9 Mini 7v7 Mini 5v5	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitches are not formally marked out.
Long Lane Recreation Ground	RM16 2AF	Grays	Adult Youth 9v9 Mini 7v7 Mini 5v5	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitches are not formally marked out.
The Springhouse Sports Club	SS17 7QT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Adult Youth 11v11	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitches not formally marked out. A planning application has been submitted for the creation of a 3G pitch at the site.
Thurrock Football Club	RM19 1YN	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Adult	**Disused site -** site still exists but is not in use. Grays Athletic FC has been gifted the provision as a requirement of the planning permission for the re-development of the adjoining training ground for commercial development.
West Thurrock Memorial Ground	RM20 3BT	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Adult	**Disused pitch** – site is still community accessible, but pitch is not formally marked out.

Based on the information in the table above, the number of disused pitches equates to 37. Broken down, this is 17 adult pitches, three youth 11v11 pitches, five youth 9v9 pitches, six mini 7v7 pitches and six mini 5v5 pitches.

Figure 2.1 overleaf identifies all grass football pitches currently servicing Thurrock. For a key to the map, see Table 2.15

Figure 2.1: Map of sites with football pitch provision within Thurrock



Future supply

Planning permission has been granted (ref: 20/00242/FUL) for the demolition and site clearance of the existing stadia pitch at Chadfields (Tilbury Football Club) and the erection of a new stadium, clubhouse, stands, lighting and car park on the site of existing training pitches located to the north-east. Outline approval sought the erection of up to 112 new dwellings on the site of the existing stadium. Construction is underway for the new stadium, however it is reported that the investors behind the development have pulled out and as such, halting progress.

Grays Athletic FC's first team (adult men's) currently groundshares the stadium at Chadfields with its remaining teams playing at multiple sites across the Borough. However, as referenced above, the Club is in the process of transferring to Thurrock United FC's former stadium, which is currently disused, although it states via consultation that the move has been delayed due to financial cost and legal ownership issues. The Club has an aspiration to move into the stadium for competitive games within the next 18 months.

Management

Of the 103 community available pitches in Thurrock, 28 are managed by the Council, 25 are managed inhouse by sports clubs, 48 are managed by education operators, and the remaining two pitches are managed by other providers.

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

Education	Council	Clubs	Other
48	28	25	2

As previously referenced, all unavailable pitches fall within the education sector.

Security of tenure

Clubs are generally considered to have secure tenure where they have freehold, leasehold or formally secured use of their site/s (for example, through a community use agreement) for the next three or more years. Based on this, tenure of football sites in Thurrock is generally secure. This is particularly the case as all local authority provision is considered to be secure via the Council's ongoing commitment to provide a leisure offering (unless development proposals are known to exist).

Most active sites which are classified as having unsecure tenure are located at schools, such as Harris Academy Ockendon, Ormiston Park Academy and St Clere's School. In the main, education establishments are able to state their own policies, therefore making them more likely to restrict levels of community use, unless they have community use agreements in place such as at Orsett Heath Academy. This was linked to the development of the School and its pitches.

The reasons for schools not allowing community use varies. The most common example is that they want to protect pitches for curricular and extra-curricular purposes due to existing quality issues. This is the case at Harris Academy Chafford Hundred.
Other reasons provided include staffing issues, health and safety issues and a perceived lack of profitability.

Moreover, several schools that do provide availability do so without providing security of tenure, meaning that they can stop the external use at any point devoid of any warning. To prevent this happening, where possible, it is recommended that club users enter community use agreements with the schools that they access. Nationally, many local authorities have a policy requirement for community use agreements to be established where development proposals relate to playing fields or wider sports facilities, which is therefore something Thurrock Borough Council could look to implement moving forward.

Away from schools, Corringham Athletic Youth FC states that it has only five years left on its lease agreement for usage of the pitches at Old Hall Farm, with this acquired from Shell. Whilst this provides some security of tenure, having a longer term arrangement would be beneficial, particularly if external funding for site development was to be sought.

Grays Atheltic FC notes that it would be interested in entering into a more formal agreement at the sites that it uses. It notes that is currently only has rental agreements in place for the use of facilities across Thurrock, with this incorporating sites such as Lakeside Sports Ground, South Ockendon Recreation Ground and Corringham Recreation Ground.

An example of where a good level of security of tenure is provided is in respect of Brandon Groves FC. It has a 25-year lease agreement with Veolia and the Council at South Ockendon Recreation Ground.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches across Thurrock has been assessed via a combination of site visits carried out (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA), PitchPower reports (see below), and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor (for the full site assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2).

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

The table below summarises the quality of community available pitches in Thurrock. As seen, most pitches are assessed as standard quality (66%), although there are a greater proportion of poor quality pitches (28%) compared to good quality (6%).

Table 2.5: Summary of pitch quality by pitch type (community available)

Pitch type	No. of good quality pitches	No. of standard quality pitches	No. of poor quality pitches
Adult	2	12	6
Youth 11v11	2	14	9
Youth 9v9	1	16	4
Mini 7v7	1	15	5
Mini 5v5	-	11	5

Pitch type	No. of good quality pitches	No. of standard quality pitches	No. of poor quality pitches
Total	6	68	29
2020 Total	10	52	51

As also seen in the table above, despite a reduction in good quality pitches since 2020, overall pitch quality across Thurrock can be said to have improved due to a high decline in poor quality pitches. There were previously 51 poor quality pitches provided compared to 29 currently.

The remaining poor quality pitches have been identified at:

- Billet Recreation Ground
- Corringham Recreation Ground
- Old Hall Farm
- Orsett Recreation Ground
- Parkside (Aveley Football Club)
- South Ockendon Recreation Ground
- Storm Fit
- The Gateway Academy
- Treetops School
- Woodside Academy
- Mobil Field

In the main, these pitches show significant signs of wear and tear, with many also having waterlogging problems. In total, 45% of the poor quality pitches are operated by the Council (13 pitches), with this also equating to 46% of all council pitches across the Borough. Maintenance of council sites in Thurrock is restricted to bi-weekly grass cutting, whilst only the 18-yard box (for adult pitches) is seeded, fertilised and weed killed, leaving the rest of the pitch untreated. The open nature of such sites also leads to high levels of unofficial use, dog fouling and litter, amongst other things.

Linked to the above, Corringham Athletic FC plays at Old Hall Farm and states that the pitches are becoming overplayed due to a lack of other available pitches within the Borough. The Club also states that wetter weather has contributed to the overall pitch quality being poor with little time for the provision to recover before being played on again.

Aveley FC states that the pitches at Parkside (Aveley Football Club) have gotten slightly poorer when compared to previous seasons. Whilst maintenance of the pitches is considered to be adequate, a lack of drainage has resulted in surface water former that has led to training and fixtures being postponed.

In contrast, the good quality pitches are located at Lakeside Sports Ground and Wyldecrest Sports Country Club. For the latter, Belhus Park Athletic FC states that it maintains the pitches to a high level, with the provision aerated twice a year and weed killed, fertilised and sand dressed each season.

Through consultation, East Thurrock Community FC states that whilst the pitches at Wyldecrest Sports Country Club are of a good quality, the pitches is not as good as they have been in previous seasons due to a change in maintenance regime.

For a full breakdown of quality ratings at each site, please refer to Table 2.15

PitchPower

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the FF's PitchPower app to carry out a free on-site assessment of their pitches. This then provides the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment.

The web app is open to access by all providers, including clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Applicants are required to submit a PitchPower assessment for each of their pitches as a condition of a grant funding application for FF grass pitch investment, such as the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (detailed later in this section).

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments, instead being able to be undertaken at any time in the year, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: July - October, November – March or April – June.

As well as the completion of other supporting information such as detail of volunteer training and what maintenance equipment is available, the assessment requires the taking of images and a single soil sample at each assessment site. There are three assessment sites for adult and youth pitches at each goal area and the centre circle, whilst for mini pitches there are two sites at the centre circle and one goal area.

The PitchPower assessments use a new five step Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating system developed by the GMA, with the FF and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS guidance. This alignment is shown in the table below.

Table 2.6: Agreed equivalent PPOSS quality rating for PQS ratings

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

In Thurrock, two sites have received a PitchPower assessment, which is a relatively low number compared to most local authorities. The findings of these in comparison to the PPOSS findings are shown in the table below. As seen, the ratings are aligned.

Table 2.7: Summary of PitchPower findings compared to PPOSS quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PitchPower rating	PPOSS rating
34	Old Hall Farm	(5v5)	Poor	Poor
34	Old Hall Farm	(5v5)	Poor	Poor
34	Old Hall Farm	(7v7)	Poor	Poor
34	Old Hall Farm	(11v11)	Poor	Poor
34	Old Hall Farm	(9v9)	Poor	Poor
50	Storm Fit (Grays)	Adult	Poor	Poor
50	Storm Fit (Grays)	Adult	Poor	Poor

Football Foundation (FF) Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GMPF)

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country. This has resulted in the creation of the GPMF. As part of this, grass pitches identified as having quality issues by the GMA via PitchPower assessment can apply to access funding to improve pitches to good quality or sustain them at good quality.

Once a PitchPower grass pitch assessment report has been produced for the site, eligible organisations can then apply for grant funding support through the FF Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund, a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help eligible organisations such as clubs and leagues enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the FF's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 quality grass pitches by 2030. If a site is categorised as 'poor' or 'basic' then organisations can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good or standard quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

All applicants must have the landowners permission (as a minimum) and have received a PitchPower Pitch Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs (excluding stadia pitches used for National League System play), leagues, education establishments and parish and town councils.

Ancillary facilities

Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important for the provision to be inclusive, particularly due to growing women's and girls' and disability demand.

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on sports using the provision and the number of pitches serviced, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

- Accessible changing areas which can be separated, or are private/self contained, to allow for separate male/female/all gender or senior/junior separation.
- A private accessible changing room (with relevant changing and showering provision) for someone who requires assistance.
- Separate female / male / all gender toilet provision.
- Suitably designed and specified showering cubicles to all users to maintain dignity and privacy whilst showering.

Open planned changing, toilets and particularly showering facilities can provide a significant barrier to many people resulting in them either not taking part or having a

poorer sporting experience. As a result, those ancillary facilities that do not meet the above criteria are not rated as anything higher than standard quality for the purposes of this document.

The table below summarises the ancillary provision across football sites in Thurrock, where known. Additional context behind the quality ratings is provided below where ancillary facility quality is known.

Table 2.8: Ancillary provision of the clubs that responded to consultation (where known)

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Overall ancillary facility quality	2020 quality	Comments
4	Billet Recreation Ground	Council	Poor	Poor	Small clubhouse on site with two changing rooms. It should be noted that this site has been listed in the 2025 LFFP as a priority for a new build clubhouse.
7	Chadfields	Sports Club	Standard	Standard	Accessible changing rooms provide but the provision is in need of refurbishment.
8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	Council	Poor	Poor	Three outdated changing room with communal showers. Self- contained toilets however no access for spectators and no car parking available on site.
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Council	Standard	Standard	Only basic facilities provided.
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Council	Standard	Standard	Two changing rooms with shared toilet and showering facilities.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	Sports Club	Good	Poor	Centre undergone refurbishment in 2019 with investment from Council and Impulse Leisure. Changing rooms include self-contained shower with cubicles and toilets.
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	Sports Club	Standard	Good	Five changing rooms with communal player showers and dedicated spectator toilets.
28	Linford Recreation Ground	Council	N/A	N/A	No ancillary facilities provided on site.

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Overall ancillary facility quality	2020 quality	Comments
34	Old Hall Farm	Sports Club	Poor	Poor	Portable toilet cabin and container for refreshments. No changing room access.
38	Orsett Recreation Ground	Council	Standard	Standard	Showers are provided in each set of changing rooms, although these are not suitable for female players.
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	Education	Poor	Poor	Two worn and outdated changing rooms with communal showers and toilets. Spectator toilet also available.
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Sports Club	Good	Good	Two changing rooms with self-contained showers, physio room and match official rooms. Complaint with league standards.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Council	Standard	Good	Two changing rooms with communal showering facilities and self-contained toilets. Dedicated medical room, officials room and spectator toilet available.
47	St Clere's School	Education	Standard	Good	Separate sports pavilion with two changing rooms with self-contained showers. Pavillion shows sign of wear and tear
50	Storm Fit	Storm Fit	Standard	Standard	Four men's and four women's changing rooms with self-contained showers.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Sports Club	Standard	Poor	Two changing rooms with communal showers and toilet facilities. Spectator toilet also available.
58	Treetops School	Education	Good	N/A	Four changing rooms refurbished in 2022. Self-contained showers with cubicles.

Site ID	Site name	Management type	Overall ancillary facility quality	2020 quality	Comments
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	Sports Club	Standard	N/A	Four changing rooms with communal showers and toilets, officials room and spectator toilet is also available.
76	Mobil Field	Council	Standard	Standard	Standard quality provision with changing rooms.

As seen in the table above, four sites are identified as providing poor quality changing facilities (Billet Recreation Ground, Chadwell Recreation Ground, Old Hall Farm and Ortu Hassenbrook Academy). These are serviced by dated facilities that require improving or replacing and have signs of wear and tear. These sites had also been identified in the 2020 PPOSS as having poor quality ancillary facilities.

2.3: Demand

A total of 300 teams from 73 affiliated clubs are identified as playing in Thurrock. As a breakdown, this equates to 65 adult teams, 88 youth 11v11 teams, 46 youth 9v9 teams, 58 mini 7v7 teams and 43 mini 5v5 teams.

Table 2.9: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in Thurrock

Age group	No. of teams
Adult Men's (18-45)	59
Adult Women's (18-45)	4
Youth Boys (12-17)	80
Youth Girls (12-17)	9
Youth Boys (10-11)	40
Youth Girls (10-11)	6
Mini Mixed (8-9)	59
Mini Mixed (6-7)	43
Total	**300**

Football in Thurrock is played predominately in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area (93 teams), followed by the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area (90 teams). The Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area has the fewest number of teams (47), with this reflecting the distribution of pitches.

Table 2.10: Summary of football teams by analysis area

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	21	29	15	14	11	**90**
Grays	13	20	8	15	14	**70**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	23	31	17	15	7	**93**
Tilbury & Chadwell	6	9	6	15	11	**47**
Total	**63**	**89**	**46**	**59**	**43**	**300**
2020 Total	**71**	**75**	**44**	**41**	**31**	**262**

Participation trends

As shown in Table 2.10, the total number of teams across the Borough has increased significantly from 262 teams to 300 teams (representing a 13% increase) since 2020 PPOSS findings. This is despite a slight decline in pitch supply over the same period. Further broken down, the growth equates to an overall increase of 14 youth 11v11, two youth 9v9, 18 mini 7v7 and 12 mini 5v5 teams. However, there has been a decline in adult demand, amounting to a decrease of eight teams.

An increase of seven additional female teams is also notable.

In connection with the above, more clubs report a growth in demand in recent years compared to those reporting a decrease. In total, 7% of responding club reports an increase in their number of adult teams, whilst 40% report an increase in youth and mini teams. This is compared to 17% of clubs that report any form of decrease.

National League System demand

Men's National League System

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

Clubs playing within the NLS must adhere to Stadium Accreditation[2] requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground grading requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Stadium Accreditation assesses grounds from Grade 1 to 7, which aligns with Step 1 clubs down to Step 6 clubs making the transition from Regional Feeder League (please refer to the FA website for the full specifications for each[3]).

In Thurrock, three teams from three clubs play within the NLS, as seen in the table below. This consists of one team at Step 2 and two at Step 4.

Table 2.11: Summary of teams playing within the NLS

Team	League	Level
Aveley FC	Isthmian League Premier	Step 3
Grays Athletic FC	Isthmian League - North	Step 4
Tilbury FC	Isthmian League - North	Step 4

The presence within the NLS is particularly important in relation to Tilbury FC and Grays Athletic FC given the development plans at Chadfields.

Women's National League System

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System, similar to the adult men's, which provides structure to the women's game. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6 with each Tier requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Although women's clubs still need to meet ground requirements set out by the FA these differ from the men's National League System. Ratings range from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements. Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Tier 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, although not exactly the same. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

[2] https://premierleaguestadiumfund.co.uk/stadium-accreditation-programme
[3] http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading

There are currently two women's teams the above relates to. Aveley Ladies FC and Corringham Cosmos Women FC both have teams playing in Tier 7 Women's County Leagues.

Women's and girls' demand

There are currently four women's teams and 20 dedicated girls' teams playing football in Thurrock. This represents 8% of all demand across the Borough. Key clubs and organisations presently fielding female teams include Aveley Girls, Brandon Groves Youth, Corringham Athletic Girls, County Park Girls, Grays Athletic Girls, Hassenbrook Youth, Lakeside Girls, St Clere's Girls and Tilbury Youth football clubs.

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

Unmet and latent demand

The following 12 clubs identify latent demand for pitch provision in Thurrock, with them all stating that they could field additional teams if they had access to better quality pitch provision for match and training demand:

- Aveley FC
- Belhus Park Athletic FC
- Corringham Athletic FC
- Corringham Cosmos Youth FC
- County Park FC
- East Thurrock Community FC
- Essex Comets FC
- Foxhound Vets FC
- Hassenbrook FC
- Heath Athletic FC
- Little Thurrock Dynamos
- Thurrock Tigers FC

This represents a substantial amount of latent demand, suggesting that capacity issues could be prevalent across the Borough.

Imported and exported demand

Grays Athletic FC is identified as exporting one of its youth U16 teams to Billericay School in Basildon. In addition, Alves FC exports a team to Ford Sports & Social Club, which is also in Basildon. Both state that this is due to a lack of suitable provision within Thurrock.

In addition, Aveley FC states that it has some of its teams exporting demand outside of the Borough. However, no further information has been provided as to where these teams play.

In regards to imported demand, Hashtag United FC's first team are identified as playing its fixtures at Parkside (Aveley Football Club) via a groundshare. This is due to no available provision existing within Basildon that is suitable for its level of football.

In relation to both latent and exported demand, this can likely be attributed to the high number of grass pitches across numerous sites previously identified within this section that are currently out of use across the Borough.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in several ways, including through club ambitions and using population forecasts as well as participation trends based on historical team data .

Club ambitions

Of responding clubs, seven report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide, totalling a large predicted growth of 42 teams. This is summarised below.

Table 2.12: Potential team increases identified by clubs

Club	Gender	Number of teams	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions per week[4]
Hassenbrook FC	Boys	3 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	1.5
Hassenbrook FC	Boys	3 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	1.5
Hassenbrook FC	Girls	3 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	1.5
Hassenbrook FC	Girls	3 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	1.5
Hassenbrook FC	Mixed	5 x Mini 5v5	Mini 5v5	2.5
Corringham Cosmos Youth FC	Boys	1 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	0.5
Corringham Cosmos Youth FC	Boys	1 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	0.5
Corringham Cosmos Youth FC	Mixed	1 x Mini 5v5	Mini 5v5	0.5
Brandon Groves FC	Mixed	2 x Mini 5v5	Mini 5v5	1
Corringham Athletic FC	Men's	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Corringham Athletic FC	Mixed	2 x Mini 5v5	Mini 5v5	1
Thurrock Tigers FC	Boys	2 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	1
Thurrock Tigers FC	Boys	1 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	0.5
East Thurrock Community FC	Women's	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
East Thurrock Community FC	Men's	2 x Adult	Adult	1
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Men's	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Women's	1 x Adult	Adult	0.5
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Boy's	2 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	1
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Boy's	2 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	1
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Girl's	1 x Youth 11v11	Youth 11v11	0.5
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Girl's	1 x Youth 9v9	Youth 9v9	0.5

[4] Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, 0.5 pitches can therefore be seen in the table where there is latent demand for one team.

Club	Gender	Number of teams	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions per week[4]
Little Thurrock Dynamo's FC	Mixed	3 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1.5
-	**Totals**	**42**	-	**21**

The total future demand expressed by the clubs listed above amounts to 21 match equivalent sessions per week (as two teams equates to one match equivalent session playing on a home and away basis). Broken down by pitch type, 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week are identified on adult pitches, 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week on youth 11v11 pitches, six match equivalent sessions per week on youth 9v9 pitches and 6.5 match equivalent session per week on mini 5v5 pitches. No future demand is forecast for mini 7v7 football, although any new teams created at mini 5v5 level will likely progress to this format.

The future demand identified by clubs includes two senior women's and eight junior girls' teams (in addition to mixed mini teams). To that end, In light of FA aspirations to increase female participation in football through the establishment and foreseen future effect of the FA Wildcats programme and Inspiring Positive Change Strategy, it is likely that the growth in affiliated women's and girls' teams may exceed that shown through team generation rates. Taking this into consideration combined with the aspirations highlighted through club consultation it can be said that women and girls' participation is going to continue to grow. As such, it is imperative that sufficient facilities are suitable for female access, particularly in relation to toilets and appropriate changing provision.

Population growth

Based on population projections to 2043[5], Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from any growth. This is through using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers. Team generation rates have then been established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

The table below shows the number of predicted number new teams that will be generated by population growth in Thurrock and the requisite match equivalent sessions that this will create. As seen, an increase of 20 teams is projected (equating to ten match equivalent sessions per week).

Table 2.13: Authority wide team generation rates

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	No. of match equivalent sessions per week[6]
Adult Men's (18-45)	1:591	6.91	7	3.5
Adult Women's (18-45)	1:9,315	0.10	0	0
Youth Boys (12-17)	1:62	4.10	4	2
Youth Girls (12-17)	1:525	0.39	0	0

[5] Thurrock's emerging Local Plan will run to 2044; however, projections are only possible to 2043.
[6] Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	No. of match equivalent sessions per week[6]
Youth Boys (10-11)	1:63	2.09	2	1
Youth Girls (10-11)	1:403	0.33	0	0
Mini Mixed (8-9)	1:86	2.91	3	1.5
Mini Mixed (6-7)	1:115	4.33	4	2

Broken down by playing format, the forecasted increases amount to seven adult, four youth 11v11, two youth 9v9, three mini 7v7 and four mini 5v5 teams.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that team generation rates through ONS projections are based exclusively on future population forecasts and do not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport.

Similarly, they cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused toward certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. This is particularly pertinent to a current drive towards increasing female participation, with this likely to result in the creation of teams above and beyond what population forecasts predict.

Future demand summary

The future demand that has carried through to the supply and demand analysis and the end of this section of the report will only be based on the increases identified via population growth. This is because future demand reported by clubs is considered more aspirational and to avoid potential double counting (as some aspirations will likely absorb population increases). However, the proceeding Strategy document will include a scenario to identify the impact it would have if the growth was realised, with this considered possible based on recent growth trends.

The Strategy will also contain a scenario exploring the participation trends for football over the lifespan of the PPOSS and what impact this trend will have on the supply and demand balance.

To illustrate the level of difference between population and participation growth for football, the 2019/20 season had 262 teams recorded across Thurrock, which demonstrates an increase of 38 teams to 300 (13%) over five years.

It is also important to note that ONS projections do not account for the population increases associated with planned housing growth in the Authority. As such, the impact of housing developments will be considered in the housing growth section in the proceeding Strategy document.

2.4: Capacity analysis

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

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

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

Table 2.15 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play recorded to determine a capacity rating as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overplayed	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

Match equivalent sessions

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

Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the usage at such sites will need to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all, and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches onsite and whether there is access to an onsite AGP.
In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking. As such, where not overplayed as a result of community use, many school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further usage based on assumed curricular and extracurricular activity.

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

Informal use

Where information is known, informal and unofficial use of pitches has been factored into current play. This is especially the case at high-traffic open access sites such as parks and recreation grounds that are heavily used, particularly during the summer for club training purposes. However, it must be noted that informal use of sites is not recorded and it is therefore difficult to quantify on a site-by-site basis. Instead, it is recommended that popular open access sites be protected through an improved maintenance regime and through retaining some spare capacity to protect quality.

Over marked pitches

Where pitches are overmarked, only the larger pitch type is included within the capacity analysis as it is acknowledged that only one pitch can be used at one time, whilst any usage the larger pitch size receives will also result in usage of the smaller pitch/es within it. However, all usage is recorded, regardless of which of the pitches is accessed.

Peak time

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time. In Thurrock, peak time for adult and youth 11v11 football is Sunday morning, whereas it is Saturday morning for all remaining pitch types. This is because most teams across the formats play at these times.

In the table overleaf, please note that, on occasions, spare capacity in the peak period is identified despite the pitch being played to capacity or overplayed or more spare capacity is identified in the peak period that what exists overall. This is because most of the use on those particular pitches occurs outside of the peak period, therefore the identified spare capacity at peak time should not be utilised over and above overall capacity unless quality improvements are made that increases overall capacity.

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

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

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

The table below identifies the way capacity balance is represented in Table 2.15.

Table 2.14: Capacity balance examples

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of capacity balance
1	Highlighted in green with a number denotes that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	With a dash, this indicates that the pitch is unavailable in the peak period. If it were to be made available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	Highlighted in orange with a zero, this indicates the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	Not highlighted by with a value, this indicates that the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, capacity has been discounted. This may be due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of capacity balance
1	Highlighted in red with a number denotes that the pitches are overplayed and have no spare capacity across the week. This includes at peak time, despite any availability at peak time which may exist.

Table 2.15: Grass football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Number of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play	Carrying capacity	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
1	Abbots Hall Primary Academy	SS17 7BW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
1	Abbots Hall Primary Academy	SS17 7BW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
3	Belmont Castle Academy	RM17 5YN	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
4	Billet Recreation Ground	SS17 0AP	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	0	Overplayed.
4	Billet Recreation Ground	SS17 0AP	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Poor	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
7	Chadfields	RM18 8NG	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted to preserve pitch quality for NLS.
8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	RM16 4UZ	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Standard	2	4	2	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period
8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	RM16 4UZ	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	RM16 4UZ	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
10	Corringham Primary School	SS17 9BH	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity.
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	0	4	4	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
13	Deneholm Primary School	RM16 2SS	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
14	Dilkes Academy	RM15 5JQ	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity within peak period.
16	East Tilbury Primary School	RM18 8SB	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Number of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play	Carrying capacity	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
16	East Tilbury Primary School	RM18 8SB	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	3	4	1	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
18	Giffards Primary School	SS17 7TG	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	5	4	1	0	Overplayed.
19	Grays Convent High School	RM17 5UX	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	RM16 6SA	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
21	Harris Academy Ockendon	RM15 5AY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
21	Harris Academy Ockendon	RM15 5AY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
23	Herringham Primary Academy	RM16 4JX	Tilbury & Chadwell	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	SS17 8NR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity.
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	SS17 8NR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	RM15 4PX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	5.5	2	3.5	0	Overplayed.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	RM15 4PX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity within peak period.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	RM15 4PX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	RM15 4PX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	0	Played to capacity within peak period.
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	RM15 4PX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity.
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	RM16 6DN	Grays	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	2.5	6	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	RM16 6DN	Grays	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	3.5	3	0.5	0	Overplayed.
29	Little Thurrock Primary School	RM17 5SW	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
34	Old Hall Farm	SS17 7RN	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	2	4	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
34	Old Hall Farm	SS17 7RN	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Number of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play	Carrying capacity	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
34	Old Hall Farm	SS17 7RN	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	3	1	2	0	Overplayed.
34	Old Hall Farm	SS17 7RN	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	4	1	3	0	Overplayed.
35	Ormiston Park Academy	RM15 4RU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	3	4	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
35	Ormiston Park Academy	RM15 4RU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed.
35	Ormiston Park Academy	RM15 4RU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	Education	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	2.5	8	5.5	2	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	Education	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
38	Orsett Recreation Ground	RM16 3JR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	3.5	2	1.5	0	Overplayed.
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed.
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	SS17 0NS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	3.5	2	1.5	0	Overplayed.
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	SS17 0NS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	3	4	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	SS17 0NS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	3.5	8	4.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	RM15 4UA	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	3	2	1	0	Overplayed.

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Number of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play	Carrying capacity	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	RM15 4UA	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	2	1	1	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	RM15 4UA	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed.
45	Somers Heath Primary School	RM15 5LX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	1.5	8	6.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	7	4	3	0	Overplayed.
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity.
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Standard	3.5	8	5.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
49	Stiffords Clay Primary School	RM16 2ST	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Unavailable for community use.
50	Storm Fit	RM17 5TD	Grays	Yes	Storm Fit	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed.
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		2	Standard	3	4	1	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	0	8	8	2	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	0	Overplayed.
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	0	Overplayed.
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	5	2	3	0	Overplayed.
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	4	2	2	0	Overplayed.

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	Number of pitches	Agreed quality rating	Current play	Carrying capacity	Capacity balance	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
54	The Hathaway Academy	RM17 5LL	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
54	The Hathaway Academy	RM17 5LL	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
58	Treetops School	RM16 2WU	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Played to capacity.
58	Treetops School	RM16 2WU	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Played to capacity.
58	Treetops School	RM16 2WU	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	1	0	1	Played to capacity.
59	Tudor Court Primary School	RM16 6PL	Grays	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult		1	Standard	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity.
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Standard	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity.
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	2	4	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	4	Standard	0.5	16	15.5	3.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
62	Woodside Academy	RM16 2GJ	Grays	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	SS17 9BJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	1	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	SS17 9BJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Good	4	8	4	1	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	SS17 9BJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	1	4	3	0	Played to capacity within the peak period.
76	Mobil Field	SS17 0AS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
76	Mobil Field	SS17 0AS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.

Actual spare capacity

Actual spare capacity totals 17.5 match equivalent sessions per week across 25 pitches and ten sites in Thurrock. This found across the following sites:

- Chadwell Recreation Ground
- Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground
- Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)
- Lakeside Sports Ground
- Old Hall Farm
- Orsett Heath Academy
- Orsett Recreation Ground
- South Ockendon Recreation Ground
- Thames Rugby Club
- Wyldecrest Sports Country Club

This has been broken down by analysis area and by pitch type below.

Table 2.16: Summary of actual spare capacity (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	-	-	1.5	0.5	2.5	**4.5**
Grays	-	-	-	2.5	2	**4.5**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	1.5	1	-	2	-	**4.5**
Tilbury & Chadwell	1	1.5	1.5	-	-	**4**
Thurrock	**2.5**	**2.5**	**3**	**5**	**4.5**	**17.5**

Interestingly, each analysis area excluding the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area provides the exact same level of actual spare capacity (4.5 match equivalent sessions). By pitch type, most is found on mini 7v7 pitches (five match equivalent sessions, whilst the least is on adult and youth 11v11 pitches (2.5 match equivalent sessions).

Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (based on its quality rating), which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of pitches. In Thurrock, 21 pitches across 13 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 29 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 2.17: Summary of overplay of grass football pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions per week)
4	Billet Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Adult	1	0.5
18	Giffards Primary School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(7v7)	1	1

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions per week)
25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Adult	1	3.5
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	Grays	Adult	1	0.5
34	Old Hall Farm	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(11v11)	1	2
34	Old Hall Farm	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(9v9)	1	3
35	Ormiston Park Academy	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	(9v9)	1	0.5
37	Orsett Heath Academy	Grays	(11v11)	1	0.5
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(11v11)	1	1.5
41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(9v9)	1	0.5
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(11v11)	1	1.5
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Adult	1	1
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	(9v9)	1	0.5
47	St Clere's School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	(11v11)	2	3
50	Storm Fit (Grays)	Grays	Adult	2	0.5
53	The Gateway Academy	Tilbury & Chadwell	(11v11)	1	2.5
53	The Gateway Academy	Tilbury & Chadwell	(9v9)	1	1.5
53	The Gateway Academy	Tilbury & Chadwell	(7v7)	1	3
53	The Gateway Academy	Tilbury & Chadwell	(5v5)	1	2
-	-	-	**Total**	**21**	**29**

Most overplay is generated from poor quality pitches (15 match equivalent sessions per week), whilst only one is assessed as good (at Lakeside Sports Ground).

The majority is situated in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area (13 match equivalent sessions per week), followed by the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area (nine match equivalent sessions per week).

By pitch type, overplay is mostly on youth 11v11 pitches (11 match equivalent sessions per week). The least is on mini 5v5 pitches (two match equivalent sessions).

Table 2.18: Summary of overplay (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	4.5	-	1	-	-	**5.5**
Grays	1	0.5	-	-	-	**1.5**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	0.5	8	3.5	1	-	**13**
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	2.5	1.5	3	2	**9**
Thurrock	**6**	**11**	**6**	**4**	**2**	**29**

2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify current demand (i.e., spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions. As stated earlier, future demand, at this stage, is calculated based on what has been identified through population growth, although it should be noted that the Strategy document will show future shortfalls on grass pitches when club ambitions are accounted for.

Adult pitch capacity

Table 2.19: Summary and demand for adult pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	-	4.5	**4.5**	1	**5.5**
Grays	-	1	**1**	1	**2**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	1.5	0.5	**1**	1	**0**
Tilbury & Chadwell	1	-	**1**	0.5	**0.5**
Thurrock	**2.5**	**6**	**3.5**	**3.5**	**7**

The table above shows that there is currently a shortfall of 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week on adult pitches in Thurrock. The deficit can be attributed to the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet and Grays analysis areas.

After considering future demand, the shortfall increases to seven match equivalent sessions per week, although overall spare capacity remains in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area.

Youth 11v11 pitch capacity

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

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	-	-	**0**	0.5	**0.5**
Grays	-	0.5	**0.5**	0.5	**1**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	1	8	**7**	1	**8**
Tilbury & Chadwell	1.5	2.5	**1**	-	**1**
Thurrock	**2.5**	**11**	**8.5**	2	**10.5**

The table above shows that there is currently a shortfall of 8.5 match equivalent session sper week on youth 11v11 pitches in Thurrock. Shortfalls can be found in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet, Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham and Tilbury & Chadwell analysis areas. The Grays Analysis Area is at capacity.

After considering future demand, the shortfall increases to 10.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Furthermore, a deficit can be seen in each analysis area.

Youth 9v9 pitch capacity

Table 2.21: Supply and demand for youth 9v9 pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	1.5	1	**0.5**	0.5	**0**
Grays	-	-	**0**	-	**0**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	3.5	**3.5**	0.5	**4**
Tilbury & Chadwell	1.5	1.5	**0**	-	**0**
Thurrock	**3**	**6**	**3**	**1**	**4**

Within Thurrock, a shortfall of youth 9v9 pitch capacity is identified, with this amounting to three match equivalent sessions. However, only the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area has a deficit, with a minimal level of spare capacity found in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area.

After considering future demand, a shortfall of four match equivalent sessions per week has been established. The deficit is entirely in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area, with the remaining three forecast to be operating at capacity.

Mini 7v7 pitch capacity

Table 2.22: Supply and demand for mini 7v7 pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	0.5	-	**0.5**	0.5	**0**
Grays	2.5	-	**2.5**	0.5	**2**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	2	1	**1**	0.5	**0.5**
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	3	**3**	-	**3**
Thurrock	**5**	**4**	**1**	1.5	**0.5**

Across Thurrock, actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session exists on mini 7v7 pitches. However, a shortfall is found in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area amounting to three match equivalent sessions.

After considering future demand, a small shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions develops, with this due to the aforementioned shortfall in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area.

Mini 5v5 pitch capacity

Table 2.23: Supply and demand for mini 5v5 pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	2.5	-	**2.5**	0.5	**2**
Grays	2	-	**2**	0.5	**1.5**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	-	**0**	0.5	**0.5**
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	2	**2**	0.5	**2.5**
Thurrock	**4.5**	**2**	**2.5**	**2**	**0.5**

Across Thurrock, actual spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions exists on mini 5v5 pitches. However, the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area currently overplayed by two match equivalent sessions.

After considering future demand, actual spare capacity is reduced to a minimal level of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is due to an increased shortfall in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area and the development of a shortfall in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.

2.6: Conclusion

Using the supply and demand tables above, the table below summarises the overall Thurrock supply and demand balance by pitch type. As seen, there are currently shortfalls across adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch types, whilst only relatively minimal levels of spare capacity exists on mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches. When considering future demand, the existing shortfalls are projected to worsen, whilst an additional shortfall is expected to be creation in relation to mini 7v7 capacity. This evidences that the existing supply is insufficient to accommodate both current and future demand.

Table 2.24: Summary of analysis for grass football pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Adult	2.5	6	3.5	3.5	7
Youth 11v11	2.5	11	8.5	2	10.5
Youth 9v9	3	6	3	1	4
Mini 7v7	5	4	1	1.5	0.5
Mini 5v5	4.5	2	2.5	2	0.5

When assessing the supply and demand balance by analysis area, despite the overall shortfalls and surpluses, there is a marked difference. In the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area, there is a current shortfall of adult pitch capacity and a future shortfall of youth 11v11 pitch capacity, whereas in the Grays Analysis Area there is a current and future deficit of both.

In the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area, there is a current and future shortfall of youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 provision, in addition to a future deficit of mini 5v5 pitch capacity. In the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area, there is a current and future shortfall for youth 11v11, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 provision.

Table 2.25: Analysis area summary for grass football pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet					
Adult	-	4.5	4.5	1	5.5
Youth 11v11	-	-	0	0.5	0.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	1	0.5	0.5	0
Mini 7v7	0.5	-	0.5	0.5	0
Mini 5v5	2.5	-	2.5	0.5	2
Grays					
Adult	-	1	1	1	2
Youth 11v11	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Youth 9v9	-	-	0	-	0
Mini 7v7	2.5	-	2.5	0.5	2
Mini 5v5	2	-	2	0.5	1.5
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham					
Adult	1.5	0.5	1	1	0
Youth 11v11	1	8	7	1	8
Youth 9v9	-	3.5	3.5	0.5	4
Mini 7v7	2	1	1	0.5	0.5
Mini 5v5	-	-	0	0.5	0.5
Tilbury & Chadwell					
Adult	1	-	1	0.5	0.5
Youth 11v11	1.5	2.5	1	-	1
Youth 9v9	1.5	1.5	0	-	0
Mini 7v7	-	3	3	-	3
Mini 5v5	-	2	2	0.5	2.5

Notwithstanding the above, since the previous PPOSS was completed in 2020, shortfalls on adult pitches has significantly reduced from 32.5 match equivalent sessions, which is likely due to a decrease of adult teams across the Borough and improvement in pitch quality. Furthermore, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches now have overall spare capacity rather than a shortfall, which has no doubt been assisted by an increase in and greater utilisation of 3G pitches (see Part 3).

In contrast, shortfalls of youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches have worsened. This is primarily related to a significant increase in the number of teams utilising these pitch types.

Within Thurrock, there are a reduced number of community available pitches in comparison to the previous study despite an increase in demand. Moreover, with latent and exported demand identified, for this to be accommodated within the Borough some sites that are currently disused will potentially need to be brought back into use to reduce the strain on facilities as well as the creation of new provision to accommodate the anticipated growth through future demand and trend based growth. The subsequent Strategy will explore ways to alleviate overplay and accommodate growth identified through various sources.

Supply and demand summary

- Actual spare capacity totals 18 match equivalent sessions per week across 26 pitches and 11 sites in Thurrock, whilst 21 pitches across 13 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 29 match equivalent sessions.
- There are currently shortfalls across adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitch types, whilst only relatively minimal levels of spare capacity exists on mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches.
- When considering future demand, the existing shortfalls are projected to worsen, whilst an additional shortfall is expected to be creation in relation to mini 7v7 capacity.
- The evidence suggests that the existing supply is insufficient to accommodate both current and future demand.

Supply summary

- The audit identifies a total of 116 Grass football pitches across 42 sites in Thurrock, with 103 pitches across 38 sites identified as being available for community use.
- Since the 2020 PPOSS was completed, there are ten fewer community available pitches due to provision becoming disused and/or re-configuration.
- The number of disused pitches equates to 37 (17 adult, three youth 11v11, five youth 9v9, six mini 7v7 and six mini 5v5 pitches), with this incorporating provision across 12 sites.
- Of the community available pitches, 28 are managed by the Council, 25 by sports clubs, 48 by education operators, and the remaining two pitches by other providers.
- Six community available pitches are assessed as good quality, 68 as standard quality and 29 as poor quality.
- Poor quality ancillary provision is found at Billet Recreation Ground, Chadwell Recreation Ground, Old Hall Farm and Ortu Hassenbrook Academy.

Demand summary

- In total there are 300 teams across 73 clubs identified as playing in Thurrock, with this equating to 65 adult teams, 88 youth 11v11 teams, 46 youth 9v9 teams, 58 mini 7v7 teams and 43 mini 5v5 teams.
- The figures include four women's teams and 20 dedicated girls', representing 8% of all demand across the Borough.
- The total number of teams across the Borough has increased significantly from 262 teams to 300 teams since 2020.
- Three men's and two women's teams play within the National League System and must adhere to ground grading regulations.
- There are 12 clubs identifying latent demand for pitch provision, which is a considerable number.

- Grays Athletic FC and Aveley FC export some demand outside of the Borough, whereas Hastag United FC imports activity into Thurrock (from Basildon).
- Seven clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide, totalling a large predicted growth of 42 teams, whilst population projections predict a growth of 20 teams (seven adult, four youth 11v11, two youth 9v9, three mini 7v7 and four mini 5v5).

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

3.1: Introduction

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

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

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

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

3.2: Supply

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

For rugby union, a 3G pitch must measure 106 x 68 metres for senior match play, with a 5-metre run off around the full perimeter. Smaller sized pitches can, however, be used to support training demand providing that they are installed to the correct specifications.

For rugby league, the preferred size of a 3G pitch must measure 100 x 68 metres with an eight metre in-goal area, with a maximum size 3G pitch measuring 100 x 68 metres with a 11 metre in-goal area and for a minimum size 3G pitch it must measure 88 x 55 metres with a six metre in-goal area. All pitches must have a 3-metre run off as standard.

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

Based on the above specifications, there are currently six 11v11 3G pitches provided in Thurrock across as many sites. Of the pitches, five are sports lit and available for community use, whereas the pitch at Thames Park Secondary school is without sports lighting and, for this reason, is currently unavailable for community use.

Four of the 11v11 3G pitches are located in the Grays Analysis Area, with one located in each of the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas. There are no pitches located in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area. Thi is summarised further in the table below.

Table 3.1: Summary of the number of 11v11 3G pitches by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of 11v11 pitches	No. of smaller pitches
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	1	2
Grays	4	2
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	1	2
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-
Thurrock Total	**6**	**6**
2020 PPOSS Total	**3**	**3**

As also seen in Table 3.1, as well as the 11v11 3G pitches, there are also six smaller sized pitches in Thurrock, all of which are serviced by sports lighting. Five are available for community use (the pitch at Purfleet Primary Academy is not). There is a split of two smaller sized 3G pitches within the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet, Grays and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas, whilst none are provided in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area.

Whilst not large enough to accommodate adult match play, smaller size provision can be used to accommodate youth and mini matches, in addition to training demand, providing that they are on the FA 3G Pitch Register, of an adequate size and with appropriate run-off areas.

Since the previous PPOSS was completed, the number of 11v11 3G pitches has increased by 100% from three. All pitches that have been developed are located in the Grays Analysis Area. Similarly, the number of smaller sized pitches has also doubled.

Figure 3.1 overleaf identifies the location of all 3G pitches in Thurrock, regardless of size. For a key to the map and a site-by-site summary of the provision, please see tables 3.2 and 3.3.

Figure 3.1: Location of 3G pitches in Thurrock



Table 3.2: Summary of 11v11 3G pitches in Thurrock

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting	Size (metres)	FA registered	World Rugby compliant
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	RM16 6SA	Grays	Yes	Yes	100x64	Yes	No
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	RM16 6DN	Grays	Yes	Yes	100x64	Yes	No
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	Yes	100x64	Yes	Yes
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	RM15 4UA	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Yes	106x75	Yes	No
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Yes	100x64	Yes	No
51	Thames Park Secondary School	RM17 5FP	Grays	No	No	100x64	No	No

Table 3.3: Summary of smaller sized 3G pitches in Thurrock

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)	FA registered	World Rugby compliant
22	Harris Academy Riverside	RM19 1QY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Yes	82x50	No	No
40	Ortu Gable Hall School	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Yes	55x36	No	No
44	Quarry Hill Academy	RM17 5UT	Grays	Yes	Yes	55x37	No	No
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	Yes	44x26	No	No
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	SS17 9BJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Yes	33x15	No	No
73	Purfleet Primary Academy	RM19 1SX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	Yes	33x18	No	No

Future supply

In the case of Thames Park Secondary School, it is working on opening its pitch up for community use. As part of this, it is in the stages of applying for sports lighting.

A planning application (REF:24/01216/CONDC) has been approved at Tilbury Football Club for the erection of a new stadium on the site of existing training pitches that are located to the north-east of its existing provision at Chadfields. The Club states that the new stadium will be a 3G surface. On the site of the existing stadium, a developer has requested to build up to 112 dwellings, subject to planning permission. Construction is underway for the new stadium, however it is reported that the investors behind the development have pulled out and as such, halting progress.

In addition, a planning application (REF:24/01027/FUL) has been submitted at Belhus Park Golf & Country Club comprising the demolition of the existing driving range structures and fencing and provision of replacement sports use comprising two sports-lit 11v11 3G pitches, storage facilities and a sports pavilion including accessible changing facilities for four teams (plus officials). This is linked to the potential loss of Aveley Sports & Social Club for an employment scheme and the FF reports that it is supportive.

Similarly, a planning application (REF:24/01197/FUL) is in place for the redevelopment of The Springhouse Sports Club that will include a new 3G pitch as well as supporting facilities. This is yet to be determined but if approved will be self-funded by the Club itself.

At Wyldecrest Sports Country Club, there is an aspiration to develop its smaller sized 3G pitch into an 11v11 3G pitch. It reports that this would ideally be in partnership with the FF to help better accommodate football demand within the Borough; however, the FF states that it has received no engagement in relation to it.

FA 3G Pitch Register

In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches, the pitch should be FIFA or IMS tested and approved and added to the FA 3G Pitch Register, which can be found at:.

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA Quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard. Generally, FIFA Quality pitches can be typically used for 60-85 hours per week, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are able to accommodate 20-30 hours.

To remain on the Register, pitches must be re-assessed every three years to ensure that quality has not deteriorated beyond acceptable levels, although this is required annually for clubs within the National League System, such as Parkside (Aveley Football Club).

Within Thurrock, five of the 11v11 3G pitches are on the FA 3G Pitch Register and can therefore be used to host competitive matches. The exception is the pitch at Thames Park Secondary School, which is not accredited.

Table 3.4: Summary of FA compliancy

Site ID	Site name	FA approved?	Expiry date
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Yes	(31/05/2026)
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	Yes	(31/05/2027)
37	Orsett Heath Academy	Yes	(31/05/2026)
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Yes	(31/05/2026)
47	St Clere's School	Yes	(31/05/2026)
51	Thames Park Secondary School	No	-

None of the smaller size pitches in the Borough are on the FA 3G Pitch Register although two were previously (at Harris Riverside Academy and Quarry Hill Academy).
It should also be noted that the 3G pitch located at Parkside (Aveley Football Club) is a NLS pitch and therefore needs retesting annually. The others require testing every three years.

World Rugby compliant pitches

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

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

In Thurrock, the 3G pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is World Rugby Compliant. It is accessed by Thurrock RUFC for the majority of its training demand, with the Club considered to be a partner as part of the planning process that saw the provision developed.

Management

Four of the six 11v11 3G pitches are managed by education providers. Conversely, the pitches at Parkside (Aveley Football Cub) and Lakeside Sports Ground managed by sports clubs.

Five of the smaller size 3G pitches are managed by education providers and one by a private operator (Wyldecrest Sports Country Club).

Availability

The following table summarises the availability within the peak period of the 11v11 3G pitches in Thurrock. This utilises Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM), which applies a generic overall peak period for AGPs based on 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

Table 3.5: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch availability

Site ID	Site	Availability in the peak period (hours)	Availability
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	30	Available from 17:00 until 21:00 on weekdays and 09:00 until 15:00 on weekends.
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	34	Available from 09:00 until 22:00 on weekdays and 09:00 until 21:00 on weekends.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	31.5	Available from 17:30 until 22:00 on weekdays and 08:00 until 18:00 on weekends.
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	34	Available from 09:00 until 22:00 every day.
47	St Clere's School	34	Available from 17:00 until 22:00 on weekdays and 09:00 until 22:00 on weekends
51	Thames Park Secondary School	-	Unavailable for community use.

As seen, availability is relatively good across the provision where community use is allowed, with pitches accessible for at least 30 of the 34 peak period hours. The only exception is the provision at Thames Park Secondary School due to its lack of sports lighting.

In relation to smaller sized pitches, availability is generally less, which is partly a consequence of less demand being received. As an example, the pitches at Ortu Gable Hall School, Harris Academy Riverside and Quarry Hill Academy are generally unavailable at weekends, despite having good availability during the week.

The pitches at Williams Edwards School and Wyldecrest Sports Country Club have better availability, with the former available for 28.5 hours and the latter for the full 34 hours.

Quality

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

In Thurrock, five of the six 11v11 3G pitches are rated as good quality, with the pitch at Lakeside Sports Ground rated as standard quality due to it being close to the end of its recommended lifespan. This is summarised in the following table.

Table 3.6: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch quality

Site ID	Site	Year installed/resurfaced	Quality
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	2022	Good
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	2016	Standard
37	Orsett Heath Academy	2023	Good
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	2019	Good
47	St Clere's School	2022	Good
51	Thames Park Secondary School	2022	Good

At Lakeside Sports Ground, it is reported that the operator had been waiting on an outcome as to whether the pitch could be lost due to highways work. As this will now not be going ahead, the pitch is considered to be secure and suitable for investment.

It should be noted that the pitch at Parkside (Aveley Football Club) serves as a NLS pitch accommodating match fixtures as well as training demand. As such, the pitch is likely to need resurfacing sooner than usual due to increased wear.

In addition to above, there are three good, two standard and one poor quality smaller size 3G pitch across the Borough.

Table 3.7: Summary of smaller size 3G pitch quality

Site ID	Site	Year installed/resurfaced	Quality
22	Harris Academy Riverside	2019	Poor
40	Ortu Gable Hall School	2017	Standard
44	Quarry Hill Academy	2021	Good
61	William Edwards School	2021	Good
63	Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	2025	Good
73	Purfleet Primary Academy	2016	Standard

Despite being installed in 2019, the pitch at Harris Academy Riverside has significant issues relating to its quality. One side of the pitch has sunk and therefore cannot be used for competitive demand as it is deemed unsafe. The School reports that the pitch will be fixed imminently to resolve this.

Ancillary facilities

All 3G provision in Thurrock is accompanied by ancillary facilities that are considered adequate with no issues raised during consultation or via site assessments.

3.3: Demand

The 11v11 3G pitch stock currently servicing Thurrock is reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times during midweek, especially in winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of sports lighting). This also applies to both midweek training demand and weekend usage given that each accessible pitch is also on the FA 3G Pitch Register to host competitive matches, with the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy also World Rugby compliant.

Currently, it is considered that most of the community-based activity on the 3G pitches is football related, with the majority of provision having large clubs tied to them. Examples include Parkside, which is heavily utilised by the host club (Aveley FC), Harris Academy

Chafford Hundred, which is used by Little Thurrock Dynamos FC, and St Clere's School, which is accessed by St Clere's FC.

In addition, the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is well used by Thurrock RUFC, which accesses the provision for three nights a week for training purposes. This is in addition to supplementary football activity, most of which comes from Grays Athletic FC.
There are also small-sided commercial leagues operating on the 3G pitches. For example, Soccer Sixes operates at St Clere's School on both Wednesdays and Sundays, whilst Powerleague runs at Harris Academy Chafford Hundred on Mondays.

The table below summarises usage levels of the 11v11 3G provision in Thurrock based on booking sheets supplied by the operators, feedback from clubs during the consultation process and affiliation data. This compared against availability at peak time, using Sport England's FPM. As seen, only very minimal capacity remains.

In relation to smaller sized provision, less information is known as booking sheets could not be accessed for some, whilst others are relatively new pitches and are therefore are yet to have a full programme of use. However, it is known that some are being utilised by relatively large clubs, such as Grays Athletic FC at Harris Academy Riverside. In addition, the pitch at Quarry Hill Academy is used by Powerleague.

Site ID	Site name	Midweek availability (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend availability (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	18	18	12	12
27	Lakeside Sports Ground	18	18	16	16
37	Orsett Heath Academy	15.5	15.5	16	16
43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	18	18	16	16
47	St Clere's School	18	18	16	13
51	Thames Park Secondary School	-	-	-	-
-	**Total**	**139**	**117.5**	**89**	**76**

Table 3.8: Current usage of all 3G pitches across Thurrock in peak time

Unmet/latent demand

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

Across Thurrock, 13 football clubs that responded to consultation report that they require additional access to 3G provision, which represents a high proportion of unmet demand. Some of these are training on 3G pitches but do not have capacity for all of their teams, or do not have access at preferred times. Others are not training on 3G pitches at all and are instead using sand-based or grass pitches either at their home grounds or elsewhere.

Across the clubs, 170 teams are represented, which is a significant number, with 86 of the teams not currently accessing any 3G provision for training. The clubs expressing this demand and sites presently used are summarised in the following table.

Table 3.9: Current training facilities of clubs reporting unmet/latent 3G pitch demand

Club name	Site ID	Site	Surface
Aveley Youth FC	43	Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Grass/3G
Brandon Groves FC	46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Grass
Corringham Athletic FC	34	Old Hall Farm	Grass
Corringham Cosmos FC	41	Ortu Gable Hall School Playing Fields	Grass
County Park FC	52	Thames RFC	Grass
Foxhound Vets FC	8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	Grass
Grays Athletic FC	7	Chadfieds	Grass
Heath Athletic FC	8	Chadwell Recreation Ground	Grass
Hassenbrook FC	42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	Grass
Horndon Veterans FC	14	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Grass
Little Thurrock Dynamos FC	20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Grass/ 3G
Thurrock Tigers FC	25	Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club)	Grass
Tilbury FC	7	Chadfields	Grass

No unmet or latent 3G demand has been identified for any sport other than football. This includes rugby union, where the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is seemingly meeting requirements.

Exported/imported demand

No clubs are identified as exporting demand outside of Thurrock to access 3G provision. Similarly, no imported demand has been identified.

Future demand

As set out in Part 2 of this report, potential growth from population projections equates to 20 football teams. If this growth was realised, and if all additional teams wanted or needed to train on 3G provision, it will increase the number of 3G pitches required.

In addition, some future demand for rugby union is also anticipated which could result in increased 3G pitch need. However, it is considered that this would only be the case if Thurrock RUFC was to grow.

Notwithstanding the above, it should also be noted that the ONS population projections used do not account for the potential for future demand to be higher, which could be the case particularly if recent growth trends continue. Further increases will therefore be subject to scenarios in Strategy document. Furthermore, the Strategy document will also consider additional future population demand associated with participation trend based growth and planned housing growth, with this also not accounted for within the above figures.

3.4: Supply and demand analysis

Football

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

Training demand

To quantify the 3G shortfall for football, the FA has established a training model that suggests that one 11v11 3G pitch can accommodate 38 affiliated teams (with capacity built in for other forms of demand). It also has an aspiration for all teams to train once per week on a 3G pitch, although it is recognised that nationally some activity may need to be retained on sand-based pitches to ensure the sustainability of them.

For the model, in addition to 11v11 pitches being included, some smaller size pitches can also be incorporated as many are suitable for accommodating training demand, especially larger ones. As such, the contribution each pitch makes in Thurrock is summarised in the table below. This then informs the proceeding modelling tables.

Any pitch too small to accommodate purposeful training demand are discounted, as well as any pitches that are unavailable for community use. In addition, the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is also discounted given that a large proportion of midweek peak time capacity is taken up for rugby union usage.

Table 3.10: Contribution of 3G pitches in meeting training requirements

Site name	Analysis area	Size (metres)	Comments	Full size adult pitch equivalents
11v11 size				
Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Grays	100x64	Fully available.	1
Lakeside Sports Ground	Grays	100x64	Fully available.	1
Orsett Heath Academy	Grays	100x64	This pitch is primarily utilised by Thurrock RUFC and therefore is not deemed to contribute towards meeting football training demands.	0
Parkside (Aveley Football Club)	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	106x75	This pitch is utilised for NLS fixtures, as such is not deemed to contribute fully towards meeting football training demands.	0.5
St Clere's School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	100x64	Fully available.	1
Thames Park Secondary School	Grays	100x64	Unavailable for community use.	0
Smaller size				
Harris Academy Riverside	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	82x50	A larger pitch that can accommodate up to youth 9v9 demand.	0.75
Ortu Gable Hall School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	55x36	Pitch can accommodate mini football.	0.25

Site name	Analysis area	Size (metres)	Comments	Full size adult pitch equivalents
Quarry Hill Academy	Grays	55x37	Accommodates commercial power league during peak period.	0
William Edwards School	Grays	44x26	Not considered big enough for purposeful training demand.	0
Wyldecrest Sports Country Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	33x15	Not considered big enough for purposeful training demand.	0
Purfleet Primary Academy	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	33x18	Unavailable for community use.	0
-	-	-	**Total**	**4.5**

As there are five 11v11 pitch equivalents provided, this means that there is a potential shortfall of three 11v11 3G pitches (rounded up form 7.9) to meet all current training demand. This is based on 300 teams currently playing in the Borough.

Table 3.11: Current demand for 11v11 3G pitches in Thurrock (38 teams per pitch)

Current number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 11v11 size 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
300	8	4.5	3.5

When considering future demand for an additional 20 teams (based on growth identified in Part 2 of this report), there is potential demand for 8.5 full size pitches overall (rounded up from 8.4), which means a theoretical future shortfall of four pitches.

Table 3.12: Future demand for 11v11 3G pitches in Thurrock (38 teams per pitch)

Future number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 11v11 size 3G pitch equivalents	Future shortfall
320	8.5	4.5	4

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

Table 3.13: Current demand for 11v11 3G pitches by analysis area (38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current requirement	Current number of 11v11 pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	90	2	1.75	1.25
Grays	70	2	2	0
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	93	2.5	1.25	1.25

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current requirement	Current number of 11v11 pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
Tilbury & Chadwell	47	1	-	1
Authority	**300**	**8**	**5**	**3.5**

This also shows current overall shortfall of three 11v11 3G pitch equivalents, aligning to the shortfall across Thurrock as a whole. It also identifies that there are specific shortfalls in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet, Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham and Tilbury & Chadwell analysis areas (demand is being met in the Grays Analysis Area).

Should the pitch at Thames Park Secondary School be opened up for community use and be equipped with sports lighting, it will reduce the overall shortfall to two pitches. However, it will not alter the analysis area breakdown due to being located in the Grays Analysis Area (although it would be feasible for demand from other areas to be accommodated to still reduce overall need).

The approved 3G pitch at Tilbury Football Club (Chadfields) could potentially meet the outlined requirements in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area, although it should be noted that this will be used for NLS football, including any midweek fixtures. As such, it may have capacity limitations that need to be accounted for. However, it should be noted that this development could be at risk due to the investor pulling out.

In addition, the approved developments of two 11v11 3G pitches at Belhus Park and one pitch at The Springhouse Sports Club are likely to help reduce the overall shortfall of pitches across Thurrock.

Match play demand

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

In Thurrock, currently 65 affiliated teams across five clubs are registered as using 3G pitches for regular match play, which is helped by five of the six 11v11 pitches being FA approved for competitive matches. Whilst this is a relatively considerable number, especially compared to most other authorities, there are opportunities for this to be further increased. As the number of 3G pitches increases in line with meeting training demand shortfalls, so should the number of teams utilising the provision for matches, which in turn should further relieve grass pitches of use. As such, whilst the number of 3G pitches needed for matches will never outweigh the number of 3G pitches needed for training (as they would not be sustainable without midweek usage), maximising the pitches that are in place and that are proposed should be fully supported.

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

The role of sand/water based pitches

The above section assumes that all football demand should take place on 3G pitches. However, in practice, there is a national need for a proportion of football training demand to be retained on hockey suitable AGPs to maintain the financial and commercial sustainability of such provision. This is particularly the case in Thurrock at The Gateway Academy given that it does not currently receive any community hockey demand (see Part 5).

Despite usage of Storm Fit to accommodate football training demand, it should be noted that England Hockey would object to any potential conversion of a 3G pitch at this site due to it being utilised by Thurrock HC.

Rugby union

Given the inclement weather often experienced throughout the winter months of the rugby union season, more clubs are becoming increasingly receptive towards training on artificial pitches. Clubs traditionally train on match pitches where sports lighting is in place, unless there is a separate grass training area. This often results in overuse and consequently a deterioration in pitch quality coupled with decreasing maintenance budgets.

In Thurrock, there is one World Rugby compliant 3G pitch located at Orsett Heath School which is well utilised by Thurrock RUFC to the point where its grass provision is no longer overused (see Part 4). This exemplifies the benefit such provision can have in meeting demand.

Notwithstanding the above, there is no evidence that additional 3G provision is required in the Borough based on the current supply and demand picture. Only a minimal shortfall exists that can be overcome through grass pitch solutions, with this relating to Stanford-le-Hope RUFC.

Furthermore, no clubs report a need to access 3G provision, other than Thurrock RUFC.

Other sports

Currently, no other sports clubs/users are presently identified as accessing the existing stock of 3G pitches in Thurrock (outside of some school activity). Furthermore, no need for access has been identified, with relevant sports such as rugby league, American football and lacrosse currently having no presence within the Borough.

3.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, there is insufficient supply of 11v11 size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football demand in Thurrock, with a potential current shortfall of three 11v11 3G pitches identified and an anticipated future shortfall of 3.5 11v11 3G pitches. The creation of new provision should therefore be seen as a priority, particularly in the Stanford-Le-Hope & Corringham and Tilbury & Chadwell analysis areas.

Notwithstanding the above, there is also seemingly some scope to increase the usage of the existing stock of pitches, which in turn will reduce the shortfall without new provision. Namely, access to the provision at Thames Park Secondary School could be sought, particularly if sports lighting could be added to the site. Furthermore, the planned development at Tilbury Football Club would also reduce need.

Away from football, no further demand for access to 3G provision is considered to be required, outside of the existing usage of the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy by Thurrock RUFC. No action is therefore required in this regard.

Supply and demand summary

- There is insufficient supply of 11v11 size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football demand in Thurrock, with a potential current shortfall of three 11v11 3G pitches identified.
- The creation of new provision should therefore be seen as a priority, although the overall shortfall could be reduced through access and the installation of sports lighting at Thames Park Secondary School as well as the already planned development at Tilbury Football Club.
- Away from football, no further demand for access to 3G provision is considered to be required, outside of the existing usage of the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy by Thurrock RUFC.

Supply summary

- There are six 11v11 3G pitches in Thurrock, with five sports-lit and available for community use (the pitch at Thames Park Secondary School is not).
- Thames Park Secondary School is working on opening its pitch up for community use and is in the stages of applying for sports lighting.
- There are also six smaller sized pitches in Thurrock, all of which are serviced by sports lighting although the pitch at Purfleet Primary Academy is unavailable to the community.
- A planning application has been approved for the creation of a 11v11 3G pitch at Tilbury Football Club, whilst applications have been submitted for the establishment of two pitches at Belhus Park Golf & Country Club and one pitch at The Springhouse Sports Club.
- At Wyldecrest Sports Country Club, there is an aspiration to develop its smaller sized 3G pitch into an 11v11 3G pitch.
- Five of the 11v11 3G pitches are on the FA 3G Pitch Register and can therefore be used to host competitive matches (the exception is the pitch at Thames Park Secondary School).
- The pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is World Rugby compliant.
- Five of the six 11v11 3G pitches are rated as good quality, with the pitch at Lakeside Sports Ground rated as standard quality due to it being close to the end of its recommended lifespan.
- Despite being installed in 2019, the smaller sized pitch at Harris Academy Riverside has significant issues relating to its quality.

Demand summary

- The 11v11 3G pitch stock currently servicing Thurrock is reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, both during midweek for training and at weekends for matches.
- It is considered that most of the community-based activity on the 3G pitches is football related, although the pitch at Orsett Heath Academy is primarily used for rugby union.
- There are 65 football teams utilising the 3G provision for matches, which is a relatively large number for the number of pitches provided.
- A total of 13 football clubs report that they require additional access to 3G provision, which represents a high proportion of unmet demand.
- Future demand for football (from population projections) equating to 20 teams will likely increase 3G pitch requirements, whilst rugby union growth could also have an impact.
- The FA training model suggests a current shortfall of two 11v11 3G pitches, increasing to 3.5 when accounting for future demand.
- The shortfalls are identified in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet, Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham and Tilbury & Chadwell analysis areas.
- Despite existing rugby union usage, there is no evidence that additional 3G provision is required in the Borough based on the current supply and demand picture for the sport.
- No other sporting needs for 3G access is identified, outside of football and rugby union.

PART 4: RUGBY UNION

4.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. It governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-aside, 10-aside, 7-aside and Tag rugby as well as the O2 Touch programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

For traditional rugby union, there are generally three playing formats, based on the age of the players involved. These are now known as age grade mixed rugby (previously mini), age grade boys/girls rugby (previously junior) and senior rugby.

The rugby union playing season operates from September to May.

Consultation

There are four rugby union clubs in Thurrock, although only Thurrock RUFC has responded to consultation requests. This is summarised in the table below.

Table 4.1: Rugby club response rate

Club name	Analysis area	Club response
Pegasus Palmerians RUFC	Grays	No
Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No
Thames RUFC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No
Thurrock RUFC	Grays	Yes

4.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 13 grass rugby pitches in Thurrock across eight sites, with all pitches available for some level of community use (although many are unused). As a breakdown there are 12 senior pitches and one age grade pitch.

Three grass pitches are sports-lit, with one at Thames Rugby Club and two at Thurrock Rugby Football Club. In addition, there is also a senior sized World Rugby compliant 3G pitch provided at Orsett Heath Academy (further information in relation to this can be found in Part 3).

As shown in the table below, the Grays Analysis Area has the largest amount of provision with six pitches (46%), followed by the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area with four pitches (31%). The Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area has the least amount of provision with just one pitch (8%).

Table 4.2: Supply of grass rugby union pitches in Thurrock

Analysis area	No. of rugby union pitches
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	2
Grays	6
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	4
Tilbury & Chadwell	1
Thurrock Total	**13**
2020 Total	**15**

Since the previous study was completed in 2020, the number of grass pitches has decreased by two. This is due to the wider development of Orsett Heath Academy that saw the creation of the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch.

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches that are serviced by goalposts. However, nationally, there are some additional spaces that are used without goalposts, particularly for age grade rugby. It is also common for age grade matches to be played on senior pitches via the use of cones.

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

Table 4.3: Rugby union pitch dimensions

Age	Playing format	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres)[7]
U7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
U8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22
U9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
U10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
U11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U12	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U13	Age grade boys/girls	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U15	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U16	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U17	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U18	Colts	100 x 70
Senior	Senior	100 x 70

Figure 4.1 overleaf shows the location of all rugby union pitches currently servicing Thurrock. For a key to the map, see Table 4.9.

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

Figure 4.1: Location of rugby union pitches within Thurrock



Management and security of tenure

The table below identifies the tenure of the clubs at their home venues. As shown, Stanford-le-Hope RUFC, Thames RFC and Thurrock RUFC are all considered to have security of tenure at their sites, whilst Pegasus Palmerians RUFC does not.

Table 4.4: Summary of rugby club security of tenure in Thurrock

Club	Tenure arrangement	Secure?
Pegasus Palmerians RUFC	Short term rental agreement	Unsecure
Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Long term lease agreement	Secure
Thames RUFC	Long term lease agreement	Secure
Thurrock RUFC	Freehold / CUA / licence agreement	Secure

Thurrock RUFC has freehold of its provision at Thurrock Rugby Football Club and also has secure access to the provision at Orsett Heath Academy via a partnership and community use agreement that was agreed as part of its development. As well as this, it also has a licence to use the age grade provision at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field), with this also forming part of the agreement for the development of the Orsett Heath Academy Site.

Stanford-le-Hope RUFC leases its clubhouse and rents its pitches at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground from the Council. The Club also forms part of the Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground User Group, which has a controlling stake in the site.

Thames RUFC is 12 years into a 21-year lease of its site (expiring 2034). Whilst this provides some security of tenure, a renewal and extension should be sought in the near future. If any external investment was to be pursued, a lease with more than 25 years remaining would increase the chances of success.

Pegasus Palmerians RUFC rents the senior pitch at Storm Fit (Grays). However, as no community use agreement is in place, tenure is deemed to be unsecure. This is common at education sites.

Pitch quality

The assessment of rugby union pitch quality looks at two key elements; the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. For maintenance, each pitch is given a maintenance rating of M0, M1 or M2, based on the regime that is usually undertaken, with the definitions of these shown in the table below.

Table 4.5: Definition of maintenance categories

Category	Definition
M0	Minimal or no maintenance is undertaken
M1	Regular maintenance is undertaken that extends beyond a basic regime
M2	A sophisticated, regular and dedicated maintenance regime is undertaken

For drainage, a rating of D0, D1, D2 or D3 is assigned to each pitch. This is based on whether drainage is adequate and considers the presence of an operational system. The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres installed in the last five years.

Table 4.6: Definition of drainage categories

Category	Definition
D0	Drainage is natural but inadequate
D1	Drainage is natural and adequate
D2	A pipe drainage system is installed (at 5-metre centres and within the last eight years)
D3	A pipe and slit drainage system is installed (at 1-metre centres in the last five years)

An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated on a scale of good, standard and poor as shown below.

Table 4.7: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	Poor	Poor	Standard
	Natural Adequate (D1)	Poor	Standard	Good
	Pipe Drained (D2)	Standard	Standard	Good
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	Standard	Good	Good

For the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2.

Of the grass rugby union pitches in Thurrock, four are rated as poor quality (including the age grade pitch), five are rated as standard quality and four as good quality. All of the good quality pitches are servicing Thurrock RUFC.

Table 4.8: Quality of senior pitches available for community use in Thurrock

Analysis area	Good quality pitches	Standard quality pitches	Poor quality pitches
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	-	2	-
Grays	4	-	2
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	3	1
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-	1
Total	**4**	**5**	**4**
2020 Total	**3**	**9**	**3**

Thurrock RUFC states that it completes its own pitch maintenance, with the provision aerated more than three times a year, sand dressed, fertilised and weed killed, as well as being re-seeded every summer. Some issues surrounding rusting posts have been identified but this is not of any major concern for the Club at this present time.

The pitch utilised by Pegasus Palmerians RUFC at Storm Fit has been rated as poor quality. This is predominately due to a lack of drainage at the site.

All pitches utilised by Stanford-le-Hope RUFC and Thames RUFC are assessed as standard quality (M1/D1).

Most of the remaining pitches located at educational sites and rated as poor quality as they receive limited maintenance. This is also applies to the Council-operated pitch at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field).

A pitch-by-pitch breakdown can be seen in the table overleaf.

Table 4.9: Site quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Management	Club user	Tenure	Community use?	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	Council	Thurrock RUFC	Secure	Yes	Age grade	No	M0/D1	Poor
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Education	Thurrock RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	-	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Sports Club	Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Sports Club	Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Sports Club	Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard
50	Storm Fit	RM17 5TD	Grays	Education	Pegasus Palmerians	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Sports Club	Thames RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Sports Club	Thames RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Education	-	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	RM16 2QH	Grays	Sports Club	Thurrock RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	RM16 2QH	Grays	Sports Club	Thurrock RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	RM16 2QH	Grays	Sports Club	Thurrock RUFC	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good

Ancillary facilities

Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities. In this regard, good quality ancillary facilities are particularly important for rugby union clubs as they can assist with income generation. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly important for the provision to be inclusive, particularly due to growing women's and girls', disability and junior/mini demand.

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on the sports using the provision, and the number of pitches the facilities service, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

- Accessible changing areas which can be separated, or are private/self-contained, to allow for separate male/female/all gender or senior/junior separation
- A private accessible changing room (with relevant changing and showering provision) for someone who requires assistance
- Separate female / male / all gender toilet provision
- Suitably designed and specified showering cubicles to all users to maintain dignity and privacy whilst showering.

Open planned changing rooms, toilets and particularly showering facilities can provide a significant barrier to many people resulting in them either not taking part or having a poorer sporting experience. As a result, those ancillary facilities that do not meet the above criteria, cannot be rated anything higher than standard quality for the purposes of this document.

The table details the ancillary facility quality in Thurrock for the club-based sites. Additional context behind the rationale for the findings is also provided.

Table 4.10: Ancillary provision of the clubs that responded to consultation

Site ID	Site name	Users	Overall building quality	Changing room quality	Comments
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	Good	Poor	The overall clubhouse is of a good quality. However, the changing facilities are poor with these specified as dated and not suitable for female players.
50	Storm Fit	Pegasus Palmerians RUFC	Standard	Standard	Four men's and four women's changing rooms with self-contained showers. However these are not specifically tailored for rugby union usage.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Thames RUFC	Poor	Poor	The changing rooms are seen as inadequate in size and are also accessed by football and cricket users in addition to the rugby union demand.

Site ID	Site name	Users	Overall building quality	Changing room quality	Comments
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	Thurrock RUFC	Standard	Standard	Two RFU complaint changing rooms were provided as a result of the development of Orsett Heath Academy as well as social facilities on the first floor of the building. In addition, there are also seven standard quality changing rooms in a separate builing that are dated and not suitable for disabled access.

Thurrock RUFC has aspirations to develop the main building at Thurrock Rugby Football Club (with the seven changing rooms) to improve the current provision and to add dedicated disability facilities. Similarly, Thames Rugby Club has aspirations for the complete refurbishment of its ancillary facilities to better accommodate the Club.

4.3: Demand

Demand for rugby pitches within Thurrock tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

Competitive demand

Club based demand for rugby union within Thurrock currently equates to 31 teams across the four clubs. Broken down, there are eight senior men's, three senior women's, ten age grade boy's, four age grade girl's and six age grade mixed teams. This is summarised by club in the following table.

Table 4.11: Summary of number of teams (demand) by club

Club	Analysis area	Men's	Women's	Age grade boys'	Age grade girls'	Age grade mixed	Total
Pegasus Palmerians RUFC	Grays	1	-	-	-	-	**1**
Stanford-Le-Hope RUFC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	3	1	5	1	-	**10**
Thames RUFC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	1	-	-	-	-	**1**
Thurrock RUFC	Grays	3	2	5	3	6	**19**
	Total	**8**	**3**	**10**	**4**	**6**	**31**
	2020 Total	**10**	**4**	**11**	**3**	**11**	**39**

When compared to 2020 PPOSS data, there has been a reduction in the number of teams., the majority of this reduction relates to Thurrock RUFC, although both Pegasus Palmerians RUFC and Thames RUFC also have one fewer team (the former fielded two senior men's teams and the latter fielded a senior women's team).

Training demand

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

In Thurrock, as referenced previously, three grass pitches are serviced by permanent sports lighting, with two located at Thurrock Rugby Football Club and located at Thames Rugby Club. However, there is also the presence of the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Orsett Heath Academy, with this providing an alternative training solution, particularly for Thurrock RUFC.

The activity and training arrangements for each club and the level of this is highlighted in the table below.

Table 4.12: Summary of rugby union club facility use for training

Site ID	Site	Club	Training demand	Match equivalent sessions per week on grass pitches
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope RUFC	The Club utilises mobile sports lights to aid training. Generally, this takes place on a separate area to its main pitches, which are only accessed if they are in good condition. The Club trains on Tuesday's and Thursday's and the occasional Sunday.	2.5
50	Storm Fit	Pegasus Palmerians RUFC	Pegasus Palmerians RUFC does not access its pitch for training. Instead, it trains exclusively on a separate piece of land at Storm Fit on Wednesday evenings.	-
52	Thames Rugby Club	Thames RUFC	The Club accesses the sports-lit pitch at its site twice a week for training demand.	2
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	Thurrock RUFC	The Club utilises the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Orsett Heath Academy, with activity taking place three nights a week for a total of six hours. However, some teams also (or instead) access the two sports-lit pitches at the site for training demand.	4

Use of artificial pitches

The alternative to training on grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches. World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22' that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. A World Rugby compliant pitch also enables the transfer of match demand from grass pitches onto 3G pitches, which alleviates overplay of grass pitches and as a result protects quality.

As mentioned above, there is currently one World Rugby compliant 11v11 3G pitch in Thurrock, with this located at Orsett Heath Academy. Thurrock RUFC access this provision three nights a week (on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays). See Part 3 of this report for further information.

Unmet/latent demand

No unmet or latent demand is expressed for rugby union in Thurrock.

Exported/imported demand

No rugby union clubs or teams are identified as leaving Thurrock to field their demand. Similarly, no demand is identified as travelling into the Borough for activity.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined through multiple ways, including through participation increases and by using population forecasts. Furthermore, due to the limited increases forecast, both aspects need to be considered within the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section as together they are considered to provide more realistic growth levels (often, one can absorb the other, but there is no overlap in Thurrock).

Participation growth

Thames RUFC is in the process of putting together a senior women's team, with aspirations to field this in the 25/26 season. The team currently trains on a Wednesday evening at Thames Rugby Club.

No future demand has been expressed by Thurrock RUFC through consultation, whereas any aspirations for Stanford-le-Hope RUFC and Pegasus Palmerians RUFC are unknown due to their unresponsiveness.

Population growth

Based on population projections to 2043[8], Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass rugby pitches that will arise from any growth. This is by using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, with team generation rates then established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

The table below shows the number of predicted new rugby union teams that will be generated by population growth in Thurrock and the requisite match equivalent sessions that this will create. As seen, an increase of one senior men's and one age grade boys' team is projected.

[8] Thurrock's emerging Local Plan will run to 2044; however, projections are only possible to 2043.

Table 4.13: Borough-wide team generation rates

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Match equivalent sessions [9]
Men (19-45yrs)	1:6,314	0.55	1	0.5
Women (19-45yrs)	1:17,077	0.02	0	0
Boys (13-18yrs)	1:639	1.34	1	0.5
Girls (13-18yrs)	1:2,204	0.32	0	0
Mixed (7-12yrs)	0	0	0	0

Notwithstanding the above, the ONS projections utilised for the team generation rates do not account for the scale or distribution of housing growth that is required in the Borough, as will be proposed in the emerging Local Plan. Housing growth will therefore be subject to dedicated scenarios in the proceeding Strategy document, with this needing to be considered separately.

In addition, it should be noted team generation rates do not account for specific development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as RFU initiatives. As such, increased future growth is still considered possible despite population projections and club aspirations indicating that there will only be minimal growth. A growth in women and girls' rugby is thought to be particularly likely given that it is currently an RFU priority area and due to the upcoming 2025 Rugby World Cup.

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025

For the first time ever, the expanded showcase event will be hosted across eight venues and cities around England (Brighton & Hove, Bristol, Exeter, London, Manchester, Northampton, Sunderland and York) with 16 teams competing to be crowned world champions. The country-wide format makes it the most accessible Women's Rugby World Cup ever, offering an unparalleled opportunity for fans to see, engage with and support the stars of the women's game in towns and cities around England.

The Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will represent a generational moment for global rugby that will set new standards, welcome new fans and families to the sport and inspire a new generation of players, providing an exciting catalyst to nationwide and global rugby growth. The impact of this therefore needs to be monitored throughout the lifespan of the PPOSS, following the event.

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established for all types of rugby. For senior teams in Thurrock, it is considered to be Saturday PM, whilst is it is Sunday AM for age grade rugby.

4.4: Capacity analysis

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

[9] Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of rugby union pitches, the following assumptions are applied to the site-by-site and pitch-by-pitch analysis:

- All sites that are or could be used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- All competitive play is on senior sized pitches, with age grade teams playing on overmarked pitches, unless dedicated age grade pitches are known to be used instead.
- From U13s upwards, teams use a full size senior pitch.
- For senior and age grade boys/girls teams, the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 match equivalent sessions for each match played based on all teams operating on a home and away basis.
- Age grade mixed teams (U6s-U12s) play on half of a senior pitch, meaning two matches and four teams can be accommodated at any one time.
- Play per week for age grade mixed teams is set at 0.25 match equivalent sessions for each match played based on teams operating on a home and away basis.
- Training that takes place on marked pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels (one training session is one match equivalent session).
- Internal use of school pitches is added to current play, where community availability is offered, as determined on a site-by-site basis depending on levels of activity.
- Other usage of pitches (e.g., by football teams) is added as match equivalent sessions based on the level and regularity of play.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate, based on quality, as set out below.

Table 4.14: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

Please see Table 4.15 overleaf for the site by site capacity analysis.

Table 4.15: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Thurrock

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Tenure	Community use?	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating	Pitch capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)	Match demand (match equivalent sessions per week)	Training demand (match equivalent sessions per week)	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions per week)	Actual spare capacity at peak time	Comments
26	Blackshots Leisure Centre (King George's Field)	Grays	Secure	Yes	Age grade	No	M0/D1	Poor	1.5	0	0	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
37	Orsett Heath Academy	Grays	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	3	0	0	0	Played to capacity through curricular and competitive demand by Thurrock RUFC.
47	St Clere's School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	1	0	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	1	1	0	Overplayed by Stanford-le-Hope RUFC
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	1	1	0	Overplayed by Stanford-le-Hope RUFC
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	0	0	Played to capacity by Stanford-le-Hope RUFC
50	Storm Fit	Grays	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	1.5	0	0	0	Played to capacity through a combination of Stanford-le-Hope RUFC and school use.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M1/D1	Standard	2	0	2	0	0	Played to capacity by Thames RUFC.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	0.5	0	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity within the peak period.
53	The Gateway Academy	Tilbury & Chadwell	Unsecure	Yes	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	1	0	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	Grays	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good	3	1.5	1.5	0	0	Played to capacity by Thurrock RUFC.
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	Grays	Secure	Yes	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good	3	1.5	1.5	0	0	Played to capacity by Thurrock RUFC.
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	Grays	Secure	Yes	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	3	-	0	0	Played to capacity by Thurrock RUFC.

Actual spare capacity

There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as actual spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis. In addition, any pitches that are used by clubs to capacity at peak time or that are poor quality are not considered to have actual spare capacity.

Furthermore, there are some rugby union pitches across Thurrock at education sites that are unused by clubs despite being reported as available. Whilst these may theoretically provide some spare capacity, it would be not be reasonable to equate this as actual spare capacity as school usage itself is likely to limit what additional activity should take place on the provision. Moreover, the nature of club rugby generally means that clubs are generally unwilling to utilise secondary venues, making community use unlikely. It is also unlikely that clubs would have security of tenure at education sites, even if they were to access them, with usage more likely to be ad hoc.

Using the above, only one pitch in Thurrock is considered to have actual spare capacity. This is at Thames Rugby Club, where the unlit pitch at the site is only used by one senior team for matches in addition to not being used to accommodate training.

Overplay

Two pitches in Thurrock have been evidenced as being overplayed, with these both provided at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground. Both are used to accommodate match play demand from Stanford-le-Hope RUFC in addition to some training demand via the use of mobile lighting. This results in them both being overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.

4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity and overplay in each of the analysis areas as well as across Thurrock as a whole for rugby union based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is then also considered via known club aspirations and population forecasts.

Table 4.16: Supply and demand balance of rugby union pitches (match equivalent sessions)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	0
Grays	0	0	0	1	1
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	0	2	2	0	2
Tilbury & Chadwell	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**0.5**	**0**	**1.5**	**1.5**	**3**

As seen, there is a current shortfall of provision amounting to 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week to meet rugby union demand. This is solely located in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area and is due to overuse at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground. Overall spare capacity exists in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area.

When factoring in future demand, the overall shortfalls increases to three match equivalent sessions per week, with a deficit also developing in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.

4.6: Conclusion

Within Thurrock, rugby union supply is insufficient to meet demand. Nevertheless, the shortfall is relatively minimal and can likely be overcome through better utilisation of the existing stock (e.g., via pitch quality improvements).

The above is further reflected when comparing findings to the 2020 PPOSS, in which a greater current (six match equivalent sessions) and future (12 match equivalent sessions) deficit was identified. The change is primarily due to the creation of the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Orsett Heath Academy, with this removing overplay at Thurrock Rugby Football Club.

Rugby union – supply and demand summary

- There is one rugby union pitch in Thurrock with actual spare capacity at Thames Rugby Club), whilst two pitches are overplayed at Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground.
- Overall, there is a current shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week to meet current demand, with this increasing to three match equivalent sessions when accounting for future demand.
- There is a clear shortfall of rugby union capacity across the Borough; however, this is relatively minimal and can be overcome through better utilising the current stock.

Rugby union – supply summary

- There are 13 grass rugby union pitches (12 senior and one age grade) identified across eight unique sites, with them all available for community use.
- Three grass pitches are sports-lit, with one at Thames Rugby Club and two at Thurrock Rugby Football Club, whilst there is also a senior sized World Rugby compliant 3G pitch provided at Orsett Heath Academy.
- Stanford-le-Hope RUFC, Thames RFC and Thurrock RUFC are all considered to have security of tenure at their sites, whilst Pegasus Palmerians RUFC does not at Storm Fit.
- Four pitches are rated as poor quality, five are as standard quality and four as good quality.
- The good quality pitches are at Thurrock Rugby Football Club, with the Club completing its own maintenance, whereas the pitch utilised by Pegasus Palmerians RUFC at Storm Fit is poor quality.
- Thurrock RUFC accesses good quality ancillary provision, whereas Stanford-le-Hope RUFC and Thames RUFC access poor quality provision (Pegasus Palmerians RUFC has standard quality facilities.
- Thurrock RUFC has aspirations to develop its main building and Thames Rugby Club has aspirations for the complete refurbishment of its ancillary facilities.

Rugby union – demand summary

- Club based demand for rugby union within Thurrock equates to 31 teams across the four clubs; there are eight senior men's, three senior women's, ten age grade boy's, four age grade girl's and six age grade mixed teams.
- There has been an overall slight in demand in recent years, with this experienced by Thurrock, Pegasus Palmerians and Thames rugby clubs.
- Stanford-le-Hope, Thames and Thurrock rugby clubs all use match pitches for some training demand, although Thurrock RUFC also accesses the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch and Stanford-le-Hope RUFC also utilises separate grass areas via mobile lights.
- No unmet, latent, exported or imported demand is identified.
- Thames RUFC has future demand for one senior women's team, whereas population forecasts suggest a growth of one senior men's and one age grade team.

PART 5: HOCKEY

5.1: Introduction

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

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

Table 5.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

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

In addition to the above pitch types, EH is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand on a pitch that is also suitable for other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2[10], is a versatile surface that will ensure that the sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience; it is a sand dressed synthetic turf with a compatible shock pad. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including at schools, with a dynamic carpet which reduces the amount of space required and enables the provision to be utilised to its full potential.

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

[10] http://www.englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2596&sectionTitle=Gen+2+Playing+Surface

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

Consultation

Thurrock HC is the only club identified as playing hockey within Thurrock. The Club has responded to a consultation request, with this therefore equating to a 100% response rate.

5.2: Supply

As seen in the table below, there are two full size (sand based/dressed) hockey suitable AGPs in Thurrock, with both available for community use and serviced by sports lighting. Both of the AGPs are located within the Grays Analysis Area.

Table 5.2: Summary of full size hockey suitable pitches in the Thurrock

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports-lit?	Size (metres)
31	Storm Fit	RM17 5TD	Grays	Yes	Yes	92 x 56
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Grays	Yes	Yes	92 x 55

The pitch at Storm Fit is in current community hockey usage via Thurrock HC, whereas the pitch at The Gateway Academy is not externally accessed for the sport.

One smaller sized hockey suitable AGP has also been identified in Thurrock at Dilkes Academy, with this also available for community use albeit it is without sports lighting. Nationally, most smaller size pitches are considered too small to accommodate any purposeful hockey demand, with this also relating to the provision at Dilkes Academy. It is therefore discounted from this point forward as the pitch is not relevant from a hockey perspective, although it is recognised that it can accommodated other sports usage.

The previous PPOSS (2020) identified a third full size hockey suitable AGP in Thurrock, with this being at Harris Academy Chafford Hundred. However, this has since been converted to an 11v11 3G pitch. A smaller sized pitches at William Edwards School was also resurfaced to a 3G surface in 2021.

For the location of the full size hockey suitable AGPs currently servicing Thurrock, please see Figure 5.1 overleaf.

Figure 5.1: Location of full size hockey pitches



Future supply (aspirations)

Consultation at Storm Fit has identified that aspirations exist to convert the pitch to a 3G surface, despite it currently being in use for club hockey.

Management and security of tenure

The AGP at the Gateway Academy is managed in house by the school, whereas the pitch at Storm Fit is managed by a leisure operator (known as Storm Fitness & Leisure). The provision is however also utilised and reserved for use by the Palmers College during weekdays.

Table 5.3: Summary of venues and relevant tenure

Site ID	Site	Hockey club users	Comments	Tenure
50	Storm Fit	Thurrock HC	The Club rents the pitch from provider on an annual basis.	Unsecure
53	The Gateway Academy	-	-	Unsecure

Due to the nature of the agreement between Thurrock HC and Storm Fit, the Club is considered to have unsecure tenure as no formal community use agreement is in place. This has also been stated by the Club.

There is also no security of tenure provided at The Gateway Academy, although this is not currently an issue for hockey given that there are no club users.

Availability / usage

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). Using this, the availability at each site providing a full-size pitch in Thurrock is summarised in the table below. Good availability exists across both sites.

Table 5.4: Availability of full-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Hockey club users	Availability	Midweek availability (peak period)	Weekend availability (peak period)
50	Storm Fit	Thurrock HC	Midweek 17:30 – 22:30 Weekend 08:30 – 18:00	16/18	16/16
53	The Gateway Academy	-	Midweek 17:00 – 21:00 Weekend 08:00 – 16:00	18/18	14/16

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

Quality

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

For the PPOSS, each AGP has been assigned a quality rating of good, standard or poor following non-technical site assessments. This rating is linked to the condition and age of the playing surface, as well as surrounding hard areas and the maintenance that is undertaken (for the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2).

Both pitches in Thurrock are assessed as poor quality, with both providing surfaces that are well over their recommended lifespan. This is shown in the following table.

Table 5.5: Age and quality of full-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Year installed/ resurfaced	Quality rating
50	Storm Fit	Grays	1	2005	Poor
53	The Gateway Academy	Grays	1	2008	Poor

The pitch at Storm Fit has major issues with the pitch waterlogging and freezing in wet and cold weather. Thurrock HC also states that the pitch is of a poor quality and that it has aspirations for resurface, although it notes that the provider does not have a sinking fund in place. This is considered problematic given the current level of hockey usage received.

Ancillary provision

The ancillary provision provided at Storm Fit is rated as standard quality, as echoed by Thurrock HC, with the facilities including eight changing rooms with self-contained showers (four men's and four women's). However, the Club expresses a desire to have its own clubhouse/pavilion onsite rather than rely on the facilities that are in effect dual use. The current setup also incurs additional charges.

Adequate ancillary facilities also service the full size AGP at the Gateway Academy, albeit the changing rooms are also for the grass pitches and indoor facilities.

5.3: Demand

Thurrock HC provides a total of six teams, with this equating to four senior men's and two senior women's teams. In addition, despite not fielding formal teams, it has a junior section (75 members), with ad hoc games scheduled on Sundays in addition to regular training activity.

Table 5.6 Summary of number of hockey teams in Thurrock

Name of club	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Thurrock HC	4	2	-	-	**6**
2020 Total	**2**	**3**	**-**	**-**	**5**

The table below breaks down the Club's membership. It has 47 senior men, 35 senior women, 46 junior boy and 29 junior girl members.

Table 5.7: Summary of hockey club membership in Thurrock

Name of club	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Thurrock HC	47	35	46	29	**157**
2020 Total	**35**	**52**	**-**	**-**	**87**

As seen in the above tables, overall demand within Thurrock HC has increased since the 2020 PPOSS, with one additional team now fielded in addition to 70 additional members being accommodated. This represents quite substantial growth.

The Club HC utilises the AGP at Storm Fit for training on Thursday evenings from 18:00 until 21:00, with matches taking place throughout the day on both Saturday and Sunday.

Additional demand

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

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

Where undertaken, these initiatives add to the hockey demand at sites. However, none currently have a presence within Thurrock.

Unmet/latent demand

No unmet or latent demand is expressed by Thurrock HC, with it reporting no capacity issues at Storm Fit. It does, however, note that the deterioration of the pitch at Storm Fit could begin to negatively impact on its membership if resurfacing does not take place in the near future.

Exported/imported demand

No hockey clubs or teams are identified as leaving Thurrock to field their demand. Similarly, no demand is identified as travelling into the Borough for activity.

Future demand

Growing participation is a key aim within EH's Strategy (Creating A Future for Our Game Together 2024–2028). Furthermore, EH is currently working on an updated facilities strategy, due to be completed in 2025, which will add to its aspirations.

Notwithstanding the above, Thurrock HC does not express any desire to increase the current number of teams within the Club following its recent growth.

5.4: Capacity analysis

When assessing the capacity of hockey suitable AGPs, all usage needs to be taken into account. This is because, in addition to hockey activity, there is often heavy football usage of the provision and occasionally other sporting use which can take capacity away from hockey-based demand.

In Thurrock, significant football demand exists at both Storm Fit and The Gateway Academy, with the former accessed for the majority of the midweek timeslots that are not taken up by Thurrock HC (although capacity exists on Fridays). At The Gateway Academy, as no hockey demand is recorded at the site, 100% of community usage is received coming from football clubs. Tilbury FC acts as an anchor club.

Whilst the football usage limits midweek capacity, weekend capacity for match play is considered to exist at both sites, with little existing usage noted outside of Thurrock HC's use of the pitch at Storm Fit.

5.5: Supply and demand analysis

Match play analysis

It is suggested that a full-size hockey suitable, sports-lit AGP can accommodate up to four matches on one day, providing no usage limitations are in place. With teams playing on a home and away basis, this equates to one pitch being able to cater for eight 'home' teams at peak time (which is Saturdays for seniors and Sundays for juniors).

Using the above calculations, on the basis that there are currently two full size hockey suitable pitches in Thurrock, this provides a theoretical opportunity to accommodate up to 16 senior teams at peak time across the Borough. With only six teams presently fielded by Thurrock HC, this therefore equates to overall spare capacity, although quality and security of tenure issues could impact on this moving forward.

For junior hockey matches, the need for pitches is generally less than it is for senior hockey. This is because younger age groups can play on half a pitch (meaning two fixtures can take place at one time) and because there are fewer junior teams in Thurrock than there are senior teams (no formal teams are fielded by Thurrock HC). As such, the existing provision is also sufficient for junior demand.

Training analysis

Thurrock HC utilises the AGP at Storm Fit on Thursday evenings and identifies no requirement for any further access. This therefore suggests that the provision is sufficient to meet the Club's training requirements, although it should be noted that capacity is somewhat limited if it was to require additional midweek capacity in the future. This is primarily due to heavy football usage of the pitches at both Storm Fit and The Gateway Academy, with this likely to be linked to a lack of 3G pitches across the Borough (see Part 3).

5.6: Conclusion

The current supply of hockey provision in Thurrock is currently sufficient to meet demand, with two full size pitches provided and only one pitch being required. However, this will only remain the case if quality issues are overcome, particularly at Storm Fit given that this provides the pitch that is currently accessed for community hockey. A lack of security of tenure for Thurrock HC also needs to be overcome, with this considered to be a particularly pressing issue given the 3G conversion aspirations that exist.

Hockey – supply and demand summary

- The supply of hockey provision in Thurrock is currently sufficient to meet demand, with two full size pitches provided and only one pitch being required.
- The supply will only remain adequate if quality and security of tenure issues are overcome, particularly at Storm Fit given its use by Thurrock HC.

Hockey – supply summary

- There are two full size hockey suitable AGPs in Thurrock (at Storm Fit and The Gateway Academy), with both available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.
- One smaller sized hockey suitable AGP has also been identified at Dilkes Academy, with this also available for community use albeit it is without sports lighting.
- A third full size hockey suitable AGP at the Harris Academy Chafford Hundred has been converted to 3G.
- Thurrock HC utilises the pitch at Storm Fit, whereas the pitch at The Gateway Academy is unused for community hockey.
- Due to the nature of the agreement between Thurrock HC and Storm Fit, the Club is considered to have unsecure tenure as no formal community use agreement is in place.
- Both full size pitches are rated as poor quality due to the age of the surfaces.
- Ancillary provision provided at Storm Fit is rated as good quality by Thurrock HC, although it has aspirations for its own dedicated provision.

Hockey – demand summary

- Thurrock HC provides a total of six teams, with this equating to four senior men's and two senior women's teams.
- The Club also has a junior section that plays ad hoc games in addition to regular training activity.
- Total membership equates to 47 senior men, 35 senior women, 46 junior boy and 29 junior girl members.
- The Club utilises the pitch at Storm Fit on Thursday evenings from 18:00 until 21:00 for training, with matches taking place throughout the day on Saturday and Sunday.
- Demand has increased significantly since 2020.
- No unmet, latent, imported or exported demand is identified.
- Thurrock HC does not express any desire to increase the current number of teams within the Club following its recent growth.
- Significant football demand also takes place on the two full size hockey pitches, with limited capacity existing, particularly midweek.

PART 6: CRICKET

6.1: Introduction

The Essex County Cricket Board (ECCB) is the main governing and representative body for Cricket within Thurrock. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children within the Borough.

For adult cricket in the Borough there are three main offerings; Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket. The youth league structure tends to be club based matches which are played mid-week and Sunday mornings.

Inspiring Generations

In October 2024 the ECB launched its refreshed strategy Inspiring Generations – Cricket's Game-wide Strategy (2025–2028). Cricket in England and Wales has seen transformative growth since the publication of its previous strategy Inspiring Generations (2020-24). Its new strategy represents an evolution of its plans, although many of its previous themes are still relevant. Its main purpose is to say 'cricket is a game for me' through its vision:

- To become the most inclusive team sport
- To grow and unite the game
- Lead the game through global transformation

It aims to obtain this vision through six key objectives:

- Make cricket diverse, inclusive and accessible
- Transform Women's and Girl's cricket
- Connect communities through play
- Inspire through winning England teams
- Support a thriving and sustainable men's and women's professional game
- Win the battle for attention

County Facilities Strategy

The ECCB has recently completed its County Facilities Strategy (CFS) in partnership with the ECB. Its production involved engagement with key stakeholders, including leagues, active partnerships, county pitch advisors and Sport England.

The CFS is to be used to shape investment decisions and priorities for CCB moving forward, with the following facilities considered throughout its development:

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

Notwithstanding the above; it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPOSS and is not an accepted evidence base for development proposals that need to be judged against the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.

Consultation

There are five affiliated cricket clubs identified as playing within Thurrock. These are as follows:

- Aveley CC
- Belhus CC
- Horndon-on-the-Hill CC
- Orsett & Thurrock CC
- Stanford-le-Hope CC

All clubs have responded to consultation requests, resulting in an 100% response rate.

6.2: Supply

There are nine grass wicket cricket squares in Thurrock across seven sites (Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club and Stanford-le-Hope Cricket Club provide two). All squares are available for community use.

Table 6.1: Summary of grass wicket cricket sites

Analysis area	No. of cricket squares
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	2
Grays	1
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	6
Tilbury & Chadwell	-
Thurrock Total	**9**
2020 Total	**11**

As shown in the table above, the Stanford-le-Hope Analysis Area has the most amount of grass wicket provision with six squares (67%). In contrast, the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area does not have any grass wicket cricket provision.

Disused provision

Since the previous PPOSS was completed in 2020, there has been a loss of two grass cricket squares, with these both previously provided at St Clere's School. Part of the school building was found to have reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC), meaning parts of the playing field has had to be used to house temporary buildings whilst the issue is corrected. This has led to Horndon-on-the-Hill CC leaving the site and accessing provision outside of Thurrock (see exported demand).

In addition, there remains two disused squares at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Fields). These were last provided in 2018.

Similarly, cricket provision was also previously provided at Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club). The ECCB has identified a particular aspiration for this to be re-established.

Future provision

In addition to requiring a solution to the loss of provision at St Clere's School for Horndon-on-the-Hill CC, the ECCB notes that it has raised the possibility of cricket being provided as Belhus Park. It notes that it has demand that is eager for a location within the Aveley Analysis Area and states that there have been some talks with developers in regards to the site.

Non-turf pitches (NTPs)

There are three non-turf wickets accompanying natural turf cricket squares, with these all available for community use, in line with the position of the grass provision. The NTPs in question are located at:

- Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground
- Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club
- Thames Rugby Club

Additionally, there are 10 standalone NTPs across 10 sites, although only the NTPs at Thurrock Rugby Football Club and William Edwards School are available for community use. At William Edwards School, a community use agreement is also being prepared which will include the provision.

The other sites, which are all schools, providing NTPs are:

- Abbots Hall Primary Academy
- Belmont Castle Academy
- Dilkes Academy
- Harris Academy Ockendon
- Ormiston Park Academy
- Somers Heath Primary School
- Stifford Clays Primary School
- The Hathaway Academy

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

From a school perspective, NTPs provide a reliable cricket offer, without the need for specific cricket preparation to be undertaken on natural turf playing field. In many instances, schools do not have the resource or expertise to prepare natural turf wickets so NTPs provide a resource to ensure cricket can remain a key element of curricular sport.

Potential future supply

It should be noted that subject to an additional senior men's XI at Aveley CC, the Club will be looking for an additional site to accommodate its demand. Notwithstanding this, it has been stated that The Crooked Billet site is a potential candidate site for accommodating an additional grass square to service Thurrock.

The map below shows the location of all cricket provision currently servicing Thurrock. For a key to the map, see Table 6.3.

Figure 6.1: Location of cricket provision within Thurrock



Table 6.2: Key to map of cricket provision within Thurrock

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	No. of NTPs
1	Abbots Hall Primary Academy	SS17 7BW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	-	-	1
3	Belmont Castle Academy	RM17 5YN	Grays	No	-	-	1
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	8	-
14	Dilkes Academy	RM15 5JQ	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	-	-	1
21	Harris Academy Ockendon	RM15 5AY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	-	-	1
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	SS17 8NR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	8	1
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	RM16 5UG	Grays	Yes	1	12	-
35	Ormiston Park Academy	RM15 4RU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	-	-	1
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	RM16 3JP	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	12	1
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	RM16 3JP	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	5	-
45	Somers Heath Primary School	RM15 5LX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	-	-	1
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	1	10	-
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	12	-
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	8	-
49	Stifford Clays Primary School	RM16 2ST	Grays	No	-	-	1
52	Thames Rugby Club	RM15 5JU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	1	6	1
54	The Hathaway Academy	RM17 5LL	Grays	No	-	-	1
57	Thurrock Rugby Football Club	RM16 2QH	Grays	Yes	-	-	1
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Yes	-	-	1

Security of tenure

The Tables below outlines the tenure agreement of cricket clubs at their primary sites across Thurrock. The position is that all clubs within the Borough have secure tenure at their respective grounds and will therefore be able to service cricket for the foreseeable future (and as a minimum over the lifespan of the PPOSS). This is detailed club-by-club in the following table.

Table 6.3: Summary of club tenure arrangements

Club	Site	Security of tenure	Comments
Aveley CC	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Secure	Rental agreement with Thurrock Council.
Belhus CC	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Secure	Long term lease agreement with Thurrock Council until 2055.
Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Secure	Long term lease agreement with Thurrock Council until 2045.
Orsett & Thurrock CC	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Secure	Long term lease agreement with Thurrock Council until 2050.
Stanford-le-Hope CC	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Secure	Long term lease agreement with Thurrock Council.

As seen, Belhus, Hornon-on-the-Hill, Orsett & Thurrock and Stanford-le-Hope cricket clubs all have a long-term lease agreement in place via the Council, whereas Aveley CC has a rental agreement, also through the Council. Generally, where provision is owned by the Council and either rented or leased to clubs, it is considered that this provision is secure and will be provided over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

Pitch quality

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

For the PPOSS, the quality of cricket pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits completed in August 2024 (using non-technical assessments as determined by the KKP) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- Good
- Standard
- Poor

The quality of a cricket square is assessed by considering factors such as evidence of the wicket being rolled, the wicket being correctly cut, evidence of cover usage, evidence of maintenance and the presence of line markings. Comparatively, an outfield is assessed on the provisions grass length, quantity of weeds, evenness of the surface, level of undulations, damage to the surface and evidence of dog fouling (for the full assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2).

The audit found one grass wicket squares to be good quality (10%), six to be of standard quality (60%) and three to be of poor quality (30%). This is summarised by site in the following table.

Table 6.4: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Square quality
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Poor
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Good
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Poor
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Poor
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Standard

As seen, the poor quality squares are found at Corringham Recreation Ground and Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground. Issues relating to this site as well as others are highlighted in the table below, with this informed via the site assessment process as well as through consultation.

Through consultation with the ECCB and ECB, the square at Corringham Recreation Ground is considered to be unplayable

Table 6.6: Pitch quality comments

Site ID	Site	Club	Comments
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Football pitches are marked out on the outfield during the winter which has an impact on the quality of this during the cricket season.
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	The Club states that the pitch has improved in quality in recent seasons due to it paying a higher fee for maintenance. Despite this, the overall quality is still rated as standard due to unofficial use and damage to the surface. Daily training on the square also impacts the overall quality.
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Belhus CC	The Club states that the quality of the square is good whilst the outfield is of a standard quality. The Club has had to cancel some games due to weather conditions.
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Orsett & Thurrock CC	The Club states that the square and outfield quality of both its pitches are of a standard quality. Limitations include utilising the provision for training five days a week as well as unofficial use, with this including dog fouling.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley CC Belhus CC	Aveley CC states that the square and outfield are of a good quality and that this has remained unchanged in the last three years. No major issues are reported.

Site ID	Site	Club	Comments
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope CC	The Club states that the quality of the square and outfield are currently of a poor quality due to the levels of maintenance, whilst the site is also prone to unofficial usage problems. Additionally, the site is shared with rugby which can impact the quality of the outfield.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Belhus CC Horndon-on-the Hill CC	The square is assessed as standard quality, although no major issues are reported by users.

In relation to the quality of NTPs across Thurrock, 13 (87%) are rated as standard quality, with one good quality and one poor quality. The poor quality NTPs is at Abbots Hall Primary Academy whilst the good quality NTP is located at Horndon-on-the-hill Recreation Ground.

Ancillary facilities

Ancillary provision refers to the accompanying building at a site that is accessed as changing facilities and a social space, if applicable. Quality ratings have been determined by assessing matters such as the condition of the building, the quantity and quality of changing rooms and the social space offering. The level of accessibility for women's and girls, junior and disability participants is also a key metric.

Where ancillary facilities exist, all grass wicket sites have provision rated as standard quality, as summarised below. However, there is no dedicated pavilion available at Corringham Recreation Ground, which can limit the usage of the site.

Table 6.7: Quality ratings for club ancillary facilities

Site ID	Site	Club user/s	Analysis area	Ancillary provision quality
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	N/A
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Belhus CC	Grays	Standard
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley CC Belhus CC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Standard
52	Thames Rugby Club	Belhus CC Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Standard

Similarly to pitch quality, the table below summaries the position of each club's ancillary facilities at each site. As seen, only Belhus CC at North Stifford Recreation Ground has changing facilities that are wholly appropriate for women's and girl's participation.

Table 6.8: Ancillary provision quality club findings

Site ID	Site name	Club user/s	Comments
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Only basic facilities on site.
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Ancillary provision at the site is rated as standard quality, with no issues declared.
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Belhus CC	The Club states that the overall facilities are of a standard quality, although it is susceptible to attempted robberies and break-ins. There are appropriate changing rooms for female players with separate showering facilities and also an officials changing room.
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Orsett & Thurrock CC	The onsite pavilion has been rated as standard quality by the Club. Showers are provided in each set of changing rooms, although these are not suitable for female players.
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley CC Belhus CC	Aveley CC states that the overall pavilion and clubhouse are of a good quality. However, there are no separate showering facilities, meaning the provision is not suitable for female players.
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope CC	The Club states that the overall pavilion is of a good quality, including its social area and toilet facilities. However, it notes that the changing facilities are poor with the changing rooms specified as dated and unsuitable for female players. There is also an officials' changing room.
52	Thames Rugby Club	Belhus CC Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	The changing rooms are seen as inadequate in size and are also accessed by football and rugby union users.

Ancillary facilities servicing standalone NTPs are considered to be less important as users generally show up to utilise such provision ready to play Furthermore, as all standalone NTPs in Thurrock are based at education sites, most of the facilities are to service wider school needs rather than being specific to cricket.

Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In Thurrock, four of the five clubs have access to onsite fixed net provision or mobile provision.

Table 6.9: Summary of training facilities

Site ID	Site	Practice nets?	Number of lanes?	ECB approved?	Comments
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	-	-	-	N/A
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	No	-	No	1 x Mobile net on an NTP.
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Yes	2	Yes	1 x Mobile net in addition to the fixed lane practice nets.
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Yes	3	Yes	1x Mobile net in addition to the fixed lane nets.

Site ID	Site	Practice nets?	Number of lanes?	ECB approved?	Comments
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	-	-	-	N/A
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Yes	2	No	Fixed lane practice nets.
52	Thames Rugby Club	-	-	-	N/A

Only Aveley CC is currently without onsite training provision, although Horndon-on-the-Hill CC is only serviced by a mobile solution rather than permanent facilities.

Indoor facilities

Whilst the PPOSS only considers outdoor provision, a cricket training programme includes accessing indoor net facilities over winter months in preparation for the start of the season. The table below highlights the clubs that utilise indoor provision and where this takes place.

Table 6.10: Summary of indoor provision accessed by clubs

Club	Access indoor provision?	Name of site(s) used
Aveley CC	Yes	Harris Academy Ockendon
Belhus CC	Yes	Harris Academy Ockendon / Harris Academy Chafford Hundred
Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Yes	Aveley School
Orsett & Thurrock CC	Yes	Harris Academy Ockendon
Stanford-le-Hope CC	Yes	Harris Academy Ockendon

All clubs within Thurrock access indoor nets, with the main site identified at Harris Academy Ockendon. Harris Academy Chafford and Aveley School are also identified as providing indoor training facilities.

More information on indoor cricket can be found in the Built Sports Facility Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

6.3: Demand

There are five clubs in Thurrock which collectively provide 62 teams. When broken down, this equates to 29 senior men's, two senior women's, 27 junior boys and four junior girls' team. This is summarised by clubs in the following table.

Table 6.11: Summary of number of competitive teams by club

Club name	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
Aveley CC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	1	-	-	-	**1**
Belhus CC	Grays	9	-	8	1	**18**
Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	6	-	-	-	**6**
Orsett & Thurrock CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	8	2	14	3	**27**
Stanford-le-Hope CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	5	-	5	-	**10**

Club name	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
	Thurrock	29	2	27	4	62
	2020 PPOSS	24	1	21	4	50

As seen, Orsett & Thurrock CC and Belhus CC are both particularly large clubs and consist of significant senior and junior sections. At the other end of the spectrum, Aveley CC fields just one senior team.

As seen in the table below, the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area accommodates the most demand with 43 teams identified (69%). This is aligned to the level of provision. The Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area does not accommodate any teams, whereas only one is located in the South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area (2%).

Table 6.12: Summary of number of competitive teams by analysis area

Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	1	-	-	-	**1**
Grays	9	-	8	1	**18**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	19	2	19	3	**43**
Tilbury & Chadfields	-	-	-	-	**-**
Thurrock	**29**	**2**	**27**	**4**	**62**

Participation trends

Since the previous PPOSS was completed (2020), the number of teams within the Borough has increased by 12. This growth is found in the senior men's, senior women's and junior boy's sections of the game (junior girls' demand has remained static).

Aligned to the above, four of the five clubs within Thurrock report that demand has increased in some form over the previous three years. Only Aveley CC states that its participation figures have remained the same, with it remaining a single-team club.

Despite overall growth, it should also be noted that both Belhus CC and Orsett & Thurrock CC state that they have lost junior teams recently.

Additional activity

The ECB run several initiatives across the Country which results in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfields, making squares unusable during these periods. The most relevant initiatives currently being delivered are detailed below.

All Stars cricket

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

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

In Thurrock, Belhus (14 participants), Horndon-on-the-Hill (eight participants) and Orsett & Thurrock (50 participants) cricket clubs all take part in the programme as does Stanford-le-Hope CC although this is not quantified. Total figures as of 2024 equate (where known) to 72 participants across the clubs.

Dynamo's cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' is the Dynamos programme for 8–11-year-olds. This build on the significant growth of the All-Stars programme and develops the pathway to retain juniors which progress. Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamo's seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified softball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket.

In Thurrock, Belhus (eight participants), Horndon-on-the-Hill (eight participants) and Orsett & Thurrock (50 participants) cricket clubs all take part in the programme, as does Stanford-le-Hope CC although this is not quantified. Total figures as of 2024 equate (where known) to 66 participants across the clubs.

Softball cricket

Softball is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase female participation in cricket. The aim of softball cricket sections is enjoyment and participation, without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and limited rules. Sessions are generally played on the outfield of a square and follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of 2 and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

In Thurrock, Aveley (five participants), Belhus (15 participants) and Orsett & Thurrock (50 participants) cricket clubs all take part in the programme. Total figures as of 2024 equate to 70 participants across the clubs.

Disability cricket

The ECB wishes to support cricket clubs to deliver cricket opportunities for those with disabilities and has setup the Disability Cricket Champion Club Programme to support clubs through guidance, resource and equipment. This is to enable them to welcome individuals with additional needs and varying abilities to support them to play, follow, officiate and volunteer.

There are currently no Disability Cricket Champion clubs in Thurrock. It is, however, suggested that this could be targeted moving forward.

Exported/imported demand

The only instance of exported demand for competitive fixtures for cricket in Thurrock is Horndon-on-the-Hill CC. In addition to its Thurrock-based demand, it also utilises Small Gains Playing Fields in Castle Point for its 3rd team and Wickford Memorial Park in Basildon for its 4th team. This is a consequence of it losing access to provision at St Clere's School.

In relation to imported demand, it has been identified by the ECCB that there is recreational demand imported from London Borough's accessing cricket provision across Thurrock, whilst this is the case, this level of demand takes place on NTPs.

Unmet/latent demand

No unmet or latent cricket demand is identified in Thurrock. That is to say that no clubs report that capacity issues are impacting on the demand that is fielded.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in several ways, including through club ambitions and using population forecasts.

Population growth

Based on population projections to 2043[11], Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for cricket pitches that will arise from any growth. This is by using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, with team generation rates then established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

Using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, team generation rates have been established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team. The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

Table 6.13: Team generation rates based on population growth (2043)

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure
Senior Men's (18-55)	1:1,528	4.00	4
Senior Women's (18-55)	1:23,400	0.11	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	1:545	2.23	2
Junior Girls (7-18)	1:3,482	0.33	0

The total amount of future growth is anticipated to equate to four senior men's and two junior boy's teams.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to acknowledge that there are plans and strategies in place to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends and population changes would suggest. For example, consultation with the ECB suggests that further development of women and girl's participation in cricket in Thurrock is likely as it is currently a national priority. This also applies to potential increased growth in junior cricket,

[11] Thurrock's emerging Local Plan will run to 2044; however, projections are only possible to 2043.

linked to the All Stars and Dynamos initiatives. Such additional increases will be addressed in the proceeding Strategy document as part of the scenario-testing process.
In addition, the ONS projections utilised for the team generation rates do not account for the scale or distribution of housing growth that is required in the Borough, as will be proposed in the emerging Local Plan. Housing growth will therefore also be subject to dedicated scenarios in the proceeding Strategy document, with this needing to be considered separately.

Participation growth

Through consultation, two of the five cricket clubs in Thurrock express their desire to increase the number of teams they field and quantify this growth. In total, this equates to the potential growth of seven teams. Details of a breakdown of this is listed in the table below.

Table 6.14: Future demand expressed by clubs (in teams)

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls
Aveley CC	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	4	1	1	-
Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	-	1	-
Total	**-**	**4**	**1**	**2**	**-**

As seen in the table above, most of this aspirational growth falls in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area, with one team in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.

Future demand summary

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, only demand identified through population growth is taken forward, with club demand considered to be more theoretical and aspirational. This is to avoid any potential double counting and also factors in that some club context is unquantified.

6.4: Capacity analysis

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

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

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

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from consultation with the clubs. Where consultation was not possible, or where the level of play was not made clear, an assumption has been made that all senior teams play between 10 and 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play between four and eight matches per year depending on their age and level of competition.

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overused	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

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

Please note that NTPs have been discounted from the analysis by means of not distorting the findings. This is because no NTPs are currently being used more than their recommended capacity, which is 60 match equivalent sessions per season (0 match equivalent sessions when poor quality). With no NTPs being overused, this translates to overall actual spare capacity for junior play, although this is not considered to be actual spare capacity for senior cricket due to league requirements generally not allowing usage.

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Thurrock is Saturday, although several teams also play on a Sunday including senior women's teams. As such, both are considered within the supply and demand analysis later in the section. For junior cricket, peak time is midweek.

Spare capacity

The table below explains the difference between the potential spare capacity referenced in Table 6.16 and the actual spare capacity identified in the final three columns (Saturday, Sunday and midweek).

Table 6.15: Spare capacity examples

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

Table 6.16: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community availability	Users	Security of tenure	Pitch quality	Type of wicket	No. of grass wickets[12]	Capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Current use (match equivalent sessions)	Capacity balance (match equivalent sessions)	Potential spare capacity/ availability for Saturday cricket	Potential spare capacity/ availability for Sunday cricket	Potential spare capacity/ availability for midweek cricket
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Secure	Poor	Senior	8	0	21	21	Yes	Yes	Yes
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Horndon-on-the-Hill CC	Secure	Standard	Senior	10	40	29	11	No	No	Yes
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Grays	Yes	Belhus CC	Secure	Standard	Senior	13	52	54	2	No	No	No
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Secure	Standard	Senior	12	48	68	20	No	No	No
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Orsett & Thurrock CC	Secure	Standard	Senior	8	32	46	14	No	No	No
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Aveley CC Belhus CC	Secure	Good	Senior	10	50	27	23	No	Yes	Yes
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Stanford-le-Hope CC	Secure	Poor	Senior	12	0	30	30	No	Yes	Yes
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	Stanford-le-Hope CC	Secure	Poor	Senior	8	0	16	16	No	Yes	Yes
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	Belhus CC	Secure	Standard	Senior	6	24	10	14	Yes	Yes	Yes

[12] Please note the number of wickets indicated are those which have been identified for actual competitive usage.

Actual spare capacity

A square is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage during a particular peak period, has security of tenure and is at least standard quality. Using the capacity analysis, this section considers the level of actual spare capacity available for each playing format.

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

Saturday cricket

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

Taking the above into consideration, only the square at Thames Rugby Club has potential capacity to accommodate further senior men's demand.

Table 6.17: Site by site breakdown of spare capacity (Saturday demand)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)	Number of additional teams that could be accommodated in the peak period	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12	1	12

The total of actual spare capacity on Saturday equates to 12 match equivalent sessions per season, with this found in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area.

Table 6.18: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Saturday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12
Grays	-
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-
Tilbury & Chadwell	-
Thurrock Total	**12**

Sunday cricket

Sunday capacity provides capacity for additional senior men's demand to be accommodated outside of the peak period whilst still being able to play within a competitive format. Moreover, it provides peak time availability for senior women's cricket (both hardball and softball) and for some junior demand.

Similar to Saturday cricket, a square on a Sunday is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is not already used by two teams at this time, has secure tenure and is not over, at, or close to capacity. Taking this into consideration, the squares at South Ockendon Recreation Ground and Thames Rugby Club have potential capacity to accommodate further demand.

Table 6.19: Summary of actual spare capacity for Sunday cricket by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)	Number of additional teams that could be accommodated in the peak period	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12	1	12
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12	1	12

Additional potential spare capacity for additional Sunday cricket demand has been discounted at Corringham Recreation Ground (as it is at capacity) and Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground (as it is poor quality).

Total actual spare capacity on a Sunday equates to 24 match equivalent sessions per season. This is all in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area.

Table 6.20: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	24
Grays	-
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-
Tilbury & Chadwell	-
Thurrock Total	**24**

Junior cricket (midweek)

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

For a square to have actual spare capacity for midweek cricket, it must have secure tenure, not be overplayed and have more than six match equivalent sessions of spare capacity as this is the average number of matches an additional junior team would play. However, a square is not considered to have capacity for an increase in demand if it is already used by six midweek teams or more as availability is then assumed to be limited (on average, clubs are able to play fixtures on three nights per week, with other nights reserved for other activity such as All Stars and Dynamos).

Taking the above into consideration, there are three squares across three sites in Thurrock that have potential capacity to accommodate further demand during midweek (further spare capacity for additional cricket demand midweek has been discounted at Standford-le-Hope Recreation Ground due to poor square quality).

Table 6.21: Summary of actual spare capacity for midweek cricket by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)	Number of additional teams that could be accommodated in the peak period	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	6	1	6
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	18	3	18
52	Thames Rugby Club	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12	2	12

The total actual spare capacity midweek equates to 36 match equivalent sessions a season, with most of this being located in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area (30 match equivalent sessions a season). The remainder is in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area (six match equivalent sessions).

Table 6.22: Actual spare capacity for midweek cricket by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	30
Grays	-
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	6
Tilbury & Chadwell	-
Thurrock Total	**36**

Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain based on the number of wickets provided and the quality of the square. In Thurrock, this relates to four squares across two sites.

Table 6.23: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	21
32	North Stifford Recreation Ground	Grays	2
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	20
36	Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	14
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	30
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	16

Total overplay equates to 103 match equivalent sessions a season, with this all identified in Grays and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas.

In the case of Corringham Recreation Ground and Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground, rather than high levels of demand received at the site, overplay is solely caused by poor square quality as this means that no capacity is provided. Contrarily, demand levels from Orsett & Thurrock CC is the primary driver of the overuse at Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club, this is also the case at North Stifford Recreation Ground with demand from Belhus CC.

6.5: Supply and demand analysis

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

Saturday supply and demand analysis

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday). For actual spare capacity, please note that this is converted from the number of match equivalent sessions identified above to the number of match equivalent sessions that could feasibly be utilised by a growth in demand. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available). The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time.

Table 6.24: Analysis for Saturday cricket (in match equivalent sessions per season)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	12	-	12	-	12
Grays	-	2	2	12	14
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	101	101	36	137
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-	0	-	0
Thurrock	**12**	**103**	**91**	**48**	**139**

As seen in the table above, there is overplay of grass wicket squares in Thurrock on Saturday's amounting to 91 match equivalent sessions per season. This deficit is solely located in the Grays and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas, with overall spare capacity found in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area.

It should also be noted that the shortfall in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area would be greater if Horndon-on-the-Hill was able to return its exported demand. This equates to 24 additional match equivalent sessions.

After considering future demand derived from population growth (equating to four senior men's teams), shortfalls worsen by 48 match equivalent sessions to 139 match equivalent sessions per season. This increases the deficit in the Grays Analysis Area Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.

Sunday cricket supply and demand analysis

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

Table 6.25: Analysis for Sunday cricket (in match equivalent sessions per season)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	24	-	24	-	24
Grays	-	2	2	-	2
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	-	101	101	-	101
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-	0	-	0
Total	**24**	**103**	**79**	**-**	**79**

There is a current overall shortfall of grass wicket squares in Thurrock on Sunday's amounting to 79 match equivalent sessions per season, despite spare capacity in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area. The deficit is due to overplay levels in the Grays and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas.

No future demand is forecast for this playing period.

Junior cricket supply and demand analysis (midweek)

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

Table 6.26: Analysis for midweek cricket (in match equivalent sessions per season)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	30	-	**30**	-	**30**
Grays	-	2	**2**	-	**2**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	12	101	**89**	12	**101**
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-	**0**	-	**0**
Total	**42**	**103**	**61**	**12**	**73**

As seen in the table above, there is a shortfall of grass wicket squares in Thurrock for midweek cricket amounting to 61 match equivalent sessions per season. A shortfall is present in the Grays and Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham analysis areas, whilst the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area has spare capacity.

After considering future demand derived from population growth (to two junior teams), the shortfalls increase to 73 match equivalent sessions a season. This growth exacerbates the shortfall in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.

6.6: Conclusion

There is a clear shortfall of natural turf cricket squares to meet demand within Thurrock for each playing format, meaning the existing supply is insufficient to meet demand levels. Furthermore, when factoring in future demand, shortfalls worsen across the Borough. This is summarised in the following table

Table 6.27: Analysis summary of cricket squares (in match equivalent sessions per season)

Format	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Saturday	12	**103**	**91**	**48**	**139**
Sunday	24	**103**	**79**	**-**	**79**
Midweek	42	**103**	**61**	**12**	**73**

Notwithstanding the above, when broken down and assessing each analysis area, it is clear that the identified deficits are primarily due to significant shortfalls within the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area. The analysis for each analysis area is displayed in the following table to evidence this.

Table 6.28: Analysis area summary for cricket squares (match equivalent sessions)

Format	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet					
Saturday	12	-	12	-	12
Sunday	24	-	24	-	24
Midweek	30	-	30	-	30
Grays					
Saturday	-	2	2	12	14
Sunday	-	2	2	-	2
Midweek	-	2	2	-	2
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham					
Saturday	-	101	97	36	133
Sunday	-	101	97	-	80
Midweek	12	101	89	12	101
Tilbury & Chadwell					
Saturday	-	-	0	-	0
Sunday	-	-	0	-	0
Midweek	-	-	0	-	0

When compared to the 2020 PPOSS, the shortfalls have slightly reduced, despite demand levels increasing. It is considered that this is primarily due to pitch quality improvements in addition to greater use of NTPs.

Cricket – supply and demand summary

- There is a clear shortfall of natural turf cricket squares to meet demand within Thurrock for each playing format, meaning the existing supply is insufficient to meet demand levels.
- The shortfalls are primarily due to significant overuse within the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area.
- When factoring in future demand, Borough-wide shortfalls worsen.

Cricket – supply summary

- There are nine grass wicket cricket squares in Thurrock across seven sites (Orsett & Thurrock Cricket Club and Stanford-le-Hope Cricket Club have two).
- All grass wicket provision is available for community use.
- Two additional grass cricket squares at St Clere's School are identified as being temporarily disused, with this leading to Horndon-on-the-Hill CC needing to export some demand outside of Thurrock.
- There are two disused squares at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field) that were last provided in 2018, whilst cricket was also previously provided at Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf & Country Club).
- Three of the squares are accompanied by an NTP, whilst there are also 10 standalone NTPs provided across school sites.
- All clubs have secure tenure at their respective grounds and will therefore be able to service cricket for the foreseeable future
- The audit of grass wicket squares found two grass wicket squares to be of good quality, five to be of standard quality and two to be of poor quality.
- All clubs in Thurrock have access to ancillary provision which are rated as standard quality, although only Belhus CC at North Stifford Recreation Ground has facilities that are appropriate for women's and girl's participation.
- Three of the five clubs have access to fixed onsite net provision, with Aveley CC not currently serviced and Horndon-on-the-Hill CC using mobile facilities.

Cricket – demand summary

- There are five clubs in Thurrock which collectively provide 62 teams, with this equating to 29 senior men's, two senior women's, 27 junior boys and four junior girls' team.
- The biggest club is Orsett & Thurrock CC with a total of 27 teams.
- Participation has increased in recent years, with 12 additional teams now fielded compared to 2020 data.
- Four clubs take part in both the All Stars and Dynamos initiative, whilst three field women's softball teams.
- Horndon-on-the-Hill CC exports some demand following the loss of access to St Clere's School, utilising Small Gains Playing Fields in Castle Point and Wickford Memorial Park in Basildon.
- No unmet or latent demand is identified and no clubs import demand into the Borough.
- Future growth from population increases is anticipated to equate to four senior men's and two junior boy's teams, whilst two of the five clubs have plans to increase the number of teams they currently provide by a total of seven teams.

PART 7: TENNIS

7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally across Thurrock. The LTA has recently restructured its strategic approach to target a number of national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites.

The LTA's vision is 'Tennis Opened Up', with these words at the heart of its work and shaping everything that it does. Its mission is to grow tennis by making the sport welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone, whilst recognising the essential role played by volunteers, coaches, officials and tennis venues.

The LTA is working to govern and grow tennis and padel across Britain, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. This is split into three main areas:

- **Participation** - making tennis a sport for anyone to play, through increasing participation and access, such as through LTA Youth, the innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis; through Open Court, a successful disability tennis programme which is one of the largest of its kind across any sport and has helped a record number of disabled people enjoy the benefits of tennis; through SERVES, a ground-breaking 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 are delivered and where support is provided for hundreds of thousands of players throughout the year.
- **Performance** - becoming one of the most respected nations in the world for player development, for example through its Player Pathway that is supporting an nurturing the next generation of elite British players with programmes such as our Pro Scholarship Programme that's helped the likes of Emma Raducanu and Cam Norrie break into the world's top 100; though the ITF Gold Standard National Tennis Centre which has been equipped with world class courts and facilities, and provides a base for Britain's top tennis and wheelchair tennis players to train; or through the increased number of international tournaments that are being staged across Britain throughout the year as part of the LTA Performance Competitions Calendar as well as summer major events, providing more opportunities for professional British players to compete and win on home soil.
- **Transformation** - transforming tennis in Britain by working with everyone in the sport, such as through its Inclusion Strategy for tennis in Britain that aims to see tennis to lead the way for inclusion and diversity in sport; through the award-winning safeguarding work that has put tennis at the forefront of safeguarding in sport, 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; or 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.

Consultation

There is one tennis club identified in Thurrock, with this being Thurrock TC. The Club has been consulted with to inform this section of the report.

7.2: Supply

There are 46 tennis courts identified in Thurrock across 21 sites, with 34 courts (74%) available for community use across 17 sites. As seen in the table below, the largest offering of tennis courts is identified in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area, although more available courts are found in the Grays Analysis Area. There are no courts in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area.

Table 7.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	8	1	**9**
Grays	15	2	**17**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	11	9	**20**
Tilbury & Chadwell	-	-	**0**
Total	**34**	**12**	**46**

Since the previous PPOSS was completed in 2020, there has been an increase of seven courts overall and two that are available for community use. The growth is due to the identification of provision across the following sites:

- Aveley Recreation Ground
- Ortu Gable Hall School
- Purfleet Primary Academy
- Thames Park Secondary School
- West Thurrock Memorial Park
- William Edwards School

Notwithstanding the above, provision has been lost at The Gateway Academy, Orsett Recreation Ground and Wyldecrest Sports Country Club. At The Gateway Academy, this is due to the court area now being marked out for netball and basketball, whereas the courts at the remaining two sites have become disused (see section below for further information).

Disused provision

As mentioned previously, there are two disused tennis courts found at Wyldecrest Sports Country Club. Consultation with the operator identifies that the site has undergone renovation in recent years, with plans existing to establish small-sided 3G pitches where the courts reside.

One disused court is identified at Orsett Recreation Ground, with this provision currently unmaintained. It is unclear as to why this is the case.

The mapping below identifies the location of the courts currently servicing Thurrock. For a key to this, see Table 7.2.

Figure 7.1: Location of tennis courts in Thurrock



Table 7.2: Summary of provision site by site

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lit?	Court type	Court quality
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
19	Grays Convent High School	RM17 5UX	Grays	Education	No	2	No	Macadam	Standard
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	RM16 6SA	Grays	Education	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
22	Harris Academy Riverside	RM19 1QY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Standard
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	SS17 8NR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	Council	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Standard
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
40	Ortu Gable Hall School	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	5	No	Macadam	Standard
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	SS17 0NS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	4	Yes	Macadam	Standard
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Poor
50	Storm Fit	RM17 5TD	Grays	Education	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Poor
51	Thames Park Secondary School	RM17 5FP	Grays	Education	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Standard
56	Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club	RM16 2ER	Grays	Sports club	Yes	3	No	Artificial turf	Good

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lit?	Court type	Court quality
60	West Thurrock Memorial Ground	RM20 3BT	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Standard
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Education	Yes	1	No	Artificial turf	Standard
69	Rowley Road	RM16 3EU	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
70	Grays Town Park	RM17 6RB	Grays	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Poor
73	Purfleet Primary Academy	RM19 1SX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	No	1	Yes	Macadam	Good
74	Aveley Recreation Ground	RM15 4BY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Standard

LTA Youth provision

LTA Youth provides children with an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. It utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques. This has five levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

- Blue: Learn the Basics – tennis lessons for ages 4-6
- Red: Serve, Rally and Score – tennis lessons for ages 6-8
- Orange: Develop a Rounded Game - tennis lessons for ages 8-9
- Green: Test your Skills - tennis lessons for ages 9-10
- Yellow: Take your Skills Further – tennis lessons for ages 10+

No specific LTA Youth courts are provided in Thurrock. However, this is not to say that such demand is not taking place. Full size courts can also be used via the use of temporary markings and/or cones.

Padel provision

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

In order to grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway, with £6 million invested by the NGB since 2021. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, with this growing to 350 in 2023 and 500 in 2024. There is also a projected growth to 1,000 in 2026, with it therefore envisaged that, with growing infrastructure, participation in padel will increase significantly over the coming years.

Notwithstanding the above, there are currently no padel tennis courts within Thurrock. In terms of future supply, a variety of environments can be considered, with provision often situated next to or managed by those running existing tennis facilities (e.g., tennis clubs, parks and 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 also states that it is not encouraging clubs or operators 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 tennis courts remains sufficient.

Indoor provision

There is one indoor tennis facility in Thurrock, with this being Bannatynes Health Club. The site provides two indoor courts, albeit these are generally only available to members of the health and fitness club and therefore cannot be readily accessed by the wider community.

More information on indoor tennis can be seen in the Built Sports Facility Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

Management

The table identifies the breakdown of tennis courts in Thurrock by management-type. As seen, 16 community available courts are operated by schools, 15 by the Council and three by a sports club (Thurrock TC). All unavailable courts are at education sites.

Table 7.3: Courts available for community use by ownership

Community use?	Sports club	Council	Education
Available	3	15	16
Unavailable	-	-	12
Total	**3**	**15**	**28**

For Thurrock TC, tenure is considered to be secure as it leases its site on a long-term basis from a private landlord. The Club also agreed access to St Clere's School if required as it formed part of the planning application for the refurbishment of its courts in 2016 and assisted with fundraising. However, it no longer utilises the provision following conflict, which is further detailed later on within this section of the report.

Court type

Within Thurrock, 42 courts (91%) have a macadam surface. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment. The LTA reports that this should cost £1,200 a year per macadam court (which includes on-going maintenance costs).

The four remaining courts (9%) have an artificial turf surface, with these identified at Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club and William Edwards School. Such provision generally allows for greater levels of access, especially during inclement weather spells, as well as requiring less frequent maintenance. Nevertheless, the cost of resurfacing the courts is more expensive despite the lifespan being similar.

The courts at Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club were converted to artificial turf in 2022 having previously been macadam-based.

Sports lighting

Courts with sports lighting enable use throughout the year and are identified by the LTA as being a key priority for growing participation nationally. In fact, the LTA reports that sports lighting allows for a 35% increase in available court time on an annual basis.

In Thurrock, 16 of the 46 courts are serviced by sports lighting, which is a relatively low proportion. The sites with sports lighting are:

- Harris Academy Riverside
- Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)
- Ortu Hassenbrook Academy
- Purfleet Primary Academy
- St Clere's School
- Storm Fit

The majority of this sites are available for community use, although this is not the case at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy (four courts) or Purfleet Primary Academy (one court). Several schools without sports lighting state that this is a key reason as to why community use is not allowed.

At Storm Fit, Palmers College reports an aspiration to upgrade the lighting to LED. However, it notes that a lack of funding is currently prohibitive in regards to this.

Nationally, access to courts with sports lighting is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision. To that end, it is worth noting that Thurrock TC is not currently serviced, although it reports that it has gained planning permission for telescoping lighting to be installed on two of its courts. It is now fundraising to enable this. Previous planning applications for traditional lighting were unsuccessful.

Sports lighting at park sites is also considered to be beneficial in terms of attracting and enabling recreational demand. In Thurrock, sports lighting is provided across only one local authority venue (Blackshots Recreation Ground), which leaves eight further sites that are not serviced. Furthermore, the LTA notes that the lighting at Blackshots Recreation Ground does not meet its required standards for servicing tennis courts.

Over markings

Tennis courts, particularly within schools, are often over marked by netball, basketball and/or football courts. Courts which are over marked tend to receive higher level of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as creating capacity issues if there is community demand from more than one sport.

In Thurrock, 30 courts are overmarked by basketball, netball and/or 5-aside provision across 12 sites, with the majority of these located at schools. Curriculum activity makes this more of a necessity.

Quality

The quality of tennis courts is informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness, and evidence of inappropriate use such as vandalism and littering (for the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2).

In Thurrock, four courts are assessed as good quality (three available to the community), whereas 30 are standard quality courts (19 available for community use) and 12 are poor quality (all available for community use).

Table 7.4: Summary of community available court quality

Community available	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	3	19	12
Unavailable	1	11	-
Total	**4**	**30**	**12**

When compared to previous PPOSS findings (2020), there has been a decrease in good quality provision and poor quality provision, resulting in an increase in the number of standard quality courts.

The poor quality courts are located at the following sites:

- Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)
- Corringham Recreation Ground
- Grays Town Park
- Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground
- Rowley Road
- Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground
- Storm Fit

At these sites, there are significant signs of wear and tear as well as worn line markings, with maintenance also seemingly only carried out to a relatively basic level. At Corringham Recreation Ground there is also a particular issue where large cracks have appeared from where a nearby tree roots have come up through ground.

In contrast, the good quality courts are found at Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club and Purfleet Primary Academy. The follows relatively recent installation and/or refurbishment across these sites.

For a breakdown of quality at each site with tennis courts, please see the table below.

Table 7.5: Site by site quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of courts	Court quality
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	2	Poor
19	Grays Convent High School	Grays	No	2	Standard
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	Grays	Yes	2	Standard
22	Harris Academy Riverside	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	3	Standard
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	2	Poor
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	Grays	Yes	1	Standard
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	Grays	Yes	1	Poor
40	Ortu Gable Hall School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	5	Standard
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	No	4	Standard
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	2	Standard
47	St Clere's School	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	4	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	2	Poor
50	Storm Fit	Grays	Yes	3	Poor
51	Thames Park Secondary School	Grays	Yes	3	Standard
56	Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club	Grays	Yes	3	Good
60	West Thurrock Memorial Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	2	Standard

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of courts	Court quality
61	William Edwards School	Grays	Yes	1	Standard
69	Rowley Road	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Yes	1	Poor
70	Grays Town Park	Grays	Yes	1	Poor
73	Purfleet Primary Academy	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	No	1	Good
74	Aveley Recreation Ground	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Yes	1	Standard

Renovation fund[13]

The LTA previously secured a £22 million investment fund to be put into park tennis courts across Britain, together with an £8.5 million investment from the LTA. This saw thousands of public park tennis courts that were in poor or unplayable condition improved for the benefit of the local communities. It also funded the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes and support to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

Whilst the above has come to an end, the LTA's ambition remains to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. The LTA notes that thus should be a focus across park provision in Thurrock.

LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme[14]

The LTA's mission is to grow tennis and padel by making them accessible, welcoming, and enjoyable. Ensuring local communities have access to quality facilities is critical to attracting and retaining more players. As such, the LTA's Quick Access Loan Scheme aims to provide loans to support venues investment in facilities, prioritising the installation and construction of covered courts.

The objectives of the fund are to:

- Provide covered or sports-lit playing facilities to encourage community accessible play all year.
- Retain and increase the number of participants at the venue.
- Offer and increase both non-members pay and play usage and coaching opportunities.
- Grow the numbers of adults and juniors on the coaching programme.
- Provide seamless booking of tennis courts and lessons through an online booking system.

As part of the fund, the LTA will fund:

- Lighting upgrades to LED (outdoor and indoor)
- New sports lights
- New court provision
- Outdoor padel courts
- Covered padel (courts and cover)
- Covered tennis courts

[13] Renovation Fund for tennis facilities (lta.org.uk)
[14] Quick Access Loan Scheme for tennis facilities (lta.org.uk)

Ancillary provision

For club-based tennis, the ancillary facilities servicing Thurrock TC are identified as being adequate quality, which is echoed by the Club. It is serviced by changing rooms and toilets as well as a separate social area, despite space being limited on the site. However, it is noted that the changing rooms in particular could be improved, primarily due to the age of the provision.

For the remaining courts across Thurrock, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Often, the facilities predominately service football and cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users. In some instances, quality is also poor, such as at Blackshots Recreation Ground where the building is no longer in use.

Where ancillary facilities are poor quality or non-existent in relation to local authority sites, the LTA notes that the most pressing issue is to ensure that accessible toilets are provided. Facilities such as changing rooms are seen as less of an issue as they are generally not accessed by park players.

7.3: Demand

Competitive tennis

There is one club in Thurrock, known as Thurrock TC. It reports that it has a membership of 200, which is made up of 60 senior men, 60 senior women, 40 junior boys' and 40 junior girls.

Table 7.6: Summary of club membership

Name of club	No. of senior members	No. of junior members	Total membership
Thurrock TC	120	80	200

When compared to 2020 PPOSS findings, the membership at Thurrock TC has increased by 60, with a total membership of 140 previously reported (70 seniors and 70 juniors). However, the previous study also recognised an additional club, known as Storm TC, which is now assumed to have folded (the operators of Storm Fit are unaware of its existence and there is no trace of the Club online). This had 58 members in 2020.

Informal and parks tennis

Away from clubs, community usage can be difficult to quantify as it is not always monitored, especially at sites that are free to access as is the case at local authority sites across Thurrock. Demand for such provision is generally at its highest during summer months, especially following events such as Wimbledon, but significant capacity is likely to exist outside of this.

To help grow the use of tennis courts, the LTA has developed a package of support for councils and other providers by removing key barriers to participation. This is via three products known as ClubSpark, Play and Smart Access. However, these are not currently utilised across any local authority sites in Thurrock, which is now relatively rare as more and more councils receive investment into provision.

Each product is further summarised below.

ClubSpark – Improving the booking process

ClubSpark is a flexible and simple venue management platform with multiple products and applications to help venues, local authorities and coaches manage their sport. ClubSpark is a tool that is offered for free as part of LTA venue registration and allows administrators to manage all functions at their venue(s), including:

- Managed website - create and manage a mobile friendly website tailored to LA/club requirements to promote events and activities.
- Managed coaching – set up coaching lessons and courses online.
- Membership management - improve membership engagement by making it easier for the venue and for members to pay, renew and keep in touch (includes online payments, direct debits and the monitoring of revenue streams; membership modules can also be used to take season ticket payments for venues operating a non-traditional annual facility fee).
- Organise payments - set the way payments are taken, whether it's immediate pay and play, or bookable as part of a membership package.
- Court bookings – reduced administration for managing bookings; give staff, coaches, members and the general public access to book and pay for courts, classes or other resources online.
- Scheduling - set unique booking and price rules to suit the venue and enable lights to switch on/off automatically when linked to the LTA Premium Gate Access system.
- Book and pay remotely - customers can make bookings and payments for a venue anytime, anywhere via the real-time booking app.
- Reporting - ClubSpark allows administrators to view reports highlighting income, court usage, revenue and number of members and season ticket holders; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

LTA Play

LTA Play is an aggregator that collects all booking and coaching information via ClubSpark pages and displays it for participants in one easy to view page. It allows players to search for venues close to them and provides booking options, removing the barriers of not knowing where courts are or how to book.

LTA Play provides a helpful customer journey, with a personal profile to review and manage bookings, and helpful reminders. Courts can be set to book for free of charge or at a fee agreed by the provider.

Smart Access

The LTA has developed two Smart Access gate access systems that work in association with ClubSpark to secure courts and to allow access to booked customers only. Members of the public can book a court online (making payment if required) and receive a four digit access code via email to enter using a courtside keypad. The gate access system then allows entry for the time booked if a correct code is entered.

There are two gate options available: SmartAccess Premium and SmartAccess Lite. The demands and needs of users plus the setup of the venue determines the most appropriate system for each site.

Nationally, the LTA report that in the last three years, sites with a gate access system installed have attracted 64,841 unique players, leading to 609,671 courts being booked. This has generated income of over £1 million.

Additional demand

The LTA operates various tennis initiatives across the Country which results in some courts receiving additional demand. Furthermore, there are other formats away from traditional tennis that can result in increased usage. These are all detailed below.

Local tennis leagues

Local tennis leagues are less formal in comparison to established club play, offering greater flexibility and an opportunity for all abilities to engage in competition at local venues. The leagues are run by the LTA and are available to all aged 18 years and above, with administration and support based online. Players are organised into mixed sex leagues of eight based on similar ability levels, with matches arranged between the two players at whatever time and court is agreed. The flexibility of play is conducive to the use of park sites which are typically more easily accessible.

In Thurrock, there is no league activity currently taking place. The closest venues utilised are in Gravesend, Castle Point and Southend-on-Sea.

Free Parks Tennis

Free Park Tennis is a new programme for all park tennis operators, offering people the chance to play tennis for free and providing an entry point for more players to get involved in the sport. This has been developed due to the following needs:

- Player Trends:
  - 35% of people who play tennis once per year or more do so in a park.
  - The most common type of play for park players is socially with friends or family.
- Barriers:
  - 25% of players cite not having anyone to play with as a barrier to playing more tennis.
  - 24% of players cite having nowhere to play or difficulty in accessing local courts as reasons why they do not play tennis more often.
  - 32% of these players say local courts are not affordable.
  - 75% of parks players consider themselves to be of beginner (41%) or improver (36%) standard, which is significantly lower than club players.
  - 22% of players state that a lack of equipment prevents them from playing tennis.

The key points of the sessions are:

- Free for all players to book and attend.
- Run by a minimum of two trained and DBS checked Activators.
- Sessions should run all year round (weather depending).
- Run on a Saturday or Sunday morning at 10.00-11.00am.

Court requirements are for three courts minimum in parks that have this many, or two courts at two court sites (a three court site can have up to 34 players attending). The sessions are designed for those aged eight and over, but under eights can attend when accompanied by a parent.

No courts in Thurrock currently offer Free Parks Tennis.

LTA Youth Programmes

The LTA provides children with the perfect opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. Designed for children aged between 4-10, mini tennis utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques.

The game is split out into five levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

- Blue Stage: Age 4-6 – learn the basics.
- Red Stage: Age 6-8 – serve, rally and score.
- Orange Stage: Age 8-9 – develop a rounded game.
- Green Stage: Age 9-10 – test your skills.
- Yellow Stage: Age 10+ - take your skills further.

No mini tennis courts have been identified in Thurrock, although that is not to say that sessions cannot be run on full size courts, particularly at club sites. That being said, Thurrock TC identifies no such activity.

Padel

In 2022, 90,000 people reportedly play padel more than once a year in England - a 493% year on year increase compared to 2021 data (15,000). This then reportedly increased to 129,000 players in 2023, exemplifying the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for. Furthermore, the LTA reports that Essex is one of the biggest growing counties in terms of padel demand and development.

Building on from the above, LTA has outlined a Padel Strategy (2024-2029). The key demand objectives are to:

- Grow the visibility of padel to increase awareness from 20% to 40% of the population, interest in playing from 7.5% to 15% and boost participation.
- Increase the number of annual padel players from 129,000 to 400,000, and monthly players from 65,000 to 200,000.
- Grow the padel coach and activator workforce from 40 to 700.
- Enable 10 players to break into the World top 200 and two players into the top 100 and inspire the padel audience.

Despite the above, there are currently no padel courts in Thurrock, meaning no activity is taking place. However, that is not to say that there is no demand. Several operators have aspirations to establish provision and this would likely result in significant usage when considering national and regional trends.

To assist local authorities in strategically planning padel provision, the LTA has established, by authority, the number of padel courts that can be sustained based on population density and padel demand. In Thurrock, this identifies a need for 14 courts, which is based on 20% of the population being interested in padel (taken from a YouGov survey), penetration levels of 8%, and one court being able to accommodate up to 200 players.

The above 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.

The figure also only represents the first stage in strategic planning for padel by local authority boundary. The second phase is to begin to look at potential locations and the demography of the catchment and how they overlay, which will in many instances cut across boundary lines.

Latent/unmet demand

Latent demand for tennis nationally is reported to be high by the LTA, which has an insight tool that suggests that 18% of the five million players that pick up a racket each year would play more often if key barriers such as poor promotion of opportunities to get on court, unclear booking journeys (especially those that are 'offline') and low quality facilities were addressed.

Furthermore, the LTA conducted some research to understand how the public feels about tennis and the main barriers to accessing the sport. The research was split into club, community and education sectors, with headline findings as follows:

- Around five million people play once per year with the majority of this in parks.
- 46% of tennis played by those 14 years is on park courts.
- 80% of those that do not play tennis but would like to see parks as their first option.
- Barriers preventing use of courts located in parks include the quality of the courts, ease of booking and the number of courts available to play.
- Demand for tennis amongst those who stopped playing in the last five years is from 14 upwards.
- Although there is demand for tennis amongst working class individuals, the highest latent demand is from upper middle, middle and lower middle classes.

Further research carried out by the LTA also suggests that many more people would play tennis if they knew where courts were located, particularly local authority courts. Its assertion is that better promotion would increase demand.

In addition to the above, Thurrock TC also identifies an element of unmet demand, noting that it is currently operating at capacity due to a lack of sports lighting. This is linked to it gaining planning permission for the installation of telescopic lighting and subsequent fundraising attempts.

Future demand

Thurrock TC does not currently identify any future growth plans, which is a consequence of it considering itself to be at capacity. Any increased demand can only occur following the installation of sports lighting.

Notwithstanding the above, a growth in demand for tennis is likely to emanate from general population growth, with much of this likely to be outside of the club environment. Using Sport England Sports Facility Calculator, projected growth to 2044 (in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan) equates to the need for 2.13 courts. This is based on extrapolating current demand levels.

In addition, the LTA also expects further future growth via its insight tools. To ensure that this can be met, it is imperative that the facility stock, particularly at park sites, is of an adequate quantity and quality and easily accessible/bookable.

7.4: Supply and demand analysis

For club-based tennis, the LTA suggests that non-sports lit courts can accommodate a maximum of 40 members, whereas courts with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members. Using this, Thurrock TC is considered to have capacity for only 120 members, meaning it is currently significantly oversubscribed with a membership of 200. This links to its identified need for sports lighting, although a deficit would remain even if all three courts were serviced (this would increase capacity to 180).

For non-club courts, capacity is more difficult to determine as exact demand levels are not known. However, this is an issue in itself, with no local authority provision operating with LTA technology such as via ClubSpark. Furthermore, no local authority sites are serviced by suitable sports lighting and none are assessed as good quality, with both of these aspects likely to be inhibiting demand.

There is also likely to be demand for padel that is not being met, based on the national and local picture, with no courts provided. This is despite the LTA identifying a need for 14 based on its modelling.

7.5: Conclusion

The supply of tennis provision in Thurrock is currently insufficient to meet both club and non-club demand. This is due to capacity issues for Thurrock TC, primarily linked to a lack of sports lighting, and because of a lack of good quality, sports-lit local authority courts that are easily accessible. There is also a need for padel provision to be established across the Borough.

Tennis - supply and demand summary

- The supply of tennis provision in Thurrock is currently insufficient to meet both club and non-club demand.
- There are capacity issues for Thurrock TC, primarily linked to a lack of sports lighting, and a lack of good quality, sports-lit local authority courts that are easily accessible.
- There is a need for padel provision to be established across the Borough, with no courts currently provided.

Tennis - supply summary

- There are 48 tennis courts identified in Thurrock across 21 sites, with 34 courts available for community use across 17 sites.
- There are disused courts identified at Wyldecrest Spots Country Club and Orsett Recreation Ground.
- There are no padel courts provided.
- There are 16 community available courts operated by schools, 15 by the Council and three by a sports club (all unavailable courts are at education sites).
- All but four courts have a macadam surface, with the remainder courts being artificial turf.
- There are 16 courts serviced by sports lighting, which is a relatively low number.
- Thurrock TC is not currently provided for in regards to sports lighting - it has gained planning permission for telescoping lighting to be installed on two of its courts.
- Four courts are assessed as good quality (three available to the community), whereas 30 are standard quality courts (19 available for community use) and 12 are poor quality (all available for community use).
- Ancillary facilities are adequate for Thurrock TC but generally problematic at non-club sites.

Tennis - demand summary

- There is one tennis club in Thurrock, known as Thurrock TC.
- The Club's membership totals 200, with this equating to 60 senior men, 60 senior women, 40 junior boys' and 40 junior girls.
- Membership has grown from 140 since 2020, although a second club has been lost during this time period (Storm Fit TC).
- Away from clubs, community usage can be difficult to quantify, particularly in Thurrock as no sites operate with LTA products such as ClubSpark.
- There is no Local Tennis League operating in Thurrock and no courts are part of the Free Parks Tennis initiative.
- No padel usage is taking place due to no courts existing; however, the LTA identifies a need for 14 courts within the Borough and take-up is therefore likely to be high when provision is established.
- Thurrock TC reports latent demand due to currently operating at capacity, which is linked to its need for sports lighting to be established.
- Future demand from population projections equates to 2.13 courts (to 2044).

PART 8: NETBALL

8.1: Introduction

England Netball is the governing body with overall responsibility for ensuring the effective governance of the sport.

Whilst often played indoors, there are far more outdoor courts provided and in use by the netball community than there are indoor. Nationally, England Netball reports that a key challenge is that the supply of outdoor netball courts is generally not of a good enough standard for use by the community, whilst accessibility and a lack of sports lighting can also be problematic.

Consultation

Consultation to inform this section of the report has taken place with England Netball and the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association.

8.2: Supply

There are 81 netball courts identified in Thurrock across 33 sites. However, of these, only 43 are available for community use across 13 sites, with all remaining provision unavailable for community use and located at educational sites.

Table 8.1: Summary of community available netball courts

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use	Total
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	5	6	**11**
Grays	17	18	**35**
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	15	11	**26**
Tilbury & Chadwell	6	3	**9**
Total	**43**	**38**	**81**

As seen in the table above, the majority of community available courts are located in the Grays Analysis Area (17), whereas the fewest are found in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area (five).

Since the previous PPOSS was completed in 2020, the number of courts across the Borough has increased substantially. However, this is predominately due to additional provision being identified, rather than it being due to new developments. The number of community available courts has only increased by five.

Disused provision

There are two disused netball courts found at Wyldecrest Sports Country Club. Consultation with the operator identifies that the site has undergone renovation in recent years, with plans existing to establish small-sided 3G pitches where the courts reside.

Figure 8.1 overleaf shows the location of the netball courts currently servicing the Borough. For a key to the map, see Table 8.2.

Figure 8.1: Location of netball courts in Thurrock



Table 8.2: Key to map

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Court type	Sports-lit?	Court quality
1	Abbots Hall Primary Academy	SS17 7BW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
3	Belmont Castle Academy	RM17 5YN	Grays	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
10	Corringham Primary School	SS17 9BH	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
13	Deneholm Primary School	RM16 2SS	Grays	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
14	Dilkes Academy	RM15 5JQ	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	No	2	Macadam	No	Standard
16	East Tilbury Primary School	RM18 8SB	Tilbury & Chadwell	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
18	Giffards Primary School	SS17 7TG	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	3	Macadam	No	Standard
19	Grays Convent High School	RM17 5UX	Grays	Education	No	2	Macadam	No	Standard
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	RM16 6SA	Grays	Education	Yes	2	Macadam	No	Standard
20	Harris Academy Chafford Hundred	RM16 6SA	Grays	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Poor
21	Harris Academy Ockendon	RM15 5AY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	No	2	Macadam	No	Standard
22	Harris Academy Riverside	RM19 1QY	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	Yes	3	Macadam	No	Standard
23	Herringham Primary Academy	RM16 4JX	Tilbury & Chadwell	Education	No	2	Macadam	No	Standard
24	Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground	SS17 8NR	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	1	Macadam	No	Poor
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	Council	Yes	1	Macadam	Yes	Poor

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Court type	Sports-lit?	Court quality
29	Little Thurrock Primary School	RM17 5SW	Grays	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
35	Ormiston Park Academy	RM15 4RU	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	Yes	2	Macadam	Yes	Standard
37	Orsett Heath Academy	RM16 2QH	Grays	Education	Yes	4	Macadam	Yes	Good
40	Ortu Gable Hall School	SS17 8JT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	No	6	Macadam	No	Standard
42	Ortu Hassenbrook Academy	SS17 0NS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	Yes	8	Macadam	Yes	Standard
44	Quarry Hill Academy	RM17 5UT	Grays	Education	No	2	Macadam	No	Standard
45	Somers Heath Primary School	RM15 5LX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
47	St Clere's School	SS17 0NW	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Education	Yes	4	Macadam	Yes	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Council	Yes	2	Macadam	Yes	Standard
49	Stifford Clays Primary School	RM16 2ST	Grays	Education	No	1	Macadam	No	Standard
50	Storm Fit	RM17 5TD	Grays	Education	Yes	2	Macadam	Yes	Poor
51	Thames Park Secondary School	RM17 5FP	Grays	Education	Yes	3	Macadam	No	Standard
53	The Gateway Academy	RM16 4LU	Tilbury & Chadwell	Education	Yes	6	Macadam	No	Poor
54	The Hathaway Academy	RM17 5LL	Grays	Education	No	3	Macadam	No	Poor
58	Treetops School	RM16 2WU	Grays	Education	Yes	4	Macadam	No	Standard
59	Tudor Court Primary School	RM16 6PL	Grays	Education	Yes	1	Macadam	No	Standard
61	William Edwards School	RM16 3NJ	Grays	Education	No	3	Macadam	No	Standard
62	Woodside Academy	RM16 2GJ	Grays	Education	No	3	Macadam	No	Standard
73	Purfleet Primary Academy	RM19 1SX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Education	No	1	Macadam	Yes	Good

Indoor provision

Whilst not included within the scope of this study, it is recognised that netball activity also takes places via indoor provision, particularly in sports halls and outside of summer months. More information in relation to this can be found in the Built Sports Facilities Strategy which is being undertaken in conjunction with the PPOSS.

Management and security of tenure

The large majority of netball court sites in Thurrock are managed by schools. In fact, the only three exceptions to this are courts at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field), Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground and Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground. These are all operated by the Council.

Due to most facilities being operated by schools, security of tenure for netball users is limited. Only those schools with a community use agreement in place provide a long-term guarantee of access e.g., at Orsett Heath Academy.

Court type

All outdoor netball courts in Thurrock have a macadam surface. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

Sports lighting

Outdoor netball courts that are serviced by sports lighting enable all year round evening use, thus allowing outdoor winter netball activity to take place as well as the more common summer netball activity. In Thurrock, only 24 of the 81 courts are serviced by sports lights, with these based at:

- Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)
- Ormiston Park Academy
- Ortu Hassenbrook Academy
- Purfleet Primary Academy
- St Clere's School
- Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground
- Storm Fit

In addition, Treetops School reports that it utilises mobile lighting for its four courts, whilst Harris Academy Riverside states that it has an aspiration to install lighting. It is currently trying to secure funding for this.

Several operators without sports-lit courts note that it is the lack of sports lighting which is preventing them from making their provision available for community use. In particular, Harris Academy Ockendon identifies that this is the case.

An absence of sports lighting on courts is an issue nationwide, with England Netball's national database identifying that only 1,941 of 5,108 outdoor netball courts are with sports lighting throughout the Country (38%). This percentage is still higher than in Thurrock, where only 30% of courts are serviced, suggesting that this could be a particular issue in the Borough.

Over marking

Netball courts, particularly at school sites, are often overmarked, predominately by tennis courts but also on occasion by basketball and/or football courts. Provision such as this tends to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as potentially causing capacity issues when there is external netball demand. This is, however, not considering the benefits the dual use can provide for schools from a curriculum perspective.

In Thurrock, a high number of courts are overmarked, with only primary schools as well as Ortu Hassenbrook Academy (four of its eight courts) and Orsett Heath Academy offering standalone provision.

Quality

The quality of netball courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (for the full assessment criteria, please refer to Appendix 2).

Of the community available courts in Thurrock, only five courts are assessed as good quality, whilst 62 are considered to be standard quality and 14 are poor quality. This is summarised further in the table below.

Table 8.3: Quality of netball courts in Thurrock

Community use	Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Available	4	29	10
Unavailable	1	33	4

Four of the good quality courts are identified at Orsett Heath Academy, whilst the other is at Purfleet Primary Academy. This follows recent installation of the provision at both. However, the latter is unavailable for community use.

The poor quality courts are identified at:

- Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)
- Harris Academy Chafford Hundred
- Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground
- Storm Fit
- The Gateway Academy
- The Hathaway Academy

Issues surrounding these courts include poor grip underfoot, evidence of moss and worn line markings. At Harris Academy Chafford Hundred, only one of the three courts are poor quality (the other two, which form part of a separate macadam area, are standard quality).

At St Clere's School, the School reports that two of its courts become unusable during inclement weather spells due to waterlogging (the other two courts are within a separate area). Thames Park Secondary School notes a similar issue, despite its courts recently being refurbished.

Quality issues are also reported at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy, with the line markings notably worn and with some cracks appearing. The School reports that the provision receives high levels of demand which is exacerbating the issues.

Grays Convent High School reports an aspiration to have an air dome installed over its two courts, although acknowledges that the funding for this will be difficult to obtain.

Ancillary facilities

Nationally, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic for community netball. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are generally not specific for netball and are often too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Moreover, given that most courts are located at schools, the facilities predominately service sports halls or grass pitches and are therefore not readily available or suited to outdoor netball court users. Access can then also be limited, even at sites that allow for community use as this may entail opening the main school buildings.

In Thurrock, the above is likely to relate given that most courts are provided at school sites, albeit this is not currently an issue due to a general lack of external netball usage. Where provision is in use, no problems are reported e.g., at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy.

8.3: Demand

Demand for outdoor netball activity can come in several forms, such as through formal league activity, commercial leagues and England Netball-led initiatives.

South Essex Thurrock Netball Association

The South Essex Thurrock Netball Association uses Ortu Hassenbrook Academy as a central venue for all its league fixtures for both senior and junior activity. Two seasons are played each year; a summer season which runs from March to July and a winter season which runs from September to January. All senior matches take place on a weekday evening (Monday-Thursday), whilst junior matches are played on a Sunday morning.

In addition to match play activity, the courts at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy are also widely used by teams for training throughout the year, as well as by teams affiliated to the Basildon Netball League (although these teams play matches outside of Thurrock). Other venues known to be used for training are Storm Fit, Treetops School, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred, St Clere's School and the Gateway Academy.

Within the league structures, several particularly large clubs field teams. This includes Fusion NC, which now hosts 20 teams. The Club provides an example of the additional usage of the courts at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy, with all training activity taking place at the site (generally on Thursdays).

Bears NC and Star NC are also large clubs that are primarily based at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy (although the latter uses indoor provision at William Edwards School). As well as fielding teams within the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association ran leagues, these clubs also have a senior team playing in the East Regional Club League (Division 3).

Commercial leagues

In addition to the club-based demand identified above, there is also a commercial netball league operating in Thurrock via Play Netball. This caters for teams outside of the normal club environment on more of a casual/recreational basis, with it generally running all-year round (a new season begins as soon as the previous one ends). In addition to welcoming already established teams, individual players are also encouraged to sign up before being placed within a team that suits their ability.

Play Netball matches take place at St Clere's School on Wednesday evenings from 19:00 until 21:00 via the outdoor courts. It currently consists of one division with eight teams participating.

England Netball initiatives

Nationally, England Netball has a variety of initiatives aimed at increasing netball participation for players of all abilities and ages. These include:

- Back to Netball
- Walking Netball
- Netball Now
- Bee Netball

However, none of these currently have a presence in Thurrock. Back to Netball and Netball Now were previously hosted at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy and St Clere's School but this is presently not the case.

Exported/imported demand

Due to the presence of the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association, it is considered likely that there will be considerable amounts of imported demand into Thurrock for netball. This is likely to be taking the form of individuals playing within teams that form part of the league structures in place.

Similarly, there is also likely to be a degree of exported demand given other leagues that operate in the region, such as those via the Basildon & District Netball Association at Basildon Sporting Village.

Unmet/latent demand

No latent or unmet demand is reported by the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association. As such, it is considered that any demand from people not currently playing netball could be accommodated within pre-existing activity.

Future demand

Future demand from the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association has not been quantified, although through consultation with Ortu Hassenbrook Academy it is noted that capacity exists for growth. That being said, it is noted that court quality has deteriorated in recent years and that renovation work is required.

In addition to club-based activity, it is hoped by England Netball that there will be an increase in the number of its initiatives held within the Borough and the demand for them. However, this can be reliant on volunteers running and organising the sessions.

8.4: Supply and demand analysis

There is currently significant level of community demand for outdoor netball provision in Thurrock, most of which is identified at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy, although several other venues are also being accessed for supplementary activity. With no capacity issues identified, the supply is seemingly sufficient to meet usage levels; however, there are clear issues in terms of quality, with only five good quality courts identified.

In addition, a lack of community availability could be inhibiting activity across a greater number of venues, with only just over 50% of provision currently accessible to clubs. This is also linked to a general lack of sports-lit provision, with this making providers less likely to open up their courts and clubs less likely to access them even when they are available.

8.5: Conclusion

The supply of netball provision in Thurrock is broadly sufficient to meet demand; however, quality improvements are required to ensure that this remains the case. This is particularly essential at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy given the levels of demand received but is also warranted at other sites that do or could provide a supplementary offer.

An increase in the number of community accessible courts and an increase in the number of sports lit courts would also be beneficial in ensuring that demand levels can continue to be accommodated.

Netball – supply and demand summary

- The supply of netball provision in Thurrock is broadly sufficient to meet demand.
- An improvement in court quality, the number of community available courts and the number of sports-lit courts are required to ensure that current activity levels and any future growth can be accommodated.

Netball – supply summary

- There are 81 netball courts identified across 33 sites in Thurrock, although only 43 are available for community use across 13 sites.
- There are two disused netball courts found at Wyldecrest Sports Country Club, where plans exist to convert the provision to 3G.
- Most court sites are managed by schools, with the only exceptions being at Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field), Horndon-on-the-Hill Recreation Ground and Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground.
- Due to most facilities being operated by schools, security of tenure for netball users is limited.
- All courts have a macadam surface.
- Only 24 of the 81 courts are serviced by sports lights, which is a particularly low number.
- Five courts are assessed as good quality, whilst 62 are considered to be standard quality and 14 are poor quality.

Netball – demand summary

- The South Essex Thurrock Netball Association accommodates most demand for netball within Thurrock, with matches taking place at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy.
- The courts at Ortu Hassenbrook Academy are also widely used by teams for training throughout the year, with this including demand from large clubs such as Fusion NC and Star NC.
- Other venues known to be used for training are Storm Fit, Harris Academy Chafford Hundred, St Clere's School and the Gateway Academy.
- There is also a commercial netball league operating via Play Netball, with this utilising courts at St Clere's School.
- No England Netball initiatives are identified as taking place in the Borough, although Back to Netball and Netball Now sessions were previously held.
- Imported demand into Thurrock is likely to be high due to the presence of the South Essex Thurrock Netball Association, whilst exported demand also exists due to the proximity of the Basildon & District Netball Association.

PART 9: BOWLS

9.1: Introduction

All bowling greens in Thurrock are flat green. Bowls England is the NGB for flat green bowls with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance. Regionally, flat green bowls is administered by the Essex County Bowling Association (for men) and the Thurrock Area Ladies Bowling Association (for women).

The flat green bowling season generally runs from May to September.

Consultation

There are 10 bowls clubs within Thurrock. However, the response rate has been poor, with only Thurrock BC responding to survey requests. This can be common in relation to bowls.

Table 9.1: Summary of bowls consultation

Name of club	Responded?
Aveley BC	No
Corringham & Fobbing BC	No
Grays Town BC	No
Orsett BC	No
Senior Citizens BC	No
South Ockendon BC	No
Springhouse BC	No
Stanford-le-Hope BC	No
Thames Sports BC	No
Thurrock BC	Yes

Given the low response rate, the Thurrock & District Bowls Association has also been consulted to provide an overview of bowls in the Borough. The Association runs leagues for both male and female bowlers across Thurrock.

9.2: Supply

There are nine flat green bowling greens in Thurrock provided across eight sites, with two greens located at both Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field). All greens are available for community use.

There are four greens in the Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham Analysis Area, three in the Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet Analysis Area and two in the Grays Analysis Area. None reside in the Tilbury & Chadwell Analysis Area.

Table 9.2: Summary of the number of greens by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of greens
Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	3
Grays	2
Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	4
Tilbury & Chadwell	-
Total	**9**

Since the previous PPOSS in 2020, the number of greens has reduced by one. This is due to the loss of a second green at The Springhouse Sports Club, with this now disused (see section below).

Figure 9.1 below identifies the location of the greens. For a key to the map, see Table 9.3.

Figure 9.1: Location of bowls greens in Thurrock



Table 9.3: Key to map

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Club user/s	No. of greens
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	SS17 9DF	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Corringham & Fobbing BC	1
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	RM16 2JU	Grays	Grays Town BC Senior Citizens BC Thurrock BC	2
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	RM15 6QR	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	South Ockendon BC	1
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	SS17 0AJ	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Stanford-le-Hope BC	1
66	The Springhouse Sports Club	SS17 7QT	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Springhouse BC	1
68	Aveley Bowls Club	RM15 4BX	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Aveley BC	1
72	Fondu Bowling Club	RM19 1TJ	Aveley, South Ockendon & Purfleet	Thames Sports BC	1
75	Orsett Bowls Club	RM16 3JS	Stanford-le-Hope & Corringham	Orsett BC	1

Disused provision

As referenced above, there is a disused bowls green at The Springhouse Sports Club, in addition to the green that remains active at the site. This was last used in 2020 but has since been left to become overgrown due to a lack of demand.

A single green at Billet Recreation Ground is also no longer provided following previous used by Pegasus BC, which has now folded. The site has been subject to development proposals in recent years and is now operated by a martial arts group that use the space for outdoor activity.

Similarly, a green was previously provided at Aveley Sports & Social Club, which has also been subject to development plans. This was utilised by New Phoenix BC prior to the Club folding.

A disused green is also found at Wyldecrest Sports Country Club. Consultation with the operator identifies that the site has undergone renovation in recent years, with plans existing to establish small-sided 3G pitches where the green resides.

Indoor provision

Whilst not included within the remit of this study, it should be noted that bowls is commonly played within indoor facilities as well as on outdoor greens. This can be via dedicated centres, or within smaller spaces such as leisure centre sports hall and community centres. These can add to the capacity for the accommodation of bowls demand, particularly during winter months when outdoor provision is unusable.

In Thurrock, there is a dedicated indoor bowls facility at Tilbury Community Centre which contains six 40-yard carpeted rinks. Although not included within this report, the facility does cater for some bowling demand, particularly during the winter months. Many members of outdoor clubs also use indoor facilities to enable all-year round play.

Further information in relation to the indoor facility is featured within the Built Sports Facility Strategy that is being carried out in conjunction with the PPOSS.

Ownership/management

The majority of greens are owned by the Council and either rented to clubs on a seasonal basis or leased on a long term arrangement. This is the case at the following sites:

- Aveley Bowling Club
- Blackshots Recreation Ground
- Corringham Recreation Ground
- Fondu Bowling Club
- Orsett Recreation Ground
- South Ockendon Recreation Ground
- Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground

The remaining green at The Springhouse Sports Club is owned privately and commercially operated. Security of tenure for Springhouse BC is therefore less secure than for the users of the local authority provision.

At Blackshots Recreation Ground, the lease of one of the greens has now expired (February 2025). This relates to the green that is primarily accessed by Thurrock BC. It therefore requires an extension to ensure the future of the Club and its access to the site.

Quality

The quality of bowling greens has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating on a scale of good, standard and poor. The non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use (for further detail regarding the criteria, please see Appendix 2).

Across Thurrock, seven greens are assessed as good quality and two are assessed as standard quality (none are poor quality). This is summarised in the following table.

Table 9.4: Summary of bowls green quality

Site ID	Site name	No. of greens	Green quality rating
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	1	Good
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	2	Good
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	1	Good
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	1	Good
66	The Springhouse Sports Club	1	Standard
68	Aveley Bowls Club	1	Good
72	Fondu Bowling Club	1	Good
75	Orsett Bowls Club	1	Standard

The standard quality greens are located at The Springhouse Sports Club and Orsett Bowls Club. However, despite this, no major issues are identified, with both scoring very highly within the standard quality parameters.

When compared to the 2020 PPOSS findings, quality has improved at both Corringham Recreation Ground and Aveley Bowls Club. It is perceived that this is due to increased and/or enhance maintenance.

Sports lighting

No greens in Thurrock are serviced by sports lighting. This means that opportunities for access for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months is somewhat limited. Nevertheless, sports-lit bowling greens are relatively rare across the Country and this should therefore not be considered as a significant issue.

Ancillary facilities

All clubs Thurrock have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site and quality is generally adequate. As seen in the table below, four greens are serviced by good quality provision and five are serviced by standard quality provision.

Table 9.5: Summary of ancillary facility quality

Site ID	Site name	No. of greens	Ancillary facility rating
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	1	Standard
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	2	Good
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	1	Standard
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	1	Good
66	The Springhouse Sports Club	1	Standard
68	Aveley Bowls Club	1	Good
72	Fondu Bowling Club	1	Standard
75	Orsett Bowls Club	1	Standard

Where provision is assessed as standard rather than good quality, this is generally due to the age of the facilities rather than any particular pressing issue. An example of this is at Corringham Recreation Ground.

9.3: Demand

There are 10 bowls clubs currently playing in Thurrock. These are:

- Aveley BC
- Corringham & Fobbing BC
- Grays Town BC
- Orsett BC
- Senior Citizens BC
- South Ockendon BC
- Springhouse BC
- Stanford-le-Hope BC
- Thames Sports BC
- Thurrock BC

The above represents a reduction of clubs when compared to 2020 data. This is due to a merger between clubs previously known as Corringham BC and Fobbing & District BC as well as the folding of Drums BC. This utilised Blackshots Recreation Ground in addition to the three clubs that remain at the site.

Current membership data by club is unavailable due to the poor consultation response rate received.

Additional demand

Play Bowls is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play users. Clubs are able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website. The aim is for this to help greens become more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience.

In Thurrock, five clubs are signed up to the above initiative, which is a comparatively high level. The clubs are Corringham & Fobbing, Orsett, Grays Town, Springhouse and Stanford-le-Hope bowls clubs.

Latent/unmet demand

No known bowls capacity issues are known to exist in Thurrock, with the majority of clubs having dedicated access to their own green. The only site this is not the case at is Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field), where the two greens are utilised by three clubs. However, Thurrock BC reports no problems with this setup.

Future demand

Using ONS projections, the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase for the period up to 2044 (aligned to the Council's emerging Local Plan). Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for greens could increase, although exactly to what extent is unclear.

In addition, Bowls England is actively working to negate the stereotype that bowls is a sport is for the older generation and is taking active steps at both county and national level to encourage younger players to participate. This could see the emergence of junior players in Thurrock.

Notwithstanding the above, future club aspirations are generally unknown due to the poor response rate that has been achieved. Thurrock BC reports no demand for an increase in membership, but the ambitions for other clubs is unclear.

9.4: Supply and demand analysis

With nine active bowls green being utilised by 10 clubs, supply is considered sufficient to meet demand, with most clubs having sole access to their own green and with no capacity issues reported at the one site where this is not the case (Blackshots Recreation Ground). This is also helped by quality generally being good across the Borough. However, with each of the greens in use, it is also clear that each requires protection to ensure that usage levels can continue to be accommodated. Nationally, many bowls greens are being taken out of use or lost for development but the evidence indicates that this cannot happen in Thurrock.

Bowls England capacity guidance for greens supports the above position. This suggests that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 80 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting the required level of demand. Whilst current demand levels are not known, all clubs comfortably fit within these parameters in the previous PPOSS and it is assumed that this remains the case unless significant participation reductions or growth has been encountered.

Table 9.6: Previous supply and demand analysis for bowls in Thurrock

Site ID	Site	No. of greens	Capacity	2020 membership[15]	Capacity balance (no. of members)
11	Corringham Recreation Ground	1	80	59	21
26	Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field)	2	160	137	23
46	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	1	80	38	42
48	Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground	1	80	27	53
66	The Springhouse Sports Club	1	80	63	17
68	Aveley Bowls Club	1	80	50	30
72	Fondu Bowling Club	1	80	38	42
75	Orsett Bowls Club	1	80	48	32

9.5: Conclusion

The supply of bowls greens in Thurrock is sufficient to meet demand, with no known capacity pressures existing and with good quality facilities provided. However, with each active green in use by clubs, it is also clear that they are all required to ensure that usage levels can continue to be accommodated.

[15] Discounting figures from clubs that have since folded.

Bowls – supply and demand summary

- The supply of bowls greens in Thurrock is sufficient to meet demand, with no known capacity pressures existing and with good quality facilities provided.
- With each active green in use by clubs, it is also clear that they are all required to ensure that usage levels can continue to be accommodated.

Bowls – supply summary

- There are nine flat greens located across eight sites in Thurrock (Blackshots Recreation Ground provides two).
- Disused greens are located at The Springhouse Sports Club (in addition to its active green), Billet Recreation Ground, Aveley Sports & Social Club and Wyldecrest Sports Country Club.
- Eight greens are operated by the Council and leased or rented to clubs, whilst the remaining green is managed commercially (at The Springhouse Sports Club).
- At Blackshots Recreation Ground, the lease of one of the greens has now expired, with this used by Thurrock BC.
- Seven greens are assessed as good quality and two are assessed as standard quality (none are poor quality).
- Four greens are serviced by good quality ancillary provision and five are serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.
- No greens are serviced by sport lighting.

Bowls – demand summary

- There are 10 bowls clubs playing in Thurrock.
- There has been a reduction in clubs over recent years following the merger of Corringham BC and Fobbing & District BC as well as the folding of Drums BC.
- Five clubs are signed up to Play Bowls.
- No unmet or latent demand is known to exist, with the majority of clubs having dedicated access to their own green and Thurrock BC reporting no capacity issues where this is not the case (at Blackshots Recreation Ground).
- Using ONS projections, the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase for the period up to 2044, with this likely to increase demand for bowls.
- Bowls England also has a current focus on attracting younger participants which could result in the emergence of junior players.

PART 10: ATHLETICS

10.1: Introduction

England Athletics is the not-for-profit membership and development body responsible for grassroots athletics and running in England. It currently supports 1,750 affiliated clubs and organisations (covering track and field, road running, fell, hill, trail and cross-country), 147,000 registered athletes, 18,700 licensed coaches and leaders, 3,800 officials and 6.2 million regular running participants.

England Athletics purpose is to inspire more athletes and runners of all abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential and to have a lifelong love for the sport. Its vision is for athletics and running to become an inclusive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish.

Consultation

There is currently one athletics club within Thurrock, known as Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club. The Club has responded to consultation requests, meaning a 100% response rate has been achieved.

Additional consultation has also taken place with England Athletics to inform this section of the report

10.2: Supply

There is one track and field athletics facility located in Thurrock at Blackshots Athletics Stadium. This provides a partially sports-lit, seven lane, 400-metre track (including an eight lane 100-metre straight) with a synthetic surface. It also has four jumping pits, two javelin run ups, two throwing cages and two areas for high jump beds.

The venue also hosts a stand containing 400 seats as well as a clubhouse that consists of changing facilities, an office and a refreshment area. It is serviced by a car park albeit without dedicated spaces. Despite being located adjacent to Blackshots Recreation Ground (King George's Field) the site has a separate access road.

Figure 10.1 overleaf shows the location of the facility, which is relatively central in Thurrock. It is in the Grays Analysis Area.

Figure 10.1: Location of athletics tracks in Thurrock

To be added in later draft.

Ownership/management

Blackshots Athletics Stadium is owned by the Council, although Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club is responsible for the management and maintenance of the facilities. The Club also owns the clubhouse that is on site.

Quality

The overall quality of the track and field provision at Blackshots Athletics Stadium is considered to be good, with no issues identified. It is TrackMark accredited, meaning that it is suitable to host events.

TrackMark

TrackMark is UK Athletics' quality assurance scheme for outdoor track and field athletics facilities. A venue that achieves TrackMark is recognised by UK Athletics as having well managed, compliant facilities that are accessible to participants of all abilities.

Ancillary provision

The ancillary facilities at Blackshots Athletics Stadium are rated as good quality. Amenities within the onsite clubhouse include changing rooms, a kitchen and toilets, with equipment storage also provided. Disabled access to all provision is provided.

Future provision

There are no known new athletics tracks proposed to be constructed in Thurrock. In addition, England Athletics' strategic position is that, in most areas of the Country, there is a sufficient supply of traditional synthetic outdoor 400-metre tracks to meet club and competition needs and that focus should be placed on protecting and maintaining this provision, rather than adding to it.

However, in addition to traditional facilities, England Athletics is keen to support the development of a new generation of innovative athletics and running facilities (known as NewGen), as well as a country-wide network of indoor athletics facilities developed as part of future indoor multi-sport projects. Priority for both NewGen and indoor developments will be given to those areas that sit outside of England Athletics recommended drivetime catchment of existing facilities, or where there is additional, demonstrable need.

The NewGen facility concepts are further summarised below.

Track & Field (Run/Jump/Throw)

- **Play Track:** The simple animation of dated playground surfaces using colourful painted lines and markings to (KS1 & KS2) – encouraging participation in run/jump/throw activities by creating challenging and inspiring environments.
- **CompactTrack:** A sports-lit, multiple lane, synthetic sprint straight with optional jumps and throws provision.
- **MiniTrack:** A sports-lit synthetic "mini" running oval, with sprint straight, mutli-sport "infield" and optional jumps and throws provision.

Recreational Running/Endurance Running/Multi-sport

- **Active Track**[16]**:** A free to access, macadam running / cycling circuit designed to be sympathetic to the local environment and support the recreational needs of local communities. Ideally lit by low level lighting / solar columns, they can be introduced to existing parks, open spaces and playing fields or integrated into the master-planning of new housing developments.

10.3: Demand

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club

Thurrock Harriers currently accommodates 250 members, which as a breakdown equates to 160 senior and 90 junior members. It trains on Tuesday evenings for two hours, Thursday evenings for three hours and Sunday mornings for two hours, with this activity taking place at Blackshots Athletics Stadium. A road running section is, however, also incorporated.

The Club also hosts its own athletics events, ranging from opens to local competitions, school competitions and individual 5k track races. As it manages the facility at Thurrock Athletics Stadium, the track is also available to hire when it is not in use by the Club. This can attract school sports days as well as running and triathlon clubs that wish to do some track training.

Running clubs

There is one affiliated running club in Thurrock, known as Thurrock Nomads. The Club meets at Thurrock Rugby Club and trains on Tuesday and Thursday evening as well as Sunday mornings. For this activity, it utilises the local road network. It is a club for all abilities, with an emphasis on having fun.

Run Together[17]

Run Together is an official England Athletics recreational running project which aims to get the whole nation running. Its aim is to provide fun, friendly, supportive and inclusive running opportunities for everyone, regardless of ability and availability. It believes that running is more fun and easier to become part of a lifestyle when shared with others.

A Run Together group is located within Thurrock. This is known as the Chafford Hundred Running Group.

[16] Sport England Case Study: ActiveTrack: Sowerby Sports Village
[17] https://runtogether.co.uk/

Park Run

Park Run is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 1,063 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online in order to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Park Run events.

Within Thurrock, there is one Park Run, with this taking place in Orsett Heath. Since its inception, it has been held 423 teams, with 6,006 finishers.

Junior Park Run events are also available, although none are currently held in Thurrock. The nearest is in Basildon (Northlands Park).

Couch to 5k

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining and active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise.

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the NHS particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

Whilst specific data is unavailable for Thurrock, it is believed that an increase in people running through the Couch to 5k programme may increase interest and possibly have a knock-on effect of leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs. As an example, the Chafford Hundred Running Group is a proponent of the initiative.

Latent/unmet demand

Thurrock Harriers reports that it currently operates a waiting list of 15. This represents unmet demand, although it is said to be due to a lack of internal resources (e.g., coaching) rather than site capacity.

Exported/imported demand

No imported or exported demand into or out of Thurrock for athletics is identified. However, that is not to say that some residents of Thurrock are not members of clubs outside of the Borough (e.g., via the track and field facility at Basildon Sporting Village). Similarly, Thurrock Harriers likely attracts some members from outside of the Borough.

Future demand

England Athletics reports that there is current trend of growth being experienced in relation to athletics and running, both within and outside of the club environment. It expects this increase to continue in the coming years.

Thurrock Harriers also reports a general aspiration to grow its demand and quantifies this as 48 additional senior members and 28 additional junior members.

10.4: Supply and demand analysis

Thurrock is well provided for in relation to athletics via the track and field facilities at Blackshots Athletics Stadium. England Athletics generally operates on the premise of one traditional track being sufficient for similarly sized local authorities, meaning that the existing supply is meeting requirements, particularly given its good quality and central location. The facility is also adequately catering for the demand that is present from Thurrock Harriers, with some capacity also existing for any other users e.g., running clubs and schools.

Away from the track and field provision, some demand can also be accommodated via the running clubs that are active and the ParkRun event that is held. However, this is relatively minimal when compared to other local authorities, meaning that focus should be placed on supporting such activities and on retaining and increasing participation. This could be aided through the creation of additional formal facilities, tied into England Athletics' current focus on providing new, innovative provision (i.e., mini / active / compact tracks). It is suggested that an Active track would be preferred to best compliment the provision at Blackshots Athletics Stadium.

10.5: Conclusion

Supply is currently sufficient to meet demand for athletics via the track and field provision at Blackshots Athletics Stadium. However, to further enhance the sport locally, supplementary provision, linked to England Athletics' NewGen products, could be established elsewhere in the Borough to better cater for additional and/or alternative types of demand. This could be tied into major new developments where there may be opportunities to include such a facility.

Athletics – supply and demand summary

- Supply is currently sufficient to meet demand for athletics via the track and field provision at Blackshots Athletics Stadium.
- To further enhance the sport locally, supplementary provision via NewGen products could be established elsewhere in the Borough to better cater for alternative types of demand.

Athletics – supply summary

- There is currently one athletics tracks in Thurrock located at Blackshots Athletics Stadium.
- The site is operated by Thurrock Harriers on behalf of the Council.
- The track and field provision is rated as good quality and it is TrackMark accredited.
- The ancillary provision supporting the site is good quality, particularly given that Thurrock Harriers has its own clubhouse at the site.

Athletics – demand summary

- Thurrock has one formal athletics club, with this known as Thurrock Harriers.
- The Club currently has 250 members (160 senior and 90 junior) and accesses Blackshots Athletics Stadium for its activity.
- Thurrock Nomads is a running club operating in Thurrock, with Thurrock Rugby Club accessed as a base.
- There is a RunTogether group in the Borough known as Chafford Hundred Running Group.
- There is one Parkrun event held in Orsett Heath.
- Unmet/latent demand is expressed by Thurrock Harriers, with a waiting list currently in place, albeit this is not because of a lack of site capacity.
- The Club has a future aspiration to increase its membership by 48 additional senior members and 28 additional junior members.

APPENDIX 1: LOCAL, NATIONAL AND SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

Local context

Thurrock Local Development Scheme (September 2024)[18]

This was approved by the Council in September 2024. It sets out the timetable for the Councils DPD work for the next three years. It explains when the Council intends to reach key stages in the Preparation of its Local Plan and other planning documents.

Thurrock Corporate Plan[19]

This was published in July 2024. Over the Plan period 2024-2029, the main purpose is to achieve two policy outcomes, for People and Place.

The People policy aims to ensure that communities, families and residents are supported and have an opportunity to achieve their full potential. The Place policy aims to enable Thurrock to achieve a strong and well-connected place that enables diverse communities, businesses, to thrive and grow.

The Corporate policy outcome will ensure that Thurrock build strong and impactful partnerships to maximise the benefits for residents in the borough.

Thurrock Core Strategy[20]

The Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (the Core Strategy) dated 2015 is currently the main local plan document. It sets out the spatial vision, strategy and planning policies for Thurrock.

The Strategy was originally adopted in December 2011 and was updated in 2015 following examination of the Core Strategy Focused Review document. It contains the existing local policy for sports and leisure provision and related policy for open space. These policies include:

- Policy CSSP3 – Sustainable Infrastructure.
- Policy CSTP9 – Well-being: Leisure and Sports.
- Policy CSTP18 – Green Infrastructure.
- Policy CSTP20 – Open Space.
- Policy PMD5 – Open Spaces, Outdoor Sports and Recreational Facilities.

Thurrock has one of the fastest growing economies in the country, supported by major developments and investment. Significant areas of commercial and industrial land have been identified for development and there are plans to build around 20-30,000 new homes and associated infrastructure.

[18] https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/local_development_scheme_-_september_2024.pdf
[19] https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/corporate-plan/our-2024-2029-plan-and-priorities
[20] https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/core_strategy_adopted_2011_amended_2015.pdf

Lower Thames Crossing

The Lower Thames Crossing is a proposed new road crossing of the River Thames east of London that will connect Kent, Thurrock and Essex. Following consultation on a series of route options, the Secretary of State for Transport announced (in April 2017) that the preferred route would connect the A2 in Kent, east of Gravesend, to the M25 in Essex, south of Junction 29 crossing under the River Thames by means of two bored tunnels.

The scheme as proposed in October 2018 sets out that the crossing will comprise c. 23km of new roads connecting the tunnel to the existing road network, with two 4km tunnels to enable traffic to cross beneath the river. It is proposed that the new road scheme will have three lanes in both directions, with widening of the M2/A2 and the M25 at each end of the route. The LTC is expected to open by 2027 subject to necessary funding and planning approvals.

Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026 [21]

This sets out priorities for reducing inequalities and improving the health and well-being of the people of Thurrock. Its vision is 'Levelling the Playing Field' with aims to tackle the many causes of poor health that are uneven across Thurrock. These include high-quality education, access to employment and other opportunities, warm and safe homes, access to green spaces and leisure, strong and resilient communities and effective public protection.

The Strategy aims to level up some of the inequities that exist in Authority and sets goals and action across six broad domains that will influence the determinants of health listed above:

- Staying Healthier for Longer.
- Building Strong and Cohesive Communities.
- Person-Led Health and Care.
- Opportunity for All.
- Housing and the Environment.
- Community Safety.

Thurrock Community Strategy

The Thurrock Community Strategy vision is to make "Thurrock a place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence, where individuals, communities and businesses flourish."

It has five priorities:

- Create a great place for learning and opportunity.
- Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity.
- Build pride, responsibility and respect to create safer communities.
- Improve health and well-being.
- Protect and promote our clean and green environments.

Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026

This aims to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents in Essex by creating a culture and environment that reduces inequalities and enables residents of all ages to live healthier lives. To achieve this, it identifies five key priorities, all of which have specific development outcomes - to be achieved though partnership work, as outlined below.

[21] https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/hwb-strategy-2022-v01.pdf

Table A1.1: Essex JHWS priorities and outcomes

Priority	Outcome
Improving mental health and wellbeing	Supported the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and families with a focus on the vulnerable. Reduced loneliness and social isolation. Reduced suicide through a focus on system support
Physical activity and healthy weight	Enabled children, young people and their families to be more physically active. Improved levels of physical activity amongst adults by helping them find ways to integrate physical activity into their daily lives. Improved nutritional awareness, healthy eating, and help low-income households access affordable healthy food options.
Supporting long term independence	Improved access to advice and guidance including financial support so that residents with long-term conditions and their carers can better manage their conditions. Reduced digital exclusion to improve access to advice and support online. Help all residents have better access to opportunities in education, work, skills, housing, and their social lives.
Alcohol and substance misuse	Improve access to advice, support and treatment for residents experiencing alcohol or substance use issues. Work across the system to help address the challenges of county lines and drugs related criminality. Educate children, young people, adults, and families on the risks associated with alcohol and substance misuse.
Health inequalities & the wider determinants of Health	Ensure that all children have access to quality parenting, early years provision and education that provide the foundations for later in life. Address food poverty and ensure that all children can access healthy food. Improve access to employment, education and training for adults and young people in our most deprived communities. Embed the use of health impact assessments in planning practice to ensure new planning proposals do not negatively impact on health, health services or widen health inequalities.

Fit for the Future: Active Essex Implementation Plan 2021-31

Launched in July 2021, this strategy provides a rallying call to action for the thousands of organisations and people across Essex who recognise the enormous contribution physical activity and sport makes to the health and wellbeing of everyone. More than 1.6 million people live in Greater Essex and 901,000 are active adults who participate in over 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Active Essex is keen to increase this number, unite in one direction and over the next 10 years, create an active Essex to improve everyone's health and wellbeing. To active this, it has set the following key objectives.

- **Strengthening communities -** all communities across Essex, Southend and Thurrock use the power of physical activity and sport to build resilience, connection and wellbeing.
- **Active environments** - to work collectively to develop and provide well connected, accessible places and spaces that encourage people to be active.
- **Children and young people** - to ensure every child has the best start in life, whereby they are active, healthy and happy.
- **Levelling up health and wellbeing** - to change behaviours, which will enable and empower people to do things for themselves and their local communities. Physical activity is the highest priority for good health.

- **Sport and physical activity** - to support the recovery, development and growth of the sport and physical activity sector to collectively increase opportunities for all.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

This looks at the health needs of local people, supporting commissioning processes used by health, council and community organisations in Thurrock. Helping areas to commission health, wellbeing and social care services in the borough alongside improving the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and communities.

The JSNA works through the Health and Well-being board to ensure the JSNA informs the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Sport for Confidence[22]

Essex County Council has appointed Sport for Confidence CIC to deliver a physical activity model to support adults living with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and long-term health conditions.

The new programme, Reconnect, uses Sport for Confidence's place-based model of early help and prevention to embed integrated physical activity pathways across Essex. Based on learning from a two-year, overwhelmingly positive pilot, it is guaranteed funding for three years, with the option to extend for two more.

Physical activity interventions that can build and maintain physical, mental and emotional wellbeing will be offered in community settings across Essex. Sport for Confidence occupational therapists and coaching workforce, who are dual-trained in mental health and physical disability, will work with a multitude of community partners including leisure centre operators, care homes, community nursing teams and charities.

The intervention marks a significant move by Essex County Council to support community-driven health interventions that tackle health inequalities and create person-centred physical activity opportunities to those who traditionally find it difficult to access services and fall behind the rest of the population in terms of activity levels.

The provision of community-based services that prevent, delay and reduce the need for clinical services will alleviate pressure on the NHS and aligns with the government's NHS Reform Plan, moving care from hospitals to communities, with a focus on prevention. With physical activity at the heart of the solution, this is a model which could be replicated across other counties.

The evidence from the pilot study was independently verified by the University of Essex and confirmed that embedding physical activity into a whole system approach to adult health and social care could deliver £58.72 of social value per £1 invested.

The Reconnect programme is aligned with its 10-year Uniting the Movement strategy, creating a fully integrated physical activity pathway which supports good health, while preventing ill health in targeting those who traditionally struggle to get physically active.

[22] https://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/news/Essex-County-Council-and-Sport-for-Confidence-launch-a-whole-system-approach-to-health-care/354102

Leisure operator

In 2000, the Council created Impulse Leisure as a not for profit company to manage its community leisure centres. Five years remain on what was a 30-year contract (it expires in 2030). It manages:

- Impulse Leisure (Blackshots).
- Impulse Leisure (Belhus Park Golf and Country Club).
- Impulse Leisure (Corringham) and the Civic Hall.

Owned by Thurrock Council, these were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's. They have received periodic investment, the most recent significant taking place in 2018/2019 plus refurbishment of health & fitness provision at Impulse Leisure (Blackshots) in 2023 and Impulse Leisure (Corringham) in 2021. However, the buildings are around 50 years old and are beyond their anticipated life. Key challenges include the plant rooms and asset management elements.

Impulse Leisure has invested c. £300,000 in Blackshots Leisure Centre, c. £800,00 in Belhus Park Leisure Centre and c. £150,000 in Corringham swimming pool since 2018. As might be expected, areas where specific investment has occurred (notably health and fitness changing rooms and the roof at Corringham) look much improved and have improved the quality of the user experience.

National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

Department of Media Culture and Sport Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)

The Government published its new strategy for sport in August 2023. The 2015 government sport strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for a More Active Nation, was a fundamental re-framing of sport and physical activity in the UK. It set out five outcomes delivered by sport and physical activity:

- Physical wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Individual development
- Social and community development
- Sustainable economic development

This new strategy builds on the foundations of Sporting Future and retains these five outcomes at its core. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of three core priorities, with seven indicators to achieve these priorities as follows:

- **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active**
  - Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030
  - Focusing on evidence, data and metrics

- Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active
- **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport**
  - Helping the sector to be welcoming to all
  - Improving how issues and concerns are dealt within the sector
- **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust**
  - Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment
  - Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector

Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences. The vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country.

Sport England Uniting the Movement: Our 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport (2021-2031)

Sport and physical activity makes people happier and healthier, and movement is the lens through which we can make that happen. It does the same thing for our communities, with life-changing, sustainable benefits that have huge economic and social value. That's why Sport England wants sport and physical activity to be recognised as essential to help overcome these national challenges.

The Strategy recognises the need to invest in sport and physical activity through NGBs, other sports bodies and local sports clubs, organisations and community groups to increase engagement for different groups as part of our core purpose. It states that there is now a need to go further in promoting movement in general as the means to unlock sport and activity for some people.

Tackling inequalities

There are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which means that there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities aren't there. These inequalities are at the very core of the Uniting the Movement.

Sport England plans on having a laser focus on tackling inequalities in all that it does, because providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity is vitally important.

National Planning Policy Framework (updated December 2024)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches,** with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses,** linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- **Support access to flexible indoor spaces,** including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision,** recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- **Support testing of technology and innovation,** building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA has commissioned a national project. Over the next two years to 2020, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all will be identified via LFFPs. LFFPs will guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Therefore, it cannot be used as a replacement for a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and it will not be accepted as an evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

The FA: Survive. Revive. Thrive. (2020-24)

This new strategy aims to ensure the grassroots game in England will survive, revive, and thrive over the next four years.

The strategy outlines seven transformational objectives through to 2024:

- **Male Participation:** Modernised opportunities to retain and re-engage millions of male participants in the game.
- **Female Participation:** A sustainable model based on a world-class, modernised offer.
- **Club Network:** A vibrant national club network that delivers inclusive, safe local grassroots football and meets community needs.
- **Facilities:** Enhanced access to good quality pitches across grassroots football.
- **Grassroots Workforce:** A transformation in community football by inspiring, supporting and retaining volunteers in the game.
- **Digital Products and Services:** An efficient grassroots digital ecosystem to serve the administrative and development needs of players, parents, and the workforce.
- **Positive Environment:** A game that's representative of out diverse footballing communities, played in a safe and inclusive environment.

This strategy was launched as grassroots football was able to safely return after lockdown from Monday 29 March, it also identifies the immediate challenge, in light of COVID-19, to get grassroots football back on its feet.

The new strategy sets out a number of goals to revive the game by addressing the areas that require particular attention. This includes increasing opportunities to ensure girls have the same access as boys to football in schools and clubs, and improving quality of pitches, with the aim of seeing 5000 good quality pitches added to the current number by 2024.

The FA: Time for Change Strategy (2020-24)

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in January 2021 which aims to 'unite the game and inspire the nation'. It will do this in two ways, by 'changing the game to maximise its impact' and by 'serving the game to deliver football for all'.

To achieve this, the strategy will focus on six Game Changer objectives, to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead:

- Win a major tournament
- Service > two million through a transformed media platform
- Ensure equal opportunities for every girl
- Delivery of 5,000 quality pitches
- A game free of discrimination
- Maximise the appeal and revenue of the FA cups and BFAWSL

These are underpinned by eight Serve objectives, ensuring maintenance of brilliant business-as-usual services to support the growing and evolving needs of the game:

- Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- Personalised and connected learning experiences
- Maximum investment into the game
- Diverse, high-performing workforce and inclusive culture
- World class venues and events
- Strong reputation and clear brand identity
- Technology enabled and insight driven

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ***Grow and nurture the core***
  - Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
  - Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
  - Invest in club facilities
  - Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
  - Further invest in County Competitions
- ***Inspire through elite teams***
  - Increase investment in the county talent pathway
  - Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
  - Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
  - Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ***Make cricket accessible***
  - Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
  - Create a new digital community for cricket
  - Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
  - Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
  - Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- **Engage children and young people**
  - Double cricket participation in primary schools
  - Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
  - Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people
- **Transform women's and girls' cricket**
  - Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
  - Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
  - Invest in girls' county age group cricket
  - Deliver a girls' secondary school programme
- **Support our communities**
  - Double the number of volunteers in the game
  - Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
  - Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
  - Increase participation in disability cricket

The Rugby Football Union Strategic Plan (2021)

The RFU has released its new strategic vision, which is to achieve 'a successful and thriving game across England'. The strategy can be found here.

It identifies four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives', to form priority focuses for the strategy. It believes that these objectives will make the greatest substantive improvements to the game and investment will be aligned to these areas.

Game objectives

- ***Enjoyment*** – Enable positive player experiences on and off the field.
- ***Winning England*** – Create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby.
- ***Welfare*** – Enhance players welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players.
- ***Flourishing rugby communities*** – Support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society.

Driving objectives

- ***Diversity & inclusion*** – Drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society.
- ***Understand*** – Build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game.
- ***Connect*** – Connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences.
- ***Commercial & operational excellence*** – Ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce.

A number of aims, identified as key to the achievement of these main objectives, are particularly relevant to facilities. The provision of good quality and suitable rugby union facilities will help to achieve these aims and in turn objectives:

- *Enjoyment* – Improve accessibility for women and girls across the game.
- *Enjoyment* – Make the game inclusive and attractive for 14 to 18 year olds.
- *Flourishing rugby communities* – Provide support to help clubs maximise the benefit from their facilities and assets.
- *Diversity & Inclusion* – Improve the diversity of all facets of our game and continue to create and inclusive environment for all.

RFU Women and Girls' Strategy

Every Rose" is the Rugby Football Union's (RFU) strategy to grow the women's and girls' game in England. The strategy runs from 2021 to 2027 and includes the following goals:

- Increase participation: Increase the number of female players to 100,000 by 2027
- Host a full-capacity Red Roses match at Twickenham Stadium
- Embrace the new global season: The Red Roses will participate in two rugby world cups
- Generate profits: The RFU will generate profits from the women's game and reinvest them into grassroots programs

The strategy includes an action plan with the following headlines:

- Accessible: Retain and recruit players
- Successful: Focus on high performance in England, Allianz P15s, and Pathway
- Visible: Increase fan following, active engagement, and broadcast
- Commercially viable: Focus on people and players

The RFU also has a campaign called "Love Rugby" that aims to grow consideration for the sport. The campaign includes distributing materials to local teams, working with clubs, enlisting online influencers, and targeting spectators at Red Roses fixtures.

England Hockey Strategy (2023 – 2028)

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found here.

Aiming to make hockey more noticeable, relevant, and accessible to all, England Hockey have launched their new strategy 'Creating a Future for Our Game Together' on 3rd October.

The new strategy is a continued effort to re-engage with the current hockey community and to reach out to potential newcomers to introduce them to hockey.

Underpinning the strategy and of importance to the hockey community are four values, "collaborate inclusively, care for people and places, play with spirit win with grace and resilient in everything we do".

The strategy is the culmination of two years consultation with various stakeholders across the sport and larger sporting sector. Hockey will be guided by five key objectives over the next five years:

1. Lead Positive Change: to create and champion positive change within the community by broadening and widening the engagement of the sport and making it more ethnically and culturally diverse.
2. Meaningful Growth: to make sure that our sport thrives and grows into the future, we want to nurture a love of hockey within a more diverse group of young players and communities to reflect society.
3. Drive Visible Impact: to produce and release high-quality, engaging content that shares the love of the game, captures the passion, builds a deep connection and amplifies the voices of the hockey community with new and existing participants.
4. Responsible Leadership: to provide forward thinking, compassionate and inclusive leadership. Leadership that fosters trust within physically and psychologically safe environments and which puts players, the community and sustainability at heart of every decision.
5. Inspirational International Success: inspirational club and national teams delivering podium success in Europe and on the world stage, underpinned by a thriving talent system and domestic game.

The strategy aligns with Sport England's 'Uniting the movement' strategy and UK Sport's Powering Success, Inspiring Impact' strategic plan.

England Netball

In November 2021 England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.
England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead.

The 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:-

- accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,
- elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, England Netball, with its proud and unique female foundations, will remain dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority, working tirelessly to address the gender participation gap in sport that has widened since the global pandemic.

Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, the organisation pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation. The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

Facility Development

The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:-
- Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
- Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.
- Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

The LTA's Vision and Mission 2024 - 2026[23]

Tennis Opened Up

The vision is 'Tennis Opened Up'. These three words are at the heart of the work and shape everything done. Tennis is an amazing sport. 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 these fantastic benefits it provides to be open to as many people as possible, across the whole of Britain.

Mission

- Grow tennis by making it welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone.
- Our mission is to grow tennis by making it welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone. We have the focus and determination that, coupled with the support of everyone in tennis, will really make a difference.
- Volunteers, coaches, officials and tennis venues all play an essential role in the future of our sport; without them, tennis can't exist. We're committed to supporting them and working with a whole range of other organisations and individuals connected to our sport, so that together we can grow tennis and open it up to many more people.

Work

The LTA is here to govern and grow tennis in Britain, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. The work it does falls into three main areas:-

- Participation - making tennis a sport for anyone to play, through increasing participation and access – for instance, through LTA Youth, the innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis; through Open Court, the successful disability tennis programme which is one of the largest of its kind across any sport and has helped a record number of disabled people enjoy the benefits of tennis; through SERVES, the ground-breaking 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 are delivered and support for hundreds of thousands of players throughout the year.
- Performance - becoming one of the most respected nations in the world for player development – for example, through the Player Pathway that is supporting an nurturing the next generation of elite British players with programmes such as our Pro Scholarship Programme that's helped the likes of Emma Raducanu and Cam Norrie break into the world's top 100; though the ITF Gold Standard National Tennis Centre which has been equipped with world class courts and facilities, and provides a base for Britain's top tennis and wheelchair tennis players to train; or through the increased number of international tournaments we are staging across Britain throughout the year as part of the LTA Performance Competitions Calendar as well as summer major events, providing more opportunities for professional British players to compete and win on home soil.

[23] lta-strategy-2024-2026.pdf

- Transformation - transforming tennis in Britain by working with everyone in the sport – for instance, through the Inclusion Strategy for tennis in Britain that aims to see tennis to lead the way for inclusion and diversity in sport; through the award-winning safeguarding work that has put tennis at the forefront of safeguarding in sport, 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; or through the development of padel as an exciting new form of tennis that is easy to play, fun for all ages and abilities and extremely sociable, and will help to engage new audiences.

England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

Vision: Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.
For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

Mission: To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve its mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics'' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims “To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England”.

APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

Grass football pitch non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football

Please complete one form per pitch

Site reference:		**Site Name:**	
6 figure grid reference		**Pitch ID(s):**	
Number of football pitches on site:		**Pitch size:**	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)
Availability		**Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?**	
		If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on a adult pitch) in Pitch Issues	
Weather at time of visit & date of visit			
Pitch Issues:			

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element (Gathered via a non technical site assessment)	**Rating**						**Guidance notes**	**Comments**
Playing surface								
Grass Cover	Good >80%		Adequate 60-80%		Poor <60%		Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch	
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size		Within FA recommended guidelines		No		See size chart below for recommended dimensions	
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Moderate		Severe			
Length of grass	Good		Too long		Too short		Good 30mm-50mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less	
Evenness of pitch	Good		Adequate		Poor			
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots			
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots			
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage		Some evidence of poor drainage		Yes, poor drainage			
Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)								**Section total**
Grass cutting	Yes, as required		Yes, but not frequent enough		No			
Seeded	Yes, as required		Not known		No			
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times		Once/ twice		No			
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No			
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No			
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No			
								Section total

NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.

PITCH SCORE	0.0%	**RATING**	Poor

Grass rugby pitch non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union

Please complete one form per pitch

Site reference		**Site Name**	
6 figure grid reference		**Pitch ID(s)**	
Date of assessment		**Pitch size**	(Senior, Mini/Midi)
Number of pitches on site		**Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?**	
Availability		*If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one mini/ midi pitch is overmarked on a senior pitch) in Pitch Issues*	
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused			
Weather at time of visit			
General comments/observations			

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Qualitative information (gathered on site)	**Rating**						**Guidance notes**	**Comments**
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor	
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.	
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm	
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots			
GOALPOSTS								
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No					
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No					
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No					
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No					
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No					
ANCILLARY								
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No					
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No					
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No					
Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below								
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never			
										Pitch Maintenance Score
Drainage	Natural (inadequate) **SCORE D0**		Natural (adequate) **SCORE D1**		Pipe drained **SCORE D2**		Pipe and slit drained **SCORE D3**		Unknown **SCORE D0**		**Natural (adequate)** = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season **Natural (inadequate)** = 4 or more training match cancellations per season *Based on a **pipe drained** system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years **Based on a **slit drained** system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.	

Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artifical grass pitches

Site reference		**Site Name**			
6 figure grid reference		**Pitch ID**			
Number of AGPs on site		**Pitch size**	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)		Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)
Availability					

Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused

Type of pitch	**Long Pile 3G** (65mm with shock pad)		**Medium Pile 3G** (55-60mm)		**Short Pile 3G** (40mm)		
	Sand Dressed		**Sand Filled**		**Water based**		

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating								Guidance notes	Site comments
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years			
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots			
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots			
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots			
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate				Poor			
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate				Poor			
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots			
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots			
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots		If no evidence, assume none.	
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate				Poor			
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate				Poor			
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate				Poor			
Adequate safety margins (where appropriate)	Yes - fully		No- but adequate				No - not adequate			
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes				No					
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes				No					
Are there dug outs?	Yes				No					
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes				No					
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes				No					

Maximum score	**93**	**Scoring:**	Poor	<=50	Total Score **0**
			Standard	51-79	
			Good	80+	Potential Rating **Poor**

Cricket non-technical assessment

Element	Rating						Guidance notes	Comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)
About the cricket outfield								
Grass coverage	Good		Acceptable		Poor		<80% falls below the ECB basic standard	
Length of grass	Good		Acceptable		Poor		Ideally 12mm - 25mm	
Evenness	Even		Uneven				Ball should run without deviation or ramp	
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None		Yes		Immediate action required		Play also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to pitch owner/site manager	
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None		Yes		Immediate action required		eg informal, casual use, unbooked use, kids kicking about etc. Play also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to pitch owner/site manager	
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None		Yes		Immediate action required		eg from vermin/animals - rabbit, gulls and foxes etc may also wish to refer to user survey	
Artifical wickets								
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes		No				There should be no trip points	
Evenness of wicket	Even		Uneven				There should be no contours in surface levels	
Stump holes	Yes		No				Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball	
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes		No				There should be none	
Rips or surface lifting	Yes		No				If "yes" contact site manager	
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes		No				If "yes" contact site manager	
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes		No					
Grass wickets								
Presence of line markings	Yes		No					
Evidence of rolling - is wicket smooth and uniform	Yes		No					
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes		No				3mm on match wicket/12mm rest of square	
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes		No					
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes		No				<80% falls below the ECB basic standard	
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surace rebound?	Yes		No					
Changing/ Pavilion								
Umpires provision	Yes		No					
Toilets	Yes		No					
Hot/cold water	Yes		No					
Heating	Yes		No					
Condition of building	Good		Acceptable		Requires attention			
NTP								
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes		No					
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even		Uneven					
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes		No					
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes		No					
No rips or surface lifting	Yes		No					
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes		No					
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes		No					
Is the steel frame/posts upright?	Yes		No					
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes		No					
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes		No					
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes		No					
Is appropraite safety/supervisory signage present?	Yes		No					

Court non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Tennis/ Netball/ Basketball Courts

KKPref							
Site name:							
Number of courts -	**Tennis**		**Netball**		**Basketball**		**Five-a-side**
General Playground or specific sports court area?							
Court surface		**Management**		**Community Use?**			
	Artificial turf, Clay, Grass, Macadam, Polymeric, Shale		Club, LA - Parks, Parish Council, Public, School				

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating						Comments
About the courts							
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfa	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Size of courts	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate		
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate		
Slope of courts	Flat	Slight	Gentle	Moderate	Severe		
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Access for disabled players - ie: ramps onto courts, width of gat	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Changing Accomodation							
Changing Accomodation	Yes			No			
About the equipment							
Posts and net	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Are the courts locked when not in use?	Yes			No			
Practice wall	Yes			No			

Bowling green non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Bowling green

KKPref			
Site name:			
Number of greens			
Flat/crown		**Community Use?**	

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating						Comments
About the greens							
Grass cover	Over 70%		40-69%		less than 40%		
Evenness of surface	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Signs of wear and tear	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Condition of ditches/boarding	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Surface of surrounding hard areas	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Is the green and surrounding area fenced?	Yes			No			
Fencing around the green and ancillaries	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Problem areas: litter, glass, fouling, leaf fall on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use on the green	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Access for disabled players/spectators - ie: ramps onto greens, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Ancillary facilities							
Changing Accomodation	Yes			No			
Toilets	Yes			No			
Car parking	Yes			No			

General comments about the site:

Athletics track non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Athletics Tracks

KKPref					
Site name:					
Track surface		Grass, polymeric, cinder, other specify		Specify If 'Other'	
No. of Lanes		Length of track:		Community Use:	

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each track with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating						Comments
About the track facilities							
Damage to the track surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Track edging	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Disabled access	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Floodlighting	Yes			No			
Is the track fenced?	Yes			No			
Surface of run ups - long/triple jump, high jump	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Adequate landing areas - jumps	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No-but adequate		No-not adequate		
Take off boards	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Landing mats	Yes			No			
Surface of throwing areas - shot, discuss, hammer	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Adequate safety margins - throws	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Throwing cages	Yes			No			
Access to toilets	Yes			No			
Changing accomodation	Yes			No			
Changing accomodation - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Club room	Yes			No			
Car parking	Good		Adequate		Poor		

General Comments

ENTER Athletics

Please make sure there is no filter on in sheet At_db !