

THURROCK OUTDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY

Prepared For

Thurrock Council

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**Ashley Godfrey Associates
2, Fanhams Hall Road
Ware
Hertfordshire
SG12 7NN**

**Tel: 01920 466601
Mob: 07906 280391
E-mail: ashley@ashleygodfrey.co.uk
Website: www.ashleygodfrey.co.uk**



CONTENTS

	Page No.
1. <u>Background</u>	3
2. <u>Scope of Playing Pitches</u>	7
3. <u>Trends in Participation</u>	20
4. <u>Facilities</u>	32
5. <u>Policy Context</u>	43
6. <u>Key Characteristics</u>	64
7. <u>Assessment of Demand</u>	69
8. <u>Key issues raised by clubs</u>	102
9. <u>Supply of outdoor sports provision</u>	110
10. <u>Quality of outdoor sports facilities and changing accommodation</u>	135
11. <u>The Assessment of the Supply and Demand for Playing Pitches</u>	166
12. <u>Conclusions</u>	199
13. <u>Objectives</u>	216
14. <u>Action Plan</u>	247
Appendix A: Where Players Live	
Appendix B: Calculation of Area of Playing Pitches	
Appendix C: Pitch Quality Assessment Sheet	
Appendix D: Changing Room Quality Assessment Sheet	
Appendix E : Pitch Capacity Calculations	
Appendix F: Other Potential Funding Sources	
Appendix G: Planning Obligations	
Appendix H: Facilities Planning Model Report	
Appendix I: Pitch Standards	

1. Background

The Brief

Ashley Godfrey Associates was commissioned by Thurrock Council in December 2008 to support the council in undertaking an assessment of playing pitch provision within Thurrock.

The brief for the project specifically required:

- an audit of all playing pitches including those set out for football, cricket, hockey, rugby and any other pitch sports played in Thurrock;
- an audit of all facilities for other outdoor sports including tennis, bowls, athletics, netball and any other sport played in Thurrock;
- an audit of all changing and ancillary facilities including parking, public transport accessibility etc;
- an audit of school and college facilities (primary, secondary and tertiary) with special attention being paid to their availability for community use;
- an audit of all multi use games areas used for sport and training;
- information on the number, size of pitches/courts etc;
- information on ownership (i.e. LA, private, club, commercial, school, voluntary, etc) and availability for use (by the community, school only, private members' club, etc);
- an assessment of the quality of all pitches, artificial turf pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and changing facilities.

This strategy covers the period 2010-2026 and feeds into the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF sets out the spatial strategy, policies and proposals which guide the future development and use of land in Thurrock.

The benefits of developing a Playing Pitch Strategy.

A Playing Pitch Strategy for Thurrock will provide a number of benefits including:

1. Providing a strategic approach to playing pitch provision with a clear direction and a set of priorities for pitch development and other outdoor sports facilities.
2. A sound assessment of local need based on considerable consultation with local sports clubs, schools and stakeholders.
3. Helping to deliver government policies for social inclusion, environmental protection, community involvement and healthy living.
4. Highlighting the value of leisure related services during times of increasing scrutiny for non-statutory services.
5. Providing robust evidence to support funding applications to agencies including the Football Foundation.
6. A robust evidence base that underpins Supplementary Planning Documents for Planning Obligations.
7. A justifiable standard of provision proving the need for developer contributions to support requirements for outdoor sport provision arising from new housing development.
8. Protection of outdoor sports provision from future development or change of use from recreation provision.
9. Links directly with work being undertaken on open spaces (e.g. PPG17) to provide an holistic approach to open space improvement and protection.
10. Improving the local authority's asset management by providing detailed audit information and facility user views. This should result in more efficient use of resources and reduced overheads.
11. Providing a quality baseline to encourage improved maintenance of pitches, greens, courts and changing facilities in the future and identifies priorities for enhancement.

1.1 Analysis of data

The analysis of demand for and supply of football and cricket pitches requires the use of the Playing Pitch Model. However, in the case of the pitch sports of hockey and rugby, there are only a few clubs in Thurrock and it is considered that a more qualitative analysis is appropriate. An assessment of facilities for tennis, netball, bowls, multi use games areas and other outdoor facilities is also required.

It is a requirement that the quality and quantity of provision and its accessibility should be analysed.

The report should identify opportunities for future development or enhancement of facilities.

1.2 Developing local standards of provision

Local standards of provision need to be derived and these should include a quantitative component (i.e. ha. per 1000 people), a qualitative component and an accessibility component (including distance thresholds and the cost of using facilities). Recommendations are also sought in relation to minimum acceptable sizes, site area multipliers, and commuted sums.

1.3 Application of local standards in Thurrock

Local standards of provision will be used to identify deficiencies in quantity, quality and accessibility in Thurrock, and any surplus in terms of quantity.

1.4 Implementation and strategic recommendations

The strategy will provide recommendations relating to existing provision which should be protected, existing provision to be enhanced, opportunities for relocation, and proposals for new provision.

1.5 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Layout and Standards

The strategy will inform the Layout and Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in respect to playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities.

This assessment therefore provides an analysis of the current level of outdoor sports provision within the local authority area of Thurrock Council. The report follows the

methodology recommended by Sport England as set out in the publication, “Towards a Level Playing Field”¹. An assessment is made of the likely future demand for playing pitches in the area and identifies any shortfalls in provision.

¹ Towards a level playing field: A guide to the production of playing pitch strategies, 2003. Sport England.

2. Scope of Playing Pitches

It is important to have a clear understanding of what types of provision are included in this report on playing pitches in Thurrock.

2.1 Playing Pitches

2.1.1 Definition of a playing field

Within planning legislation, Statutory Instrument 1817 ² defines a playing field as ‘the whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch’. It defines a pitch as ‘a delineated area which, together with any run-off area, is of 0.4 hectares (1 acre) or more, and which is used for association football, American football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo (grass or artificial surface)’. Statutory Instrument No. 453 ³ amends the definition of “playing-pitch” from 0.4 hectares to 0.2 hectares. The change has been made to protect smaller playing fields. This change brings down the size threshold upon which Sport England must be consulted when a planning application for development is submitted.

The Department of Children Schools and Families (DCSF) definition of a sports pitch as described in section 77 of The School Standards and Framework Act is:

‘Open grassed land that is capable of forming at least a small pitch, which is equal to or larger than the Football Association’s recommended area for games played by under 10s, that is 2,000 square metres. It should also have a configuration and topography making it suitable for a sports pitch, whether it is laid out or not;

Synthetic or artificial playing surface, or dedicated hard games court of more than 2,000 square metres that is set out for team games.’

In order to maintain conformity with current legislation the following definition is therefore proposed:

² The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order 1996

³ The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2009

A pitch is a grass or artificial surface which is marked out as a pitch for at least part of the year and on which a match can be played, and has a minimum size of 0.2 hectares, including run-off areas.

2.1.2 Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)

Artificial surfaces make a significant contribution to outdoor playing space. Virtually all competitive hockey is now played on artificial surfaces. For football, they complement rather than replace natural turf pitches. The recent ruling of the Scottish Premier League (SPL)⁴ against the use of this type of pitch by Dunfermline Athletic, despite support from Uefa, Fifa and the Scottish Football Association, is likely to delay its use for competitive football. However, Uefa has given the go-ahead for European games to be played on this type of surface and Fifa has approved their use for World Cup qualifiers.

The main role of Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) for football is to absorb midweek training and, in some cases are used for matches which could not be played on grass pitches due to the lack of lighting. Mostly they are used to accommodate five-a-side football.

The main advantage of STP⁵s is that they have a much higher capacity than natural turf pitches and can be used 7 days a week. They can also be used in most weather conditions. However, they cannot accommodate the range of activities suited to natural turf.

In terms of modelling demand for STPs the recommended approach is to use the Sport England strategic planning tool, Active Places Power.

⁴ SPL Executive Board decision 2 May 2005.

⁵ This term covers all sand based and rubber crumb (Third Generation) pitches.

2.1.3 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

Sport England has prepared guidance notes⁶, in partnership with the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) for MUGAs.

Five principal types of MUGA/STP are detailed in this guidance although not all of these are recommended as being suitable for the pitch sports considered in this report. Each type has a different surface although certain surface types are more suitable than others for different sports. Types 1 and 2 have macadam surfaces and these are not considered suitable for football, hockey or rugby. Type 3 has a polymeric surface which has a degree of inherent shock absorption. To provide the high degree of slip resistance required by sports such as tennis and netball a specially modified final coating can be applied, although the use of this surface for ball contact sports will cause a rapid reduction in its slip resistance. Type 4 MUGAs have thicker forms of polymeric surface to accommodate five-a side football, basketball and general sports and recreational training and play. Type 5 MUGAs have a surface with a shockpad and either sand filled or sand dressed synthetic turf or a needle-punch carpet. The areas are used for sports such as hockey, uni-hockey, five-a-side football, football, lacrosse, American football and training areas for activities such as rugby union and rugby league. There are many different types of synthetic turf construction. The majority of synthetic turf pitches are surfaced with tufted sand filled carpets. Experience has shown this form of carpet to have good durability and performance when used in the conditions which generate the extreme wear experienced on MUGAs.

2.1.4 Dual Use Facilities

School playing fields are provided primarily for the physical education and enjoyment of children attending the school. Some schools make their pitches available for use by the community. For these pitches to be included within the overall supply of sports pitches they must be secured for use by the community. Where sports pitches

⁶ Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) including Multi-Sport Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) Part 1 to 3 – General Guidance and Design Considerations; Dimensions and Layouts. Produced by Sport England, in conjunction with the Sports and Play Construction Association.

are subject to formal community use agreements they can be counted within the standard. The agreement needs to ensure that the future availability of the land is not lost as a result of changes in the staff or governing body of the school.

School playing fields were included in the audit undertaken for this strategy to provide a full understanding of the supply of pitches in Thurrock. Only those pitches which are in secured community use were considered in the assessment of current provision. However, pitches not currently available offer the potential to meet future growth in demand, especially from junior teams. In many cases this would necessitate improvements to playing surfaces and capacity, providing or improving changing accommodation and possibly providing revenue subsidies.

2.1.5 Private sports grounds

Sports facilities within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors which serve the outdoor recreational needs of their members or the public are included in the standard. This includes institutional facilities that are available to the public as a result of formal community use agreements. Also, any facilities that are owned, used or maintained by clubs/private individuals and which, as a matter of policy and practice, are available to large sections of the public through membership of a club or through an admission fee. The grounds of professional or semi-professional clubs and workplace facilities solely for the benefit of employees are excluded.

2.2 The Value of Pitch Sports

Everyone's quality of life is improved through participation in sport. It is an enjoyable leisure activity that brings fun, challenge and competition, as well as opportunities for social interaction as part of leisure time activities.⁷

In answer to the question, 'What do you think are the main benefits of children's participation in sport?'⁸ parents regarded children's participation in sport as having a number of benefits, the primary benefit being keeping fit and healthy (67%). The

⁷ "Sport Playing Its Part" Sport England, Department of Culture, Media and Sport's and the Local Government Association. 2005.

⁸ Nestlé Family Monitor study on 'Sport and the Family' was undertaken with the Youth Sport Trust. 543 adults were interviewed by MORI throughout Britain between 5 April and 23 April 2000.

enjoyment of participating (66%) and the social aspect of being involved (62%) were also regarded as major benefits. Around three in five also said that it is a good way of learning team skills (57%).

Sport England has identified six areas where sport and active recreation contribute to the delivery of wider objectives⁹. The 'six principles' are:

1. **Environmental Sustainability** – sport and recreation can demonstrate and contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources.
2. **Community Safety** – sport can help to directly reduce social exclusion and disaffection.
3. **Local Economic Viability** – sport directly and indirectly contributes to local and national economic vibrancy.
4. **Quality of Life and Well-Being** – physical activity contributes to peoples' perceptions and experience of well-being and sense of attachment to their surroundings.
5. **Health Improvement** – physical activity should be a natural part of everyday life.
6. **Raising Standards in Schools** – the foundations of life-long health and sporting excellence lie in early opportunities for taking part in sport and active recreation.

The benefits of outdoor sport are considered in the following sections

2.2.1 Enjoyment

Sport offers opportunities for friendship, rivalry, challenge and enjoyment. The enjoyment of sport is derived from a combination of physical and psychological benefits. Sport can be a source of personal satisfaction. It also provides opportunities to meet people and develop friendships.

The Government's strategy for sport and physical activity concluded that:

⁹ Spatial Planning for Sport and Active Recreation, Sport England (2005).

‘Winning is neither the only nor the most common reason for participation. Having fun, learning new skills, doing something one is good at, making friends, and fitness are all factors alongside experiencing success.’¹⁰

A significant minority of young people stop participating in sport for negative reasons such as lack of fun.

2.2.2 Sport and health

Medical research evidence shows that regular physical activity can yield a number of physiological benefits in adults. People with active lifestyles have a lower risk of contracting coronary, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases than those with sedentary lifestyles.

There is a strong relationship between physical activity and coronary heart disease. It has been shown that the higher the levels of physical activity or cardiorespiratory fitness, the lower the level of coronary heart disease. The 25% of the population with the lowest levels of cardiorespiratory fitness are at particularly high risk of coronary heart disease.¹¹

Obesity levels for children aged 6 have doubled in the last 10 years, and have tripled in 15 year olds. 22% of adults are obese and about 40% are overweight. Being overweight or obese accounts for as much as 30% of heart disease and 80% of diabetes and costs the UK £2.5 billion a year.¹²

Obesity has emerged as key health issue in Thurrock. Obesity is a known risk factor and contributor to heart disease and the high mortality rate from circulatory disease. Almost 1 in 4 people in Thurrock were estimated to be obese in 2000-2002 compared with 1 in 5 people nationally. The problem of obesity is not evenly spread across the borough. There are variations in the numbers of people estimated as being obese across Thurrock with the ward of South Chafford having lowest

¹⁰ Game plan: a strategy for delivering government's sport and physical activity objectives. Government's Strategy Unit and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. 2002.

¹¹ Studies cited in At least five a week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health. A report from the Chief Medical Officer.2004.

¹² NATURAL FIT: Can Green Space and Biodiversity Increase Levels of Physical Activity? Dr William Bird. Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. 2004.

proportion (19.1%) compared with the highest in Tilbury St Chads (28.8%). High proportions of people estimated to be obese are also found in Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park (28.5%) and Chadwell St Mary (27.5%), while the lowest proportions are found in Chafford and North Stifford (20.2%) and Orsett (20.3%). This reflects the level of general deprivation in these wards.

As part of their service planning and commissioning, local authority and health partners across the county of Essex have undertaken a high level Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Essex, Southend and Thurrock. The findings revealed that, for children, Thurrock and Colchester appear to have the highest obesity levels in the reception year whilst Harlow and Thurrock have the highest among children in year 6.

Poor health is a characteristic of the Thurrock population¹³. Key indicators include:

- Thurrock (78.2 years) has the second shortest life expectancy in Essex and is lower than for England as a whole (78.3 years).
- Male life expectancy is average, but deaths from circulatory disease are above average. One in 6 of all deaths are due to smoking.
- There are large differences in life expectancy between the least and most deprived fifth of areas within Thurrock, the differences being 5.7 and 4.1 years for men and women respectively.

Regular exercise can be important in helping to prevent obesity and its associated problems. This is particularly important for children and adolescents. Overweight children are at increased risk of many health problems including hypertension, respiratory and orthopedic problems. Obesity in adolescence is independently associated with chronic diseases that develop in adulthood.

It is the view of the Chief Medical Officer that:

‘The low incidence of overweight and obesity in active individuals suggests that there is a clear benefit in regular physical activity. Achieving at least 30 minutes

¹³ Thurrock Health Profile 2007. Association of Public Health Observatories.

of at least moderate intensity physical activity on 5 or more days a week (150 minutes per week) will represent a significant increase in energy expenditure for most people, and will make a substantial contribution to their ongoing weight management'¹⁴

People with active lifestyles have higher bone density than those with sedentary lifestyles. Joints, muscles, ligaments and tendons benefit from physical activity. Physical activity also acts positively through improved glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity to benefit late-onset diabetes.¹⁵

Some of the greatest gains from activity programmes relate to psychological health and increased feelings of well-being. Research has found a consistent link between exercise and anxiety reduction and protection against the development of depression.¹⁶

Thurrock has above average proportions of its working age population claiming benefit/allowance for a mental or behavioural disorder and an above average proportion of its working age population suffering from a neurotic disorder / depression. Moreover, based on national information, 1 in 10 of children and young people could have some form of mental health problem.¹⁷

Participation in a one-off bout of physical activity can result in a reduction in anxiety levels and self-reported feelings of increased well-being. Such improvements have been reported to last for up to three hours after the activity session¹⁸.

2.2.3 Sport and crime:

There is a widely-held view that sport can have value as part of a package of measures to tackle crime. Sport appears to be most effective when combined with programmes which seek to address wider personal and social development so that diversion needs to be complemented by development.

¹⁴ Ibid Page 48.

¹⁵ Ibid Sections 5.1 to 5.4.

¹⁶ Craft LL, Landers DM. The effect of exercise on clinical depression and depression resulting from mental illness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 1998.

¹⁷ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Essex, Southend and Thurrock 2008.

An evaluation of the West Yorkshire Sports Counselling project, established in 1991 with the aim of using sport to reduce rates of re-offending by Probation Service clients, found that those who completed eight weeks or more of their sports counselling programme were significantly less likely to be re-convicted than a control group. Improvements in self-esteem and perceptions of their own fitness resulted from a programme that included voluntary involvement and one-to-one counselling. Participants were also introduced to new social networks, role models and opportunities.¹⁹

Recorded crime in Thurrock is falling with a 17%²⁰ reduction in crime²¹ recorded in 2009/10 against the previous year. **Table 2.1** compares reported crime per 1000 population for Thurrock and for the United Kingdom.

¹⁸ Raglin, J S (1990) 'Exercise and Mental Health: Beneficial and Detrimental Effects', *Sports Medicine*, 9 (6), 323-329.

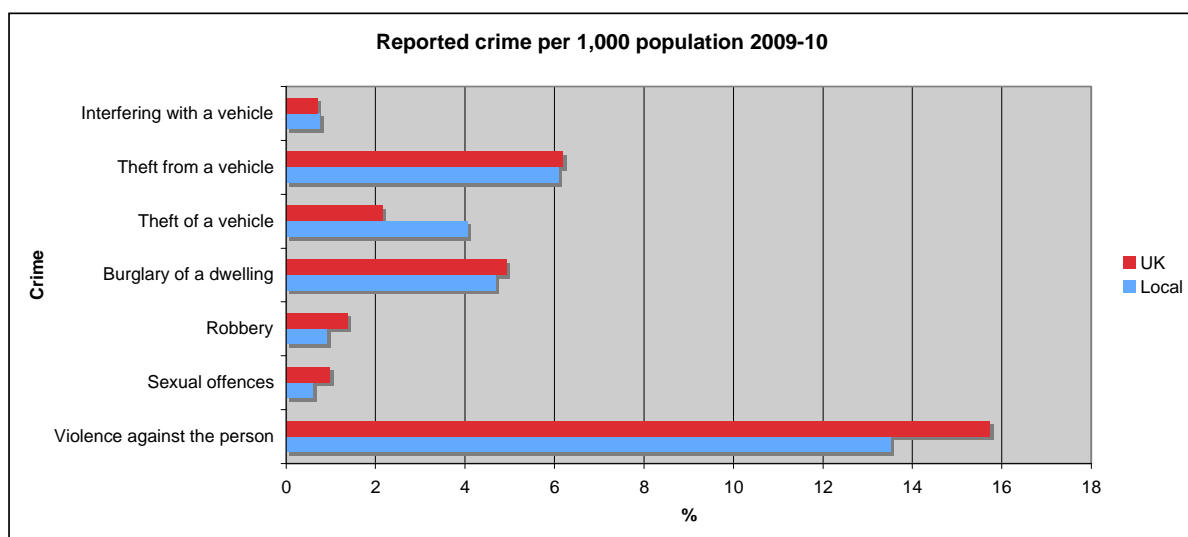
¹⁹ Nichols, G. and Taylor, P. (1996) *West Yorkshire Sports Counselling: Final Evaluation*, West Yorkshire Sports Counselling Association, Halifax

²⁰ Data taken from the database used for the National Statistics bulletin on crime in England and Wales published on 15th July 2010. Recorded crime figures remain subject to revision in future publications as forces resubmit data to reflect the latest information.

²¹ Reported crime types as defined within the British Crime Survey Comparator.

Table 2.1: Reported crime per 1,000 population 2009-10

	Local	UK	Difference
Violence against the person	13.51	15.73	-2.22
Sexual offences	0.61	0.99	-0.38
Robbery	0.92	1.37	-0.45
Burglary of a dwelling	4.68	4.93	-0.25
Theft of a vehicle	4.06	2.16	1.9
Theft from a vehicle	6.09	6.19	-0.1
Interfering with a vehicle	0.77	0.7	0.07



Of the seven categories of crime only Theft from a Vehicle is significantly higher than the UK average.

There is no accepted definition of anti-social behaviour that can be used to provide a consistent comparison within Thurrock or between different parts of the country. However, information is available on criminal damage, which is a “high volume” crime for Thurrock with a rate of 28 crimes per 1,000 population. Geographically the pattern of offences has remained fairly consistent with most incidents being recorded in the Tilbury, Chadwell, West Thurrock and Ockendon areas. 86% of the offenders

have been identified as male and 50% of offenders have been in the age range 10 to 19 years, 15% aged 20 to 24 and 30% aged 25 to 44 years.

The “Safer Thurrock Partnership Crime and Disorder Reduction, and Drugs Strategy 2005 to 2008” has identified diverting young people away from crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and reducing the vulnerability of young people to prevent them becoming victims of crime as a key priority. The Partnership is seeking to promote diversionary activities among young people.

2.2.4 Sport, young people and education.

Evidence from case studies²² lends support to the view that sport may have a direct or indirect impact on cognitive, emotional and motivational development, which may in turn lead to improved academic performance. Secondly, sport can be used to attract under-achieving students to educational programmes.²³

‘Playing for Success’ is a ten-week programme for underachieving pupils based in Study Support Centres in professional football clubs. Small groups work on a range of activities. These include an integrated learning system testing maths, spelling and reading.

A four-year evaluation found significant improvement in pupils' literacy, numeracy and use of information and communications technology (ICT). Although initially below national averages of literacy and numeracy, pupils' scores had risen closer to national norms by the end of the course. For numeracy, pupils were achieving just below the expected level for their age.

In Thurrock the project is known as 'In the Net' and is a partnership between Thurrock Council, West Ham United Football Club, Newham Council and Stifford Clays Junior School.

²² Sharp, C., Mawson, C., Pocklington, K., Kendal, L. and Morrison, J. (1999) *Playing for Success National Evaluation (Final Draft)*, National Foundation for Educational Research

²³ Realising the potential of cultural services the case for sport. Fred Coalter, Centre for Leisure Research at the University of Edinburgh.2001.

Using football as a teaching tool, the 10-week programme helped 60 year five pupils from Thurrock to raise their skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT (Information Computer Technology), as well as give them a chance to meet their sporting heroes.

2.2.5 Community development and volunteering in sport.

Volunteering in sport offers possibilities for the development of a sense of self esteem and social purpose. Sport is also seen as an activity to promote qualities such as teamwork or leadership.

2.2.6 Environmental value of sport.

Sports facilities can make an important contribution to the physical infrastructure of communities, providing a social focus for a community and affecting people's perception of their neighbourhood. Recreation related improvements have a significant role to play in the development of the quality of life in communities.

"Planning and Climate Change: Supplement to Planning Policy Statement" 1²⁴ sets out to take forward the recommendations in the Stern Review in relation to climate change.

Climate change will exacerbate the temperature gradient that peaks in city centres creating an urban 'heat island effect' because warmer urban air lies in a 'sea' of cooler rural air. Green infrastructure such as outdoor sports facilities will have a tendency to lower surface temperatures. The contribution made by outdoor sports spaces as 'carbon sinks' and 'urban cooling' areas should help to protect them from inappropriate development, although it may limit opportunities to develop synthetic surfaces or other sports facilities which would have to be done via carbon offsetting.

Maintaining the environmental benefits of outdoor sports provision will necessitate the provision, collection, storage and distribution of freshwater to provide for the irrigation during periods of "*summer heat stress*".

²⁴ Planning and Climate Change: Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1. DCLG 2007.

3. Trends in participation in outdoor sports

3.1 Active People

The Active People Survey, commissioned by Sport England, provides detail on the levels of participation in sport and physical activity by adults (16+) for each local authority in England. The Active People 1²⁵ results for Thurrock found that 16.6% (base 1,013 respondents) of people over 16 participated in sport or active recreation on three occasions a week for thirty minutes (KPI 1²⁶) compared with 20.5% in the East of England, 20.1% in Essex and 21% for England. The Active People 3²⁷ results for KPI 1 show a decline of 1% in participation levels in Thurrock with 15.6% (base of 996 respondents) of people over 16 participating in sport or active recreation on three occasions a week for thirty minutes (KPI 1). This compares with 21.3% in Essex, 20.7% in the East of England and 21.6% for England. Overall, the KPI 1 results for Active People 1 and 3 show that the level of participation in sport or active recreation in Thurrock has remained below that of the county, region and national figures.

Participation in Outdoor Sports

The Active People Survey (APS)²⁸ of sport and recreation provides a detailed analysis of how participation varies between individual sports. Participation in a sport is defined as the number of adults in England (aged 16 plus) who have taken part in the sport at moderate intensity for 30 minutes or more at least once in the last week (at least four days out of the previous 28 days).

Nationally, in the period between 2007/8 (APS 2) and 2008/9 (APS 3), 12 out of 33 sports have seen an increase in overall participant numbers, with athletics and tennis showing a statistically significant increase in participation rates.

²⁵ Active People 1 survey ran from October 2005 to October 2006

²⁶ The definition of the 3x30 participation indicator, 'KPI1' is: The percentage of the adult population participating in at least 30 minutes of sport and active recreation (including recreational walking and cycling) of at least moderate intensity on at least 3 days a week.

²⁷ Active People Survey 3 began on 15 October 2008 and ran for 12 months until mid October 2009.

²⁸ The Active People Survey was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England.

Participation in athletics (including running and jogging) has grown from 1.61 million adults (3.9%) in 2007/8 to 1.74 million adults (4.2%) in 2008/9, an increase of 128,000 participants, while tennis participation has increased from 487,500 adults (1.2%) to 530,000 adults (1.3%), an increase of 43,000 participants.

Three outdoor sports - golf, rugby union and bowls²⁹ - have seen a statistically significant decrease in weekly participation rates between 2007/8 and 2008/9.

The results for Thurrock are compared with the England results in the first two columns of **Table 3.1** below.

A key goal for Sport England is to increase the 'once a week' adult participation³⁰ rates in individual sports, to get one million people doing more sport by 2012/2013.

The second two columns compare the results of the 'once a week' adult participation indicator for Thurrock and England.

Table 3.1: Active People 3 Results for Participation in Outdoor Sports

Sport	Percentage of adult population participating at least once in the last four weeks		Percentage of adult population participating for at least 30 minutes at moderate intensity at least once in the last week ³¹	
	Thurrock	England	Thurrock	England
Athletics	4.86%	6.39%	3.02%	4.16 %
Bowls ³²	1.35%	1.01%	0.76%	0.58 %
Cricket	0.97%	1.02%	0.40%	0.49%
Football	7.37%	7.44%	4.83%	5.08 %
Golf	3.64%	3.52%	1.93%	2.15 %
Hockey	*	0.37 %	*	0.23 %
Netball	1.07%	0.27 %	0.85%	0.32 %
Rugby	1.21%	0.74%	0.82%	0.50 %
Tennis	1.27%	2.37%	0.35%	1.27 %

²⁹ The figure for bowls refers to participants aged over 65 participating for at least 30 minutes at any intensity

³⁰ Participation is defined as the number of adults (age 16 plus) who have taken part in the sport at moderate intensity for 30 minutes or more at least once in the last week (at least four days out of the previous 28 days).

³¹ Once a week participation is defined as participation on four or more days out of the previous 28 days.

³² Only includes those aged 65 years and over.

* Numbers too small to be statistically reliable.

Table 3.1 shows that participation in Bowls, Golf, Netball and Rugby are higher in Thurrock than for England as a whole. The result for netball indicates a rate of participation which is four times higher than that for England. Participation in Athletics, Cricket and Tennis is lower in Thurrock than for England as a whole. Participation in football is similar to that for England.

The 'once a week' participation shows that for Bowls, Netball and Rugby the level of participation is higher than the national average³³.

These results indicate a continuing demand for the outdoor sports facilities in Bowls, Football, Rugby and Netball, which are the sports that attract a participation level above the national average.

The result for Tennis is significant in that this is one of the sports that has shown an increase in participation in recent years. In Thurrock participation is just over half that for England.

³³ It should be borne in mind that the sample size for the survey is 1007 base and that the numbers responding positively to the participation question are relatively small.

3.2 Football

The “average” club consists of 3.8 teams, has 2 qualified (mostly level 1) coaches and 8.7 volunteers³⁴. National participation trends indicate a decline in male adult 11-a-side football especially in Sunday morning football³⁵ with players defecting to five-a-side. There has been substantial growth in informal 5-a-side football³⁶ with 35% of 11-a-side players also playing 5-a-side football³⁷. This growth is attributed to changing leisure/work patterns, better facilities and improved team organisation. There are now more mid-week fixtures and greater use of non-grass pitches. Participation in football declines significantly after the age of 30 years³⁸.

There has been an increase in the numbers of disabled children and adults participating in football with over 10,000 disabled children and adults participating in Ability Counts sessions. Over 600 football coaches have attended the Coaching Disabled Footballers Course and 45 Football in the Community schemes offer regular playing and coaching opportunities for disabled players.³⁹

The Active People Survey 1 found the adult (over 16) participation rate for outdoor football in Thurrock was 6.4% compared which was higher than that for the Eastern region (5.7%) and for England (5.5%).

3.2.1 Junior Football

Mini-soccer has experienced a rapid growth since 1997, with 250,000 participants nationally under the age of ten. There has been a growth of 30% in the numbers of 7 – 10 year olds playing mini-soccer between 2003 and 2006. The FA is currently examining the feasibility of introducing a new non-competitive 4 a side game for 5/6 year olds and a 9 a side game for under 11's.

A major quantitative survey, undertaken on behalf of the FA, interviewed 1,200 children throughout England in three age groups, 7-9, 10-12 and 13-15. The

³⁴ The Football Development Strategy 2001–2006

³⁵ Reported by County FAs

³⁶ Data provided by FA (unpublished).

³⁷ Football Development Strategy 2001-06, Football Association

³⁸ 30.8% for age 16-19 years down to 8.8% age 30-44 years. General Household Survey (GHS) 2002.

³⁹ Football Facility Development Strategy 2003-2006, The Football Association

research showed that 60 per cent of the population of 7-15 year old girls in England - nearly 1.5 million girls - played football in 2002⁴⁰.

Out of school, football has experienced the biggest growth of all sports in 'frequent' participation from 37% in 1994 to 43% in 2000. More children are playing due to the popularity of mini-soccer.

The survey revealed that small-sided soccer and park matches account for a large proportion of football activity, while school-based participation only accounts for 19 per cent.

3.2.2 Women's Football

Football is now the most popular sport for females in England, with more players competing in affiliated competition than any other team sport, and has been since overtaking netball in 2002. There has been a huge increase in the number of women and girls who are regularly playing affiliated football from 96,044 in 2005 to 138,354 in 2009.⁴¹

In 1993 there were just 80 girls' teams. In season 2004–05 there were over 8,000 teams. Women's football is also the fastest growing participation sport in the country, with research indicating a total of 1.6 million women and girls taking part in recreational football. There has been an increase the number of active accredited clubs within the sport from 490 in 2005 to 2,490 by 2009. The increase in the number of FA Community Clubs (clubs with a minimum of 10 teams, youth to adult football for males and females, qualified coaches, child protection policies and a football development plan) from 53 in 2005 to 333 by 2009.

3.2.3 Football Association

Key facts about football in Thurrock are reported in the Football Association's Local Area Data report for 2008/2009. The findings of the report are based on data collected through the annual Football Association (FA) and County FA's (CFAs) affiliation process and stored in the County Administration System (CAS).

⁴⁰ Research conducted on behalf of The FA conducted by BRMB.2003.

The FA reported that Thurrock has a total of 352 teams excluding small sided teams. There are 25 female teams playing in Thurrock. The peak youth age is U12, with 29 teams playing at this level.

In Thurrock the club to team ratio is 1:2.6 (i.e. each club runs on average 2.6 teams). This is the same as the national ratio of 1:2.6 and less than regional ratio of 1:2.9.

37 of the youth clubs in Thurrock just run youth 11-a-side teams and do not have mini-soccer teams. There are no clubs fielding both youth and adult teams.

70.2% clubs in Thurrock have adult teams, compared with national and regional averages of 69.5% and 73.1% respectively. 79.8% of adult-only clubs in Thurrock have only one team.

Of the 134 clubs in Thurrock, 8 have achieved Charter Standard. In terms of teams, 49.4% of youth and mini-soccer teams play within a club of Charter Standard status. This compares to a national average of 58.1% with a National Game Strategy target of 75% of youth and mini-soccer teams playing within a Charter Standard Club by 2012.

The FA have calculated football participation rates in Thurrock and compared the result with regional and national rates. These are calculated by comparing the number of persons playing football to the relevant population. The number of individuals playing football is found by multiplying the number of teams by the average number of players involved in the different forms of football⁴². The result is expressed as a proportion of the relevant population or 'conversion rate'.

The adult male conversion rate in Thurrock is 5.9% compared with 5.0% for England. The conversion rate in Thurrock is also higher for youth male (32.6%) compared to England (23.9%) and youth female (5.6%) compared to England (2.0%). The conversion for mini soccer is 10.7% in Thurrock and 8.9% in England.

⁴¹ Memorandum submitted by the Football Association to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee on Women's Football (Fourth Report of Session 2005–06)

⁴² The FA assumes 15 players are involved in an 11 a side squad, 10 players in a mini soccer team squad and 8 in a small-sided team squad.

These findings indicate that there could be a significant level of latent demand which, if realised, would create demand for additional pitch provision.

3.3 Rugby

During the year Oct 08 to Oct 09 (APS3) 207,500 (0.5%) adults participated in 30 minutes moderate intensity rugby union at least once a week. This was a decrease of 22,800 from the APS2 baseline of 230,300. The decreases have been seen across all age groups, and also in the number of women playing rugby union.

A survey of rugby clubs undertaken by the RFU in 2006 had shown a growth of 13% in the number of players, including showed a growth in Mini rugby (+2%) and Youth rugby (+1%), offsetting a small decline in adult participants (-0.9%).

In 2006, the RFU estimated that overall participation in all club rugby had risen from 567,000 to 677,000 over the period 2003 to 2006, representing growth of 19 per cent.

The RFU's strategic plan target for 2005-13 is a 2% per year increase in adult and youth participants which would mean another 25,000 adults and 15,000 13 to 18-year-olds coming into the sport. However, the APS3 survey results indicate that this target is not being achieved.

3.4 Cricket

National participation trends in cricket are showing an increase in interest and participation at all levels. This interest may be due in part to the introduction of the Chance 2 Shine programme into state schools, and the marketing of the professional game, through the introduction of Twenty20 cricket, which has taken the game to a new and more diverse audience.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) reports that there are 8,500 cricket clubs in England and Wales, all but a thousand of which are affiliated to the ECB through 39 County Boards. About 3,600 of those affiliated clubs have junior sections, and since 2004-5 there has been a 51 per cent rise in participation in cricket.

Membership is up by 40%, and the numbers of women and girls playing the game has increased by 48 per cent.⁴³

The ECB announced in April 2009 that there had been an increase in participation across the recreational game in 2008, an overall increase of 24%, which included:

- a 49% increase in the number of women and girls taking part in cricket;
- a 137% increase in disability cricket participation;
- a 30% increase in black and ethnic minority participation.

A recent ECB report which used data collated from ECB Focus Clubs across England and Wales also recorded a 48% increase in Years 5, 6 and 7 school participation and a 33% increase in 5-16 year old participation across both schools and clubs.

APS 3 results show 206,600 adults (0.49%) are taking part in at least one, moderate intensity, 30 minute session of cricket each week, a rise of 1,800 in weekly participation from the APS 2 results of 204,800.

There was an increase in the number of men participating in cricket and a decline in the number of women playing cricket between APS 2 and 3. The number of 35-54 year olds participating in cricket increased, but there were decreases in participation in the 16-19 and 25-29 year old groups, and an increase in the 20-24 year old group.

3.5 Hockey

English Hockey is seeking to attract more young people into the sport by developing the Single System for Hockey, which aims to ensure a clear and consistent pathway for juniors (girls and boys) aged 13-17 to progress from their Club or school through to (potentially) national level.

APS3 results show 95,700 adults (0.23%) took part in at least one moderate, 30 minute session of hockey a week, a decrease of 4,100 since APS2; an increase in male participation was more than offset by the fall in female participation over the same interval.

⁴³ Play Cricket - Making a Difference, ECB 2009

3.6 Tennis

Tennis is increasing in popularity and is now one of the most regularly played sports in the country. APS3 reported 530,200 (1.27%) adults participated in 30 minutes moderate intensity tennis at least once a week, an increase of 42,700 from the APS2 baseline of 487,500 (1.17%). Increases in participation have taken place in all age groups bar those aged 35-44 years.

There was an increase in the number of men playing tennis between APS2 and 3. Also, between APS2 and 3 the number of tennis players increased across all socio-economic groups, particularly In NS-SEC groups 1-4, the professionals.

3.7 Bowls

The General Household Survey 2002⁴⁴ found that

- 3.8% of adults said that they had participated in some type of bowls during the 12 months before the interview.
- 1.3% had participated during the four weeks before the interview.
- 1% had participated in bowls 4 or more times in the previous 4 weeks i.e. once a week or more.

The age profile of people participating in bowls shows that:

- 4% of the sample aged 60-69 took part in bowling in the previous 4 weeks as did 3% of those aged 70 and over.
- 1% of the age groups 45-59 and 16-19 participated during the four weeks before the interview.
- Participation for the age groups 20-44 was below 0.5%.

Clubs are at the heart of everything that happens in bowls. As part of the GHS, people who had participated in at least one activity during the four weeks before the interview were asked about club membership. Just over three quarters (76%) of bowls players had belonged to a club in the four weeks before interview. This

compares with the next highest percentage of participants, golf, where 49% had belonged to a club.

The Active People Survey showed that:

- 357,000 adults (age 16 and over) had participated in bowls at least once a week (0.9%). There had been no significant change in participation between 2005/6 and 2007/8.
- Female participation in bowls had increased from 0.65% in Active People Survey 1 to 0.71% in Active People Survey 2. This represented an increase of 16,000 female participants. Male participation in bowls had shown no statistically significant change during this period.
- Participation amongst adults with a limiting illness or disability had increased from 0.8% in 2005/06 to 1.0% in 2007/08. This represented 9,000 more participants.
- Bowls participation among people from lower socio-economic groups (NS SEC 5-8) had also increased between 2005/6 and 2007/8.
- Bowls is considered to be moderate intensity exercise for people aged 65 and over. The participation by this age group had increased from 2.9% in 2005/06 (233,400 people) to 3.4% in 2007/08 (277,900 people). This represents an increase of 44,500 participants aged 65 and over during this period.

3.8 Athletics

Active People 3 found that 1,739,700 (4.16%) of adults participated in 30 minutes moderate intensity athletics at least once a week, an increase from the APS2 baseline of 1,612,100 concentrated among those aged 25 - 29 and 45 - 64 years. There was an increase in the number of women taking part in athletics between APS2 and 3 and a smaller increase in the number of men.

⁴⁴ The General Household Survey covers participation by persons aged 16 and over only.

3.9 Netball

APS 3 indicated that 133,500 (0.32%) adults participated in 30 minutes moderate intensity netball at least once a week, an increase of 14,700, with particular focus in the 20 to 24 year age group. The number of netballers from professional SEC groups also showed an increase.

Golf

APS3 reported that 897,600 adults (2.15%) adults participated in 30 minutes moderate intensity golf at least once a week; this was a significant decrease of 50,700 between APS2 and 3. The decrease occurred in both genders but was especially concentrated among males.

All age groups apart from those aged 16 to 19 years showed some decrease in participation between APS2 and 3, with significant reduction among over 35s, and among professional groups.

3.10 Conclusion

Changing patterns of participation are likely to have implications for the requirements for specific types of provision. An increase in participation in a pitch sport or a sector within that sport can lead to increased levels of usage of particular types of pitch or, if there is a shortfall in provision in one area, teams having to play their sport in locations where sports pitches are available. For example, the growth in participation in junior football and mini-soccer has resulted in the need for pitches of a suitable size to accommodate the increased demand. A shortage of pitches or their ancillary facilities can constrain the level of participation in that sport as participants drop out of the sport because of the lack of suitable provision. Changing patterns of participation are therefore likely to have an impact upon pitch and related facility requirements in the Thurrock Council area.

At the national level participation levels have been increasing in football, cricket and rugby. The FA is ahead of its growth targets in Mini-Soccer, youth boys and girls' football and disability football. However there is concern about the need to arrest the decline in adult male 11 a side football although there is no evidence that this is the

case in Thurrock. In Thurrock, participation levels in all age groups, including adult football are higher than in England. It is likely that if participation rates continue to grow in future, the demand for facilities for these pitch sports will increase. However, participation in hockey is likely to remain stable and the sport is unlikely to contribute to any pressure for additional STP provision.

Participation levels in bowls are likely to remain stable and there is unlikely to be any significant pressure for new facilities for this sport. Participation in netball is high and this is likely to generate a need for netball facilities in those parts of Thurrock that are currently deficient in provision, i.e. the west of Thurrock. Clearly there may well be latent demand for tennis given the growth of participation.

4. Facilities

Changing patterns of use, rising maintenance costs and technological developments will have implications for the future provision of facilities for pitch sports.

4.1 Football

Research undertaken by the Football Association (FA)⁴⁵ found that:

The majority hire pitches from Local Authorities (53%) and Local Education Authorities (25%) and the minority have bar/club facilities (25%), a training area (20%) and floodlights (13%). The qualitative and quantitative research undertaken revealed that the provision of quality pitches and facilities was the major concern of football clubs.

Pitch Sizes

Table 4.1 provides details of football pitch sizes for the different age groups. These sizes determine whether a pitch is classified as a mini soccer pitch, a junior pitch or an adult pitch when considering the supply of football pitches in relation to demand.

There is an overlap between the maximum size of a Youth U15 –U16 pitch and the minimum size of a Youth U17 – U18 & Seniors pitch. It is therefore sometimes a problem to determine whether a pitch has been laid out for junior or adult usage.

⁴⁵ The Football Development Strategy 2001–2006

Table 4.1: Football Pitch Sizes

Age grouping	Suggested pitch size in yards (length x width)	Suggested Size of Goalposts (height x width)
Mini-Soccer U7-U8	50 yds x 30.yds	6ft x 12ft
Mini-Soccer U9-U10	60 yds x 40 yds	6ft x 12ft
9 v 9	80 yds x 50yds	7ft x 16ft
Youth U11-U12	80 yds x 50 yds	7ft x 21ft
Youth U13-U14	90 yds x 55 yds	7ft x 21ft
Youth U15-U16	100 yds x 60 yds	8ft x 24ft
Youth U17-U18 & Senior ages	110yds x 70 yds	8ft x 24ft

Age Grouping	Yards				Metres			
	Length		Width		Length		Width	
	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min
Mini-Soccer U7-U8	50 yds	30 yds	30 yds	20 yds	45.75m	27.45m	27.45m	18.3m
9 v 9	85 yds	70 yds	55 yds	45 yds	78.46m	64m	50.77m	42m
Mini-Soccer U9-U10	60 yds	50 yds	40 yds	30 yds	54.9m	45.75m	36.6m	27.45m
Youth U11-U12	80 yds	60 yds	55 yds	45 yds	73.85m	54.9m	50.77m	42m
Youth U13-U14	80 yds	70 yds	60 yds	45 yds	73.85m	64.62m	56m	42m
Youth U15-U16	90 yds	75 yds	60 yds	45 yds	82m	70m	56m	42m
Youth U17-U18 & Senior ages	130 yds	100 yds	100 yds	50 yds	120m	90m	90m	45m

Source: The Football Association Season 2008–2009.

Community Clubs

The FA's Community Clubs initiative builds upon the foundations of the Charter Standard scheme. Community Club status has a requirement of at least ten teams of different age groups and both sexes, based at a site with at least five pitches and changing facilities capable of accommodating a diverse range of users. Community Club accreditation provides both status, and expectation of quality, but also reward in the form of funding eligibility.

Of the 134 clubs in Thurrock, 8 have achieved Charter Standard. One club has achieved Community Club status and one club has achieved Development Club Status. Six clubs have achieved Basic Charter Standard status.

Women's football

Changing provision for women and girls remains generally poor at all pitch sites and is likely to act as a deterrent to new and continued participation, as well as raising serious questions over equalities.

Synthetic Turf Pitches

The role of Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) for football is currently to absorb midweek training and, in a limited number of cases, matches. The role of STPs as an alternative to grass pitches is limited due to current league rules. There are four full size STPs in Thurrock and one three quarter size 3G rubber crumb pitch.

Commercial small-sided football

The significant growth of the small-sided (mainly five-a-side) game as a commercial venture principally involves small, all-weather, floodlit pitches. This could supplement and possibly displace demand for full-sized natural turf pitches. There is no commercial five-a-side venue in Thurrock. The nearest facility is at Norwegian Playing Fields in Newham.

School Pitches

Many school pitches are used extensively during the week, and therefore additional usage at the weekend may be detrimental to the pitch (and all parties involved). In Plymouth, the City Council carried out a study into the school use of playing pitches using the 'team equivalent' approach specified in 'Towards a Level Playing Field'. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the wear and tear that might be expected in dual-use circumstances (in other words - in situations where school pitches are used by community teams as well as school pupils for PE classes and extra-curricular sports club activities).

Three independent case studies were undertaken and it was found that in each case school use amounted to the 'equivalent' of three games per week for football and between five and seven games per week for rugby for each pitch available for community use.

The Plymouth study found that most of the pitches available to the community were being overused with the inevitable consequences in terms of wear and tear and the long term quality of those pitches.

Clearly, the condition and the playability of individual pitches will vary depending on the physical condition of the pitch including drainage, type of soil, grass cover, wear and tear, slope and quality of maintenance. These factors will determine the individual capacity of each pitch. However, 'Towards a Level Playing Field' indicates that:

'In the absence of local pitch capacity data, an average figure of two games per week should be assumed.'

However, the Plymouth Study cautions that it cannot be assumed that school pitches are an underused resource which can readily accommodate the needs of community sports clubs.

4.2 Rugby

Changing patterns of participation have significant implications for pitch provision (with more small-sided Mini-Rugby pitches needed) and for changing facilities (with appropriate provision made for juniors and women).

Third generation (3G) artificial carpet systems are used to accommodate training needs. These are generally a 50-65mm long pile, non-abrasive carpet system, in-filled with recycled rubber to replicate natural turf. Underneath is a pad designed for firmness, yet capable of absorbing impact when a player falls under a heavy tackle.

In 2003 the International Rugby Board (IRB) 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. The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allow matches to be played on surfaces that meet the standard. Full contact activity, including tackling, rucking and mauling, scrummaging and line outs can take place.

Recognising the synergy between rugby and football, the RFU, supported by the FA, produced a document in 2007 based upon Regulation 22, entitled 'Artificial Grass Pitches for Rugby and Association Football'. This includes a performance standard and guide for dual use artificial grass rugby/football pitches. Information is provided to show that rugby and football can be played on artificial surfaces if the IRB criteria are met. It also sets out the testing protocols required for suppliers and clubs/operators to ensure the pitches meet - and continue to meet - the required criteria.

4.3 Cricket

The need for good quality grass pitches is highlighted for both club and district level play. However, in many instances facilities now comprise an artificial grass wicket

set in a lightly mown outfield, with no grass cricket table (or square) as such. The maintenance of good quality grass wickets is a major challenge.

There is a continuing trend for cricket clubs to acquire and develop their own facilities in contrast to football clubs, the majority of whom rely heavily on the public sector.

Increased participation by women has resulted in a need for good quality segregated changing facilities.

The Essex County Cricket Board classifies club grounds in 4 categories. These range from Category 1 County Ground Class 1 / Focus Club which is a venue capable of hosting First Class County Championship matches to Category 4 which is a venue capable of hosting club cricket. Cricket pitches in Thurrock are either Category 3 or Category 4 venues.

4.4 Hockey

Nearly all club games are played on Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) and the number of full size STPs in England is now in excess of 600.

There are a number of different types of synthetic surface available. These fall generally under one of the following headings:

Filled surface: a surface (or carpet) comprising a synthetic yarn filled with sand (or similar material) to the full height of the pile to help maintain its verticality. The pile height is greatest in this type of surface.

The sand is an important element. A high quality material with well-rounded particles that allows adequate drainage at all times and prevents compaction of the fill while under use is usually specified.

Hockey in Thurrock is played on a pitch of this type.

Dressed surface or water-based filled surface: a surface (or carpet) comprising a synthetic yarn filled with sand (or similar material) to between 65% and 80% of the pile height to help maintain its verticality. The pile is a little denser in this surface but the pile height is less.

For optimum performance, it is recommended that this type of surface be watered, although this is not absolutely necessary. The quantity of water should be much less than on an unfilled water-based surface.

Water-based unfilled surface: a surface (or carpet) comprising a very dense synthetic pile of short length. It is essential from the safety, comfort and playability points of view that this type of surface is maintained wet during play. It also ensures that wear on the turf carpet is minimised and the full expected life of the turf is realised.

The Future of Waterbased Hockey Pitches

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) is working towards specifying a water-free synthetic turf for top level hockey and a multi-sport turf for some other levels.

The development of a water-free turf is an important project because it recognises environmental concerns about water usage. Multi-sport turf is likely to continue being suitable for development and recreational hockey.

With regard to multi-sport turf, some recent products have been shown to meet FIH “national” level performance criteria and also FIFA One Star requirements.

Loughborough University recently received official confirmation that its refurbished multi-use pitch is suitable for competitive hockey fixtures. This pitch is one of the next generation of a turf approved by the FIH and is within the pile length guidelines set out by England Hockey. The turf is already approved for competitive football use by international federation FIFA.

In the interim and in relation to top level hockey, water-based pitches will continue to be specified. Even when new turfs are available, there is no intention to cease to allow top events to be played on existing water-based pitches which meet the FIH performance specifications.

4.5 Tennis

Although there are currently 10,000 park courts in the UK, the Tennis Foundation says there were about 33,000 three years ago. Many councils have decided to convert courts to other uses which get more use.

Most of the tennis courts in Thurrock are located in parks. Some of these have fallen into disuse.

4.6 Synthetic Turf Pitches

Synthetic turf pitches (STPs) provide for the needs of hockey and football for an all-weather surface. For hockey, this provides a better playing surface than natural grass and, for football, a hard wearing all weather alternative. Technical developments have meant that the use of STPs has widened considerably for both competitive play and training.

The following Football Association Committees have approved the use of such pitches:

- FA Trophy
- FA Vase
- FA Youth Cup (qualifying rounds only)
- FA Women's Premier League and Cup
- FA Sunday Cup
- FA County Youth Cup

The use of such pitches is however dependent on compliance with conditions of use. In future, matches may be played on artificial grass pitches that conform to the FIFA 1 star standard, or the equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard (IATS) in all FA Competitions, except the FA Cup (all rounds) and FA Youth Cup (Rounds proper). To qualify for use, the pitch must be certified by The FA as meeting the FIFA 1 Star standard or the equivalent International Artificial Turf Standard. The performance standards for the system have been based on the work currently being

undertaken by UEFA for professional football. The tolerances for non-league or community football will be greater, given the likely higher usage levels.

Sport England and sportscotland undertook a survey of the use of STP facilities in 2005 to help understand how local communities and teams use STPs. Seventy-six percent of users travelled by car, either as a driver or passenger and 14% walked to the STP. Only 4% travelled by public transport. The average distance travelled was six miles with most users, 70%, travelling under 5 miles. However this overall figure masks substantial differences between football players, who travelled 5 miles on average, and hockey players, who travelled 11 miles on average. Among football players 19% travelled less than 1 mile and 39% travelled less than 2 miles.

The average journey time was 22 minutes for all users, (20 minutes for football, 33 minutes for hockey); almost two thirds (63%) of users had a journey of 20 minutes or less with similar journey lengths for both car users and walkers/cyclists. Only 14% of all users had a journey time of over 30 minutes.

England Hockey's 3G Pitch Policy permits the use of some long pile turf pitches for some competitive hockey. England Hockey recognises that with appropriate maintenance, some (FIH approved) long pile turf as a playing surface is preferable to poorly maintained grass or synthetic turf pitches. England Hockey also acknowledges that with appropriate levels of maintenance, some long pile turf is appropriate for young players being introduced to hockey in schools and in community programmes / activities.

England Hockey has introduced a system of pitch categorisation (see **Table 4.2** below) which identifies three levels within the current FIH testing parameters. The categories identify the pitches that are suitable for hockey playing and specific levels of competition.

Table 4.2 Categories of STPs that can be used for Hockey

Category	Type	Use
EH Category 1	Water based and sand-dressed surfaces approved within the FIH Global/National parameters.	All levels of competition inclusive of international training and matches
EH Category 2	Sand-filled (sand-based) surfaces within the FIH National parameter.	All levels of competition excepting international training and matches.
EH Category 3	Long pile (3G) surfaces that are categorised by FIH as satisfying their 'National' performance parameter. Such approved by the FIH. The certification shall be based on on-site testing.	Local and regional league competition (excepting regional premiership divisions– e.g. the division that directly feed the national league)

England Hockey draws attention to the fact that the playing surface of a Category 3 pitch is characterised by a slower surface speed, poor and sometimes unpredictable levels of consistency and modern hockey skills are much more difficult to execute. Category 3 pitches cannot be used for any England Hockey Knock-Out Competition, international training and matches, the England Hockey League (all Divisions), Regional Premier Division, BUCS premier league, matches and all Single System activity from and including JDC level upwards for U18s and SRPC level for over 18s.

4.7 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) for Outdoor Sport

The most commonly played outdoor sports on multi-sports games areas are tennis / mini tennis, netball, basketball, soccer / five-a-side soccer, and hockey. Certain surface types are more suitable than others for different sports.

One of the important issues relating to the choice of surface is the need for some form of shock absorbency. However, there can be conflicting requirements between the sports. On the one hand there are clear benefits for participants in protection from injury, but too much cushioning of the surface may be detrimental to the performance of certain sports, such as tennis, basketball and netball. **Table 4.3** below identifies the general suitability of main types of playing surface for a range of sports, although this will also depend on the standard of play that is intended.

Table 4.3: MUGA Sports Surfaces

Sports Surface/ MUGA Type	5-a-side Football	Tennis	Mini Tennis	Netball	Basketball	Hockey	Rugby Training	Athletics Training	Football Training
Macadam (Type 1)	4	1	1	2	1	4	4	4	4
Macadam (Type 2)	4	2	2	1	2	4	4	4	4
Polymeric (Type 3)	3	2	2	1	2	3	4	3	3
Polymeric (Type 4)	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	2
Sand filled synthetic turf (Type 5a)	1	4	4	4	4	1	2	3 (excluding spikes)	1
Sand dressed synthetic turf (Type 5b)	2	3	3	4	3	1	3	3 (excluding spikes)	2
Needle- punch synthetic turf (Type 5c)	2	3	3	4	3	2	3	3 (excluding spikes)	2

Key 1 = Preferred surface 2 = Suitable surface 3 = Possible surface though less suitable 4 = Unsuitable surface

Source: A Guide to the Design, Specification & Construction of Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) Including Multi-Sport Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)

5. Policy Context

5.1 National Policy Context

5.1.1 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) was issued in August 2002. PPG 17 indicates that local authorities have a responsibility to undertake a robust assessment of needs with regard to open space and sports and recreational provision. Where a robust assessment of playing field needs has not been undertaken or completed, PPG 17 cites a number of tests which should be satisfied, before permission to develop playing fields can be granted.

5.1.2 Playing to Win: A New Era for Sport

This document supercedes the 2002 Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) policy entitled “Game Plan: A strategy for delivering the government’s sport and physical activity objectives”. In the context of the preparation for the Olympic Games in London in 2012 the revised DCMS focus is on performance and excellence, or “sport for sports sake”. The plan seeks to change the culture of sport in England to get more people to take up sport simply for the love of sport; to expand the pool of talented English sportsmen and women; and to break records, win medals and win tournaments for this country.

As Olympic host nation there is an opportunity to set a new level of ambition for sport and change permanently its place in society. The ‘Playing to Win’ ethos is to be reflected in achieving the highest standards on and off the field. The vision is to give more people of all ages the opportunity to participate in high quality competitive sport.

To create a world leading sporting nation, clear aims are essential. They are:

- To engage a million more people in regular sport participation.

- To produce a seamless ladder of talent development from school to the elite level, with opportunities for more competition and more coaching at each level.
- To ensure every member of the sporting family, and every part of Government, plays its part.

5.1.3 Sport England Strategy 2008-2011

Sport England's strategy focuses exclusively on sport and maximising English sporting success in all its forms. The driving force behind the strategy and investment is to address the needs of sport participants across the country.

Sport England will focus on ensuring that opportunities are available to enable children and young people to continue in sport when they have left school. Sport England will work with the Youth Sport Trust to address the drop-off in participation at the age of 16 and develop a modern sports club network in partnership with National Governing Bodies (NGBs).

The new strategy reflects a shift in emphasis and role for National Governing Bodies. NGBs will have greater funding autonomy and more responsibility for the delivery of these desired outcomes.

An important element of the strategy for the delivery of high quality outdoor sports opportunities is the intention to focus on developing a modern network of sports clubs. An accessible, modern, sports club structure is to be developed within each sport with the intention of driving up participation, improving satisfaction and retention and allow those with talent to fully develop. Sport England will work with partners such as the Football Foundation to develop multi-sport clubs that will provide a diverse range of opportunities to fit with modern lifestyles and needs.

It will be an essential requirement for NGBs to develop girl's and women's sport, disability sport and to reach out to diverse communities.

In future there will be a single pot of funding. Sport England will drive delivery via NGBs and seek to bring a focus to regional and local activity.

Sport England is committed to delivering:

- 1 million people doing more sport by 2012-13.
- A reduction in post-16 drop-off in at least five sports by 25% by 2012-13.
- A quantifiable increase in satisfaction (actual measure to be determined).
- Improved talent development systems in at least 25 sports.
- A major contribution to the delivery of the Five Hour Sport Offer.

5.1.4 Sport England's policy on playing fields

Since 1996, Sport England has published a number of documents reflecting current issues and guidance relative to playing fields. Sport England's policy on planning applications for development on playing fields is included in their planning policy statement 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England' (1998).

By virtue of a statutory instrument made in 1996, Sport England is a statutory consultee on proposals for development which affect playing fields, land used for playing fields at any time in the last five years which remains undeveloped, or land which is identified for use as a playing field in a development plan. This means that Sport England must be notified by the local planning authority when a relevant planning application is received, and any objections raised must be considered.

The policy states that they 'will oppose the granting of planning permission of any planning application for any development that would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, all or any part of a playing field, or land last used as playing field or land allocated for use as a playing field in an adopted or draft deposit local plan unless, in the judgement of Sport England, one of the specific circumstances applies. Those specific circumstances are:

E1: A carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

E2: The proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use.

E3: The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing area of any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on site.

E4: The playing field or playing fields that would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development.

E5: The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields'.

The policy statement includes a set of circumstances applicable to each of the above exceptions which are taken into account by Sport England when assessing planning applications.

5.1.5 The FA's National Game Strategy 2008-12

The aims of the National Game Strategy, which was published in 2008, are four-fold. Firstly the FA wants to increase the number of people involved in the game including players, coaches, administrators and referees and to retain those already involved. Secondly there is an intention to develop better coaches and more skilful players, focusing on improving the quality of the 5-11 age group. Thirdly the FA is seeking to run the game more effectively by making it easier to organise the game locally. Finally, the intention is to raise standards of behaviour and address abusive behaviour by creating a safe and positive environment.

A number of key issues that are relevant to this strategy emerged from the consultation process including:

Facilities

- Improving the quality of existing facilities and changing rooms to support grassroots football.
- Although £340 million has been invested into facilities, this only represents 15% of the overall estimated costs.
- The increasing costs of hiring facilities for training and playing matches for youth clubs.

Growth and Retention (young players)

- 1.1 million 5-15 year olds (839,000 boys and 331,000 girls) currently playing kick about football would like to join a football team.
- Children are facing increasing time pressures, greater choices in leisure options, and are demanding more flexible formats of football.
- 2.4 million 5-15 year olds would like access to quality coaching to improve their football skills.
- A clear gender divide - 52% of all girls have no experience of playing football.

Growth and Retention (adult players)

- A decline in the adult 11-a-side game as a result of changing lifestyle patterns; players require greater flexibility in football provision.
- Adult 11-a-side players require a referee for every game, quality facilities and access to local competitions.
- Adult football is not currently representative of the wider community and there is a need to identify and address the barriers that prevent people becoming involved and progressing in football.

The strategy outlines the facilities required to sustain and increase participation in football. It identifies a need to provide affordable, new and improved facilities in schools, clubs and on local authority sites to deliver the national game strategy.

Targets specified include:

- £300 million of additional investment to develop new facilities, and improve the quality of existing facilities.
- creation of a network of FA Football Development Centres.
- support for 100 FA Community Clubs to develop facilities.
- 150 artificial grass pitches sanctioned for competitive matches.
- support for the development of 50 5-a-side centres.

The FA will develop local investment plans to address areas with gaps in facilities and to increase capacity of existing facilities to meet local demands in that area. A network of 'FA Development Centres' will be created and promoted to support the FA Skills Programme and the training and development of coaches and volunteers.

FA Community Clubs will be promoted as the model for club development and these clubs and those aspiring to attain the award will be the priority for future investment. Clubs will be supported in developing new and improved facilities and will be encouraged to acquire freehold or long-term leases on their facilities.

The FA is seeking to develop a network of 150 artificial pitches to increase the opportunities for coaching, competitive play and more flexible formats of football.

A strategy to support the development of facilities in the women's pyramid of football will be developed.

In a wider context the FA will lobby the Government to protect public open green spaces and change the 'No Ball Games' culture to encourage children's play. Also, Local Authorities will be urged to consider the sporting facilities required in development plans especially in areas of high housing growth.

5.1.6 Women's & Girls' Football Strategy 2008-12: Championing Growth and Excellence in Women's and Girls' Football

This strategy, published in 2008, highlights the fact that women's and girls' football continues to grow with more players competing in affiliated competition than any other team sport. There has been an increase in the number of players, clubs,

leagues and competitions since 1993; the number of affiliated players has increased from 10,400 to over 150,000.

This strategy echoes the National Game Strategy findings that the quality of facilities is a problem and a significant number of sites still do not have any changing rooms. Also, women's football is usually played as the last game of the weekend on a Sunday afternoon, where a number of factors such as poor pitches and adverse weather conditions result in too many games being postponed. There is therefore a need to ensure that the FA Centres of Excellence and the clubs in national leagues have access to high-quality facilities in the locality, potentially creating joint ventures with other partners such as universities, colleges or clubs in the men's National League System.

The FA intends to work alongside a number of key partners, notably the Football Foundation, to ensure that a programme of facility development supports the women's and girls' game at all levels.

5.1.7 Rugby Football Union: Building for the Future - Capital Funding Requirements

This document sets out the facilities requirements for grassroots rugby.

The report identifies a significant requirement to invest in facilities. Key reasons for investing in facilities are:

- Refurbishment of existing facilities to retain participants;
- Compliance with new legislation;
- Delivering increased participation; and
- Developing multi-sport community facilities.

The report concludes that the condition of many facilities at club level is a cause for concern. For example, a 2004 RFU Questionnaire reported that:

- 65% of women's teams felt constrained by inadequate changing facilities;
- 69% of clubs said that their changing facilities were generally inadequate;
- Only 12% of clubs have Class 2 floodlighting; and

- 22% of clubs have no training area at all.

The development and maintenance of good quality facilities is considered to be vital to the delivery of increased participation and retaining the existing players. If facilities continue to deteriorate, participation starts to reduce, as players are discouraged from playing the sport in increasingly inadequate conditions.

The RFU supports the Government's initiatives to develop multi-sport facilities. The 2005 RFU questionnaire indicated that over 76% of club sites are used by other sports.

The focus for investment is on new and improved outdoor grass playing/ floodlit training areas, 3G rubber crumb pitches and changing facilities. The report estimates that a total investment in club facilities in the region of £605m is required over a 10-year period.

5.1.8 Rugby Union Facility Strategy

In 2008 the Rugby Football Union presented its "National Facilities Strategy for Rugby Union in England" to enhance the sport of rugby through the provision of better facilities at all levels of the game.

Rugby has seen significant levels of investment for the facility needs of its community rugby clubs in recent years. The Rugby Football Union (RFU) has invested £25,650,000 into the game with a further £46,000,000 of support from other stakeholders. In line with this investment the game has seen increases in participation within invested clubs of 58% mini/youth players, 16% coaches and 3% volunteers.

The development of facilities within community rugby clubs is a key strategic priority of the RFU and a framework for the development of facilities at a national, regional and local level is provided by the National Facility Strategy.

Key to the delivery of the strategy is the development of Constituent Body Facility Plans to identify the facility needs of all community rugby clubs and then prioritise projects for investment based upon delivery against key performance indicators.

There are four strategic themes for the strategy, More People (more games), Better Places, Access for All and Enjoyment. Appropriate modern facilities are considered to be necessary to increase participation and create sustainable clubs.

Of the clubs who responded to a questionnaire survey in 2006, 79% had security of tenure over their own ground. They therefore are in a good position to develop their facilities, subject to funding and planning issues. The RFU will target capital investment at these community venues.

The strategy identifies three Model Venues with each one having a different range of facilities. They provide a framework for development.

Model Venue 1: This is usually a club, school, university or other provider playing lower level or recreational rugby.

Model Venue 2: An established club venue with a wider programme of adult and youth rugby for both male and female players.

Model Venue 3: A venue with potentially higher level competitive rugby that can provide for more sophisticated RFU and RFUW development programmes.

Increasing or improving facilities at a club will be supported by the RFU where the level of activities undertaken exceeds the facilities available.

The following facility improvements and developments have been set as priorities:

- Increase the provision of integrated changing facilities that are child friendly and can sustain concurrent male and female activity at the club.
- Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches.
- Increase the number of Artificial Turf Pitches (ATPs).
- Improve the quality and quantity of community use and competition floodlighting.
- Provide a safe environment for all rugby and sporting activity.
- Support central venues for player, coach, official and volunteer training.
- Support the development of multi-sports clubs.

- Other projects that assist clubs to become sustainable.

5.1.9 Essex County Cricket Board (ECCB) Facilities Strategy Minimum Quality Standards

This strategy outlines a broad vision for the facility needs for cricket in Essex, from the small village club or school through to venues capable of hosting County First and Second X1, ECCC Academy, Development of Excellence and County Age Group Cricket.

It also covers the practice facilities, both indoor and outdoor, required to develop talent, linked to the clubs' or schools' ability to deliver a development programme commensurate with the clubs structure and development plan. One of the priorities of the strategy is:

The ECCB currently has 259 affiliated cricket clubs. The affiliation criteria are broken down by gold, silver and bronze levels, which are commensurate with the size of the club (by the number of teams they run) and the level of cricket played. Affiliation entitles clubs to assistance from the ECCB Development Team appropriate to the level of affiliation.

Club Cricket

The aims for Club Cricket are to encourage every ECCB/ECB Affiliated Cricket Club to obtain access to well prepared outdoor match/practice pitches and indoor facilities, and to have appropriate machinery and expertise available. Also the ECCB will assist with the development of changing rooms and general club facilities.

The strategy sets out Minimum Quality Standards which reflect the ECB Technical Specification TS4. This requires the cricket square to be well maintained and in good condition. The bounce of the pitch should be true and predictable throughout the match and should not produce excessive spin or movement off the seam. Any holes or ruts on the square caused by previous matches must have been levelled, filled and firmed. For a Silver Focus club the square should be of sufficient size to allow regular rotation of match pitches and ensure that a maximum of 4 full games are played on the same strip throughout the season.

The outfield should be well maintained and adequately drained. Balls should be able to run true and the outfield should be free of holes, ruts or other obstructions that might pose a hazard to fielders.

5.1.10 Places to Play strategy

The Places to Play strategy is the Lawn Tennis Associations (LTA) plan to increase the opportunities to participate, compete and gain access to tennis coaching at all levels. It gives guidance on the expectations for financial support from the resources and funds available to British Tennis. The aim is to increase the number and standard of facilities available throughout the UK. These facilities will be available to the whole community at a reasonable, affordable cost whilst sustaining the financial viability of the clubs and tennis providers.

The majority of grant funding is derived from money allocated to British Tennis through Sport England. There is a commitment that the number of people playing tennis once a week will increase by 150,000 by 2013. Investment in the right projects, supported by the right people is key if this target is to be achieved.

Specific targets for Places to Play include:

- Supporting ambitious clubs to develop their facilities in order to increase participation
- Developing facilities that will develop the talent pool and secure a winning future at the top level.
- Improving player and ancillary facilities to meet increased customer expectations and deliver a quality experience
- Boosting capacity and bringing poor quality courts back into use – addressing historic underinvestment in parks and community settings.

5.2 Local Policy Context

5.2.1 Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy for Thurrock (October 2007)

The strategy provides a plan for the development of the existing and new sports and active leisure facilities in Thurrock over the next 10 years. It provides a programme that will encourage and promote sports participation and a healthier lifestyle. It specifically addresses the opportunities and potential generated by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games.

The study produced a demand model for Synthetic Turf pitches based on 1 full size pitch per 25,000 population. The model shows a deficiency of three synthetic turf pitches based on the projected population for 2016. The strategy identifies the need for one Synthetic Turf Pitch at Belhus and one at Blackshots, both of which should be third generation facilities. A third site near Lakeside Shopping Centre could provide a synthetic turf pitch but may be more suitable for a Goals or Power League facility.

In addition the study looked at football team generation rates in Thurrock to assist in determining the level of demand. The study concluded that Thurrock generates a large number of football teams from its population.

The strategy carries forward the concept of creating a Sports Hub in the Blackshots area. This would involve the re-modelling of the Leisure Centre and its outdoor sports provision. In addition a number of sites are identified as having the potential to contribute to this proposal. These include a possible new site for the William Edward Sports College on existing farm land close to Blackshots Leisure Centre; green belt land that may become available for a football stadium development.

The Sports and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy concurs with recommendations contained in the Open Space Strategy for Thurrock that master plans or feasibility studies should be developed for Blackshots and Belhus as multi use sports hubs or sports villages.

5.2.2 Community Sports & Wellbeing Hub – Feasibility Study

This report was commissioned to examine the feasibility of proposals to develop two hub sites serving the East and West of Thurrock. The report concludes that Belhus Park and Blackshots are the preferred locations for new community sports facilities.⁴⁶

Blackshots is considered to be a strong location for a Community Sports and Wellbeing Hub. The site has a number of existing facilities and is close to the population of Grays. The report indicates that there are opportunities for co-location with William Edwards Sports College, local football clubs, existing user clubs and potentially the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Libraries Service.

This report stated that the catchment population for Belhus Park is limited and it is not easily accessible by public transport. It is therefore only considered suitable for the development of a smaller scale community leisure centre serving the communities in the West of the borough, notably Aveley and South Ockendon. However this could change in the future with new planned housing and transportation developments at Lakeside.

It is considered that both sites have the potential to develop football facilities in partnership with local clubs. Thurrock has five semi-professional football clubs which are all seeking to improve the quality of their facilities and achieve greater financial sustainability. The Council is keen to work in partnership with the clubs to help them to relocate to better locations including Council owned sites.

This feasibility study sets out the recommended minimum provision ('Core') and the maximum range of facilities that are recommended if sufficient funding can be secured.

Blackshots Outdoor Sports Proposals

Core Provision

- Football pitches (14 adult/junior & 8 mini)

⁴⁶ Community Sports & Wellbeing Hub – Feasibility Study, January 2010

- Stand-alone cricket pavilion
- Rugby pitches (4 new pitches)
- 4 x tennis courts
- 1 Full sized Synthetic Turf Pitch

Maximum Provision

- Football stadium with total capacity of 4,000-5,000 of which 500 is covered seating.
- Multi Use Games Area
- 5-a-side pitches (commercial operator)

Belhus Park Outdoor Sports Proposals

Core Provision

- Football pitches (12 adult/junior pitches)
- Full sized Synthetic Turf Pitch

Maximum Provision

- Football stadium with total capacity of 1,500 -2,000 spectators
- Multi Use Games Area

A condition survey of the existing facilities at Belhus Park found them to be in poor condition and to have reached the end of their useful life. As a consequence, the replacement of facilities at Belhus Park is considered to be a higher priority than Blackshots.

The programme for development of facilities is likely to be driven by availability of funding. The report concludes that:

‘Clearly, there is a long-standing need for several clubs to relocate to modern purpose built facilities. This will enable them to continue to make an important contribution to sporting provision in the Borough.’

However, the programme for the development of new facilities for the five semi – professional football clubs will be dependant on their ability to fund the new facilities and the ability to secure planning permission

These clubs are:

- Aveley FC
- East Thurrock United
- Grays Athletic FC
- Thurrock FC
- Tilbury FC

5.2.3 Shaping Thurrock – Thurrock’s Local Area Agreement

Share the vision – *Shape our future*, Thurrock’s Sustainable Community Strategy was adopted in December 2009. It sets out a vision of how the Shaping Thurrock Partnership aims to improve Thurrock over the period 2010-2020.

The Vision for Thurrock is:

'We want Thurrock to be at the dynamic heart of the Thames Gateway, a place of ambition, enterprise and opportunity, where communities and businesses flourish and the quality of life for local people is continually improving.'

Five priorities have been identified:

- To ensure a safe, clean and green environment.
- To improve the education and skills of local people.
- To encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity.
- To provide and commission high quality and accessible services that meet, wherever possible, individual needs.
- To build pride, respect and responsibility in Thurrock's communities and its residents.

Thurrock's Local Area Agreement is the delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy. Published in 2008 and refreshed in 2010, it sets out the key priorities for Thurrock and lays out how the council will deliver its vision over the period 2008-2011. The Local Area Agreement sets out the priority outcomes, targets and indicators that will be used to measure progress towards achieving the vision for Thurrock.

The headlines from community consultation undertaken in August 2006 indicate that people want better sports, recreation and leisure opportunities for all sections of the community;

A key priority is 'Leisure and Healthy Living'. The aims are to create the conditions that enable residents of Thurrock to live long and healthy lives. A key indicator for this objective is to increase adult exercise. The indicator for this is:

NI 8 - At least 3 days x 30 minutes, moderate intensity participation (sport and recreational walking and cycling and for those aged 65 and over light intensity participation in yoga, pilates, bowls, archery, croquet)

The intention is to seek an increase in the number of adults participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation. The most recent Active People Survey (APS3) undertaken by Sport England found that 16% of Thurrock's adult population achieved this level of activity for NI 8 compared to 17% for APS1 and 16% for APS2. The intention is for this to increase to 22.6% in the year 2009/10 and 21% in the year 2010/11.

A further important theme in the Local Area Agreement is that of 'Reaching Your Potential'. Many activities in this theme are specifically targeted at children and young people, and the LAA seeks to address the holistic needs of children and young people by creating more positive experiences. A key indicator of the outcomes for this priority is NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities. In 2008/09 participation was measured at 68.3%. The intention is for this to increase to 71.5% in the year 2009/10 and 75% in the year 2010/11.

Clearly, one of the principal aims of the Outdoor Sports Strategy is to maintain and develop increased opportunities for young people to participate in and enjoy the benefits of sport.

5.2.4 Thurrock Council Community Needs and Open Spaces Study (2006)

The Community Needs and Open Spaces Study examined provision of football, rugby and cricket pitches but also included provision for bowls and tennis. The consultation undertaken for the study identified that the majority of sports participants in Thurrock are men and football and golf are the most popular sports. The study also identified deficiencies in provision based on projected population increases and these are shown in **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1: Community Needs and Open Spaces Study

Pitch Type	Deficiency/ shortfall of pitches – 2006	Deficiency/ shortfall of Pitches – 2021	Area of Pitches (hectares required 2021)	Area
Adult Football	7	6	8.40	Aveley/Ockendon
Adult Football	3	10	10.5	Grays & West Thurrock
Adult Football	3	5	7.00	Stanford/ Corringham
Junior Football	2	2	2.10	Tilbury/Chadwell
Junior Football	1	5	5.25	Rural Area
Junior Rugby	11	17	17.40	Thurrock

The study found that the supply of pitches was currently only just meeting expressed demand and that the situation would be likely to deteriorate if there was continued growth in junior and women's football.

Table 5.1 shows the shortfalls in pitch provision identified by the study in 2006. These shortfalls were indicated to increase by 2021 if playing pitch provision remained at the same level. Overall the shortfalls identified were:

- 21 adult football pitches
- 7 junior football pitches
- 17 junior rugby pitches

The shortage of playing pitches was calculated by the Playing Pitch Model using 2001 data and for this reason the report stated that the results should be treated with caution.

The conclusion reached was that the capacity for further dual use of education sites was limited and that curricular use of playing pitches combined with community use at weekends was resulting in some pitches being overplayed. Additional training provision in the form of 'Third generation' rubber crumb Synthetic Turf Pitches would help to alleviate the use of grass pitches for training.

The quality of playing pitches was found overall to be reasonable. There were some problems associated with a lack of evenness, and motorcyclists and car parkers were regularly damaging some pitches. Changing accommodation was basic but acceptable (with one or two exceptions), but was inadequate to support women and girls' participation and was probably discouraging female participation.

With regard to bowling greens some appeared to be underused. However, this was thought to be a response by club members to the poor quality of some of the bowling greens, as there was some evidence of players migrating to better facilities.

Bowling greens were being maintained to a reasonable standard and the County Association passed most rinks as acceptable after their annual inspection. The standard of ancillary facilities at bowling greens was considered to be good.

Measures were recommended to bring about an overall improvement in the quantity, quality and accessibility of outdoor sports provision in Thurrock. These included measures to improve the pitch quality of Council owned sports pitches and improvements to the quality of ancillary facilities, particularly women's football changing facilities.

It was further recommended that consideration should be given to the development of single site multi-sport hubs to serve all the settlement areas.

5.2.5 Thurrock Open Space Strategy 2006 – 2011 (2006)

With regard to playing pitch provision, the strategy noted that the pitch quality results for the Community Needs Study provided a distorted picture of sporting facilities in

Thurrock. The surveys were undertaken in the winter of 2005, which was a particularly dry winter and did not provide a true reflection of the usual pitch conditions. It is considered that pitches are often over used with a concomitant decline in quality. The need for more synthetic turf pitches in Thurrock is acknowledged. Particular concern is expressed about cricket pitches. Information obtained from the Essex Cricket Board identified Thurrock's cricket pitches to be some of the poorest in Essex. This strategy concludes that investment is required to improve sporting facilities but subsidence issues, vandalism, car parking and the condition of changing facilities must be tackled if higher quality facilities are to be delivered.

A significant recommendation in this strategy is the identification of two sites of strategic importance, Belhus Park and Blackshots Recreation Ground. The strategy envisages that there is potential for improvements to the quality, quantity and diversity of facilities at both sites and that master plans should be developed to investigate the potential of both sites as multi use sports hubs.

5.2.6 Creating Active Places - Sports Facilities Strategy for the East of England and Building a Winning Future Together in Essex: Essex Sports Facilities Strategy 2008-2020.

Creating Active Places - Sports Facilities Strategy for the East of England (October 2007) and Building a Winning Future Together in Essex: Essex Sports Facilities Strategy 2008-2020 (2008) set out the strategic context and identified the level and need for future sports facility provision in Essex. They cover the period 2007- 2020. Both strategies seek to provide the appropriate number of fit for purpose, quality facilities to address the national target to increase participation in sport by 1% year on year and to meet increased population demands from the growth agenda.

The Essex Sports Facilities Strategy makes recommendations that are built around seven complementary themes as follows:

- 1. Investing in existing facility stock** – where existing facilities are in the right location to meet community needs but require investment to make them fit for purpose.

- 2. Developing new facility provision** - where there is a need to replace ageing or poorly located facilities or to meet a clearly identified unmet demand for a particular type of facility.
- 3. Addressing Unmet Demand** – where the population is located outside the catchment area of existing facilities, or where existing facilities are already close to, or at, capacity at peak times.
- 4. Improving Accessibility to existing facilities** – e.g. through pricing structures or public opening hours.
- 5. Partnership Working** – a partnership approach across all sectors is required in order to deliver the right facilities in the right place to meet the needs of all potential users.
- 6. Utilising the planning framework** – to help deliver new sports facilities and secure planning contributions towards new community sports provision.
- 7. Retaining Performance Sport and Performance Athletes** –delivering sports facilities suitable for competition and training.

6. Key Characteristics

6.1 Population

Details of the current and future population of Thurrock are provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2006-based subnational population projections which provide yearly population projections up to 2031 for every local authority area in England. The population projection data sets are based on information from natural change (births and deaths), internal migration into and out of an area, international and cross-border migration into and out of an area and gender and age breakdowns.

These projections provide an estimate of future trends in population by age and sex for the period 2006 to 2026. The projections are trend-based and therefore show what the population will be if recent trends in fertility, mortality and migration continue. They do not reflect the impact of any future policy changes or local development policies that may impact the population of an area. At this point in time they represent the best information available on population increase.⁴⁷

Main Points:

- The 2006 population of Thurrock is estimated at 148,900. The population has increased by 16% since 1991 and 4% since the 2001 Census.
- The population of Thurrock is projected to continue to grow and will reach 177,400 in 2026. This represents an increase of 19.1% or 28,500 people over a 20 year period (2006 to 2026).
- The population increase of 19.1% is higher than the projected national increase of 16.1% but is lower than the projected 20.3% increase regionally over the same period.
- Over the next 20 years Thurrock will see a significant ageing of its population due to longer lives, falling birth rates and ageing of the baby boom generation. The number of people aged over 65 will increase by 9,900 people (a 51%

increase) and people aged over 85 will almost double, increasing by 2,100 people (a 95.5% increase).

- Growth among the younger population will be smaller as fertility rates start to fall. The number of young people aged 0-14 in the population is projected to see a modest increase of 15.8% between 2006 and 2026 and people aged 15-24 will increase by 2,500 people (a 13.7% increase) over the same period.
- The younger working age population (15-34) will see an increase of 2500 people (an 8.3% increase) between 2006 and 2026.
- The older working age population (35-64) will see an increase of 10,100 people (a 16.9% increase) between 2006 and 2026.

Thurrock has a young age profile when compared to the national average. In particular, there are more people aged 0-14 and 25-44 with 1 in 5 people (20%) aged under 15 compared to 18% nationally and regionally. There are fewer people in the older age groups with 30% aged over 50 compared to 33% nationally and 35% regionally. The average age in Thurrock is 36.6 years compared to 38.7 nationally.

Thurrock has a lower proportion of people from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background than the national average – 5.4% compared to 9% (2003 estimates).

The population projections used in this study are trend-based. It has not been possible to use the dwelling-lead population projections produced by the Chelmer Population and Housing Model. This is because the Playing Pitch Model requires data for active populations between the ages of 6 and 55 years. This data is not available broken down into these age groups.

It should be noted that it is anticipated that the growth in population may well not follow the trend indicated by the ONS because the majority of the housing growth will take place at the end of the period covered by the Strategy. In particular there is a

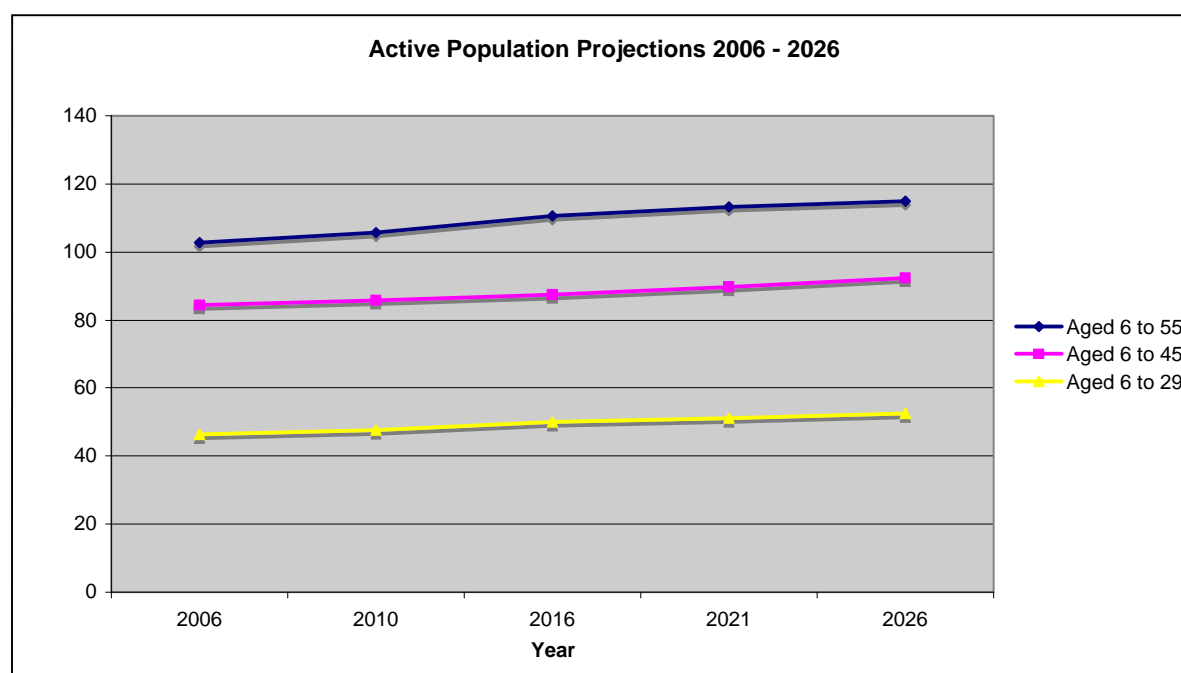
⁴⁷ Information based on Thurrock Profile Briefing Note July 2008. www.thurrock.gov.uk/i-know/profile/pdf/rm_population_200807.pdf.

proposed development of 3,000 dwellings at Lakeside. This will inevitably increase demand for outdoor sports facilities in the west of the borough.

6.1.1 Active Population

The Sport England Playing Pitch Model considers that the demand for playing pitches will come from the 'Active Population', which is considered to be between the ages of 6 and 55 years. However, for pitch sports such as football this is more likely to be between the ages of 6 and 45 years. It is therefore pertinent to consider what changes are projected for these age groups over the period to 2026. **Diagram 1** and **Table 6.1** show that, for both these age groups, there is a steady increase in the number of people in these age groups.

Diagram 1: Active Population Projections 2006 - 2026



Source: 2006-based subnational population projections ONS.

Table 6.1: Active Population

Active Population	2006 (000's)	2010 (000's)	2016 (000's)	2021 (000's)	2026 (000's)
Aged 6 to 55	102.7	105.72	110.58	113.22	115
Aged 6 to 45	84.42	85.8	87.5	89.74	92.36
Aged 6 to 29	46.28	47.54	49.94	51.12	52.5

Source: 2006-based subnational population projections ONS.

Examining the change in the population of different age groups in greater detail reveals that the most significant increase within the Active Population takes place within the 50 to 54 age groups between 2006 to 2026 which increases by 31.4% (see **Table 6.2**). In the shorter term the 35 to 39 age group declines over the period 2006 to 2021 but this decline is reversed by 2026 with an overall growth of 4%. The growth of the 10 to 14 year age group shows a sharp rise between 2016 and 2021 and an overall growth of 19.6% up to 2026. If the 6 to 29 year age groups are considered there is a steady growth in numbers of 7.9% between 2006 and 2016 and 13.4% between 2006 and 2026 (see **Table 6.2**).

Table 6.2: Projected change in population by age group – 2006-2026

Age Group	% change 2006-2011	% change 2006-2016	% change 2006-2021	% change 2006-2026
0-4	12.1%	13.1%	14.1%	14.1%
5-9	0.0%	11.9%	12.9%	13.9%
10-14	4.1%	5.2%	17.5%	19.6%
15-19	-3.0%	-1.0%	1.0%	13.1%
20-24	16.7%	11.9%	13.1%	14.3%
25-29	1.0%	12.7%	8.8%	6.9%
30-34	-4.3%	-0.9%	8.5%	5.1%
35-39	-4.8%	-7.9%	-4.0%	4.0%
40-44	5.9%	0.0%	-3.4%	2.5%
45-49	20.6%	26.8%	19.6%	16.5%
50-54	10.5%	32.6%	39.5%	31.4%
55-59	-13.5%	-4.2%	14.6%	19.8%
60-64	21.9%	6.8%	19.2%	42.5%
65-69	20.0%	47.3%	30.9%	45.5%
70-74	8.9%	31.1%	62.2%	44.4%
75-79	-5.0%	5.0%	27.5%	57.5%
80-84	-6.3%	-6.3%	9.4%	31.3%
85 and over	27.3%	45.5%	63.6%	95.5%
All ages	4.9%	9.9%	14.8%	19.1%

Source: Projections based on 2006 sub-national population projections: ONS

7.0 The Assessment of Demand

7.1 Sources of data

“Towards a Level Playing Field” indicates that for a successful and accurate playing pitch assessment it is necessary to obtain as accurate a tally as possible of the number of teams and other users of the pitches and the existing pattern of play.

In the first instance, a direct count of teams can be derived using a number of sources including:

- governing body, county association handbooks and league handbooks
- interviews with league secretaries
- booking records for local authority, educational and other pitches (where available – this will also supply information on patterns of play/temporal demand)
- sports club directories
- local knowledge.

In addition a questionnaire survey can provide information relating to demand.

The information gathered from these sources relating to demand includes:

- membership, membership trends and number of teams per club
- place of origin of team members
- matches played per season (home and away)
- length of season
- number of postponements and cancellations last season
- level of activity at existing facilities
- unmet demand
- financial status (for predicting future numbers of clubs)
- links with local schools and other users

- sports development plans.

7.1.1 Latent and future demand

Latent demand is demand that cannot be expressed because of lack of access to pitches or other ancillary facilities. Factors to take into account when assessing latent demand include:

- Current frustrated demand – e.g. teams that are waiting for home pitches so that they can join a league or are not currently playing in their preferred location.
- Influence of sports development initiatives – targets may be set in local sports development initiatives. For example, if Thurrock's aspiration to achieve an overall increase in the number of adults participating at least 30 minutes in moderate intensity sport and active recreation on three or more days a week is achieved, this will have an impact on future demand for sports pitches.
- Quality of pitches/ancillary facilities - poor-quality facilities may restrict new players being attracted to sport or result in poor retention levels.
- Lack of facilities such as changing accommodation as is the case with some pitch sport venues in Thurrock.
- National sporting success and its influence on increasing participation
- Pricing policy - a high cost for hiring/leasing facilities may prevent teams from forming (or hinder the long-term sustainability of existing clubs).
- Sport in the school curriculum - increased profile of school sport may encourage more people playing team sports beyond school hours and school years.
- Impact of mini-sports in engendering long-term increases in adult play
- Lifestyle changes and other activities competing for leisure time/spend - may lead to a reduction in overall demand for formal pitch sports. Small-sided soccer at commercial venues may lead to fewer teams playing on Sunday mornings.

Future demand refers to any foreseeable future demand, for the use of playing fields. This can be established through the use of Team Generation Rates (TGR). Team Generation Rates (TGRs) indicate how many people in a specified age group are required to generate one team. They are derived by dividing the appropriate population age band in an area by the number of teams in that area in that age band. Once the number of teams has been established, the TGR for each sport and age group can be calculated. Existing TGRs can then be applied to estimated future changes in the population. By breaking down population estimates into age groups, future demand among the team-generating age groups can be identified.

7.1.2 Survey of Sports Clubs in Thurrock

A questionnaire survey was undertaken of all the sports clubs in Thurrock. Questionnaires were distributed by post to the secretaries of the sports clubs and a follow up reminder sent to those clubs who had not responded after a certain time period. Further chasing up was done by telephone after which clubs either agreed to complete the questionnaires by email or the survey was undertaken by telephone. It was necessary to undertake reminder telephone follow ups at least 6 times to many of the clubs. The final response rate achieved for football was 97% with 101 clubs out of a total of 104 providing a response. An additional 3 clubs who were playing at the start of the season had disbanded by the time of the survey.

7.2 Football

7.2.1 Membership

The numbers of players currently playing football in Thurrock is shown in **Table 7.1** below.

Table 7.1: Number of football players

Male players Under 18	Female players Under 18	Adult Male players	Adult Female players	Veteran players	Total players
2,841	280	1,667	30	132	4,950

There are an estimated 4,950 people playing football in Thurrock who are members of football clubs. Of these, 4,640 (94%) of players are male and 310 (6%) female. Males under 18 years number 2,841 (57%) and females under 18 years number 280 (6%); adult males total 1,667 (34%), adult females 30 (1%) and Veterans 132 (3%) of the total number of people playing football in Thurrock. These results are shown in **Table 7.2** below.

Table 7.2: Breakdown of people playing football

Players	Number	%
Total	4950	
Male	4640	94%
Female	310	6%
Players Under 18	3121	63%
Male players Under 18	2841	57%
Female players Under 18	280	6%
Adult	1829	37%
Male	1667	34%
Female	30	1%
Veteran	132	3%

Mini soccer and youth players number 3,121 (63%) of all players with adults numbering 1,829 (37%).

There are 104 football clubs in Thurrock of which 69 clubs (66%) have adult members only with none of these having adult female members. Of the 69 adult only clubs 65 have only one team.

There are 35 clubs with players under 18 years of age and these are shown in **Table 7.3** below. Of the clubs with players under 18 years of age, 12 (34%) have in excess of 100 players. The largest club is Thurrock Y.F.C with 520 players under 18 years of age.

Table 7.3: Football Clubs with Players Under 18

Club	Junior (under 18)		Adult		Veteran (over 40)
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Aveley Girls Football Club		24			
East Thurrock Ladies FC		16			
Rec Rovers	1		20		
Ockendon Motor Spares	2		29		
Belhus Colts Y.F.C.	11				
Chafford (Lions) Y.F.C.	13				
Stifford Scorpions	14				
Colts United YFC	15				
Ockendon Motor Spares Y.F.C.	15				
Thurrock All Stars	15				
Catford Park Royals	18				
Linford Dragons	18				
Tilbury Football Club	18		25	18	
Essex Comets Football Club	25		15		
Pegasus Coryton and Youth Team	25		25		25
Cricketers YFC	28		14		
Campus Wanderers Y.F.C.	30				
Lakeside Y.F.C.	30				
Thames Gateway Y.F.C.	31				
Romford	40		30		
Stadium United Y.F.C.	43				
Tilbury Terrors Y.F.C.	49				
Linford Wanderers Y.F.C.	50				
Brandon Groves Y.F.C.	92	12			
Copeland Colts Y.F.C. and Girls	120	11			
Stanford Wanderers	135		18		15
Corringham Athletic Y.F.C.	150				
Grays Athletic Football Club (under 21s, youth and girls)	150		16	12	
Ockendon Rhinos Y.F.C.	150	15			
Thurrock Tigers YFC	165				

Little Thurrock Dynamos	180	135	36		
East Thurrock FC	200	12	25		
Aveley Y.F.C.	238				
Corringham Cosmos Y.F.C.	270	35			
Thurrock Y.F.C.	500	20	50		
Total	2884	280	303	30	40

7.2.2 Membership Trends

Of the 96 clubs that responded to the question about whether their membership had increased, decreased or stayed the same, 26 (27%) responded that the membership of the club was increasing; 14 clubs (15%) reported that their membership was declining with 56 (58%) indicating that membership was static.

Of the 35 Youth Football clubs that responded to the question about whether their membership had increased, decreased or stayed the same, 13 (37%) reported increases in membership, 10 (29%) reported that its membership was declining with 12 (34%) indicating that membership was static. 8 out of the 12 clubs with over 100 players under the age of 18 years reported that their membership was increasing.

7.2.3 Number of Teams

To ascertain the details of the number of teams in the study area, in addition to data from the questionnaire survey, we employed the Essex County Football Association Handbook and the Football Association's 'Find a Club' website and also the FA's Local Area Data for Season 2008/2009.

There are 104 football clubs in the Thurrock Council area running a total of 312 teams. Details of the numbers of mini, youth and adult teams are shown in **Table 7.4** below.

Table 7.4: Football Teams in the Study Area.

Number of Mini teams		Number of Youth teams		Number of Senior teams		Number of Veteran teams	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male
76	2	109	17	1	101	0	6

The number of youth male football teams (109) is approximately equal to the number of adult male teams (107). Women's football is not well represented with only 1 adult women's team and 17 youth girl's teams located in the Thurrock Council area. In addition, there are 6 Veteran's football teams for men.

7.2.4 Mini Football

The number of mini football teams is 78. These are teams that fall within the under 7, 8, 9 and 10 categories. The majority of the teams (76) are male and there are 2 girls' teams. Details are shown in **Table 7.5** below. Most of these teams play in the Thundermite Youth Football League which runs mini-soccer mainly on Saturday and Sunday. In addition, there are a number of teams that play in the Chelmsford Youth Football League and the Echo Junior Football League.

Mini soccer is played in a different way to youth and adult soccer with teams attending one venue to play a series of time limited matches. Mini soccer pitches are usually marked out on a temporary basis so it is difficult to model demand and supply. For this reason, mini soccer has been excluded from the Playing Pitch Model analysis.

Table 7.5: Clubs with Mini Soccer Teams

Club	Mini-Soccer U7-U8		Mini-Soccer U9-U10	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Aveley Youth Football Club	3		2	
Belhus Colts Youth Football Club			1	
Brandon Groves Youth Football Club			3	
Campus Wanderers Youth Football Club			1	
Copeland Colts Youth Football Club and girls	2		2	
Corringham Athletic Youth Football Club	2		3	
Corringham Cosmos Youth Football Club	6		4	1
East Thurrock FC	3		2	
Essex Comets Football Club	1			
Grays Athletic Football Club (under 21s, youth and girls)	1		4	
Lakeside Youth Football Club	1		2	
Linford Wanderers Youth Football Club	1			
Little Thurrock Dynamos	2		3	1
Ockendon Rhinos Youth Football Club	3		1	
Stanford Wanderers	1		4	
Thurrock Tigers YFC	2		3	
Thurrock Youth Football Club	5		6	
Tilbury Terrors	2			
Total	35	0	41	2

7.2.5 Leagues

Teams within Thurrock play in a total of 15 leagues. The number of teams playing in each league is shown in **Table 7.6** below.

Table 7.6: Football Leagues in the Study Area

League	No. Teams	Normal Day/Time of Games
Brentwood Sunday Football League	1	Sunday Afternoon
Chelmsford Youth League	51	Sunday Afternoon
Chelmsford Youth Under 21 League	3	Sunday Afternoon
Eastern Junior Alliance	15	Sunday Afternoon
Echo Junior Football League	24	Sunday Morning & Afternoon
Essex County Girls Football League	14	Sunday Afternoon
Greene King Essex Veterans League	2	Saturday Afternoon
Romford & District League	9	Saturday Afternoon
Southend & District Junior Sunday Football League	7	Sunday Morning
Southend Borough Combination Veterans League	3	Sunday Morning
The Broch Group Mid Essex League	1	Saturday Afternoon
The LFC Insurance Group Essex Olympian Football League	4	Saturday Afternoon
Thundermite Junior League (Boys and Girls)	113	Sunday Morning & Afternoon
Vitality Thurrock Association Sunday League	54	Sunday Morning
Vitality Thurrock Association U21 League	1	Sunday Afternoon

It is estimated that 62% of games are played on Sunday morning and 32% on Sunday afternoon. The remaining 5% of games are played on Saturday afternoon. Junior football is played on Sundays both in the morning and in the afternoon. This estimate is based on the information provided by the clubs and assumes that matches are played at normal league kick off times. In reality, cancellations of games throughout the season will have meant that more games are likely to have been played midweek than is shown in **Table 7.7** below. Moreover, it is difficult to be accurate about the times when Mini Soccer and Youth Football games are played because there is often an overlap between morning and afternoon kick off times.

Table 7.7: Times when football matches are played

Time	Number of Matches	%
Saturday am	0	0%
Saturday pm.	16	5%
Sunday am	191	62%
Sunday pm	99	32%
Total	306	100%

7.2.6 Area in which majority of players live

Clubs were asked where the majority of their players live. Of the 104 clubs that were identified, 101 provided a response about where their players live and in the case of the 3 remaining clubs assumptions were made on the basis of their name and home ground location. The locations cited by each club have been analysed and it is evident that players are travelling across the Thurrock area to play for individual clubs. There are 12 clubs who state that they draw players from across the whole of Thurrock. No pattern emerges that would justify breaking the Thurrock area into sub areas. For instance, there are 16 clubs with players living in the Grays, Chafford Hundred, Chadwell St Mary area (RM16 and RM17) and in Stanford-le-Hope/Corringham (SS17). There are 14 clubs that draw players solely from the

Stanford-le-Hope/Corringham (SS17) area but it is not felt that this justifies treating Stanford-le-Hope/Corringham as a separate sub area. The analysis of where players live can be found at **Appendix A**.

7.2.7 Clubs Playing Outside Thurrock

There are 4 clubs with teams that use pitches located outside the local authority area. These are shown in **Table 7.8** below. Ockendon Rhinos, a junior football club with 15 teams is playing at a location outside Thurrock although the club's members all live in Thurrock. The club indicated in the response to the questionnaire that this was because they could not obtain access to pitches in Thurrock.

Table 7.8: Clubs Playing Outside Thurrock

Club	Home Ground	Location where players live
Copeland Colts Youth & Girls Football Club	Westlake Park, Basildon (2 teams) ⁴⁸	Mainly Stanford le Hope. Some from Grays and Basildon.
Inn on the Green	Selex Sports & Social Club, Basildon	Stanford le Hope/ Corringham
Ockendon Rhinos Youth Football Club	Belhus Woods Country Park, Hornchurch.	Ockendon RM15, Aveley, Grays
Allied Rec	The Drive Warley (was Belhus)	Chafford 100 Romford upmininster

The evidence shown in **Table 7.8** provides an indication of unmet demand.

7.2.8 Live outside, play in Thurrock

A number of clubs 33 (33%) indicate that some of their players live outside the Thurrock area. The most frequently mentioned areas are Dagenham, Rainham, Upminster/North Ockendon and Basildon. However, only one club, Romford FC, originated outside the borough although a significant number of its players live within the borough.

⁴⁸ Majority of teams play at locations within Thurrock.

The number of players who live outside Thurrock but play on pitches in Thurrock is probably balanced by the number of players who live in Thurrock and play on pitches in adjoining local authority areas.

7.3 Cricket

7.3.1 Membership

There are an estimated 706 playing members of 7 regular cricket clubs in Thurrock. Adult members make up 61% of the membership and youth members account for 39%. Male members account for 99% of the total membership. Details are shown in **Table 7.9** below.

7.3.2 Clubs

There are 7 regular cricket clubs based within the Thurrock Council area. There may be a number of other casual sides but it was not possible to discover any details about these teams.

The largest club is Belhus CC with 208 members followed by Orsett C.C. with 183 members and Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club with 117 members. The smallest club, with 20 members is Walton Hall Cricket Club which played 12 mid week or Sunday's friendly matches at South Ockendon Recreation Ground in the 2009 season.

Focus Clubs in the area are Orsett CC, Belhus CC and Horndon on the Hill CC. These three clubs are also Club Mark clubs. Pegasus and Corringham CC, Stanford le Hope CC and Grays and Chadwell CC are all "working towards" Club Mark.

A Focus Club under the England and Wales Cricket Trust scheme is one that has been identified for a clear strategic reason, and one that is committed to long-term youth development. The aim of the programme is to build a nationwide network of 'vibrant, robust and dynamic cricketing communities' that offer high-quality youth development programmes for young players.

The clubs field a total of 54 teams and these are listed in **Table 7.10** below. There are 35 adult teams and 19 youth teams of under 16's.

The questionnaire survey revealed that clubs play on both Saturday and Sunday afternoons and evening. Four clubs also play midweek junior matches.

Table 7.9: Cricket Club membership

Name of club	Total members	Junior Male members	Junior Female members	Adult Male members	Adult Female members	Veteran members
Belhus Cricket Club	208	32	4	145	2	25
Grays & Chadwell Cricket Club	113	48	0	65	0	0
Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club	117	48	0	59	0	10
Orsett Cricket Club	183	111	0	53	0	19
Stanford Cricket Club	83	20	2	50	1	10
Pegasus & Corringham Cricket Club	103	50	3	30	0	20
Walton Hall Cricket Club	20			20		
Total	827	309	9	422	3	84

Table 7.10: Cricket Teams

Name of club	Youth Teams	Adult Teams
Belhus Cricket Club	3	6
Grays & Chadwell Cricket Club	3	6
Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club	3	5
Orsett Cricket Club	5	7
Stanford Cricket Club	2	6
Pegasus & Corringham Cricket Club	3	4
Walton Hall	0	1
Total	19	35

7.3.3 Membership Trends

Of the 6 clubs that responded to the questionnaire survey, 4 reported that membership of the club was increasing although this only applied to the Colts section of Pegasus & Corringham CC. Adults membership at Pegasus & Corringham CC is declining. The remaining two clubs reported that their membership was static. All the respondent clubs indicated their intention to increase membership of their club in the future.

7.3.4 Area in which majority of players live

Clubs were asked where the majority of their players live. All the respondent clubs indicated that their players live in the Thurrock area. Most players live within a twenty minute catchment area of their home ground. The only exception being Stanford CC which has some players who live in Basildon.

7.3.5 Leagues

Five teams play in the Shepherd Neame Essex League and in the 20/20 Cup competition. Grays & Chadwell CC play in the Lords International Essex Cricket League. All the clubs play in the Essex Sunday League. All the clubs have youth teams who play in the South Essex District Cricket Board Leagues although not all have U11, U13 and U15 teams. In addition all clubs play in the U13 Bradford Cup

and all clubs apart from Pegasus & Corringham CC have teams in the U15 Peters Cup. Leagues are shown in **Table 7.11** below.

Table 7.11: Leagues

Name of club	League
Belhus Cricket Club	Shepherd Neame Essex League and 20:20 cup; Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U11, U13, U15; Bradford & Peters Cup.
Grays & Chadwell Cricket Club	Lords International Essex Cricket League Sat and 20:20 cup. Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U11, U13, U15; Bradford & Peters Cup.
Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club	Shepherd Neame Essex League and 20:20 cup; Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U11, U13, U15; Bradford & Peters Cup.
Orsett Cricket Club	Shepherd Neame Essex League and 20:20 cup; Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U11, U13, U15; Bradford & Peters Cup.
Stanford Cricket Club	Shepherd Neame Essex League and 20:20 cup; Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U15; Bradford & Peters Cup.
Pegasus & Corringham CC	T Ripon Mid Essex League (Sat). Essex Sunday League; South Essex District Cricket Board U11, U13; Bradford Cup.

7.4 Rugby

7.4.1 Number of Teams

There are four Rugby Football Union Clubs in Thurrock. These are Thurrock RUFC, Pegasus Palmerians RUFC, Thames Sport RUFC and Stanford RUFC. Information obtained from the 4 clubs shows there are 19 adult teams, including 2 veterans teams, 12 youth teams and 11 mini sides. Thurrock RUFC, Thames Sport RUFC and

Stanford RUFC have women's teams. Details of the teams are shown in **Table 7.12** below:

Table 7.12: Rugby Teams

Club	Number of Mini teams	Number of Youth teams	Number of Senior teams	Number of Veteran teams
Pegasus Palmerians	0	0	2	0
Stanford R.F.C.	4	5	4	0
Thames Sport R.F.C.	2	1	4	1
Thurrock R.F.C.	5	6	7	1
Total	11	12	17	2

Thurrock R.U.F.C. and Thames Sport R.U.F.C. both report that both their junior and women's sections are expanding.

7.4.2 Leagues

Thurrock RUFC (London 2 North East – Level 7); Thames Sport RUFC (Essex League 1 – Level 9); Stanford RUFC (Essex League 2 – Level 10); Pegasus Palmerians RUFC (Essex League 2 – Level 10). All the clubs play in the Essex 3 and BL Office Centre Essex Merit Table Divisions of the Essex County RFU.

7.4.3 Membership

There are a total of 1077 players with significantly more junior players than adults. Adults total 450 or 42% of all players and there are 627 juniors (58% of all players). Of the adults there are 287 male players (27%) and 75 female players (7%) and of the juniors there are 592 boys (55%) and 35 girls (3%). The number of veterans given was 88 but there is not a clear distinction between adult players and veterans, with many veterans playing in non-veteran teams. There is great variation in the size of the clubs with the largest being Thurrock R.U.F.C with 450 members and the smallest Pegasus Palmerians with 54 players. Details of membership are shown in **Table 7.13** below.

Table 7.13: Club Membership

Club	Total Members	Junior Male members	Junior Female members	Adult Male members	Adult Female members	Veteran members
Stanford R.F.C.	387	252	5	71	15	44
Thames Sport R.F.C.	186	60	20	72	20	14
Thurrock R.F.C.	450	280	10	90	40	30
Pegasus Palmerians	54	0	0	54	0	0
Total	1077	592	35	287	75	88

7.4.4 Membership Trends

The Stanford, Thames Sport and Thurrock rugby clubs have seen their membership increase over the last five years whereas Pegasus reports that membership has remained fairly static.

7.4.5 Area in which majority of players live

Thurrock Rugby Club attracts members mainly from Thurrock with the rest from various parts of Essex, Suffolk, Chelmsford, Colchester, Barking and Ipswich. Pegasus Palmerians report members living in both the Grays and Corringham areas. Thames Sport R.F.C. attracts members mainly from Thurrock. No information was obtained about the Stanford club.

7.5 Hockey

There is one hockey club in Thurrock which is the Thurrock Hockey Club based at Palmers College where they play on the sand based STP.

7.5.1 Membership

Table 7.14: Membership of Hockey Clubs

Club	Number of Male junior members	Number of Female junior members	Number of Male senior members	Number of Female senior members	Number of veteran members (Male & Female)	Total members
Thurrock HC	40	20	30	30	25	145

Thurrock HC has a total of 145 members. There are 85 adult members (59%) and 60 junior members (41%) There are 85 male members (59%) and 60 female members (41%). Details are shown in **Table 7.14** above.

7.5.2 Membership Trends

Thurrock HC has experienced a decline in membership over the last five years. The club has aspirations to increase the number of members and feels that the availability of a clubhouse would benefit membership. For this reason the club is seeking to relocate to a location where these facilities would be available.

7.5.3 Number of Teams

Thurrock HC has 10 teams 3 of which are junior teams (30%) and 6 are adult teams (60%) with 1 mixed junior team (10%). 6 of the teams are male (60%) and 3 female (30%) and one mixed (10%). Details are shown in **Table 7.15** below.

Table 7.15: Hockey Teams

Club	Number of Male Junior teams	Number of Female Senior teams	Number of Mixed Junior Teams	Number of Male Adult Teams	Number of Female Adult Teams	Number of Veteran teams	Total number of teams
Thurrock HC	3	0	1	3	3	0	10

7.5.4 Leagues

The Ladies First team plays in the East of England Women's Premier League. The Men's teams play in the East Men's League Divisions 3, 6 and 9.

7.5.5 Area in which majority of players live

Players live mostly within Thurrock, more particularly in RM16 (Grays, Chafford Hundred, Chadwell St Mary, North Stifford, Orsett) and RM17 (Grays) and Stanford-le-Hope. There are some players from outside Thurrock who live in Canvey Island and also Romford and East London.

7.5.6 Key Issues

Thurrock H.C. finds the cost of hiring the pitch at Palmers College to be high. There is a particular problem in relation to social facilities after games. It is customary for hockey clubs to provide food and refreshment after a match. Palmers College allow the hockey club to use a classroom but this is not considered adequate.

7.6 Bowls

There are 16 bowls clubs in Thurrock; all of them provided a response to our questionnaire survey giving a response rate of 100%. One club, Blackshots Senior Citizens, exists to play friendly matches and internal club competitions only and has different membership requirements from the other clubs in Thurrock.

7.6.1 Membership of Bowls Clubs

There are a total of 820 members of bowls clubs in Thurrock. (see **Table 7.16** below). Virtually all these are adult players. There are only 8 junior members, 5 boys and 3 girls, playing in 5 bowls clubs. Most of these junior members are relatives of adult members of the clubs. Of the adult players, approximately two thirds are male (63%) and one third are female (37%). There are no all male or all female clubs – all clubs have mixed membership. The largest club by far is the Shell Bowls Club with 102 members, followed by Thurrock and Aveley Bowls Clubs each with 67 members. The smallest bowls club is Thames Sports with 31 members followed by Fondu (32 members) and Billet with 34 members. Most of the clubs have membership somewhere between 40 and 60 players. Some clubs have membership fairly evenly spread between men and women such as Aveley, Chadwell St. Mary and United Services. Others have predominantly male membership such as Fondu and London Fire Brigade. Most of the remaining clubs have around two thirds male players and one third female players.

Table 7.16 – Membership of Bowls Clubs

Club	Bowls Clubs and their Members				Total
	Adult		Junior		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Aveley BC	32	35			67
Billet BC	20	14			34
Chadwell St Mary BC	27	26	1		54
Corringham BC	30	16			46
Drums BC	37	24	1	2	64
Fondu BC	23	9			32
Grays Town BC	34	12	1		47
London Fire Brigade BC	32	11			43
Orsett BC	31	15			46
Pegasus BC	45	15			60
Shell BC	60	40	2		102
South Ockendon BC	27	20			47
Thames Sports BC	21	10			31
Thurrock BC	46	21			67
United Services Bowls Club	24	20		1	45
Blackshots Senior Citizens	21	14			35
Total	510	302	5	3	820

7.6.2 Membership Trends

Clubs were asked whether there had been an increase or decrease in membership over the last five years. Half the clubs reported a decrease in membership and a third reported that membership had stayed about the same. Only 3 clubs (19%) reported an increase in membership. These were 3 of the larger clubs - Aveley, Grays Town and Thurrock Bowls Clubs. There is thus a trend towards membership declining or remaining static. With less than 1% of membership comprising junior members it would appear that none of the clubs are undertaking initiatives to get junior members involved.

Table 7.17: Bowls Clubs and their Teams

CLUB	Number of Teams	
	Male	Female
Aveley BC	2	2
Billet BC	1	1
Chadwell St Mary BC	2	2
Corringham BC	2	1
Drums BC	2	2
Fondu BC	1	1
Grays Town BC		
London Fire Brigade BC	6	2
Orsett BC	varies	varies
Pegasus BC	2	1
Shell BC	3	2
South Ockendon BC	1	2
Thames Sports BC	3	3
Thurrock BC	2	2
United Services Bowls Club	2	1
Blackshots Senior Citizens	no teams	
Total	29	22

7.6.3 Teams

There are a total of 51 teams in 13 Bowls Clubs in Thurrock. One club, Blackshots Senior Citizens, does not have teams; Orsett Bowls Club reported that the number of teams varies and Grays Town Bowls Club did not provide this information. Of the 51 teams 29, just over half, are male teams (57%) and the remaining 22 are female teams. There are no mixed teams in Thurrock. All clubs have both male and female teams. Most clubs have between 2 and 4 teams with the exception being the clubs at London Fire Brigade Bowls Club and Thames Sports each with 6 teams and Shell Club with 5 teams. For details of teams see **Table 7.17**.

Clubs and their Leagues

Table 7.18 – Clubs and their leagues

Club	Leagues
Aveley BC	Thurrock and District mens, Thurrock and District ladies, Essex County League, England National Competitions
Billet BC	Thurrock and District league and competitions. Essex County Competitions. Group nine competitions
Chadwell St Mary BC	TDBA and TALBA
Corringham BC	Thurrock Assn. Mens and Ladies Leagues. Basildon Assn mixed Triples League. County and Thurrock Competitions
Drums BC	National, county, district, group nine competitions and friendlies
Fondu BC	EBA men and women
Grays Town BC	Thurrock and District. TALBA. County
London Fire Brigade BC	Thurrock and District County Competitions. Group 9 competitions and club competitions plus friendlies.
Orsett BC	Thurrock and District Bowling Assn (men). Thurrock area ladies bowling assn
Pegasus BC	Thurrock and District BA. TALBA Ladies
Shell BC	TADBA league. National, County, Group 9, District and Club Competitions and various opens.
South Ockendon BC	Thurrock League. TALBA Ladies Competitions. Triples League.
Thames Sports BC	Thurrock and District Leagues. Thurrock and District - singles, doubles, triples and fours
Thurrock BC	Thurrock and District BA. TALBA Ladies
United Services Bowls Club	Thurrock and District BA. TALBA Ladies. Basildon and district. Two open all day comps. Essex County Ladies comps Group 9
Blackshots Senior Citizens	Competitions within the club, 2 or 3 - trophies donated by families of members who have died

7.6.4 Leagues

All the bowls clubs, with the exception of Blackshots Senior Citizens who do not play league bowls, belong to the local leagues run by the English Bowling Association (EBA). These are the Thurrock and District Bowling Association for men and the Thurrock Area Ladies Bowling Association for women. There are no local leagues catering for mixed teams. These leagues are part of the group 9 section of the Essex County League. Clubs also play in associated County Competitions. (**see Table 7.18 above**). A small number of clubs play in the Basildon and District League (Corringham and United Services).

Blackshots Senior Citizens Club exists to play friendly matches and competitions within the club. Most members of this club are also members of another local bowls club. Membership is restricted to residents of Thurrock who are over the age of 60.

Table 7.19: Bowls Clubs and their Grounds with Number of Matches Played.

Club	Bowling Green	Number of matches played per season
Aveley BC	Aveley Recreation Ground	1760 (matches, competitions and practices)
Billet BC	Billet Recreation Ground	140
Chadwell St Mary BC	Corringham Bowling Green	50 club matches + 60+ competitions (110+)
Corringham BC	Corringham Bowling Green	100
Drums BC	Blackshots Recreation Ground (2 greens)	Competitions, leagues and friendlies – 600 rinks approx
Fondu BC	Fondu Bowls Club, Purfleet	30 friendlies plus approx 20 league and cup matches(50)
Grays Town BC	Blackshots Recreation Ground	7 home league matches plus friendlies plus competitions.
London Fire Brigade BC	Aveley Sports and Social Club, Purfleet Road, Aveley	76+
Orsett BC	Orsett Bowls Club	65
Pegasus BC	Pegasus Club, Corringham	100
Shell BC	Springhouse Club, Corringham	100
South Ockendon BC	South Ockendon Bowls Club	24 ladies league matches plus 12 mens league plus 10 – 12 TALBA competitions plus 50 friendlies (96-98)
Thames Sports BC	Fondu Bowls Club, Purfleet	50
Thurrock BC	Blackshots Recreation Ground	62
United Services Bowls Club	Stanford Recreation Ground	
Blackshots Senior Citizens	Blackshots Recreation Ground	14 to 15

7.6.5 Clubs

Two of the Bowls Clubs are based at private members clubs in Corringham, the Pegasus Club and the Springhouse Club (formerly Shell Club). Members of these bowls clubs must also be members of the Pegasus and Springhouse Social Clubs. The London Fire Brigade Bowls Club is based at the privately owned Aveley Sports and Social Club and the green is leased from them.

Most of the other bowls clubs are based at greens either on or adjacent to recreation grounds and these are either rented or leased from Thurrock Council.

The largest site is at Blackshots Recreation Ground where there are 2 bowling greens and 3 pavilions. The four clubs Grays Town, Thurrock, Drums and Blackshots Senior Citizens are based here. Two clubs are based at the green at Corringham Recreation Ground – Corringham and Chadwell St. Mary Bowls Clubs. Other recreation grounds with bowls clubs are at Aveley, Billet, Orsett, Stanford and South Ockendon. The Fondu Bowls Club is located on land owned by Thurrock Council in Purfleet. The club leases the ground from Thurrock Council; Thames Sports Bowls Club also plays at this venue.

Two of the bowls clubs are self managed – Fondu and Aveley. These clubs maintain the green and manage the pavilion themselves.

The number of matches played by each club per season is shown on **Table 7.19** above. There is great variation in this from the number of matches played by Aveley Bowls Club at 1760 to 14 or 15 games played by Blackshots Senior Citizens. However the figures must be viewed with caution because different clubs have interpreted the question in different ways, for example Aveley has included practice games in the figure. The figures do give an indication of the level of competitiveness with which the clubs play with some clubs taking part in a large number of league games and competitions and others playing less formal games. The number of games played is also a function of the size of the club and the number of teams. The majority of clubs report playing between 50 and 100 matches per season.

Most league matches take place during the week. Most clubs play league matches on Wednesday evenings from 6 pm; some clubs play in a triples league on Tuesday evening. Several play matches on Thursday afternoon and evenings. Some clubs report playing on all weekday evenings.

Friendly matches are played at the weekends by all clubs on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

7.7 Tennis

7.7.1 Clubs

Thurrock has one main tennis club, the Thurrock Tennis Club based at Montgomery Close. In addition there is a club based at Palmers Sports Centre but the main reason for adults joining this is to obtain discounts on tennis coaching and on court fees. The adult members do not play in leagues and the juniors mainly play matches within the club supervised by the coach. Membership of Palmers Tennis Club consists of approximately 30 adults (20 men and 10 women) and 15 junior members (10 girls and 5 boys). Palmers Tennis Club did not provide any further details.

Stanford Recreation Ground Users Group (SRGUG) is seeking to establish a new tennis club based at the recently refurbished tennis courts on the Recreation Ground.

7.7.2 Membership

Membership of the Thurrock Tennis Club comprises about 100 in total. About 70 of these are adults, with about 45 men and 25 women. There are around 30 junior members – about 20 boys and 10 girls. Membership has remained fairly static over the last five years. Members live all over Thurrock but mainly in Grays, Chafford, Ockendon and Stanford.

Members play in the Lawn Tennis Association Essex Doubles League. One adult female, one adult male and one adult mixed team play in the league. There are no junior teams playing in the league at present, but a few juniors play in the adult teams. Matches are played all the year round in both the winter and the summer season. They are usually played at weekends on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Approximately 30 matches are played on the courts each season.

7.7.3 Facilities

The club's premises comprise three asphalt courts and pavilion at Montgomery Close. The club owns Court 3 and the car park. The rest of the site is owned by Billings, the company who built the adjoining houses. The club pays a 'peppercorn rent' to Billings and this is already paid up to 2060. Billings have to approve any work done on the site such as the recent refurbishment of the pavilion. The club rates the

quality of the courts as very good. They were re-laid 10 to 12 years ago and re-sprayed 2 years ago. The changing accommodation is also considered to be very good; this was recently refurbished and improved with access for disabled provided and newly tiled floor and double glazed windows.

7.7.4 Key Issues

The club reported that finance is always a problem. The secretary spends much time and effort obtaining grants and the club was recently awarded a Grass Roots Grant and a junior player was successfully nominated for a Jack Petchie achievement award which provided funding for new nets and tennis balls. Currently the membership fee for a full adult member is £97, but, without the grant aid that has been achieved, this figure would be £150.

The club's ambitions are to encourage more people to play. They would also like to run group coaching throughout the year and would like an indoor facility. These would all require more money.

7.8 Netball

7.8.1 Membership

Thurrock has 50 Netball Clubs with a total of approximately 650 players over the age of 14. Of these around 150 to 200 are between the age of 14 and 18 and the remaining 450 to 500 are adult players. All these players are female.

There are 69 teams in the senior league; most clubs support one team only but one club has 10 teams.

Adults play in the SETNA league. Matches are played at one venue in Thurrock which is Hassenbrook School. Senior matches take place on the weekday evenings of Monday to Thursday with matches starting at 7.15 pm and 8.30 pm.

Most training also takes place at this venue.

In addition there are approximately 200 junior players, all girls, aged between 9 and 14. They play in the Thurrock Sports Council Junior Netball league. Matches take place on Sunday mornings at Hassenbrook School.

Membership has been increasing over the last five years. Members come from all parts of Thurrock but particularly from the areas of Stanford, Corringham, Grays and Tilbury. The west of the authority area – Ockendon and Aveley are considered to be ‘netball deprived’ areas with no players at all coming from Chafford Hundred.

7.8.2 Facilities

The courts at Hassenbrook are considered to be very good; changing facilities are considered to be only moderate as they are very basic but most players come ready dressed and do not use the changing facilities. The toilets are considered to be too far away from the courts.

Whilst a large proportion of netball is played indoors, there is still a need for additional facilities in West Thurrock to encourage higher levels of participation in the sport. This view is shared by England Netball which supports the need to develop netball in the ‘netball deprived’ areas.

7.9 Athletics

7.9.1 Membership

Thurrock Harriers Athletics Club has a total membership of 128 athletes made up of 37 adult male members, 24 adult female members, 32 junior male members and 35 junior female members. Membership has increased over the last five years.

Members mainly live locally in the Upminster (RM14), South Ockendon (RM15) and Grays (RM16 & 17) areas. Some members travel from Basildon and Brentwood.

7.9.2 Leagues

The club has teams participating in the Southern Women's League, Southern Men's League and Eastern Young Athletes' League. In the future, the club will be participating in the Junior (Under 20) League and the National Young Athletes League.

7.9.3 Facilities

The 7 lane 400 metre athletics track at Blackshots meets the National standard. There are throw attachments for people with disabilities who wish to participate in field events. There is a covered stand for spectators and changing rooms with facilities for people with disabilities. A new clubhouse has been recently opened with catering facilities. The facility is leased from Thurrock Council.

The club feels that the facilities at Blackshots are good.

7.9.4 Activities

Approximately 10 competitions take place in a season at the weekends. Training takes place on three midweek days.

England Athletics East of England Region is working with Thurrock Harriers AC to form a cluster of clubs⁴⁹ with the aim of securing support under the McCain Athletic Network funding programme. This funding will enable the club to provide more coaching in the future. England Athletics considers that the facilities at Blackshots are good and meet both current and future needs for athletics in the area. Whilst it is

anticipated that there will be increased participation in the sport as a consequence of the 2012 Olympic Games, it is not considered that this will result in the need for additional facilities in the area.

⁴⁹ The others are Basildon AC, Chelmsford AC, Havering Mayesbrook AC, Southend AC, Harlow AC and Benfleet Running Club.

8. Key Issues

8.1 Key Issues for Football Clubs

Clubs were asked whether there were any issues that presented problems for the club at present. Sixty eight clubs provided a response to this question specifying key issues. A further sixteen clubs stated that there were no issues which present them with a problem at present. Finance and costs, quality and quantity of pitches, the quality of changing rooms and high rents were the problems most frequently encountered by football clubs⁵⁰.

The main problems encountered by respondent football clubs are summarised in **Table 8.1**.

Table 8.1: Key Issues for Football Clubs

Key Issue	Number of clubs affected
Finance/Cost	32
Quality of Pitches	24
Quality/Availability of Changing rooms	22
Car parking	11
Lack of Pitches	8
Lack of officials/volunteers	4
Other	3

8.1.1 Finance

The most frequently mentioned issue for football clubs is finance and costs which are cited by 33 of the respondent clubs. Clubs are concerned about the cost of hiring

⁵⁰ The survey included all the community football clubs in Thurrock. It did not include the five semi-professional clubs because their pitches are not available for community use. It did however include the junior sections of these clubs i.e. Thurrock United, Aveley FC, East Thurrock F.C., Tilbury F.C. and Grays Athletic F.C.

pitches and training facilities which they consider are too high. Typical statements include:

“Cost is far too high and is driving teams out of existence”

“The club must pay adult prices - the pitch cost has risen from £450 to £700 a year but the players don't have much money and parents don't support them at that age.” (from a Youth Football Club)

“The cost of running a football club is getting out of hand. £800 for a pitch is a joke and will close most clubs down in the next few years.”

This problem appears to be more acute for Youth Football Clubs with one club that supports children from disadvantaged families finding the situation to be very difficult.

There is also a perception that value for money is poor with clubs indicating that the cost of hiring is high in relation to the quality of the facilities on offer.

8.1.2 Quality of the Pitches

24 clubs mention the poor quality of the pitches. Concern is focused on poor maintenance with complaints about the state of the playing surface, failure to mark out pitches, glass and dog mess on the pitches. Corringham Recreation Ground is specifically mentioned by a number of clubs. Typical comments are:

“Pitch quality this year is poor, it's like a swamp.”

“We used to play on Corringham Recreation Ground but we had a problem with rubbish and dog mess so we moved away.”

“State of pitch. Four away teams suggested the match was played on their pitch.”

8.1.3 Lack of Pitches

Linked to the problem of the poor quality of pitches is the issue of lack of available pitches which is mentioned by 10 clubs. The lack of pitches in the Aveley/Ockendon area is mentioned. One club, with a number of players who live in Thurrock but which was originally from Romford and is now based in Aveley is seeking to relocate to Romford.

Comments on this issue include:

“We must play matches at a later time than the adults because there are no pitches available earlier (on Sunday).”

“We need to find a new pitch for next season and most are already allocated.”
(Aveley based club)

8.1.4 Changing rooms

The existing quality of changing rooms does not meet the expectations of at least 22 football clubs. Typical problems are poor showers and toilets, vandalism, poor condition of the building fabric, lack of space and rubbish.

One Youth Football Club that has used the pitches and changing rooms at The Billet for 22 years complained that the pitch and changing rooms have been reallocated to adult teams on Sunday mornings. The club feels that it had kept the changing rooms in a good condition over this period but this has not been the case with the adult teams.

Most changing rooms do not have segregated changing facilities and where these exist there are still problems as indicted by the comment below.

“The girls need a dedicated changing area/ room which they have at Belhus Park, but it has only been available for use to use twice, due to the Men's teams using the designated women's changing rooms and shower/ toilet facilities in the mornings.”

8.1.5 Parking

13 clubs mentioned problems with car parking. Sites with a particular problem appear to be Stanford Recreation Ground, Belhus Park, Linford Recreation Ground, and St Cleres School.

8.1.6 Other Issues

Other issues focused on the lack of officials for matches, lack of volunteers to help with administration and road safety in the case of one club where players have to walk up a road from the changing rooms to access the pitch.

8.2 Key Issues for Cricket Clubs

Most of the clubs were keen to increase the number of members; Stanford wishes to increase the number of junior members as the numbers of colts have declined.

Pegasus and Corringham club are trying to get more people to participate in cricket of all ages and sexes; Grays and Chadwell are trying to get more females playing next year.

Orsett Cricket Club is concerned about the lack of pitches particularly because the club's lease of the June Ridgewell Ground in Orsett has not been renewed and the club considers the cost of hiring the pitches at Gateway Academy to be prohibitive. The club also feels that the council could offer more support to the club.

Grays and Chadwell report problems with finance – they find it difficult to secure sponsorship. They also find their poor changing facilities a problem.

Both Horndon and Orsett Cricket Clubs reported a lack of car parking to be a problem.

8.3 Key Issues for Rugby Clubs

Thurrock RUFC reports that their facilities are used by many other clubs and that they are in desperate need of additional changing facilities particularly for women. They also need more floodlit training facilities and all weather facilities to accommodate all their teams. Car parking can sometimes be a problem.

Stanford RUFC reports that the club has problems meeting the high costs of maintenance and that they do not have enough storage facilities.

Thames Sport R.U.F.C. cited the lack of pitches, including football pitches, as a key issue for the club. The club is also concerned about the high costs of leasing their site from the council.

8.4 Key Issues for Hockey Clubs.

The main issue for Thurrock Hockey Club is the lack of social facilities at Palmers College after games. It is customary for Hockey Clubs to provide food and refreshment after a game. Palmers College allows the club to use a classroom but this is not adequate. The second issue is the cost of hiring the pitch.

8.5 Key Issues for Bowls Clubs

The most frequently mentioned problems were finance and parking issues (each mentioned by 7 clubs) followed by the issues concerning the maintenance of the green (5 responses). Other issues concerned the state of changing accommodation (2 responses) and problems with vandalism (2 responses).

Finance

“Finance is always a problem” is a quote from both the self managed clubs of Aveley and Fondu. However, Aveley club mentioned the possibility of applying for grant aid once the lease was granted; thus self management has certain advantages in terms of applying for financial help. Fondu felt that they were being over charged by being obliged to pay rates on the changing rooms. They would welcome a reduction in the cost of their lease. The London Fire Brigade club said, “ Finance.....too expensive therefore people are leaving the game”.

Car Parking

Problems associated with insufficient parking or the poor condition of the car park were mentioned by 7 clubs. Those clubs based at Blackshots felt lack of sufficient parking to be a problem particularly at weekends and when weddings were taking place in the civic hall. The parking at Stanford recreation ground is felt to be, “completely inadequate” and parking presents a problem for South Ockendon Bowls Club. The condition of the car park at Corringham is considered to be very poor: “the state of the car park has been an issue for some years”.

Maintenance of the Green.

Five clubs mentioned problems with condition and maintenance of the greens and, in particular, problems with watering. Both the clubs at Stanford and Orsett felt that an automatic watering system was urgently required. Maintenance of the green was mentioned as a problem by those clubs based at Billet, Corringham and Orsett. It was pointed out that the ditches at Corringham do not comply with EBA regulations.

Other issues

Vandalism was mentioned as a problem at Billet and Fondu Clubs. The state of changing accommodation was mentioned by the clubs at Corringham and Orsett.

The future of the club at South Ockendon is felt to be under threat: “Our future looks uncertain as Thurrock Council are withdrawing their support and funding for the Bowls club/ Cricket Club and the Football club housed on our site. They are looking for alternative funding to build a new pavilion for Community use to be run as a business venture.”

8.6 Key Issues for Tennis Clubs

There is only one tennis club, Thurrock LTC. This club is obliged to expend considerable effort in making grant applications to keep the club running e.g. Jack Petchie Achievement Award has paid for new nets and tennis balls. The club would like to encourage more people to play and would like to run group coaching all through the year.

8.7 Key Issues for Netball Clubs

Problems affecting local clubs are finance, “finance is always an issue” with costs being very high. Another problem is the difficulty of finding volunteers, in particular, getting parents involved.

8.8 Key Issues for the Athletics Club

Key issues for the club are financial notable the high rent being paid for the facilities and the high costs of insurance; an inadequate car park; a dispute with the construction company over repairs to the track surface which is still under warranty; and, problems with vandalism.

8.9 Future Plans

Clubs were asked about any future plans that the club might have. A list of possible aims was provided as a prompt and there was an opportunity to specify any other aims not covered by the list. Clubs were able to choose more than one aim or to indicate that they didn't have any future aspirations. Where a club did not respond it was assumed that they fell into this category.

8.9.1 Future Plans – Football Clubs

Out of all the responses provided, 1 in 3 clubs (33%) expressed an intention to increase the membership of the club. 22 clubs (17%) indicated that the club intends

to move to a different location with 2 clubs specifically mentioning that they wished to move from Corringham Recreation Ground. 12 clubs (9%) are looking to expand the range of facilities provided. 9 of these clubs are youth football clubs. 9 clubs (7%) expressed an intention to refurbish their existing premises with 8 of these being youth football clubs. The theme of the 'other' responses related to finance and the future survival of the club with 4 clubs aspiring to obtain sponsorship and raise finance. (see **Table 8.2** below)

Table 8.2: Football Clubs Future Plans

Aim	Number of Responses	% of all responses
Increase the number of members	42	35.3%
Expand the range of facilities provided	12	10.1%
Refurbish existing facilities	9	7.6%
Relocation to different premises	22	18.5%
None	34	28.6%
Total	119	100.0%

8.9.2 Future Plans – Cricket Clubs

All six respondent cricket clubs expressed an intention to increase the membership of the club. Four of these clubs also stated that they were seeking to both expand the facilities provided and refurbish their existing facilities. Other ambitions included Grays and Chadwell CC completing Club Mark and Pegasus and Corringham CC achieving Focus Club status. Horndon CC intends to coach younger players from 7 years and upwards and organise kwik cricket for 50 to 60 under 9s. Orsett Cricket Club is aiming to acquire additional land adjacent to Orsett Recreation Ground to create a second pitch.

8.9.3 Future Plans – Rugby Clubs

All the respondent clubs state that they plan to increase membership. Stanford RUFC is planning to run extra teams next season and, in order to accommodate these, is seeking to mark out an extra (third) pitch on the recreation ground. Pegasus

Palmerians are planning to get a veterans side out next season. Thurrock RUFC is in the process of refurbishing the changing facilities and has plans to extend these.

Thames Sport R.U.F.C. is seeking to increase membership and to develop new permanent changing and club house facilities at their home ground.

Stanford R.U.F.C. anticipates increasing the number of teams playing at Stanford Recreation Ground. To achieve this a further pitch will be required in addition to the two existing pitches.

8.9.4 Future Plans – Hockey Clubs

Thurrock Hockey Club are considering relocating to Gloucester Park in Basildon.

8.9.5 Future Plans – Netball Clubs

Future plans include trying to build links with local schools, particularly in the Ockendon/Aveley area, and trying to create a team from the Ockendon area.

From September 2009 it is intended to launch 'Tiny Tots' in schools – introducing netball to infants in years 1 and 2; and High 5 – introducing netball to children in schools under the age of 9. It is hoped that boys will join in on these initiatives. There are no boys playing netball in Thurrock at present. An added benefit of these initiatives will be the involvement of parents and therefore to create an increase in the volunteer base for the sport.

The lack of provision in the west of Thurrock is limiting the potential of the sport to extend its coverage. A new facility, linked to the proposed Ormiston Park Academy would address this problem.

9. Supply of outdoor sports provision.

9.1 Football

9.1.1 Ownership and accessibility

The ownership and accessibility of pitches will influence their actual availability for community use. The definition of pitches in 'secured community use'⁵¹ includes those in Category A in **Table 9.1** below.

Table 9.1: Categories of pitches

Category	Definition	Supplementary information
A(i)	Secured community pitches	Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management
A(ii)		Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector which are open to members of the public ⁵²
A(iii)		Pitches at education sites which are available for use by the public through formal community use arrangements ⁵³
B	Used by community, but not secured	Pitches not included above, that are nevertheless available for community use, e.g. school/college pitches without formal user agreements
C	Not open for	Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of

⁵¹ Towards a Level Playing Field

⁵² Where there is a charge, this must be reasonable and affordable for the majority of the community.

⁵³ Pitches in secured community use are pitches that are available for use by community teams and whose future use is secured for the coming seasons by one or more of the following:

- a formal community use agreement
- a leasing/management arrangement between the school and LEA requiring the pitch(es) to be available to community teams
- a policy of community use minuted by the school or LEA, including tariff of charges, etc
- minutes of the board of school governors allowing use of pitches by community teams
- written commitment from the school to the current community team(s) using the pitch(es), and, where it is the intention of the school to maintain access for community teams to its pitch(es) at peak times (ie evenings, weekends and/or school holidays) for the next two or more years.

	community use	policy or practice, available for hire by the public.
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Table 9.2: Football Pitches in Secured Community Use.

Site Name	Outdoor Adult Pitches	Outdoor Junior Pitches	Outdoor Mini Pitches	Outdoor Artificial Pitches	Outdoor Artificial 5 a side	Changing Rooms	Car Parking	Comments
Local Authority								
Belhus Park	7	1	1			1	Yes	
Billet Recreation Ground	2					1	Yes	
Blackshots	4	2				1	Yes	
Bulphan Recreation Ground	1					0	Yes	Disused
Chadwell Recreation Ground	2					1	Yes	
Corringham Recreation Ground	2					1	Yes	
Daisyfields	2					1	Yes	
Horndon Recreation Ground	1		1			1	Yes	
Linford Recreation Ground		1	1			0	No	
North Stifford Recreation Ground			1			1	Yes	
Nutberry Playing Fields	1	1	1			0	Yes	
Orsett Recreation Ground	1					1	Yes	
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	2		2			1	Yes	
Education								
Corringham Primary			2				Yes	
Stanford Le Hope Primary			2				Yes	
Belhus Chase Specialist Humanities College	3		1			1	Yes	1 pitch disused

Chafford Hundred School		1	2	1				
Gable Hall School	2	2	3		1	1	Yes	
The Gateway Community College	3	3		1		1	Yes	
The Grays School		2				1	Yes	
Hassenbrook School	1				2	1	Yes	
The Ockendon School	2					1	Yes	
Palmers College	1			1				
St Cleres School	3	1	1	1		1	Yes	
William Edwards School and Sports College	4		4			1	Yes	
Private Club								
Aveley Sports and Social Club	4	1	1			1	Yes	
East Thurrock FC	1		1			1	Yes	To rear of football stadium
Lakeside	2					1	Yes	
Old Hall Farm (Manorway Recreation Ground), Manorway, Coryton	1	1				0	Yes	Former agricultural land
Pegasus Club	2					1	Yes	
Shell Club	1					1	Yes	
Thames RUFC	3	1	1			1	Yes	
Total	58	17	25	4	3	25		

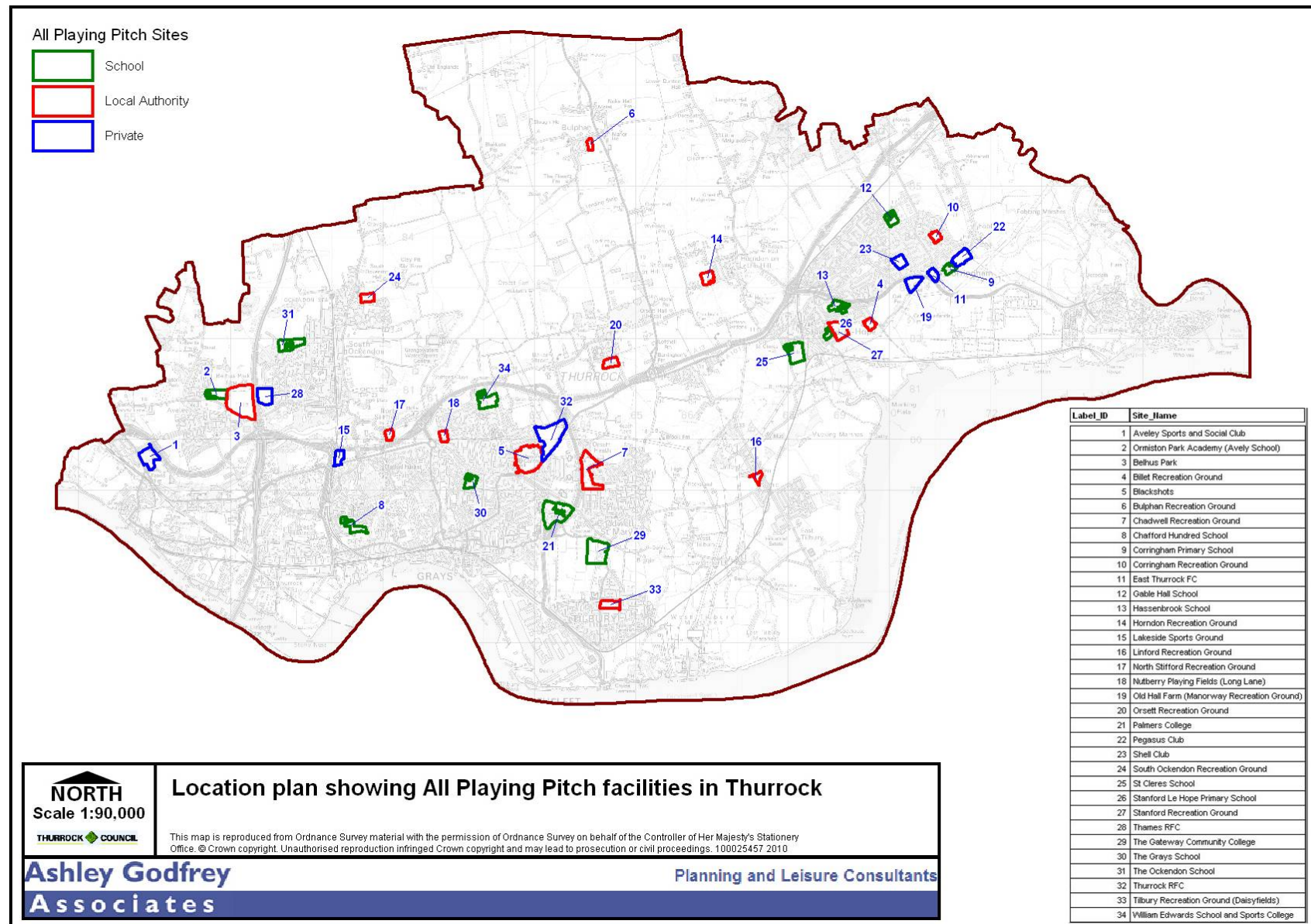
The number and type of football pitch at each site in Thurrock is shown in **Table 9.2** above. There are 58 adult pitches, 17 youth pitches and 25 mini soccer pitches. All the playing pitch sites in Thurrock are shown on **Map 1** below. The breakdown of ownership of pitches in Thurrock is shown in **Table 9.3** below.

Table 9.3: Ownership of Football Pitches

Pitch Type	Local Authority	Private Club	Education
Adult Pitches	25	14	19
Junior Pitches	5	3	9
Mini Pitches	7	3	15
Total	37	20	43

Schools are the largest provider of football pitches in Thurrock, providing 19 adult, 9 junior and 15 mini soccer pitches at 12 sites of which 11 have changing facilities. These are shown on **Map 2** below. There are 13 local authority sites providing 25 adult, 5 junior and 7 mini soccer pitches. Changing facilities are provided at 10 of these sites. Private sports clubs provide 14 adult pitches, 3 junior pitches and 3 mini soccer pitches at 7 sites, 6 with changing facilities.

Map 1: Playing Pitches Sites in Thurrock



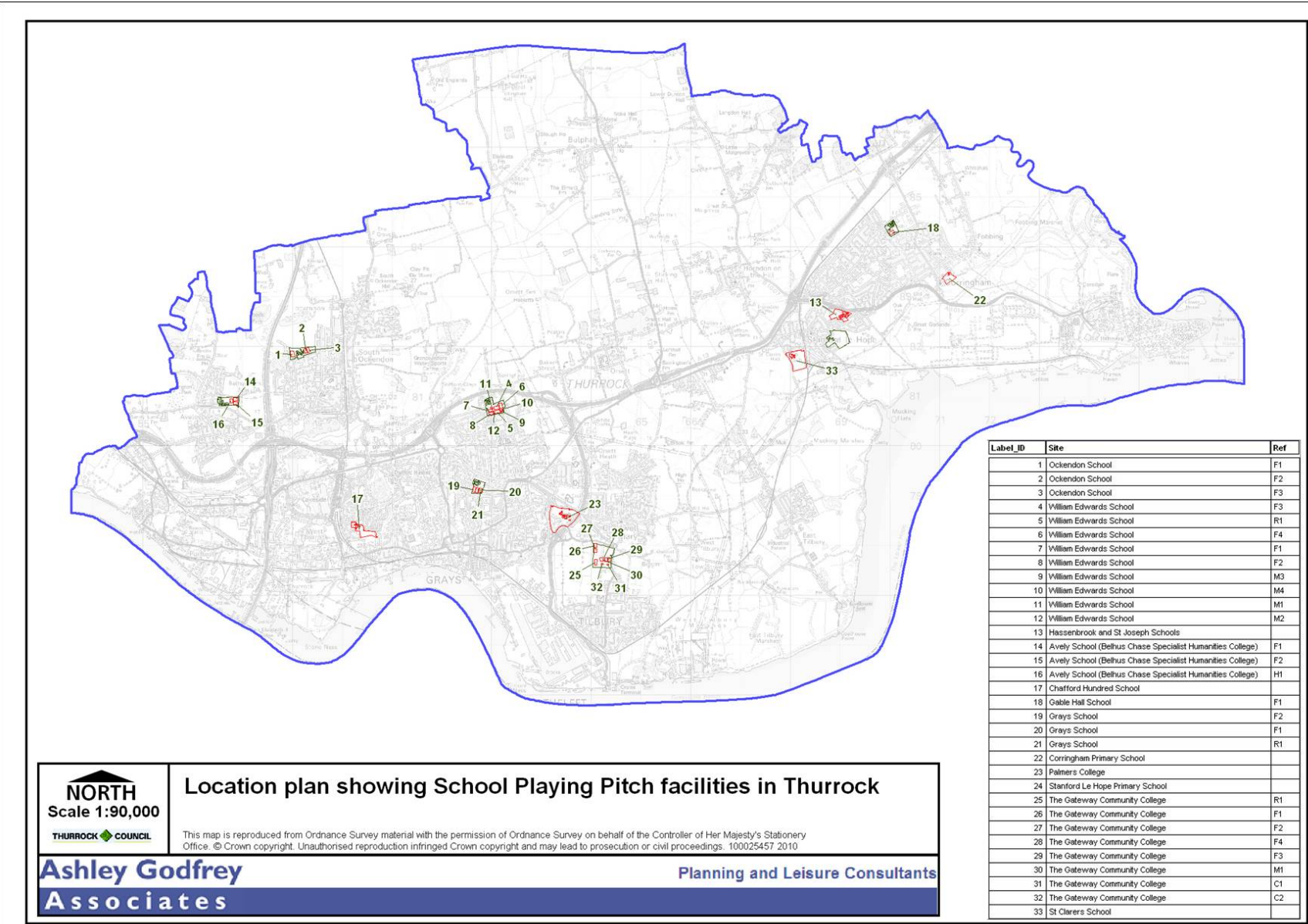
9.1.2 Mini Soccer Pitches

There are different possible pitch dimensions for mini soccer, depending on the team size. There are 25 mini soccer pitches in Thurrock; 7 on local authority sites; 15 in schools; and 3 on private sites (see **Table 9.4**). All these pitches are in secured community use. However, pitches are also marked out on a temporary basis. Any shortfall in mini-soccer pitches is difficult to identify because the playing pitch model only takes account of marked-out pitches. Mini-soccer can be and is played on larger pitches and on artificial surfaces.

Table 9.4: Mini Soccer Pitches

Site Name	Outdoor Mini Pitches
Local Authority	
Belhus Park	1
Horndon Recreation Ground	1
Linford Recreation Ground	1
North Stifford Recreation Ground	1
Nutberry Playing Fields	1
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	2
Education	
Corringham Primary	2
Stanford Le Hope Primary	2
Belhus Chase Specialist Humanities College	1
Chafford Hundred School	2
Gable Hall School	3
St Cleres School	1
William Edwards School and Sports College	4
Private Club	
Aveley Sports and Social Club	1
East Thurrock FC	1
Thames RUFC	1
Total	25

Map 2: School Playing Pitches Sites in Thurrock



9.1.3 Junior Football

The calculation of the adult / junior team ratio shows that the percentage of adult teams in Thurrock is 35% compared with the percentage of junior (40%) and mini soccer teams (25%). This is not reflected in the availability of football pitches with the number of adult pitches that are available for community use accounting for 56% of pitch provision compared with 44% for junior and mini soccer pitches.

9.1.4 Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)

Active Places Power enables a comparison to be made of the number of facilities in Thurrock with that of national and regional levels of provision and those of near neighbour authorities.

Table 9.5: Facilities per 1,000 population

Local Authority	Total Number Of Pitches	Total Population	Capacity Ratio Per 1000
Brentwood District	3	68509	0.044
Chelmsford District	5	157083	0.032
Braintree District	4	132154	0.030
Thurrock	4	143155	0.028
Basildon District	4	165647	0.024
Castle Point District	2	86604	0.023
Southend-on-Sea	3	160284	0.019

Active Places Power indicates that there are only 4 STPs of any type in Thurrock. The ratio of provision given is therefore 0.028 per 1000 population compared with 0.03 for England and 0.04 for the East Region. There are other neighbouring authorities with a higher level of provision (see **Table 9.5** above). The audit revealed that there are four STPs. However, the sand based STP at Chafford Hundred School does not have any floodlighting and does not therefore have the capability to meet the needs of community sports clubs. In addition, there is a training 3G rubber crumb pitch (60m x 40m) at Gable Hall School.

All the STPs are located in and managed by education establishments. These are listed in **Table 9.6** below:

Table 9.6: Synthetic Turf Pitches

Location	Type of STP	Year Built	Floodlighting	Dimensions
Chafford Hundred Campus	Sand Based	2008	No	Full Size
Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre	Sand Based	2005	Yes	Full Size
The Gateway Academy	Sand Based	2008	Yes	Full Size
St Cleres School	Rubber Crumb (3G)	2008	Yes	Full Size
Gable Hall School	Training Pitch – Rubber Crumb (3G)	2008	Yes	¾ size
William Edwards School	Training Pitch/MUGA – Carpet	2006	Yes	Half size

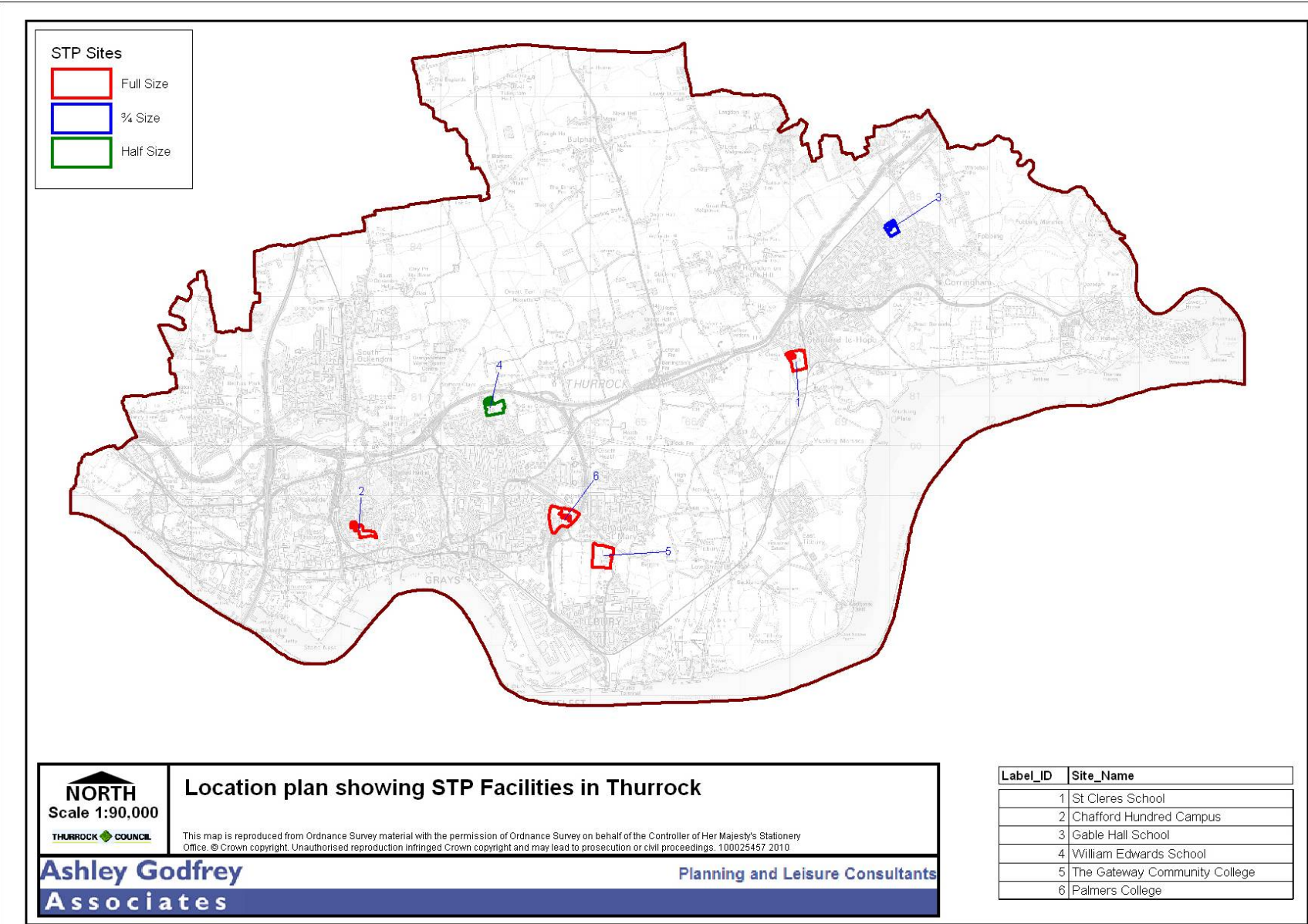
Whilst the current level of provision appears to be comparable with national and regional levels of provision, it should be borne in mind that, at present, the community use of the schools facilities is limited by curricular use during the normal school day and extra curricular use after school and at weekends.

An assessment of synthetic turf pitch provision, based on Sport England's 2009 Facilities Planning Model run for Thurrock, has been undertaken in support of this strategy.

The report indicates that there are 2 synthetic turf pitches in Thurrock. These are the pitches at Palmers Sports & Fitness Centre and St Cleres School. Both are on education sites, one available to clubs and associations on block bookings and one for pay and play. Both are full size and floodlit, one is sand based (Palmers), and one is a third generation pitch (St Cleres). There are also two additional pitches relatively recently provided which are privately used, and not the subject of this assessment.

However, the report does not take into account the sand based STP at Gateway Academy which is floodlit and available for community use. All sites with an STP are shown on **Map 3** below.

Map 3: Synthetic Turf Pitch Provision in Thurrock



The report indicates that the total capacity in visits per week in the peak period is 1,500⁵⁴. However, if the one additional pitch at Gateway Academy is taken into account, this figure should increase.

The number of pitches per 10,000 people in Thurrock based on 2 pitches is 0.13, compared with 0.2 in England, Essex and the East region. The best provision in the region is 0.6 pitches per 10,000. However, if the additional pitch is taken into account the number of pitches per 10,000 people is 0.2.

Demand is based on population and participation rates. Demand expressed for STPs in Thurrock is 3,700 visits per week, or the equivalent of 5 pitches.

On the basis that there are 2 pitches available, satisfied demand equates to 1,800 visits per week, or 48% of total demand, which is much less than the national (64%), regional (66%) or county (71%) averages. However, if current provision is 3 pitches the level of satisfied demand will be higher.

The report indicates that Thurrock is a significant net exporter of demand to neighbouring local authority areas of about 300 visits. About 850 visits per week are exported, while about 550 visits are imported. This is due to lack of capacity at Thurrock pitches, and better accessibility to pitches in neighbouring areas on the one hand, and better access to some of Thurrock's pitches by some residents of neighbouring areas. Only about 25% of local demand is met in the district.

Unmet demand is for about 1,900 visits per week (or about 52% of total demand). In total this represents the equivalent of about 3 pitches. Clearly, this requirement is reduced if the additional pitch is taken into consideration. The report states that most unmet demand in Thurrock is due to lack of capacity at existing STPs – very little is caused by residents living outside the catchments of existing pitches. However, Gateway Academy reports that the level of community use of their STP is low, notwithstanding efforts to promote the facility to local clubs.

⁵⁴ STPs are weighted in the model according to their attractiveness to the public, depending on their age and date (if any) of refurbishment. This makes a significant difference to usage levels.

The report does not take into account the sand based pitch at Chafford Hundred Campus because it is not floodlit and is not therefore available at times when community sports clubs would wish to use the facility. In addition, no account is taken of the training pitch at Gable Hall School.

The report concludes that there is sufficient unmet demand for about 3 additional pitches and that at least two additional community pitches can probably be justified. This figure is reduced to two additional pitches, if the pitch at Gateway Academy is taken into account.

9.1.5 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

There are two MUGAs available for outdoor sports in Thurrock. The first is a 3G training pitch used primarily for football training at Gable Hall School and the second is a filled carpet type surface at William Edwards School. Both are in the east of the borough (see **Table 9.5** above).

9.1.6 Higher League Football

The English Football League system or football pyramid functions at different levels. Promotion is subject to FA Ground Grading requirements as well as other rules and requirements of the various leagues. There are five clubs in Thurrock playing in higher leagues (see **Table 9.**). Grays Athletic FC plays in the Blue Square Conference Premier which is the lowest of the five nationwide football divisions in England and the top tier of the National League System of non-league football. Thurrock FC plays in the Blue Square Conference South which is one tier down with East Thurrock United, Aveley FC and Tilbury FC playing in the Isthmian Leagues.

Table 9.7 Higher League Football Clubs

Club	League	Position in Pyramid
Grays Athletic FC	Blue Square Conference Premier	Conference National is the lowest of the five nationwide football divisions in England and the top tier of the National League System of non-league football.
Thurrock FC	Blue Square Conference South	Second level of the National League System and at the sixth tier overall of the English Football league system
East Thurrock United	Isthmian League Premier Division	Seventh tier of the English Football league system
Aveley FC	Isthmian League Premier Division	Seventh tier of the English Football league system
Tilbury FC	Isthmian League Division One North	Eighth tier of the English Football league system

Consideration is currently being given to the relocation of semi-professional football clubs to more sustainable locations. A number of options have been considered including the suggestion reported in the Community Sport & Wellbeing Hub Feasibility Study that East Thurrock FC would consider relocating their main match pitches to Blackshots. Some clubs may also be willing to consider ground sharing arrangements. However, none of the proposals that have been put forward have been subject to any evaluation by the council and there may be planning and other issues which affect the suitability of these proposals.

It is understood that Tilbury FC is committed to new facilities in partnership with the Gateway Academy.

Aveley FC is keen to explore opportunities to relocate from its existing site and see Belhus Park as a good potential location for a new first team pitch and training facilities.

Thurrock FC is not interested in relocating and has recently developed new pitches adjacent to their ground at Ship Lane.

9.2 Cricket

9.2.1 Ownership

The breakdown of ownership of pitches in Thurrock is shown in **Table 9.8** below.

The main provider is the local authority which provides 8 out of a total of 12 pitches.

Private clubs provide 4 pitches. Two pitches are located at a school site but the quality is so poor that they are unusable. However, the club at Horndon-on-the-Hill and the users group at Stanford-le-Hope run and manage the changing pavilions at their grounds. In addition to their main pitch, Orsett Cricket Club leases the June Ridgewell Ground which is located on land adjacent to the Primary School.

Gateway Academy has two squares with 9 strips per square. These squares have only recently been laid and to the knowledge of the ECCB are not currently being used by any clubs. Orsett Cricket Club reported that the costs of hiring these pitches was too high for the club to consider using them.

Table 9.8: Cricket Pitches

Cricket Ground	Outdoor Cricket Pitches	Estimated Number of Strips	Changing Rooms	Artificial Wicket	Nets	Operator
Billet Recreation Ground	1 (not in use)		1	No	No	Local Authority
Blackshots	2	9 + 9	1	No	No	Local Authority
Horndon Recreation Ground	1	14	1	Yes	Yes	Local Authority
North Stifford Recreation Ground	1	12	1	No	Yes	Private Club
Orsett Recreation Ground	1	12	1	Yes	Yes	Local Authority
June Ridgewell Ground in Orsett	1	9	1	No	No	Private
Pegasus Club	2	18 + 6	1	No	Yes	Private Club
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	1	9	1	No	No	Local Authority
Stanford Recreation Ground	2	14 + 6	1	No	Yes	Local Authority
Gateway Academy	2 (not in use)	9 + 9	1	No	No	Education site
Corringham Recreation Ground	1	6	1	Yes	Yes	Local Authority
Total	12	124	11			

9.3 Rugby

There are 5 locations with a total of 12 rugby pitches. There are two local authority sites although in the case of Blackshots the pitches are adjacent to Thurrock Rugby Club and are used exclusively by the club. At Stanford Recreation Ground, the rugby club is a member of the users group that manages the changing pavilion. The three remaining sites are all private clubs. None of the rugby pitches at school sites are currently being used by community rugby clubs. The details are shown in **Table 9.9** below:

Table 9.9: Rugby Pitches

Venue	Rugby Pitches	Changing Rooms	Operator
Blackshots	4	1	Local Authority
Pegasus Club	1	1	Private Club
Stanford Recreation Ground	2	1	Local Authority
Thames RUFC	2	1	Private Club
Thurrock RUFC	3	1	Private Club
Total	12	5	

9.4 Pitches in Secured Community Use

The population of the borough in 2010 is 154,700. The playing pitch methodology carried out for this study identifies that there is a total of 109.30 hectares of playing pitches in secured community use in Thurrock available to meet the demand from local football, cricket and rugby teams and clubs. This equates to a current level of provision of 0.71 hectares per 1000 population. This area is based on National Governing Body recommended pitch sizes including safety margins. In addition a site multiplier has been applied to take into account changing, parking, landscaping etc,

The method used in calculating this area can be found in **Appendix B**.

9.5 Hockey

Hockey is played on the sand based STP at Palmers College which is the home ground for Thurrock Hockey Club.

9.6 Bowls

All the bowling clubs in Thurrock are affiliated to the English Bowling Association (EBA) and their greens should therefore conform to the EBA's regulations. There are 12 bowling greens at 10 locations and these are listed in **Table 9.10** below.

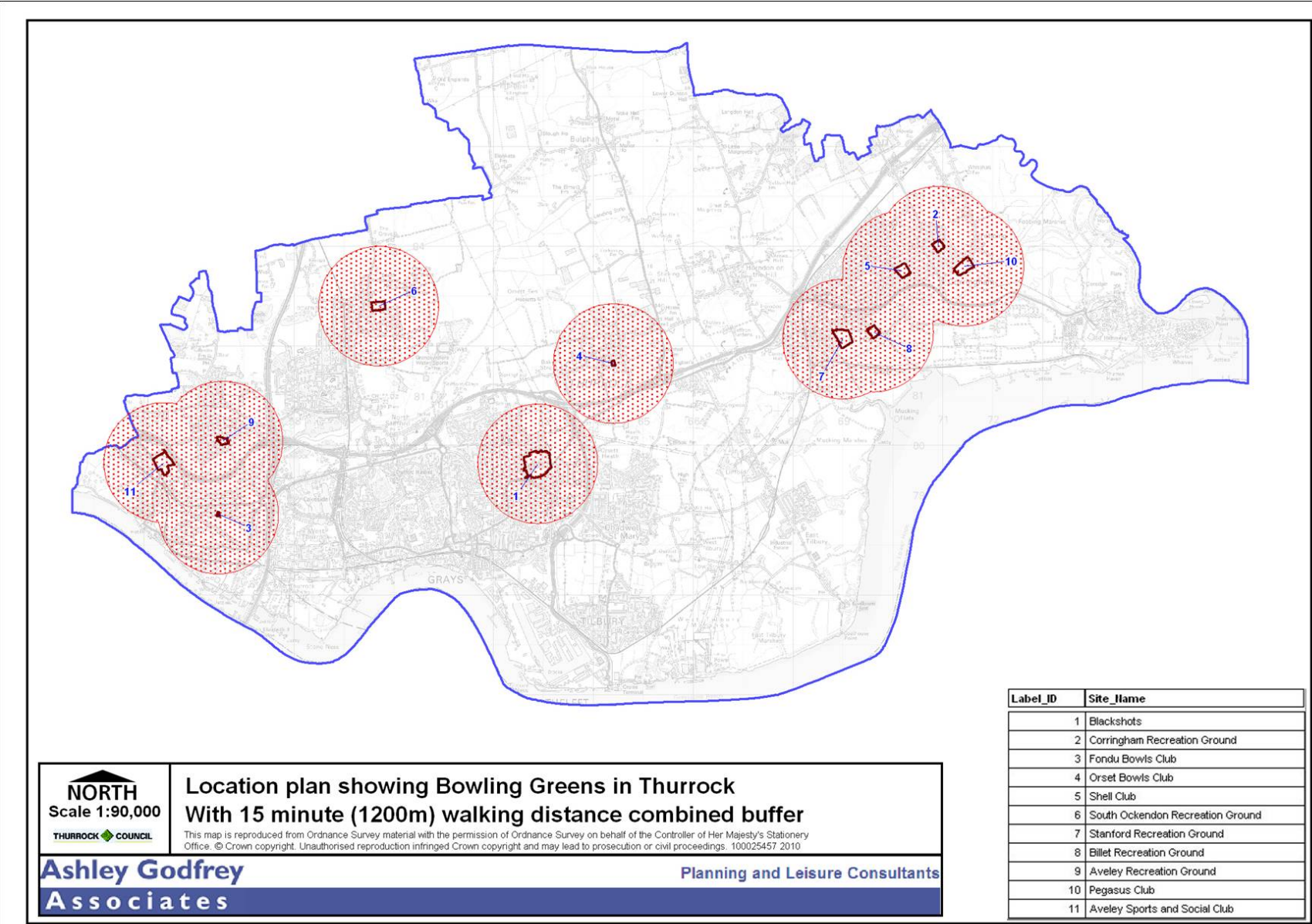
Table 9.10: Bowling Greens

Bowling Green
The Billet
Stanford Recreation Ground
Corringham Recreation Ground
Blackshots 1
Blackshots 2
South Ockendon
Aveley
Orsett
Fondu
Shell 1
Shell 2
Fireman's Sports & Social

The locations of bowling greens in Thurrock are shown on **Map 4** below. This map also shows a catchment area of 15 minutes walking time or 1200 metres. This is based on the responses to the questionnaire survey question about where bowlers who use the green live. The map shows relatively good accessibility to bowling greens in the east and west parts of Thurrock but a deficiency in provision in the central area around Grays where there is just one location available at Blackshots which has two greens. The areas of West Thurrock, South Ockendon, North Stifford,

Chafford Hundred and a large part of Grays do not have a bowling green within a fifteen minute walk from where they live.

Map 4: Bowling Greens with Catchment Areas



9.7 Tennis

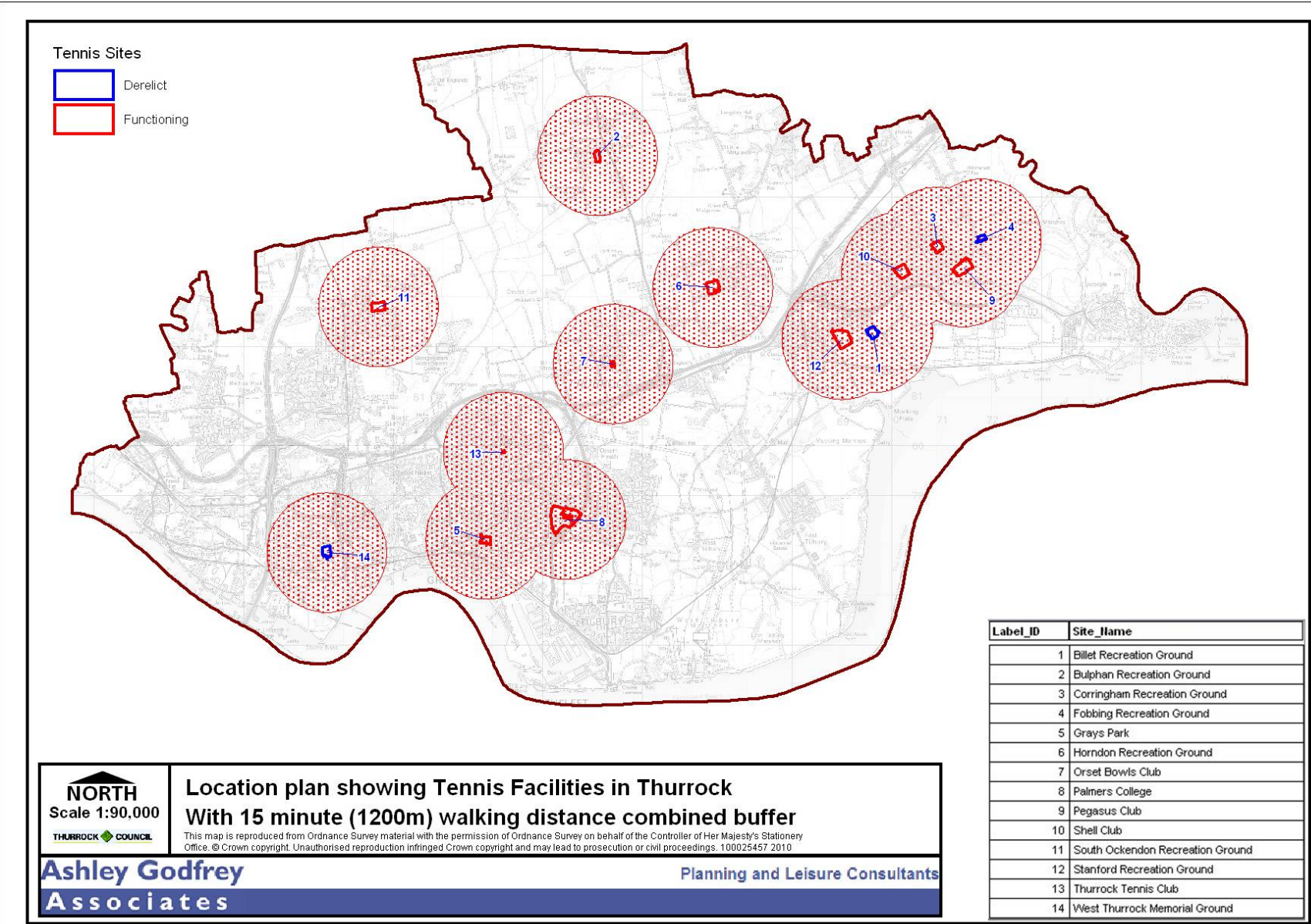
There are 25 tennis courts in 14 locations although only 14 courts are still in a usable condition. In addition there are 3 hard courts at the private club, Bannatyne's, at Chafford Hundred. Access to these courts requires the payment of a membership fee and these are not considered to constitute community provision. Tennis courts are shown in **Table 9.11** below.

Table 9.11: Tennis Courts

Location	Tennis Courts	Operator	Comments
Bulphan Recreation Ground	1 Macadam	Local Authority	
Corringham Recreation Ground	2 Macadam	Local Authority	Derelict
Fobbing Recreation Ground	1 Macadam	Local Authority	
Grays Park	1 Macadam	Local Authority	
Horndon Recreation Ground	1 Macadam	Local Authority	
Orsett Village	1 Macadam	Local Authority	Semi-derelict
Pegasus Club	2 Macadam	Private Club	
Shell Club	2 Macadam	Private Club	Unused
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	2 Macadam	Local Authority	
Stanford Recreation Ground	2 Macadam	Users Group	Recently refurbished
The Billet	2 Macadam	Local Authority	Derelict
Thurrock Tennis Club	3 Macadam	Private Club	
West Thurrock Recreation Ground	2 Macadam	Local Authority	Derelict
Palmers College	3 Macadam	Education/Local Authority	

The locations with tennis courts are shown on **Map 5** below. This map also shows a catchment area of 15 minutes walking time or 1200 metres. The map shows that functioning tennis courts are accessible to most people in Thurrock. The areas of deficiency are in the east part of Thurrock, namely Aveley, West Thurrock, Purfleet, South Ockendon and in the central area, at Chadwell St Mary and Tilbury.

Map 5: Tennis Courts with Catchment Areas



9.8 Netball

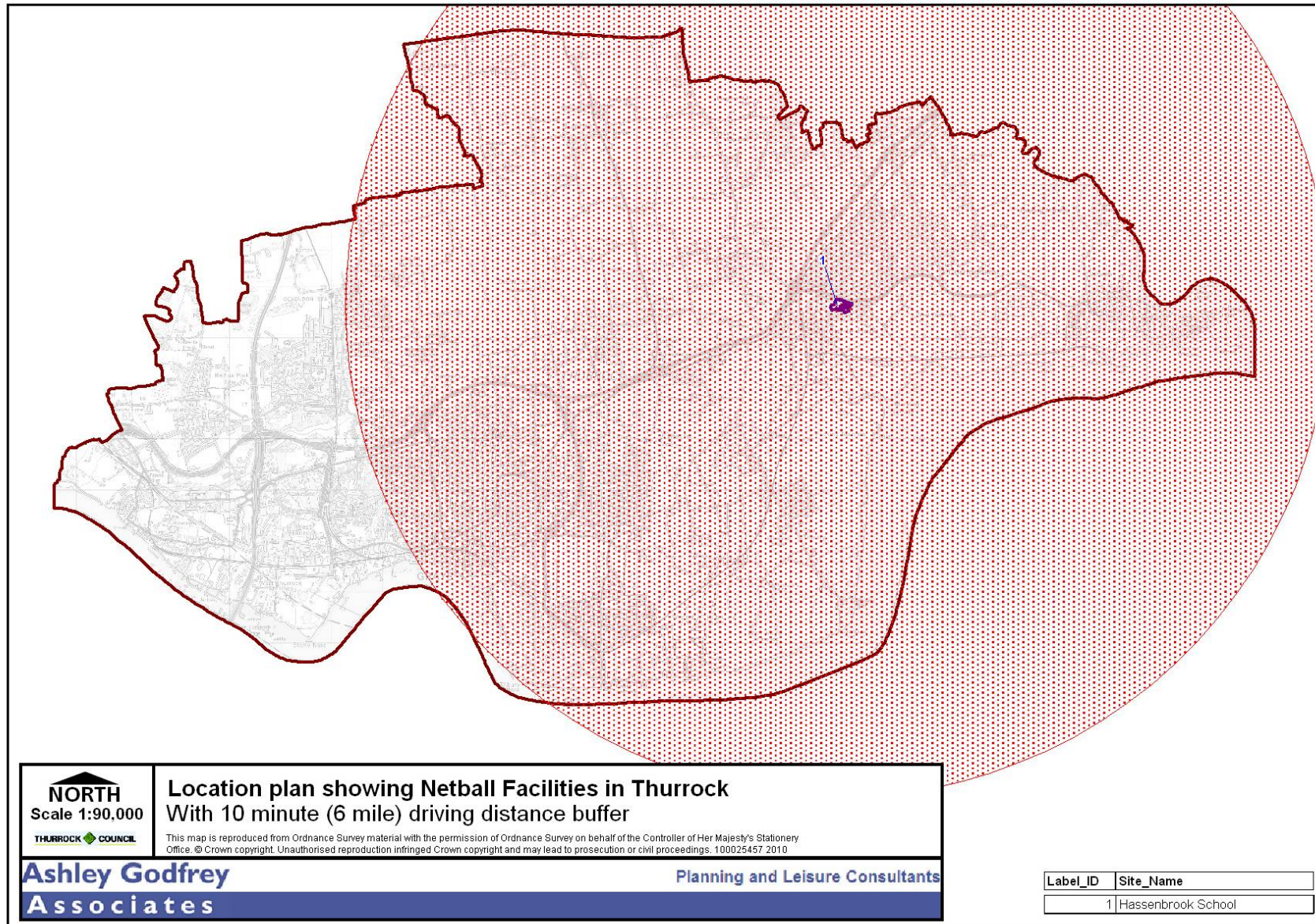
There is one dedicated outdoor netball facility which is the Regional Centre of Excellence for Netball at Hassenbrook School where there are 8 floodlit netball courts.

The location of the netball centre is shown on **Map 6** below. A catchment of 10 minute driving time or 6 miles has been assigned to this centre on the basis that it functions as a regional centre and can therefore be compared to a STP. Research undertaken by Sport England and sportscotland⁵⁵ found that the average distance travelled to an STP was 6 miles.

The whole of the eastern part of Thurrock lies within this catchment area. However, the west area of Thurrock including Aveley, West Thurrock, Purfleet and South Ockendon does not have access to a netball facility.

⁵⁵ Synthetic Turf Pitch Study: Final Report July 2006 Prepared for sportscotland & Sport England by TNS

Map 6: Netball Facility with Catchment Area.



9.9 Athletics

Thurrock Athletics Stadium is adjacent to Blackshots Leisure Centre in Grays. It has a 7 lane synthetic track and an 8 lane straight track, full field event facilities, changing facilities, floodlights and seating for 300 people.

9.10 Golf

Thurrock has five golf courses:

- Belhus Park Golf and Country Club which has an 18 hole course that extends over 46 acres.
- Langdon Hills Golf Course which has a 27 hole course at Langdon Hills.
- Orsett Golf Club which has an 18 hole golf course.
- St Cleres Hall Golf Club which has an 18 hole golf course and a 9 hole course.
- Mardyke Valley Golf Course which has an 18 hole golf course.

The total number of holes in Thurrock equates to 108.

The estimated population of Thurrock in 2010 is 154,700. The ratio of golf courses (5) to the population is equal to one course per 30,940 people.

10. Quality of the Playing Pitches and Changing Rooms

10.1 Visual quality assessment

A visual quality assessment was undertaken of all the playing pitches and changing rooms. This assessment employed the Sport England Visual Quality Assessment provided with the Electronic Toolkit for 'Towards a Level Playing Field'. The assessment sheets can be found at **Appendix C** and **D**.

The assessment is intended to provide a standard approach in helping to assess the quality of pitches. The intention is that it is capable of being carried out by individuals who do not have any specific technical expertise in pitch quality. The assessment provides a snapshot of the condition of the playing surface and supporting facilities on the day of the assessment.

The survey was undertaken towards the end of the football/rugby season and before the beginning of the cricket season. In some cases it was difficult to assess features such as the line markings because the pitches had not been marked for a few weeks. It was therefore necessary to assess the lines, where appropriate, as being 'moderate' unless circumstances indicated otherwise.

The quality ratings are as shown in **Table 10.1** below.

Table 10.1: Pitch Quality Ratings

Score	Quality Rating
91%+	An excellent pitch
71-90%	A good pitch
61-70%	An average pitch
40-60%	A below average pitch
Less than 40	A poor pitch

Table 10.2: Thurrock Football Pitch Quality Scores

Location	Pitch Number F1	Pitch Number F2	Pitch Number F3	Pitch Number F4	Pitch Number F5	Pitch Number F6	Pitch Number F7	Pitch Number F8	Pitch Number F9
Lakeside	82%	77%							
Dimensions	110 x 70	110 x 65							
Linford Recreation Ground	53%	51%							
Dimensions	88 x 55	54 x 37							
Corringham Recreation Ground	42%	39%							
Dimensions	94 x 62	100 x 61							
Pegasus Club	86%	86%							
Dimensions	96 x 66	98 x 66							
Billet Recreation Ground	55%	not marked out							
Dimensions	98 x 60								
Nutberry Playing Fields	72%	64%	60%						
Dimensions	92 x 60	90 x 59	50 x 37						
Blackshots	63%	63%	65%	64%	66%	63%			
Dimensions	101 x 60	96 x 64	90 x 61	102 x 61	86 x 65	100 x 65			
Daisyfields	73%	63%							
Dimensions	104 x 62	108 x 62							

Chadwell Recreation Ground	55%	48%							
Dimensions	100 x 60 (not marked out)	104 x 63							
Orsett Recreation Ground	65%								
Dimensions	100 x 65								
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	73%	63%	71%	72%					
Dimensions	98 x 51	59 x 39	54 x 39	92 x 65					
Belhus Park	61%	64%	69%	65%	65%	70%	63%	75%	75%
Dimensions	98 x 53	94 x 56	92 x 56	94 x 56	96 x 56	100 x 55	94 x 57	80 x 48 (womens)	54 x 37
North Stifford Recreation Ground	76%								
Dimensions	54 x 36								
Shell Club	84%								
Dimensions	100 x 70								
Aveley Sports and Social Club	75%	76%	77%	81%	69%	64%			
Dimensions	98 x 68	98 x 68	98 x 68	98 x 68	50 x 37	80 x 60			
East Thurrock FC	52%	78%							
Dimensions	59 x 40	104 x 69							
Bulphan Rec	49%(disus								

	ed)								
Dimensions	102 x 60								
Horndon Rec	63%	63%							
Dimensions	104 x 65	54 x 37							
Old Hall Farm (Manorway Rec)	54%	46%							
Dimensions	84 x 57	100 x 53							
Orsett Showground⁵⁶	54%	58%	59%	60%	60%	70%	60%	60%	55%
Dimensions	88 x 56	102 x 56	56 x 37	56 x 39	104 x 56	56 x 35	104 x 65	104 x 63	86 x 51
Thames RUFC	47%	52%	66%	49%	108 x 66				
Dimensions	98 x 69	100 x 63	56 long (mini)	93 long (junior goals 6m x 7 ft)	52%				

⁵⁶ The pitches at Orsett Showground were subsequently taken out of use by the landowner.

Table 10.3: Thurrock Football School Pitch Quality Scores

Location	Pitch Number F1	Pitch Number F2	Pitch Number F3	Pitch Number F4	Pitch Number F5	Pitch Number F6	Pitch Number F7	Pitch Number F8
Hassenbrook	54%							
Dimensions	98 x 57							
Belhus Chase	66%	63%	60% (not used)	52%				
Dimensions	56 x 42	100 x 58	100 x 55	100 x 70				
William Edwards	60%	67%	67%	61%	67%	65%	73%	70%
Dimensions	94 x 55	102 x 58	58 x 38	56 x 38	60 x 38	120 x 78	56 x 38	116 x 75
Palmers College	66%							
Dimensions	102 x 61							
Grays School	66%	61%						
Dimensions	90 x 50	90 x 50						
Ockendon School	77%	81%						
Dimensions	100 x 50	100 x 52						
Gateway Academy	87%	93%	94%	95%	95%	88%		
Dimensions	104 x 63	104 x 50	76 x 43	78 x 47	76 x 46	106 x 63		
Gable Hall School	76%	63%	63%	61%	65%	70%	63%	

Dimensions	104x54	58x38	58x38	58x38	82x53	82x53	104x66	
Chafford Hundred	69%	77%	77%					
Dimensions	Mini	88x60	54x39					
St Cleres	78%	75%	69%	75%	71%			
Dimensions	110x53	102x55	72x50	56x37	106x55			
Stanford le Hope Junior	47%	54%						
Dimensions	58 x 42	58 x 43						
Corringham Primary	65%	65%						
Dimensions	52 x 36	52 x 40						

Table 10.4: Summary of Football Pitch Quality Ratings

Quality Rating	Number of Pitches	%
An excellent pitch	4	3.7%
A good pitch	30	27.5%
An average pitch	44	40.4%
A below average pitch	30	27.5%
A poor pitch	1	0.9%
Total	109	100%

10.2 Football

10.2.1 Pitches

The results of the assessments for football pitches are shown in **Table 10.3** and **10.4** above and the ratings of the pitches are summarised in **Table 10.4**.

109 football pitches were assessed including 28 mini soccer pitches. Of these 4 achieved a score of excellent. These were all new pitches at Gateway Academy; these pitches have recently been constructed and only a small number of games have been played them. 30 pitches achieved a “good” score. The best of these pitches were at the Pegasus Club (both scoring 86%) and the remaining two pitches at Gateway Academy. Twelve of the good pitches were on school sites; the best of these, apart from Gateway Academy, were at Ockendon School, Chafford Campus and St Cleres. The remaining 60% were on a mixture of Local Authority Recreation Grounds and Private Clubs. A higher proportion of the good pitches were on privately owned sites. Over two thirds of pitches scored average or lower. The lowest scoring pitch was at Corringham Recreation Ground with a score of 39%. The median score is 65% which equates to an ‘Average’ pitch.

10.2.2 Mini Soccer Pitches

Table 10.5: Mini Soccer Pitches Quality

Site Name	Quality Score Pitch 1	Quality Score Pitch 2	Quality Score Pitch 3
Local Authority			
Belhus Park	75%	n/a	n/a
Horndon Recreation Ground	63%	n/a	n/a
Linford Recreation Ground	51%	n/a	n/a
North Stifford Recreation Ground	76%	n/a	n/a
Nutberry Playing Fields	60%	n/a	n/a
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	63%	71%	n/a
Education			
Corringham Primary	65%	65%	n/a
Stanford Le Hope Primary	47%	54%	n/a
Belhus Chase Specialist Humanities College	66%	n/a	n/a
Chafford Hundred School	69%	77%	n/a
Gable Hall School	63%	63%	61%
St Clere's School	75%	n/a	n/a
William Edwards School and Sports College	60%	n/a	n/a
Private Club			
Aveley Sports and Social Club	69%	n/a	n/a
East Thurrock FC	52%	n/a	n/a
Thames RUFC	66%	n/a	n/a

The highest scoring mini soccer pitch (77%) was at Chafford Hundred School and the lowest was the pitch at Stanford Le Hope Primary (47%). The median score for mini soccer pitches was 64% which equates to an 'Average' pitch. Results are shown in **Table 10.5** above.

10.2.3 Football club views about pitch quality

Clubs were asked to assess the overall quality of their main match pitch on a five-point scale ranging between very good and very poor (see **Table 10.6**). The club's assessment reflects the overall performance of pitches over the season. 99 clubs provided a response to this question in relation to 102 main home match pitches.

Three clubs provided responses for two pitches because they are larger Youth Football Clubs with a relatively large number of teams. 58% (59), of clubs rated their main match pitch as being good or very good. 27% (28) rated their main match pitch as being moderate. 15% (15) thought their main match pitch was poor or very poor.

Table 10.6: Clubs assessment of the overall quality of main match pitch

Rating	Number	%
Very good	22	22%
Good	37	36%
Moderate	28	27%
Poor	12	12%
Very poor	3	3%
Total	102	100

10.2.4 Football clubs' views about condition of the playing surface

Clubs were asked to indicate whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface (see **Table 10.7**). 18% (18) of clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was worse or much worse. The majority, 69% (68) of clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was about the same and 12% (12) felt that the condition of the playing surface was better or much better.

Table 10.7: Clubs assessment of whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface

Rating	Number	%
Much worse	4	4.1%
Worse	14	14.3%
Same	68	69.4%
Better	10	10.2%
Much better	2	2%
Total	98	100%

Four clubs indicated that the playing surface of the pitches at Blackshots was worse or much worse. The pitches at Aveley Sports and Social Club, Corringham Recreation Ground and Chadwell Recreation Ground were each cited by 2 clubs as having a playing surface that had become worse or much worse. Other football pitches cited were Orsett Recreation Ground, Nutberry Playing Fields and Thames Sports Ground.

Football pitches where the playing surface was considered to have become better or much better were Belhus Park (3 clubs), Lakeside (2 clubs), Chafford Hundred School, East Thurrock United, Palmers College, Shell Club and Corringham Junior School.

10.2.5 Football Clubs' views on the Maintenance of their Pitches

Clubs were asked to rate the quality of the maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season. 68 clubs considered maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season to be good or very good. Of the sites considered to be very good, Belhus Park was cited by 7 clubs and Aveley Sports and Social Club by 4 clubs with Lakeside and Pegasus cited by 2 clubs each. The results are shown in **Table 10.8** below.

11 clubs indicated that maintenance was poor or very poor in this respect. Five sites were considered by clubs to be very poor. These sites are the Billet (2 mentions) Nutberry Playing Fields, Grays School, Belhus Chase School and Corringham Recreation Ground.

Table 10.8: Football clubs' rating of maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season.

Rating	Number	%
Very good	22	22.2%
Good	46	46.5%
Moderate	20	20.2%
Poor	6	6.05%
Very poor	5	5.05%
Total	99	100%

Clubs were then asked to rate the quality of the maintenance of their pitch during the season. 55 clubs considered the maintenance of their pitch during the season to be good or very good. The maintenance of the pitches at Belhus Park was cited by 7 clubs as being very good with Aveley Sports and Social Club and Pegasus Club cited by 2 clubs each.

16 clubs felt that the maintenance of their pitch during the season was poor or very poor and the remaining 29 clubs considered maintenance to be moderate. The very poorly maintained sites were Billet (2 mentions), Belhus Chase School and Corringham Recreation Ground.

There was thus a tendency to consider maintenance to be better at the start of the season than during the season. The difference however was not marked and most clubs gave the same response to both questions; this was particularly true in respect of the very good and very poor ratings.

The results are shown in **Table 10.9** below.

Table 10.9: Football clubs rating of maintenance of their pitch during the season.

Rating	Number	%
Very good	20	20%
Good	35	35%
Moderate	29	29%
Poor	12	12%
Very poor	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Clubs were asked which pitches they considered were the three best played on during the past season and which were the three worst pitches.

The most frequently mentioned 'best' pitches were Pegasus Club (30 responses), Belhus Park (25), Lakeside (20) and Shell Club (19). More details of the club responses are to be found in **Table 10.10**.

Table 10.10: 'Best' Pitches

Best Pitch	No. Mentions	Second Best Pitch	No. Mentions	Third Best Pitch	No. Mentions
Pegasus Club	18	Pegasus Club	9	Lakeside	6
Belhus Park	13	Shell Club (Springhouse)	8	Belhus Park	5
Lakeside	10	Belhus Park	7	Aveley Sports and Social Club	4
Shell Club (Springhouse)	9	Aveley Sports and Social Club	6	Pegasus Club	3
Aveley Sports and Social Club	5	Blackshots	5	Blackshots	3
		Lakeside	4	Gateway	3

With regard to the worst pitches (**Table 10.11**), the most frequently mentioned sites were Blackshots (25 responses), Corringham Recreation Ground (20), Belhus Park (20) and Billet (14). The number of mentions by clubs reflects the number of pitches available at each site as sites with greater numbers of pitches will be used by more clubs. On this basis, Corringham Recreation Ground and the Billet, both of which have only two pitches, are probably considered by clubs to be the worst pitches in

Thurrock. Sites with large numbers of pitches may be considered to have some of the best and some of the worst pitches (e.g. Belhus Park and Blackshots Recreation Ground).

Table 10.11: 'Worst' Pitches

Worst Pitch	No. Mentions	Second Worst Pitch	No. Mentions	Third Worst Pitch	No. Mentions
Corringham Recreation Ground	12	Blackshots	11	Blackshots	7
Belhus Park	10	Belhus Park	7	Belhus Park	3
Billet	8	Corringham Recreation Ground	6	Chadwell Recreation Ground	2
Blackshots	7	Chadwell Recreation Ground	3	Daisyfield	3
Thames Sports	5	Billet	3	Thames Sports	3
Chadwell Recreation Ground	4			Billet	3
Orsett Recreation Ground	3			Corringham Recreation Ground	2

10.2.6 Training

The use of the home match pitch for training by clubs can be one of the reasons for the poor condition of football pitches. Clubs were therefore asked whether they used the match pitch for training. 98 clubs responded to this question and 80 stated that they did not use the match pitch for training although 18 confirmed that they did.

10.2.7 Changing Accommodation

The quality of the changing accommodation at sites with football pitches was assessed using the assessment criteria to be found at **Appendix D**. The results are shown in **Table 10.12** below:

Table 10.12: Quality scores for changing accommodation

Site	Changing Room score	Number of Changing Rooms
Private Clubs		
Pegasus Club	73%	5
Shell	55%	2
Thurrock RFC	93%	4
Thames RUFC	57%	4
Local Authority		
Chadwell Rec	52%	2
Aveley Sports and Social Club	67%	4
Daisyfields	43%	2
Lakeside	92%	2
Orsett Rec	52%	3
Blackshots	60%	8
Billet	44%	2
Corringham Rec	57%	2
Horndon Rec	60%	2
Belhus	51%	5
Stanford Rec	73%	7
Schools		
Grays School	88%	4
Palmers College	95%	2
William Edwards	87%	4
Belhus Chase	81%	4
Hassenbrook	93%	4
St Cleres	85%	4
Gable Hall	85%	4
Corringham Primary	32%	2

Changing accommodation is provided by private clubs (4 sites), the local authority (11 sites) and schools (8 sites). The quality of changing accommodation varies considerably with scores ranging between 32% and 95%. The highest scoring facility was Palmers College. The worst scoring facility was that at Corringham Primary School where the changing rooms are adapted portacabins. The overall median score is 67% although the median scores for schools is 86% compared with 57% for local authority and 65% for private club facilities.

10.2.8 Football club views about changing accommodation

Clubs were asked to assess the overall quality of the changing accommodation at their main match pitch on a five-point scale ranging between very good and very poor (see **Table 10.13** below)

Table 10.13: Football clubs rating of changing accommodation at their main match pitch.

Rating	Number	%
Very good	18	18.4%
Good	26	26.5%
Moderate	24	24.5%
Poor	13	13.3%
Very poor	9	9.2%
No Changing	8	8.2%
Total	98	100.0%

98 clubs provided a response to this question. 45% (44), of clubs rated their changing accommodation as being good or very good. 24% (24) rated their changing accommodation as being moderate. 22% (22) thought their changing accommodation was poor or very poor. There are 8 clubs (8%) without changing accommodation at their home match pitch.

Clubs were then asked to indicate whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the changing accommodation (see **Table 10.14**). 84 clubs provided a response to this question. 14% (12) of clubs felt that the condition of the changing accommodation was worse or much worse. The majority, 70% (59) of clubs felt that the condition of the changing accommodation was about the same

and 15% (13) felt that the condition of the changing accommodation was better or much better.

Table 10.14: Football clubs views about the condition of the changing accommodation has improved or deteriorated.

Rating	Number	%
Much worse	2	2.4%
Worse	10	11.9%
Same	59	70.2%
Better	12	14.3%
Much better	1	1.2%
Total	84	100.0%

Two clubs indicated that the condition of the changing accommodation at Billet was worse or much worse and one club thought that the changing accommodation at St Cleres School was much better.

10.2.9 Quality of School Pitches and Changing Accommodation

The quality of the school pitches that were assessed is shown in **Table 10.3**. In addition, schools were asked to rate the quality of their pitches and changing accommodation and the results are shown in **Table 10.15** below.

Table 10.15: School's Ratings of Sports Pitches and Changing Accommodation

School	Overall Quality of the Pitch	Quality of the Changing Accommodation
Gateway Academy	Moderate	Good
Gable Hall School	Good	Moderate (but showers poor)
Grays School	Moderate	Good
Hassenbrook School	Good to Moderate	Good
St Cleres School	Moderate	Good
Stanford-le-Hope Primary School	Moderate	None
Corringham Primary School	Moderate	Poor
Abbotshall Primary School	Moderate	None

Gable Hall was the only school to consider the pitches were of good quality. Hassenbrook School reported the adult football pitches were good but the junior pitches only of moderate standard. The remaining schools considered their pitches to be of moderate quality.

All the secondary schools except Gable Hall considered their changing facilities to be of good quality. Gable Hall reported changing facilities to be moderate but the showers are poor. The only Junior School to have any changing facilities is Corringham Primary. These consist of portacabins and are rated as poor by the school.

Only schools where there is at least one grass pitch which is in community use are reported here. Schools with Synthetic Turf Pitches have not been included.

10.3 Cricket

10.3.1 Pitches

The results of the assessments for cricket pitches are shown in **Table 10.16** below.

Table 10.16: Cricket Pitch Quality Results

Site Name	Pitch 1 Quality Score %	Pitch 2 Quality Score %
Blackshots	66%	57%
Gateway Academy	79%	76%
Horndon Recreation Ground	90%	
Orsett Recreation Ground	94%	82%
Pegasus Club	93%	93%
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	73%	
Stanford Recreation Ground	91%	86%
Billet Recreation Ground	57%	
North Stifford Recreation Ground	94%	

The quality of cricket pitches was assessed using a modified version of the Sport England Visual Quality Assessment Tool (VQA). The quality scores of 79% (11) of the cricket pitches were rated as Good or Excellent, with 5 of these being excellent and 6 rated as good. The remaining 3 pitches (21%) were average. None of the pitches scored below average or poor. A summary of pitch quality ratings is shown in **Table 10.17** below. The best scoring pitches were those which are maintained by the clubs (Orsett, Stanford, North Stifford and Horndon) and at Gateway Academy and Pegasus Club. The worst scoring pitches were at the council maintained sites of Billet and Blackshots. Pitches were visited before the recent improvements reported by the club playing at Blackshots. The median score for quality of cricket pitches is 84% which is at the higher end of the scale of a good pitch.

Table 10.17: Summary of Cricket Pitch Quality Ratings

Quality Rating	Number of Sites
An excellent pitch	5
A good pitch	6
An average pitch	3
A below average pitch	0
A poor pitch	0

In its response to the consultation on the draft of this strategy, the ECB⁵⁷ in consultation with the Essex County Board responded to these quality results. The view of the ECB is that the VQA:-

“is a very poor way of assessing cricket pitches and that for a true understanding a Pitch Quality Standard (PQS) report would need to be conducted.”

The ECB considers that, without a core sample taken, it is impossible from a visual inspection alone to know how the pitch will play. To get a proper assessment of the quality of the pitches a cricket PQS assessment would need to be undertaken on each square. The ECB accepts that this was not feasible for this report.

10.3.2 Cricket club views about pitch quality

Clubs were asked to assess the overall quality of their main match pitch on a five-point scale ranging from very good to very poor. The club's assessment reflects the overall performance of pitches over the season. 6 clubs provided a response to this question in relation to 8 home match pitches. Two clubs provided responses for two pitches. Three clubs rated their main match pitch as being good or very good. The remaining pitches were rated as moderate. None of the clubs thought their match

⁵⁷ Tim Nicholls : Regional Funding & Facilities Manager (London & East) England and Wales Cricket Board

pitch was poor or very poor. Belhus Club rated their home match pitch as being very good.

These results are summarised in **Table 10.18** below.

Table 10.18: Cricket Club Responses about Pitch Quality to Questionnaire Survey

Club	How would you rate the overall quality of your main home match pitch?					Could you please indicate whether there has been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface?				
	Very good	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very poor	Much worse	Worse	Same	Better	Much better
Belhus Cricket Club	X									X
Grays & Chadwell Cricket Club		X first pitch	X second pitch							X (was awful before)
Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club (home pitch)			X					X		
Orsett Cricket Club		X							X	
Stanford Cricket Club			X					X		
Pegasus & Corringham Cricket Club			X (both)				X			

CLUB	How would you rate the maintenance of your pitch at the start of the season?					How would you rate the maintenance of your pitch during the season?				
	Very good	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very poor	Very good	Good	Moderate	Poor	Very poor
Belhus Cricket Club	X					X				
Grays & Chadwell Cricket Club					X	X				
Horndon on the Hill Cricket Club			X					X		
Orsett Cricket Club		X					X			
Stanford Cricket Club			X					X		
Pegasus & Corringham Cricket Club			X					X		

In response to the consultation on the Draft Strategy, the ECB cited reports to the Essex County Cricket Board about the quality of cricket pitches. Orsett CC reported about their home pitch; Belhus CC about the Ockendon Recreation Ground pitch; Grays and Chadwell CC about their pitch at Blackshots and Horndon on the Hill CC about their home pitch and also the pitch at Corringham Recreation Ground. These reports apparently contradict the findings of the surveys undertaken for this study.

10.3.3 Cricket club views about pitch maintenance

Clubs were asked to indicate whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface. Only one club felt that the condition of the playing surface had become worse. Two clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was about the same two clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was better or much better. Grays & Chadwell Club noted that their pitch at Blackshots had previously been in a very poor condition but had recently improved significantly.

Clubs were asked to rate the maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season. Belhus CC considered maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season to be very good. Grays & Chadwell CC indicated their pitch at Blackshots was very poor in this respect. The remaining clubs considered that maintenance at the start of the season was moderate.

Clubs were then asked to rate the maintenance of their pitch during the season. Two clubs, Belhus CC and Grays & Chadwell CC considered the maintenance of their pitch during the season to be very good. The remaining clubs Horndon CC, Pegasus CC and Stanford CC considered that maintenance of their pitch during the season was moderate.

Clubs were asked which pitches they considered were the three best played on during the past season and which were the three worst pitches. Only three clubs responded to this question with none citing a pitch within Thurrock as being one of the best pitches. The clubs cited different pitches across Essex with no consensus emerging.

With regard to the worst pitches the most frequently mentioned site was Blackshots although Grays & Chadwell qualify this as referring to the situation before the recent improvements.

10.3.4 Changing Accommodation

The quality of the changing accommodation for cricket is highly variable. However most of the changing accommodation used for cricket is also used for other outdoor sports and has been assessed elsewhere in the report. The ECCB considers that changing facilities are generally poor especially at Orsett Recreation Ground.

However, the private grounds of Belhus CC and Pegasus and Corringham CC show some improvement.

10.4 Rugby

10.4.1 Pitches

15 rugby pitches were assessed for quality and the results are shown in **Table 10.19**. Three of the pitches are located at school sites and, whilst they are not currently used by community clubs, there is the potential for this. Six pitches at two sites are provided and maintained by the local authority although in the case of Blackshots the pitches are used exclusively by Thurrock Rugby Club. The remaining six pitches are located at three private clubs.

Table 10.19: Rugby Pitch Quality Results

Rugby Pitch	Pitch 1 Score	Pitch 2 Score	Pitch 3 Score	Pitch 4 Score
Blackshots	69%	64%	68%	67%
Gateway Academy	88%	84%		
Pegasus Club	89%			
Stanford le Hope Recreation Ground	59%	69%		
Thames RUFC	77%	72%		
Thurrock RUFC	84%	79%	84%	
William Edwards School	73%			

The lowest scoring pitch was at Stanford le Hope Recreation Ground (59%) and the highest scoring at Pegasus Club (89%). The median score is 75% which equates to a 'Good' pitch. The majority of pitches (9) were rated as 'Good' pitches with the remaining pitches rated as 'Average' (5) or 'Below Average' (1). The results are shown in **Table 10.20**.

Table 10.20: Summary of Rugby Pitch Quality Ratings

Quality Rating	Number of Sites
An excellent pitch	0
A good pitch	9
An average pitch	5
A below average pitch	1
A poor pitch	0

10.4.2 Rugby Clubs views about quality of pitches

Both Thurrock RUFC and Pegasus Palmerians considered the quality of their pitches to be very good and that maintenance was very good both at the start of and during the season. The quality of the pitches at Pegasus had improved due to extra drainage installed. Thames Sport R.U.F.C. rated the quality of their two pitches as good but stated that the condition of the playing surface had deteriorated in recent seasons. Maintenance of the pitch was considered by the club to be good at the start of the season but only moderate during the season. The club at Stanford considered their pitches to be of moderate quality and that there had been a deterioration in the quality of the playing surface. Maintenance was rated as moderate.

10.4.3 Changing Accommodation

Changing rooms for Rugby were assessed at all five sites and the results are shown in **Table 10.21** below.

Table 10.21: Rugby Changing Room Quality Results

Name of Site	Changing Accommodation Quality Score %
Blackshots	60%
Pegasus Club	73%
Stanford le Hope Recreation Ground	73%
Thames RUFC	57%
Thurrock RUFC	93%
William Edwards School	87%

Four of the changing facilities achieve a good score but the facilities at Blackshots and Thames RUFC are clearly below the standards of the others. Changing facilities at Thurrock RUFC and Thames RUFC do not comply with current RFU specifications in terms of size and provision.

10.4.4 Rugby Clubs views about quality of the changing accommodation

Stanford R.U.F.C. consider their changing accommodation to be good and both Thames R.U.F.C. and Thurrock R.U.F.C. consider theirs to be moderate although the latter club accepts that this will improve once the refurbishment programme is complete.

10.5 Bowls

10.5.1 Bowling Green Quality

The bowling greens were assessed using an assessment sheet that was developed in partnership with Bowls England (formerly the English Bowling Association).

However, it is meant to provide a non-technical visual quality assessment that takes into account a range of factors that are likely to influence the playing surface. For example, the assessment does not include bowling a wood on the green to assess the speed of the green or whether there are any bumps, undulations or deviations on the playing surface.

The median score for bowling greens was 71%. The lowest scoring greens were The Billet (48%), Corringham Recreation Ground (59%) and Orsett (61%). The greens at The Billet, Corringham Recreation Ground and both greens at Blackshots exhibited

signs of damage from foxes digging holes in the bowling green. Given the depth of these holes it is likely that this resulted from the application of a blood or bone-based fertiliser.

The highest scoring greens were Pegasus (89%), Fondu (82%) and Fireman's Sports & Social (82%). Results are shown in **Table 10.22** below.

The median score for bowling pavilions was 69%. Lowest scoring pavilions were Fireman's Sports & Social Club (52%), Corringham Recreation Ground (57%) and Fondu (61%). Poor scores were often the result of there being no disabled access, dilapidated fixtures and no fire precautions. The best pavilions for quality were Aveley (91%), Blackshots (Grays Town) (88%) and Pegasus (81%).

Table 10.22: Bowling Green and Changing Pavilion Quality Results

Club	Bowling Green	Changing Pavilion
Blackshots Drums	71%	No Access
Orsett	61%	No Access
Fireman's Sports & Social	82%	52%
Corringham Recreation Ground	59%	57%
Fondu	84%	61%
Shell Ladies	68%	64%
Shell Mens	82%	69%
The Billet	48%	68% (large changing)
The Billet		69% (small changing)
Stanford Recreation Ground	70%	69%
South Ockendon	77%	70%
Pegasus	89%	81%
Blackshots Grays Town BC	73%	88%
Aveley	71%	91%

10.5.2 Clubs' rating of the quality of their greens and changing facilities

Half the clubs rated the quality of their greens as moderate and just under half rated the green as either good or very good. Two clubs rated their green as poor or very poor: the green rated thus is Corringham Bowling Green which is used by Chadwell St Mary and Corringham Bowls Clubs. The green with the highest rating was that at the Aveley Sports and Social Club used by the Firemens Club; this was the only green rated as very good. All the privately owned greens scored moderate or above. The green at Pegasus was rated as good and that at Shell Club as moderate. The two council owned greens which are self managed by the clubs were both rated as good (Aveley and Fondu). The only Council maintained green to score highly was that at South Ockendon Bowls Club which was rated as good. The other council maintained greens at Blackshots, Billet, Stanford and Orsett were rated as moderate by their clubs but the second green at Blackshots was rated as poor by one club.

Clubs' rating of their changing facilities was more positive with over two thirds rating their pavilions and good or better and no clubs rating them as poor. The best scoring facilities were again at the self managed clubs of Aveley and Fondu, both of whom

scored their pavilions as very good. The three privately owned pavilions were rated as good, as were the facilities at Blackshots (3 pavilions) and at Corringham. Most clubs do a certain amount of work on their pavilions themselves, the Drums Bowls Club reporting that the pavilion was installed, maintained and paid for by the club. The lowest scoring pavilions were those at South Ockendon, Orsett, Billet and Chadwell St Mary, all of which were rated as moderate.

10.5.3 Greens with the highest rating by clubs

Clubs were asked to name the three best greens they had played on in the previous season. The best green named by the most clubs was that at Fondu rated best by 5 clubs. The next best greens were outside Thurrock; Mopsies Park in Basildon and Essex County at Westcliffe on Sea were rated highest by 3 clubs each. The most frequently mentioned second best green was that at Pegasus mentioned by 4 clubs. Other local greens named within the best three were Aveley, Shell, Firemans, South Ockendon and Orsett.

Clubs were also asked to name the worst three greens they had played on. Most of the poorest rated greens were those maintained by Thurrock Council. Five clubs rated the Billet green as the worst and 3 thought Corringham to be the worst. All except two of the clubs mentioned the Billet green as one of the worst three. Half the clubs thought the Corringham green to be among the worst three. The greens at Blackshots were rated poorly by some clubs – 4 clubs cited Drums, 3 Grays Town and one mentioned Thurrock and one just stated Blackshots as one of the three worst. Other greens mentioned by two or more clubs were Orsett, Aveley and United Services at Stanford. There were 3 greens outside Thurrock in this category but none were mentioned by more than one club.

10.6 Tennis

10.6.1 Tennis Court Quality

Tennis courts were all assessed using a quality assessment sheet with criteria which are likely to influence the playing experience. Where a block of courts was identical in quality an overall assessment was provided. Where there were differences between

courts, individual court assessments were provided. These are shown in **Table 10.23** below. All the courts had an asphalt surface.

The median score was 75%. The lowest scores are all for courts that are in a very poor condition and in some cases virtually unusable. This is particularly the case with courts at Orsett Recreation Ground (22%) and Fobbing Recreation Ground (34%). Notwithstanding their current condition, there are some basic elements which remain in a reasonable state including whether the court is level and the condition of the surface. This means that refurbishment remains an option if the need can be justified. There are derelict tennis courts at The Billet, West Thurrock Recreation Ground and Corringham Recreation Ground and these have not been scored. It is unlikely that these courts could be restored.

The highest quality score was achieved by the courts at Stanford Recreation Ground (94%), which have recently been refurbished, and Thurrock Lawn Tennis Club (88%).

Mostly, tennis changing rooms were located within larger changing facilities serving other sports and were not therefore assessed separately. The only exception is the facility at Thurrock LTC where access could not be obtained.

Table 10.23: Tennis Courts

Location	% Score	Number of Courts
Stanford Recreation Ground	94%	2
Thurrock LTC	88%	3
Pegasus Court 1	75%	1
Pegasus Court 2	84%	1
Ockendon Recreation Ground	59%	2
Palmers College	75%	3
Fobbing Recreation Ground	34%	1
Orsett Recreation Ground	22%	1

10.6.2 Tennis Club Views on 'Best' and Worst' courts.

The club was asked which were the best and worst courts played on during the previous season. They considered their own courts to be the best and the worst to be Oldersbrook in Ilford and Gidea Park.

11. The Assessment of the Supply and Demand for Playing Pitches

The method for the assessment of the supply and demand for playing pitches recommended in 'Towards a Level Playing Field' follows the eight stage process outlined in the Playing Pitch Methodology (PPM).

11.1 The Playing Pitch Methodology

The PPM comprises eight stages (see **Diagram 2**). Stages 1 to 6 involve numerical calculations, whilst Stages 7 and 8 develop issues and solutions. The methodology is employed to analyse the adequacy of current provision and to assess possible future situations, in order that latent and future demand (identified through Team Generation Rates), and problems with quality, use and capacity of existing pitches can be taken into account.

Stage 1 - Identifying Teams/Team Equivalents

The key task here is to count how many pitch sport teams there are within the study area, recorded according to sport, type of team (adult, junior, mini) and sex. This will include those teams that are resident in Thurrock but play their games elsewhere.

The likely number of future teams within Thurrock requires information on the forecast population increases from the national census. Team Generation Rates or TGRs can then be applied to provide an indication of future levels of demand.

Stage 2 - Calculating Home Games Per Team Per Week

The second stage of the model is to calculate the total number of home games played by each team per week in the study area. This information is collected from a questionnaire survey.

This variable is calculated in two stages. The first stage requires the total number of home games to be divided by the number of weeks in a season to provide the average number of home games per week. Secondly that figure is divided by the number of teams to provide the average number of home games per team per week.

Stage 3 - Assessing Total Home Games Per Week (Stage 1 x Stage 2)

Stage 3 is the calculation involving multiplying the total number of teams (Stage 1) by the total number of home games per team per week (Stage 2). This provides an assessment of the total number of home games per week taking part in Thurrock, i.e. how many games have to be accommodated within Thurrock in a typical week.

Stage 4 – Establishing Temporal Demand for Games

This stage determines the proportion of home games played on each day of the week. The temporal demand is the proportion of matches that are played each day. This shows the periods of peak demand and this usually occurs on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings and afternoons, particularly in relation to football, however this needs to be quantified accurately from the questionnaire survey.

Stage 5 – Determining the Number of Pitches Used/Required on Each Day

By multiplying Stages 3 and 4 together (i.e. the total number of home games x days on which they are played) it is possible to determine the number of pitches currently used on/at each day/time during the week.

Stage 6 – Establishing Pitches Available

Having established through stages 1 – 5 the number of teams in Thurrock and when they use the pitches, in order to identify any potential shortfall in supply, it is then necessary to count the number of pitches that are available for community use within the study area.

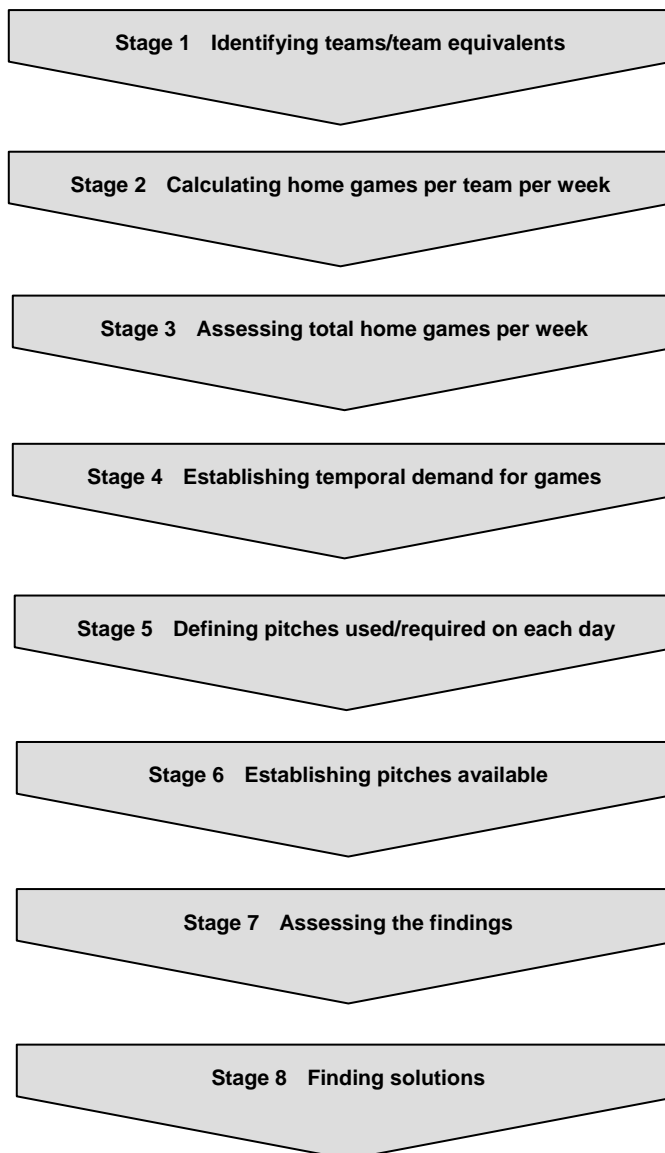
Stage 7 – Assessing the Findings

Stage 7 compares the number of pitches required on each day (Stage 5) with the number of pitches available (Stage 6). This identifies whether there are spare or underused pitches, excess demand or if supply matches demand.

Stage 8 – Identifying Policy Options and Solutions

The final stage of the Playing Pitch Model is to translate the findings obtained from Stages 1 – 7 into a strategy based on the identified level of supply and demand.

Diagram 2: Flow-chart to illustrate the key stages:



11.2 The Playing Pitch ‘Calculator’

The calculations set out in Stages 1-7 above can be undertaken by the Playing Pitch Calculator which is based on an excel spreadsheet comprising six tabulated sheets.

11.2.1 Analysis of Supply and Demand

The results of the audit of playing pitches and teams in Thurrock facilitate the calculation of any surplus or deficit of pitches.

11.2.2 Team Generation Rates

Team Generation Rates (TGRs) provide an indication of how many people in a specified age group are required to generate one team. TGRs are derived by dividing the appropriate population age band in the area by the number of teams playing within that area in that age band. Calculating TGRs enables fair comparison to be made between different areas where similar studies have been undertaken.

The following examples help clarify what TGRs mean:

1:100 ➔ high TGR ➔ relatively low latent (unmet) demand

1: 1000 ➔ low TGR ➔ relatively high latent (unmet) demand

Team Generation Rates for Football

Dividing the number of football teams in the study area into the estimated total population aged between 10 - 45 years gives an overall TGR of 1:333 for football in the Study Area. This means that there is one football team for every 333 people aged 10 – 45, which is above the National Average of 1:477. The TGR for mini soccer (U7s to U10s) is 1: 101 or one team for every 101 children aged 6 to 9 years which is higher than the National Average of 1:141. The TGR for Junior Boys is 1:57 compared to the National average of 1:71 and for Senior Men it is 1:302 compared to the National average of 1:314. This high TGR for football, indicates a relatively low latent demand.

Table 11.1 below compares TGRs for football in Thurrock with those of studies in other Authorities. One source of this information is the TGR database provided by Sport England. However, this data is dated summer 2004. The results for

Nottingham, Erewash and Middlesbrough are from more recently completed studies. The ONS defined similar local authorities to Thurrock are Dartford, Medway, Basildon and Broxbourne. The most up to date results for Dartford and Basildon are included in the tables.

Table 11.1: Local Authority Football TGRs - Population per Team⁵⁸

Local Authority	Mini -Soccer 6-9yrs	Junior Boys 10-15yrs	Junior Girls 10-15yrs	Senior Men 16-45 yrs
Bradford	1:204	1:104	1:696	1:372
Charnwood	1:172	1:61	1:694	1:328
Chelmsford	1:141	1:57	1:905	1:248
Erewash	1:127	1:64	1:401	1:367
Medway	1:736	1:46		1:196
Middlesbrough	1:143	1:82	1:3199	1:460
Milton Keynes	1:228	1:66	1:1718	1:437
Nottingham	1:142	1:104	1:1053	1:449
Sefton	1:102	1:136		1:131
Swindon	1:102	1:76	1:684	1:370
Test Valley	1:435	1:61	1:1533	1:261
Walsall	1:341	1:76	1:2050	1:451
Basildon	1:208	1:63	1:1608	1:577
Dartford	1:113	1:56		1:239
Thurrock	1:101	1:57	1:345	1:302
National Averages	1:141	1:71	1:818	1:314

⁵⁸ Sport England TGR database and individual studies.

Table 11.2 Team Generation Rates for Cricket

Local Authority	Junior Boys 11-17yrs	Junior Girls 11-17yrs	Senior Women 18-55yrs	Senior Men 18-55 yrs
Erewash	1:128	1:2428	1:24177	1:527
Solihull	1:816		1:48,939	1:904
Maidstone	1:248			1:495
Middlesbrough	1:364			1:1,326
Milton Keynes	1:476	1:4,891	1:59,007	1:1,723
Nottingham	1:1,180			1:3,887
Sefton	1:488			1:1,462
Swindon	1:2,807		1:25,696	1:1,285
Test Valley	1:165	1:5,184		1:742
Basildon	1:981		1:44329	1:2504
Dartford	1:284	1:1224		1:1393
Thurrock	1:374			1:1,773
National Averages	1:1,481	1:15,926	1:72,518	1:1,333

The TGRs for junior boys and senior men's cricket shown in **Table 11.2** above are both above the national average and are higher than most of the examples from other local authorities. This high TGR for cricket, indicates a relatively low latent demand.

Table 11.3: Team Generation Rates for Rugby

Local Authority	Junior Boys 13-17yrs	Junior Girls 16-17yrs	Senior Women 18-45yrs	Senior Men 18-45 yrs
Chelmsford	1:220		1:31,080	1:2,324
Erewash	1:584			1:3985
Milton Keynes	1:2,462		1:22,752	1:3,139
Nottingham	1:9,940			1:18,710
Sefton	1:2,438			1:3,727
Swindon	1:836		1:40,044	1:5,271
Medway	1:366			1:3,597
Test Valley	1:432		1:20,722	1:2,844
Dartford				1:5452
Thurrock	1:1,599		1:10,547	1:2,208
National Averages	1:1,864	1:19,529	1:43,770	1:10,315

The TGRs for junior boys, senior men's and women's rugby shown in **Table 11.3** are all well above the national average and are higher than the examples from other local authorities. This high TGR for rugby, indicates a relatively low latent demand.

Table 11.4: Team Generation Rates for Hockey

Local Authority	Junior Boys 11-15yrs	Junior Girls 11-15yrs	Senior Women 16-45yrs	Senior Men 16-45 yrs
Chelmsford			1: 3,314	1:2013
Milton Keynes	1:3,801	1:3,569	1:7,802	1:6,707
Maidstone	1:579	1:831	1:3,962	1:1,637
Nottingham			1:4,502	1:3,178
Swindon	1:1,558	1:1,558	1:10,558	1:5,279
Test Valley	1:611	1:5,184	1:4,414	1:3,534
Dartford			1:3573	1:4365
Thurrock	1:1,713		1:11,187	1:8,436
National Averages	1:4,239	1:5,115	1:10,292	1:7,595

The TGRs for senior men's and women's hockey shown in **Table 11.4** above are below the national average. However, the TGR for junior boys is higher than the national average. This low TGR for hockey, indicates a relatively high latent demand among senior men and women.

The relatively high team generation rates in three out of the four pitch sports indicates a low latent or unmet demand.

11.2.3 Assumptions

A number of factors are built into the Playing Pitch Model (PPM) process. Firstly, that the temporal demand should reflect patterns of play. These have been assessed on the basis of the information obtained from League Handbooks and the responses to the questionnaire. The split in times of play has been based on the numbers of teams within each league that are based in the Study Area. The leagues have standard kick off times so it is possible to assess what proportion of teams are playing at peak times i.e. Saturday and Sunday. With regard to Youth Football, the main league is the Thundermite League which organises football on Sundays. The

League Secretary estimates that about half the matches are played in the morning and half in the afternoon.

Shaping Thurrock, Thurrock's Local Area Agreement (Partnership's LAA 2008/09 – 2010/11) has set the improvement target of an increase in adult participation in sport of 6.5% between 2006 (16.6%) and 2010/2011 (23.1%). This equates to an increase of 1.3 per cent each year. However, Active People 3 reported that adult participation in 30 minutes, moderate intensity sport had in fact declined by 1.34% between October 2006 and April 2009. On this basis a lower growth factor of 5% over the baseline level of participation in 2009 has been built in to the calculator to allow for increased participation up to 2016. Increased participation is likely to be stimulated by sports development initiatives and wider government programmes to increase activity. In addition a higher growth rate of 8% up to 2016 has been used to more closely reflect the LAA target increases in participation. Similarly, a lower growth rate of 10% and a higher growth rate of 13% above the 2009 baseline have been used for the period up to 2021.

The population projections used are those provided by the 2006-based subnational population projections which provide yearly population projections up to 2026 which is the time horizon for the LDF Core Strategy.

The Playing Pitch Model uses the population within the Active Age Groups for each sport to calculate Team Generation Rates. In calculating the future demand, the projected populations within the relevant age groups have been employed.

Although there are 5 STPs available for community use in Thurrock, there is very little evidence that these are used for league matches by any of the football clubs. They are used for training, mini soccer and five a side games. They have not therefore been included in the PPM on the grounds that to do so would provide a misleading result.

11.3 Playing Pitch Model Results

The results of the survey of clubs and the audit of playing pitches were entered into the playing pitch calculator to ascertain the current and future requirements for playing pitches in the Study Area. Two periods are considered - the period between 2009 and 2016 and between 2009 and 2026. The individual pitch sports are considered in turn.

11.3.1 Current and Future Situation for Football

11.3.1.1 Current Situation

The current situation with regard to football is summarised in **Table 11.5** below. For Football the Active Population is between 10 and 45 years.

Table 11.5: PPM Summary of Current Situation for Football

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or surplus											
Football Current Situation	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	46.7	17.0	17.0	18.6	54.8	-4.4	-24.6	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

The audit of pitches revealed that there are a total of 58 senior football pitches and 17 youth pitches in secured community use available in Thurrock.

The model calculates the number of games played on each day. The shortfall in provision occurs at the time of peak demand when there are not enough pitches in secured community use to meet that demand.

The current situation for football indicates that there is a shortfall in provision of 4.4 youth pitches at the peak times of Sunday morning and 24.6 pitches on Sunday

afternoon. However, there is a surplus of 18.6 adult pitches in Thurrock on Sunday morning and 54.8 adult pitches on Sunday afternoon.

If an allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches, which is recommended, is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 6.1 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 12.8 pitches. The shortfall in youth pitches would be 26.3 on Sunday afternoon and the surplus of senior pitches would be 49.0. On this basis there would be sufficient playing pitches available at all times.

The problem of the shortage of youth pitches would appear to be being resolved in a number of ways. It is likely that youth sides are using adult pitches. There is some evidence that youth games are taking place once senior games have finished. It is also possible that the number of games being played on some pitches is greater than the capacity of those pitches.

11.3.1.2 Future Situation

In the first instance, the future situation is considered up to 2016. A playing pitch assessment can only reflect the situation at one point in time. There will be changes in the pattern of supply and demand for all outdoor sports over time and after 5 years this assessment will have only limited value. For this reason it is recommended that the study should be reviewed after a five year period.

The results for the future situation in 2016 are shown in **Table 11.6** below.

Table 11.6: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2016 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	46.0	17.0	17.0	16.2	54.6	-5.7	-27.1	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

In calculating the future situation the model assumes that the number of pitches in secured community use remains static. However, demand changes partly because of changes in the population and partly because the model builds in growth of 5% as a result of increased participation stimulated by sports development initiatives and an increase in interest in healthy activity. This is evidenced in Thurrock by the growth in the popularity of Youth Football.

The future situation shown in **Table 11.6** assumes a growth rate of 5% and indicates that the shortage of youth pitches for football will be 5.7 youth pitches at the peak times of Sunday morning and 27.1 pitches on Sunday afternoon. However, there is a surplus of 16.2 adult pitches in Thurrock on Sunday morning and 54.6 adult pitches on Sunday afternoon.

The shortfall of youth pitches at the peak time of Sunday morning will only be met where there is a surplus of adult pitches available that are suitable and which are not in use at other times during the weekend period.

If an allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 7.4 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 10.4 pitches. The shortfall in youth pitches would

be 28.8 on Sunday afternoon and the surplus of senior pitches would be 48.8. On this basis there would be an overall surplus in pitch provision on Sundays.

The actual requirement for achieving a balance in provision of senior and junior football pitches at peak times of usage in 2016 under this scenario would be 42 adult pitches, 45 junior pitches and 42 mini soccer pitches. If a 10% allowance for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account, the requirement is 47 adult pitches, 49 junior pitches and 46 mini soccer pitches. This compares with the current level of provision of 58 adult pitches, 17 junior pitches and 25 mini soccer pitches.

With regard to the provision of mini soccer pitches, there is an assumption that just one mini soccer match is played on each pitch on Sunday morning and one on Sunday afternoon i.e. two matches per week. In reality, because mini soccer matches are of a shorter duration, it is reasonable to assume that each pitch will accommodate double this number of matches. On this basis the current number of mini soccer pitches would be adequate to meet demand.

Table 11.7: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2016 assuming 8% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	45.6	17.0	17.0	15.0	54.5	-6.4	-28.4	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

A growth rate of 8% is shown in **Table 11.7**. Assuming that the supply of pitches remains the same, the shortfall in youth pitches on Sunday morning would be 6.4 and Sunday afternoon 28.4. This shortfall is balanced by the surplus of adult pitches Sunday morning (15.0) and Sunday afternoon (54.5). Overall provision of pitches is therefore adequate in the future, based on these calculations. If an allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 8.1 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 9.2. On Sunday afternoon the shortfall in youth pitches would be 30.1 and the surplus of senior pitches would be 48.7. On this basis there is an adequate number of pitches available on Sundays.

Table 11.8 shows a growth rate of 10% with the supply of pitches remaining the same. In this case, there is a shortfall in youth pitches on Sunday morning of 6.8 pitches and a surplus of 14.2 adult pitches. On Sunday afternoon the shortfall is 29.2 pitches and the surplus of adult pitches is 54.4. Taking into account the 10% contingency results in a shortfall of 8.1 youth pitches and a surplus of 9.2 adult pitches on Sunday morning; a shortfall of 30.1 youth pitches and a surplus of 48.7 adult pitches on Sunday afternoon.

Table 11.8: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2016 assuming 10% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	45.4	17.0	17.0	14.2	54.4	-6.8	-29.2	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

Table 11.9 shows the position in 2016 with a 13% growth rate where again the shortage of youth pitches is slightly worse at the peak times on a Sunday although there is still a surplus of adult pitches. However, under this scenario, if the 10% contingency allowance is taken into consideration there would be an overall shortfall of two pitches on Sunday morning.

Table 11.9: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2016 assuming 13% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	45.1	17.0	17.0	13.0	54.3	-7.4	-30.5	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

Looking forward to 2026, if the supply of pitches remains the same and a growth rate of 5% is applied for the period 2010 to 2026, the shortfall in youth pitches on Sunday morning would be 7.1 and on Sunday afternoon 29.7. The surplus of adult pitches on Sunday morning would be 13.7 and on Sunday afternoon 54.4. Overall there are a sufficient number of pitches now and in the future, based on these calculations. (see **Table 11.10**)

If an allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 8.8 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 7.9. On Sunday afternoon the shortfall in youth pitches would be 31.4 and the surplus of senior pitches would be 48.6. The current number of pitches would therefore not be sufficient to meet demand on Sundays when the 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account.

Table 11.10: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2026 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	45.3	17.0	17.0	13.7	54.4	-7.1	-29.7	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

If a growth rate in participation of 10% is achieved the shortfall in youth pitches would be 8.2 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 11.6. On Sunday afternoon the shortfall in youth pitches would be 31.9 and the surplus of senior pitches would be 54.2. This is shown in **Table 11.11**. In this situation there would be very little flexibility in terms of meeting demand and it is highly likely that shortfalls in provision would arise. When the allowance of 10% for the rest and

recuperation of playing pitches is made, the shortfall in youth pitches would be 9.9 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 5.8. On Sunday afternoon the shortfall in youth pitches would be 33.6 and the surplus of senior pitches would be 48.4. There is therefore an overall shortfall of 4 pitches in these circumstances.

Table 11.11: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Football in 2026 assuming 10% Growth Factor.

Football	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Football Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	58.0	44.7	17.0	17.0	11.6	54.2	-8.2	-31.9	58.0	17.0	58.0	17.0

Clearly the situation of Ockendon Rhinos, a Thurrock based junior football club with 15 teams which is obliged to play at a location outside the borough indicates that there is unmet demand for youth pitches. Moreover, a high proportion of the pitches identified and included in the current supply of pitches are located on school sites. These have been included on the basis that they are normally available to community football teams outside school hours and at weekends. However, in many cases there is no formal agreement other than an annual lease arrangement and it is possible that as a result of changing circumstances these pitches could become unavailable in the future. For example, when an academy school is set up it becomes independent from the local authority. The ownership of the school building, its grounds and facilities are transferred from the local authority to the charitable trust running the academy. There is no guarantee that any community use of sports pitches will continue under the new arrangements.

Overall, it is therefore considered that the existing provision of pitches for football is not adequate to meet future demands up to both 2016 and 2026.

11.3.1.3 Pitch Capacity

Towards a Level Playing Field includes a provision for taking account of pitch capacity. The methodology acknowledges that the number of community matches a grass pitch can absorb is a function of the needs of other users and the quality of the pitch. On this basis pitches may not be able to take two matches per week.

Therefore, in addition to running the playing pitch methodology based on the actual number of pitches available, the model has been recalculated to take into account the apparent quality of the pitches.

There is no formula for calculating the carrying capacity of pitches as it is dependent on a wide range of factors, including the proportion of games that were cancelled in the previous season due to the poor condition of the pitch; whether the condition of the pitch has been declining year on year; the maintenance regime for the pitch etc. However, it is argued that information from the questionnaire survey, and an analysis of usage patterns facilitates the classification of each pitch into the categories listed in **Table 11.12** below.

Table 11.12 Carrying capacity for each type of pitch

Carrying capacity	Multiplication factor
Three matches (or more) per week	1.5
Two matches	1.0
One match per week	0.5
One match (or less) per fortnight	0.25

Assessments of the football pitches in Thurrock have been undertaken and pitch capacities adjusted accordingly. After application of the multiplication factor the number of pitches was calculated as shown in **Table 11.13** below.

Table 11.13: Pitch Capacity Adjustments

Type of Pitch	Actual number of pitches	Adjusted number of pitches
Mini	25	23
Youth	17	14
Adult	58	52

The net effect on the current situation would be to increase the deficiency of youth pitches to 7.4 pitches from 4.4 pitches on Sunday morning and to 27.6 pitches from 24.6 pitches on pitches on Sunday afternoon. These shortfalls would be balanced by a surplus of 12.6 adult pitches (surplus reduced from 18.6 pitches) on Sunday morning and of 48.8 pitches (surplus reduced from 54.8 pitches) on Sunday afternoon.

If the allowance for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account there would be a shortfall of 8.8 junior pitches on Sunday morning and a surplus of 7.4 adult pitches. There would be a shortfall of 29 youth pitches on Sunday afternoon which would be balanced by a surplus of 43.6 adult pitches.

However, the situation in 2016 based on the 5% growth rate without any allowance for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is that a shortfall of 8.7 youth pitches on Sunday morning which would be balanced by a surplus of 10.2 adult pitches. The shortfall of 30.1 pitches on Sunday afternoon is balanced by a surplus of 48.6 adult pitches.

If the allowance for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account there is a shortfall of 10.1 youth pitches on Sunday morning is not balanced by a surplus of 5.0 adult pitches. The shortfall of 31.5 pitches on Sunday afternoon is balanced by a surplus of 43.4 adult pitches

Overall, if pitch capacity is taken into account together with the allowance for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches, the number of pitches is not adequate to meet demand on Sunday morning.

11.3.1.4 Mini Soccer

There are 25 mini soccer pitches in Thurrock and the number of mini football teams is 78. However, the consultation with clubs indicated that numbers of children participating in mini soccer are increasing. Similar to most other local authorities, Thurrock continues to experience significant growth in mini soccer.

Mini soccer is played in a different way to youth and adult soccer with teams attending one venue to play a series of time limited matches. Mini soccer pitches are usually marked out on a temporary basis so it is difficult to model demand and supply. Whilst the PPM does not cater specifically for mini soccer, nevertheless the same principles can be applied.

The majority of teams play in the Thundermite Junior League (Boys and Girls) and the Echo Junior Football League both of which play their matches on either Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon. Other leagues include Chelmsford Youth League, Eastern Junior Alliance and Essex County Girls Football League. These leagues also play on Sunday. It has not been possible to establish whether teams are playing in the morning or afternoon but it is reasonable to split the games on a 50/50 basis. If all the teams in Thurrock played at home against teams from outside Thurrock there could potentially be 78 games being played on a weekend. Peak time demand in such a circumstance would be 39 games on both Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. A mini soccer match is played over two 20 minute halves. It is therefore reasonable to assume that each pitch is able to sustain three matches per week. On this basis there is capacity to accommodate 75 matches per week on the 25 pitches. There is therefore a shortfall of one mini soccer pitch to meet peak time demand in

these circumstances. Given that it is highly unlikely that such a situation would occur it can be concluded that there are only just sufficient pitches available to meet current peak time demand.

Participation in mini soccer is increasing rapidly both nationally and in the Thurrock area and demand for pitches will therefore continue to increase. If a 10% increase in the number of teams playing in the Thurrock area by 2016 is assumed, this would result in the potential for 86 matches to be played in a weekend. In this situation the peak time demand would be 43 games on both Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. On this basis there will be a shortfall of 4 pitches by 2016.

11.3.2 Current and Future Situation for Cricket

11.3.2.1 Current Situation

The current situation with regard to cricket is summarised in **Table 11.14** below. For Cricket the Active Population is between 11 and 55 years.

Table 11.14: PPM Summary of Current Situation for Cricket

Cricket	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Cricket Current Situation	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	11.0	1.2	5.7	11.0	11.0	1.2	5.7	11.0	9.8	10.3	9.8	10.3

The audit revealed that there are 11 cricket pitches available in the Thurrock area⁵⁹. Both youth and senior teams use these pitches. If youth and senior matches are played at different times during the day then there is an apparent surplus. However, the model only considers the number of squares and not the number of wickets

⁵⁹ There are two newly laid cricket squares at Gateway Academy but these were not considered to be playable at the time of the study. The cricket square at The Billet Recreation Ground has been de-commissioned.

available on each square. In the case of Thurrock this varies between 6 strips and 14 strips. Nevertheless, it would appear that there is a balance of supply and demand at the peak times of Saturday and Sunday.

The number of pitches does not include two new cricket squares at Gateway Academy. These squares are not used by any cricket club in Thurrock because they have been deemed to be unfit.

11.3.2.2 Future Situation

The future situation with regard to cricket is summarised in **Table 11.15** below. This assumes a 5% growth in participation between 2010 and 2016.

Table 11.15: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Cricket in 2016 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Cricket	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Cricket Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	11.0	-3.2	3.3	11.0	11.0	-3.2	3.3	11.0	9.2	10.0	9.2	10.0

The model indicates a shortfall of 3.2 pitches on both Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Overall, the number of cricket pitches in Thurrock does not appear to be adequate to meet future needs. If a 10% growth rate is applied the shortfall increases to 3.9 pitches on both Saturday and Sunday.

If the June Ridgewell Cricket Ground (Orsett Cricket Club) closes the number of pitches available will be reduced to 10 and the shortfall would increase to 4.2 pitches.

The situation in the Thurrock area could change if the impact of focus club status on local cricket clubs results in increased participation in cricket at the youth level.

Looking forward to 2026, applying a 5% growth rate results in a shortfall of 3.8 cricket pitches on both Saturday and Sunday afternoon. This is shown in **Table 11.16** below. The loss of the June Ridgewell Ground increases this to 4.8 pitches. However, this shortfall could be partially alleviated if the pitches at Gateway Academy were to be brought up to a standard that could accommodate community use.

When a 13% growth rate from the 2010 baseline is used, there is a shortfall of 4.3 cricket pitches in Thurrock. Provision would clearly not be adequate to meet future needs.

Table 11.16: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Cricket in 2026 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Cricket	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Cricket Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	11.0	-3.8	3.0	11.0	11.0	-3.8	3.0	11.0	9.1	10.0	9.1	10.0

11.3.3 Current and Future Situation for Rugby

11.3.3.1 Current Situation

The current situation with regard to rugby is summarised in **Table 11.17** below. For Rugby the Active Population is between 6-55 years.

Table 11.17: PPM Summary of Current Situation for Rugby

Rugby	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Cricket Current Situation	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	7.8	6.7	-1.5	2.0	7.3	7.3	-2.6	-2.6	10.0	2.0	10.0	2.0

The audit revealed that there are 10 senior and 2 junior rugby pitches in Thurrock. The model shows that for the current situation there is an apparent shortfall in the provision of junior pitches of 1.5 pitches on Saturday morning and 2.6 pitches on both Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. However, this is balanced by a surplus of adult pitches. In reality, both junior and senior games are played on the same pitches. There would not therefore appear to be an overall shortfall in provision.

11.3.3.2 Future Situation

The future situation with regard to rugby is summarised in **Table 11.18** below. A growth rate of 5% is used.

Table 11.18: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Rugby in 2016 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Rugby	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Rugby Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	7.6	6.4	-1.8	2.0	7.0	7.0	-3.0	-3.0	10.0	2.0	10.0	2.0

The future situation indicates that the apparent shortfall in the provision of junior pitches will have increased to 1.8 pitches on Saturday morning and 3.0 pitches on both Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. However, this is balanced by a surplus of adult pitches. Again, both junior and senior games are likely to be played on the same pitches.

Looking forward to 2026 and assuming a growth rate of 5% over the 2010 baseline the shortfall in the provision of junior rugby pitches is 1.9 pitches on Saturday afternoon and 3.3 pitches on both Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon. However, this shortfall is again balanced by a surplus of adult pitches. Whilst both junior and senior games are likely to be played on the same pitches there would appear to be a potential shortfall in the number of junior pitches available for rugby. (see **Table 11.19**

Table 11.19: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Rugby in 2026 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Rugby	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Rugby Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	7.5	6.2	-1.9	2.0	6.9	6.9	-3.3	-3.3	10.0	2.0	10.0	2.0

11.3.4 Current and Future Situation for Hockey

11.3.4.1 Current Situation

The current situation with regard to hockey is summarised in **Table 11.20** below.

Table 11.20: PPM Summary of Current Situation for Hockey

Hockey	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Hockey Current Situation	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	-0.5	-0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

The audit revealed that there is 1 sand based artificial turf pitch dedicated to hockey in Thurrock. The model shows in the current situation there is an apparent shortfall in provision on both Saturday and Sunday. However, the model only allows for 1 game per pitch per day. In reality, a sand based artificial surface can accommodate several games on one day so it is not considered that there is a shortfall in this case.

11.3.4.2 Future Situation

The future situation with regard to Hockey is summarised in **Table 11.21** below.

Table 11.21: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Hockey in 2016 assuming 5% Growth Factor.

Hockey	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Hockey Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	-1.2	-1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

Taking into account a growth in participation of 5%, future situation in 2016 indicates that the existing provision of 1 Hockey pitch will continue to be adequate to meet the needs for hockey on Saturdays and Sundays. However, this situation could change if the National Governing Body proposal to introduce a more competitive structure for junior hockey results in the formation of more hockey teams.

Looking forward to 2026, assuming a growth rate of 10% over the 2010 baseline, the shortfall in provision on both Saturday and Sunday changes only marginally. (see **Table 11.22**)

Table 11.22: PPM Summary of Future Situation for Hockey in 2026 assuming 10% Growth Factor.

Hockey	Stage 7											
	Shortfall or Surplus											
Hockey Future Year 2016	Saturday AM (senior)	Saturday PM (senior)	Saturday AM (junior)	Saturday PM (junior)	Sunday AM (senior)	Sunday PM (senior)	Sunday AM (junior)	Sunday PM (junior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (senior)	Mid Week 1 Tuesday (junior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (senior)	Mid Week 2 Thursday (junior)
Thurrock	-1.4	-1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	-1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

It should be noted that there are 3 sand based artificial turf pitches in Thurrock.

There are facilities at Chafford Hundred Campus and Gateway Academy. However, Chafford Hundred Campus does not have floodlights although the sand based artificial turf pitches at Gateway Academy could potentially accommodate hockey.

11.4 Other Outdoor Sports

The assessment of supply and demand for non-pitch sports covers tennis, bowls, netball, athletics, and golf. The Playing Pitch Methodology does not extend to the provision of these sports, so this section assesses the adequacy of provision for these sports by analysing supply and demand within Thurrock.

11.4.1 Bowls

There are 12 bowling greens at 10 locations in Thurrock. There is a good distribution of facilities with most areas being within reasonable access of a bowling green. The best served area is Corringham/Stanford – le – Hope where there are four bowling greens. The only area without provision is Tilbury/Chadwell St Mary.

Based on the clubs responses to the question in the survey about where their members live, a 10 minute drive time is considered to be a reasonable distance to travel.

There are 16 bowls clubs in Thurrock with 820 members. These are shown in **Table 11.23** below. All clubs have mixed membership. There are only 8 junior members. Of the adult players, approximately two thirds are male (63%) and one third are female (37%). Most of the clubs have membership somewhere between 40 and 60 players. The majority of clubs have the capacity to sustain a greater number of members indicating that supply is more than sufficient to meet existing demand.

In response to the questionnaire survey, half the clubs reported a decrease in membership and a third reported that membership had stayed about the same. Only three clubs reported an increase in membership. These were 3 of the larger clubs - Aveley, Grays Town and Thurrock Bowls Clubs. The trend is towards membership declining or remaining static.

Table 11.23: Bowls Club Membership

Club	Membership
Thames Sports BC	31
Fondu BC	32
Billet BC	34
Blackshots Senior Citizens	35
London Fire Brigade BC	43
United Services Bowls Club	45
Corringham BC	46
Orsett BC	46
Grays Town BC	47
South Ockendon BC	47
Chadwell St Mary BC	54
Pegasus BC	60
Drums BC	64
Aveley BC	67
Thurrock BC	67
Shell BC	102
Total	820

There is therefore an issue about the longer term viability of the clubs with a relatively small number of members. Some greens accommodate more than one club e.g. Blackshots. However, clubs such as the Billet, where the quality of the green and the changing facilities is poor and where there are only 34 members, are not viable. In this case there is another green in close proximity. This is the green at Stanford Recreation Ground which is the home of the United Services Bowls Club. Concentration of resources at this green could provide a more sustainable future for bowling provision in this area.

The NGBs for Bowls were awarded 'in principle' funding of more than £750,000 by Sport England to help deliver grassroots opportunities. The funding is to be used primarily to develop bowls and increase participation in the sport, in all its forms, through joint recruitment and retention projects. The increase in participation, in the over 65 age group will be measured by Sport England as part of the Active People Survey.

The numbers of people living in Thurrock is projected to increase over the periods 2009 to 2021 as shown in **Table 11.24** below.

Table 11.24: Numbers of people aged over 65 living in Thurrock 2010 to 2026

Year	2009	2016	2021	2026
Population	20500	24400	26700	29300
Proportion of Total Population	13.3%	14.9%	15.6%	16.5%

In the context of an ageing population, there would not appear to be any justification for any further consolidation of bowls provision. However, this situation may well need to be reviewed in the future, particularly where there are greens with clubs whose membership continues to decline.

11.4.2 Tennis

There are 25 tennis courts in 14 locations although only 14 courts are still in a usable condition. The derelict tennis courts are primarily located in isolated recreation ground settings.

Thurrock has one main tennis club, the Thurrock Tennis Club which has 100 members of which 70 are adults. In addition there is a club based at Palmers Sports Centre with 30 adults members and 15 junior members which provides coaching only. The Stanford Recreation Ground Users Group has refurbished the tennis courts and is currently discussing setting up a tennis club in association with the tennis club at Palmers College.

Nationally there has been an increase in participation in tennis. The latest APS results found that tennis is one of only four sports to see a significant growth in weekly participation. Demand for tennis facilities is therefore likely to increase in future. However, stand alone facilities are clearly not viable. Any new facilities will need to be considered as part of a mix of sports facilities such as those proposed for the multi sports hubs.

In response to consultation, the Lawn Tennis Association pointed out that the Tennis Foundation is seeking to improve tennis delivery in all Local Authority facilities; including Parks, Schools and municipal facilities. The Foundation has identified that there are approximately 10,000 park courts across the United Kingdom, together with probably the same number on secondary school sites. The Foundation considers that many of these courts could be used for free social use if they were in good shape, and coaches could offer coaching and competitive programmes throughout the year.

The Places to Play strategy seeks to renovate park courts and bring them back into use by addressing the historic underinvestment in parks and community settings.

The 'epark' initiative enables people who would like to play tennis to find their nearest public court and their nearest LTA qualified coach.

11.4.3 Netball

Thurrock has 50 Netball Clubs with a total of approximately 650 players over the age of 14. Of these around 150 to 200 are between the age of 14 and 18 and the remaining 450 to 500 are adult players. All these players are female.

The questionnaire survey revealed that the west of Thurrock i.e. Ockendon and Aveley are considered to be 'netball deprived' areas with no players at all coming from Chafford Hundred.

Membership of the netball clubs in Thurrock has increased over the last five years. However, the participation rate in netball nationally is predicted to decline by 0.1 percent from 0.4% to 0.3% between 2005 and 2013.

England Netball is to address the 'drop off' of participation by girls aged 16 to 18. The Back 2 Netball initiative is aimed at women, aged 16 years and older, who have stopped playing and competing in netball for a variety of reasons. If the levels of participation in netball in Thurrock are to be sustained and enhanced, facilities need to be in place to take advantage of the England Netball initiatives. England Netball supports the conclusion that there is a need to address the dearth of facilities in the west of the borough.

11.4.4 Athletics

The UK Athletics Facilities Strategy, Athletics Facilities Planning and Delivery 2007 – 2012, indicates that a hierarchy of provision is required for competition and training purposes. The firm, but not strict, criteria for the provision of outdoor facilities is one outdoor synthetic track (6 or 8 lanes) per 250,000 within 20 minutes drive time. This is achieved in Thurrock by the Thurrock Athletics Stadium at Blackshots.

11.4.5 Golf.

Thurrock is home to four 18-hole, one 9-hole and one 27 hole course totalling 108 holes. These are detailed in **Table 11.25** below. The estimated population of Thurrock in 2009 is 151,600. The ratio of holes per 1000 population is 0.71 compared to a ratio of 0.68 per 1000 for England and 0.81 per 1000 population for the East Region. It is therefore considered that there is adequate provision.

Table 11.25 Golf Course Provision in Thurrock

Club	Number of Holes	Length	Par	Access
Mardyke Valley Golf Club , South Road, South Ockendon, RM15 6RR	18	6106 Yards	70	Pay & Play
Belhus Park Golf & Country Club, Belhus Park, South Ockendon- RM15 4PX	18	5604 Yards	69	Pay & Play
Orsett Golf Club, Brentwood Road, Orsett, Grays- RM16 3DS	18	6682 Yards	72	Sports Club membership
St Cleres Hall Golf Club, London Road, Stanford-le-hope- SS17 0LX	9	910 Yards	36	Pay & Play
	18	6937 Yards	72	Pay & Play
Langdon Hills Golf and Country Club, Lower Dunton Road Bulphan Essex RM14 3TY	27-hole course with three combinations of 18 holes			Pay & Play
	Langdon - Bulphan	6436 Yards	72	
	Bulphan - Horndon	6371 Yards	73	
	Horndon - Langdon	6049 Yards	71	

The English Golf Union (EGU) does not currently have a recommended standard of provision, however this is likely to change as part of the England Golf Partnership (EGP) facility strategy. The EGU agrees with the conclusion that there is currently adequate provision in Thurrock. In the view of the EGU, the focus should be on developing the right structures at facilities in order to ensure the appropriate accessibility and affordability to get into golf and remain a regular participant. The EGU's GolfMark⁶⁰ accreditation would support this.

⁶⁰ www.golfmark.org

12. Conclusions

12.1 Context

Many national and local strategies and policy documents inform this Outdoor Sports Strategy for Thurrock. The key message from these documents is that this strategy should support the wider strategic objectives set out in these strategies by promoting and developing good quality opportunities for all sections of the community to participate in outdoor sports.

The rate of growth of Thurrock's population between 1991 and 2006 has been more than double the national and regional growth rate over the same period. Future growth is projected to continue to outstrip regional and national rates.

Thurrock has a young age profile with more people in the younger age groups and fewer people in the older age groups compared with national and regional figures. Thurrock has a lower proportion of people from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background than the national average.

The 'Active Population' is likely to increase over the period to 2026 with the 6 to 29 year age groups growing steadily in numbers between 2010 and 2026.

12.2 Trends in participation

The Active People Surveys revealed that the number of people over 16 in Thurrock who participated in sport or active recreation on three occasions a week for thirty minutes increased between APS 1(2005/6) and APS 3 (2008/9).

Nationally there has been a decline in participation in male adult 11-a-side football especially in Sunday morning football in recent years. At the same time there has been a rapid growth in Mini-soccer for children under the age of ten. The number of women and girls players is also increasing.

The FA have calculated 'conversion rates' for different types of football in Thurrock and these are higher for adult, junior and mini soccer compared to the average for England. These findings could indicate that there a significant level of latent demand which, if realised, would create demand for additional pitch provision.

There has been a reduction in the number of senior men playing rugby which has been offset in part by the growth of women's rugby and Mini-Rugby.

There has been a resurgence of interest and participation in cricket and since 2004-5 there has been a 51 per cent rise in participation in cricket. Membership is up by 40 per cent and the numbers of women and girls playing the game has increased by 48 per cent.

The downward trend in the popularity of hockey has slowed with more children now participating. Participation rates for tennis have remained fairly static although there has been an increase in young players participating in Mini Tennis. Bowls is experiencing a decline in club membership.

12.3 Football

12.3.1 Supply

The audit of pitches revealed that there are a total of 58 senior football pitches, 17 youth football pitches and 25 mini soccer pitches in secured community use available in Thurrock. This compares with the report on playing pitches in 2000 which found that there were 50 full-size pitches, 3 youth/junior-pitches and 8 mini-soccer pitches in secured community use.

Schools are the largest provider of football pitches in Thurrock, providing 19 adult, 9 junior and 15 mini soccer pitches at 12 sites of which 11 have changing facilities. There are 13 local authority sites providing 25 adult, 5 junior and 7 mini soccer pitches. Changing facilities are provided at 10 of these sites. Private sports clubs provide 15 adult pitches, 3 junior pitches and 3 mini soccer pitches at 7 sites, 6 with changing facilities.

The current situation for football indicates that there is a shortfall in provision of 4.4 youth pitches at the peak times of Sunday morning and 24.4 youth pitches on Sunday afternoon. However, there is a surplus of 18.6 adult pitches in on Sunday morning and 54.8 adult pitches on Sunday afternoon.

Sport England recommends that it is prudent for there to be a contingency allowance of 10% in the overall provision of pitches to accommodate the time required for

maintenance, improvements to pitches or pitches not being available due to waterlogging. This situation is currently achieved at the time of peak demand on Sunday morning when there are sufficient pitches to meet demand. If the allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 6.1 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 12.8 pitches. The shortfall in youth pitches would be 26.3 Sunday afternoon and the surplus of senior pitches would be 49.0. On this basis there are still sufficient pitches achieved by juniors playing on adult pitches.

With a growth rate of 5%, the future situation in 2016 indicates that the shortage of youth pitches for football will have increased to 5.7 youth pitches at the peak times of Sunday morning and 27.1 pitches on Sunday afternoon. However, there is a surplus of 16.2 adult pitches on Sunday morning and 54.6 adult pitches on Sunday afternoon.

The shortfall of pitches at the peak time of Sunday morning will only be met where there is a surplus of adult pitches available that are suitable and which are not in use at other times during the weekend period.

If in 2016 an allowance of 10% for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account the shortfall in youth pitches would be 7.4 on Sunday morning and the surplus of senior pitches would be 10.4 pitches. The shortfall in youth pitches would be 28.8 Sunday afternoon and the surplus of senior pitches would be 48.8. On this basis there would be sufficient pitches achieved by juniors playing on adult pitches.

The actual requirement for achieving a balance in provision of senior and junior football pitches at peak times of usage in 2016 under this scenario is 42 adult pitches and 45 junior pitches and 42 mini soccer pitches. If a 10% allowance of for the rest and recuperation of playing pitches is taken into account, the requirement is 47 adult pitches and 49 junior pitches and 46 mini soccer pitches. This compares with the current level of provision of 58 adult pitches, 17 youth pitches and 25 mini soccer pitches.

Whilst schools are the main provider of football pitches in Thurrock, it should be borne in mind that the availability of these pitches in the future cannot be guaranteed. One school, Ockendon School, has already withdrawn its pitches from community use. Thurrock's Building Schools Future Programme (BSF) includes Ormiston Park Academy which will replace Belhus Chase Specialist Humanities College. The school has pitches that are in community use and the availability of these pitches could change when the new Academy is opened.

There is a perception among Youth Football clubs that pitches are not being made available for junior football. One of the responses to this has been the development of 2 new pitches by Corringham Athletic at Old Hall Farm (Manorway Recreation Ground), Manorway, Coryton. Ockendon Rhinos feel obliged to play their matches at a location outside Thurrock.

The Aveley Sports and Social Club has now been leased to Grays Athletic and in future all that club's games will be played on this site. This may have implications for the teams that are currently based at this facility.

Thurrock FC received a Football Foundation grant to prepare a 10 acre site adjoining their ground at Ship Lane. This has been levelled and seeded and will provide at least 2 new full size pitches with dugouts and fencing from the start of the 2010/2011 season. Youth teams will mostly use these pitches.

There are a number of pitches in Thurrock that are currently decommissioned. These include pitches at The Billet, Chadwell Recreation Ground and Bulphan Recreation Ground.

The proposals to develop multi sports hubs at Blackshots and Belhus Park may increase playing field provision especially at Blackshots. The draft North Grays Masterplan proposes additional playing fields at Blackshots. There are also proposals for a significant expansion of Ockendon School's playing fields through the North Ockendon Country Park scheme.

12.3.2 Demand

There are 4,950 people in Thurrock registered as players with 104 football clubs and playing in 312 teams.

It is estimated that 73% of adult games are played on Sunday morning and 21% are played on Saturday afternoon. The remaining 6% are played on Sunday afternoon. Junior football is played on Sundays both in the morning and in the afternoon.

Players are travelling across the Thurrock area to play for individual clubs with 12 clubs who state that they draw players from across the whole of Thurrock. There are clubs with players living in the Grays, Chafford Hundred, Chadwell St Mary area and in Stanford-le-Hope/Corringham. However, there are 14 clubs that draw players solely from the Stanford-le-Hope/Corringham area. There are 3 clubs with teams that use pitches located outside the local authority area including one Youth Football club with 165 members that plays in Hornchurch and draws all its players from the Thurrock area. Approximately 1 in 3 clubs attract players who live outside the Thurrock area.

The membership of the majority of clubs has remained static. 1 in 4 clubs indicated that the club's membership was increasing. However, over 1 in 3 of the Youth Football clubs indicated that membership is increasing although almost 1 in 3 reported that membership was declining. 13 Youth Football clubs with over 50 members each account for over 2,640 participants in Youth Football. In contrast many of the exclusively male adult clubs are quite small often having just one team. The average size of the adult club is 21.3 players with 69 clubs having 1,473 adult members.

78 mini soccer teams who play in leagues have been identified. In addition, it must be borne in mind that Under 7's or Under 8's are not permitted to play in leagues which means that there will be additional demand for pitches from players in this age group.

There is some evidence of latent demand. Ockendon Rhinos junior football club with 15 teams are playing at Belhus Woods Country Park in the London Borough of Havering.

There is evidence of a small amount of cross border movement with one or two clubs from Thurrock playing outside the borough, notably in Basildon. However, this is balanced by one or two clubs from outside the borough, notably Barking and

Dagenham, playing within the borough. This situation is likely to change in the near future when Grays Athletic take over the Aveley Sports and Social Club.

Clubs are concerned about the high costs of renting pitches and this could be a factor that might inhibit future participation. Clubs are also concerned about the poor quality of both pitches and changing rooms, the availability of pitches and the availability of car parking.

Thurrock has a young age profile when compared to the national average. In particular, there are more people aged 0-14 and 25-44 with 1 in 5 people (20%) aged under 15 compared to 18% nationally and regionally. For pitch sports such as football the 'Active Population' is between the ages of 6 and 45 years and for cricket it is between the ages of 6 and 55 years.

Football in Thurrock has relatively high team generation rates. It is therefore likely that the growth in population will generate increased numbers of teams. These teams will need to be accommodated. The Playing Pitch Model calculations have taken account of this growth in population and a balance in provision is indicated. However, there is potential for a shortfall in provision in the future.

12.3.3 Quality

4 (4%) of football pitches achieved a score of excellent and 30 pitches (28%) achieved a "good" score. Over two thirds (69%) of pitches scored average or lower. The median score is 65% which equates to an 'average' pitch.

Clubs were asked to assess the overall quality of their main match pitch and 3 out of 5 rated their main match pitch as being good or very good with 1 in 5 rating their main match pitch as being moderate and only 15% considered that their main match pitch was poor or very poor.

Football clubs were asked to indicate whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface. The majority considered that the condition of the playing surface was about the same and only 18% that the condition of the playing surface was worse or much worse and 12% that the condition of the playing surface was better or much better.

The clubs were asked to rate the maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season and 67% considered this to be good or very good and only 11% that it was poor or very poor in this respect.

Clubs were also asked to rate the maintenance of their pitch during the season and over half considered this to be good or very good and just 16% that it was poor or very poor.

Clubs views on the best pitches played on during the past season focused on Pegasus Club, Belhus Park, Lakeside and Shell Club. The worst pitches were Blackshots, Corringham Recreation Ground, Belhus Park and The Billet.

3 out of 5 clubs stated that they did not use the match pitch for training.

Private clubs provide changing accommodation at 4 sites, the local authority at 11 sites and schools at 8 sites. The quality of changing accommodation varies considerably with scores ranging between 32% and 95%. The overall median score is 67% although the median score for schools is 86% compared with 57% for local authority and 65% for private club facilities.

Nearly half the football clubs rated their changing accommodation as being good or very good with 1 in 4 rating their changing accommodation as being moderate and 1 in 10 as poor or very poor. There are 8 clubs (8%) without changing accommodation at their home match pitch.

Clubs were asked to indicate whether there has been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the changing accommodation and 3 out of 5 clubs felt that the condition of the changing accommodation was about the same with 1 in 8 considering it was worse or much worse and 1 in 8 that it was better or much better.

The lack of suitable facilities for girls' and women's football would appear to be acting as a constraint on the development of this sector of the game. Many of the changing facilities assessed as part of the audit did not have segregated changing. This means that girls' and women's teams are obliged to play their matches, usually on Sunday afternoon, when boys' and men's games have finished. Moreover, the poor quality of some facilities is a barrier to potential female participants.

12.3.4 Overall Conclusions for Football

Taking into account Sport England's contingency recommendation of 10% and adjustments taking in account the carrying capacity of pitches, there is an overall shortfall in junior football pitches available to meet current and future demand at the time of peak usage on Sunday morning.

However, it should be noted that, in contrast with most other local authorities, schools in Thurrock are a major provider of football pitches. There is no guarantee that these pitches will all continue to be available in the future particularly with new Government's emphasis on Academy status.

The poor quality of some of Thurrock's football pitches is a key concern. There may well be a need to employ more resources to improve quality and increase the capacity of existing pitches. A good pitch can sustain three games per week, and a fully drained, well-maintained pitch may be able to take five. Selection of the best pitches, together with appropriate ground works could deliver a stock of pitches able to meet current and future requirements.

Existing 3G rubber crumb STPs and training pitches at schools in the east of the borough are well used by local football clubs although this is not the case with the facilities at Gateway Academy. Clearly, the use of the grass pitches at Belhus Park for training indicates the need for all weather pitches for training and 5-a-side use in the west of the borough.

Changing facilities present a significant problem. Users rightly expect to find that there are good quality changing facilities available when they wish to participate. It is not acceptable to have sites with football pitches that do not have changing facilities that are fit for purpose and of an adequate quality. There is a need for segregation and flexibility to accommodate young children, girls and women, and disabled users. This will be difficult to achieve in outmoded changing facilities.

There are insufficient youth pitches and there is a need to provide pitches with dimensions that are appropriate for the age of users. Reducing the number of senior pitches and reconfiguring them as mini/junior pitches could achieve this. However shortfalls in the provision of junior pitches could only be balanced if there are surplus

adult pitches available in the right locations that are suitable for being marked out for junior football, i.e. on sites in locations where the needs of junior football are not currently being met. Only those adult pitches that are surplus during the peak period of activity could be converted to junior pitches, i.e. Sunday a.m. Currently, there are surplus senior pitches in the peak period and this may not be sufficient to meet the peak junior deficiencies. Many senior pitches are used more than once over a weekend and in these cases it will not be practical to change pitch markings and goals from day to day.

The disposal of pitches could only be considered after a programme has been implemented of converting surplus senior pitches to junior pitches and after allowing for growth over the period to 2026 and allowing for 10% surplus as a contingency.

The Community Club approach promoted by the Football Association presents a way forward in terms of strategic direction. Concentrating resources on high quality, multi-team venues with good quality training and playing facilities will provide opportunities for players irrespective of age, gender, and ability.

12.4 Cricket

12.4.1 Supply

There are 8 cricket grounds providing 12 cricket pitches in Thurrock. The cricket pitch at one ground, The Billet, is currently not in use and the pitches at Gateway Academy are unusable. Youth and senior teams use the same pitches. The number of wickets at each ground varies between 18 and 6. The main provider is the local authority. Private clubs provide 4 pitches. The PPM indicates a shortfall in pitch provision both currently and in the future. However, the two squares at Gateway Academy are not used by any cricket club in Thurrock partly because of their unusable condition. In addition, the loss of the June Ridgewell Ground in Orsett and the pitch at the Billet will further reduce the number of cricket pitches available in the future.

12.4.2 Demand

There are 6 regular cricket clubs fielding a total of 49 teams of which 32 are adult teams and 17 youth teams of under 16's. Clubs play on both Saturday and Sunday afternoons and evening and four clubs also play midweek junior matches.

Two clubs are Clubmark accredited clubs, Belhus CC and Horndon on the Hill CC. Horndon on the Hill CC is a Focus club under the England and Wales Cricket Trust scheme.

12.4.3 Quality

The visual quality assessments of cricket pitch quality found that there are some good pitches, notably those maintained by the clubs themselves. However, with the exception of one club, the clubs only rated their pitches as moderate. The quality of changing facilities at most clubs is moderate.

Clubs were asked to indicate whether there had been any improvement or deterioration in the condition of the playing surface. Only one club felt that the condition of the playing surface was worse and two clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was about the same and two clubs felt that the condition of the playing surface was better or much better.

Clubs were asked to rate the maintenance of their pitch at the start of the season and during the season. Belhus CC considered maintenance of their pitch at the start and during the season to be very good. Grays & Chadwell CC indicated their pitch at Blackshots was very poor at the start of the season and very good during the season. The remaining clubs felt that maintenance was moderate both at the start and during the season.

12.5 Rugby

There are 5 locations with 10 senior and 2 junior rugby pitches. There are two local authority sites although in the case of Blackshots the pitches are adjacent to Thurrock Rugby Club and are used exclusively by the club. At Stanford Recreation Ground, the rugby club is a member of the users group that manages the changing pavilion. The three remaining sites are all private clubs. The PPM does not indicate a

shortfall in pitch provision either currently or in the future but this is only because junior sides are playing on adult pitches. There are only 2 junior pitches but there is demand at the peak time of usage for 4 junior pitches.

Stanford R.U.F.C. anticipates increasing the number of teams playing at Stanford Recreation Ground. To achieve this, a further pitch will be required in addition to the two existing pitches.

There is evidence that the junior sections at both Thurrock R.U.F.C. and Thames Sport R.U.F.C. are expanding. In addition both clubs report an increasing number of women playing the sport. Moreover, there is also evidence that the rugby pitches at Garron Lane are being overplayed. On this basis, current provision may not be adequate to meet existing and future needs.

A third generation dual use (3G rubber crumb) artificial grass rugby/football pitch to accommodate the training needs of the rugby clubs could probably be justified. This would need to be a 50-65mm long pile, non-abrasive carpet system that complies with IRB Regulation 22 and permission will need to be obtained from the RFU for its use.

Rugby pitches were assessed for their quality. The majority of pitches (9) were rated as 'Good' with the remaining pitches rated as 'Average' (5) or 'Below Average' (1).

Two clubs considered their home pitch to be very good and that maintenance was good and one that their pitches were moderate as was the maintenance of the pitches. However, changing is considered to be good.

Clubs are concerned about maintenance costs and storage facilities. One club needs more changing facilities to meet the needs of its increasing female membership. A need for more floodlit areas for training and all weather facilities is also identified.

12.6 Hockey

There is one hockey club in Thurrock which is the Thurrock Hockey Club based at Palmers College where they play on the sand based STP.

Thurrock HC has a total of 145 members although membership is declining. There are 10 teams, 4 of which are junior teams and 6 are adult teams. The club has

aspirations to increase the number of members and feels that the availability of a clubhouse would benefit membership. For this reason the club is seeking to relocate to a location where these facilities would be available.

There is a need to retain the Thurrock Hockey club in the borough either through the development of a club facility at Palmers College or through relocation to another site. The provision of a sand based STP or an England Hockey Category 3 Long pile (3G rubber crumb) surface pitch that satisfies the FIH 'National' performance parameter at the multi sports hub at Blackshots could provide a solution.

12.7 Bowls

There are 16 bowls clubs in Thurrock with 820 members; only 8 are junior members. Of the adult players, approximately two thirds are male and one third are female. The largest club is Shell Bowls Club with 102 members, followed by Thurrock and Aveley Bowls Clubs each with 67 members. Most of the clubs have membership somewhere between 40 and 60 players. Membership is generally declining although 3 clubs reported an increase in membership. Three of the Bowls Clubs are based at private clubs. Most of the other bowls clubs are based at greens either on or adjacent to recreation grounds and these are either rented or leased from Thurrock Council. Two of the bowls clubs are self managed – Fondu and Aveley.

There is a good distribution of bowling greens across Thurrock with only the Tilbury area not having reasonable access to a bowling green. There is a concentration of bowling greens in the east in Corringham and Stanford – le – Hope. Given the close proximity of the Billet green and the green at Stanford Recreation Ground, the low level of membership at the Billet club and the poor condition of the facilities, consideration could be given to rationalisation of provision in this part of the borough, concentrating resources at Stanford Recreation Ground to provide a better quality of playing surface with good quality ancillary facilities.

The increase in absolute numbers and the increase in the proportion of the population aged over 65 in future years could lead to increased levels of participation in the sport. This provides justification for the retention of the remaining bowling greens subject to their remaining viable.

Most league matches take place during the week and all clubs play friendly matches at weekends.

The bowling greens were assessed using an assessment sheet that was developed in partnership with Bowls England (formerly the English Bowling Association). The lowest scoring greens were The Billet, Corringham Recreation Ground and Orsett. The highest scoring greens were Pegasus, Fondu and Fireman's Sports & Social.

The lowest scoring pavilions were Fireman's Sports & Social Club, Corringham Recreation Ground and Fondu. Poor scores were often the result of there being no disabled access, dilapidated fixtures and no fire precautions. The best pavilions for quality were Aveley, Blackshots (Grays Town) and Pegasus.

Clubs were asked to rate the overall quality of their main home match green. Eleven of the nineteen respondent clubs considered that their home green was 'Good' or 'Very Good', four thought their green was 'Poor'.

Clubs were asked to name the three best greens they had played on in the previous season. The best green named by the most clubs was that at Fondu and the worst greens were The Billet and Corringham Recreation Ground.

Bowling greens are accessible to people living in the west and east parts of Thurrock. However, there is only one location, Blackshots, providing bowling greens in the central area around Grays. This means that people living in Grays, in particular, have relatively poor access to a bowling green.

12.8 Tennis

There are a significant number of derelict tennis courts in a number of recreation grounds across Thurrock.

Thurrock has one main tennis club, the Thurrock Tennis Club, although there is also a club based at Palmers Sports Centre. Membership of the Thurrock Tennis Club comprises about 100 in total. About 70 of these are adults, and there are 30 junior members. Membership has remained fairly static over the last five years. Members live all over Thurrock but mainly in Grays, Chafford, Ockendon and Stanford.

The club's premises comprise three asphalt courts and a pavilion. The club rates the quality of the courts as very good. The changing accommodation is also considered to be very good.

The club reported that finance is always a problem. The club's ambitions are to encourage more people to play.

The Users Group has refurbished the tennis courts at Stanford Recreation Ground and the potential to establish a new tennis club at the site in conjunction with Palmers College is being considered.

There is a lack of tennis provision in the west of the borough.

12.9 Netball

Thurrock has 50 Netball Clubs with a total of approximately 650 players over the age of 14. Of these around 150 to 200 are between the age of 14 and 18 and the remaining 450 to 500 are adult players. All these players are female. In addition there are approximately 200 junior players, all girls, aged between 9 and 14.

Membership has been increasing over the last five years. Members come from all parts of Thurrock but particularly from the areas of Stanford, Corringham, Grays and Tilbury. The west of the authority area is considered to be a 'netball deprived' area.

Matches and training all take place at the Regional Centre of Excellence at Hassenbrook School.

The courts at Hassenbrook are considered to be very good; changing facilities are considered to be only moderate as they are very basic but most players come ready dressed and do not use the changing facilities.

Problems affecting local clubs are finance with costs being very high. Another problem is the difficulty of finding volunteers, in particular, getting parents involved. There is a lack of facilities in the west of Thurrock which is inhibiting the development of the sport.

Future plans include trying to build links with local schools, particularly in the Ockendon/Aveley area, and trying to create a team from the Ockendon area. There is potential to establish the sport in the west through the Building Schools for the

Future programme and Academy Programme, possibly with the development of the Ormiston Park Academy (formerly Belhus Chase). The multi sports hub proposed at Belhus Park offers another opportunity.

12.10 Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)

There are five STPs all of which are located in and managed by education establishments. Three of these are sand based and two are rubber crumb 3G pitches.

The current level of provision appears to be comparable with national and regional levels of provision, although community use of the schools facilities is limited by curricular use during the normal school day and extra curricular use after school and at weekends.

The Facilities Planning Model report on STPs states that the number of pitches per 10,000 people in Thurrock based on 2 pitches is 0.13, compared with 0.2 in England, Essex and the East region. The best provision in the region is 0.6 pitches per 10,000. However, if the additional pitch at Gateway Academy is taken into account the number of pitches per 10,000 people is 0.2. Demand expressed for STPs in Thurrock is 3,700 visits per week, or the equivalent of 5 pitches.

On the basis of 2 pitches, satisfied demand is equivalent to 48% of total demand, However, if 3 pitches are taken into account the level of satisfied demand will be higher.

The report indicates that to satisfy unmet demand an additional 3 pitches are required. The report states that most unmet demand in Thurrock is due to lack of capacity at existing STPs. However, the STP at Gateway Academy is currently underused despite promotional efforts by the school.

The report concludes that there is sufficient unmet demand for about 3 additional pitches and that at least two additional community pitches can probably be justified. This figure is reduced to two additional pitches, if the pitch at Gateway Academy is taken into account.

12.11 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

The Sport and Active Recreation Facilities Strategy for Thurrock does not identify any need for MUGA provision. However, there are only two such facilities that are available for outdoor sports and these are both in the east of the borough.

MUGAs offer better value than tennis courts as they are suitable for basketball, netball, hockey, volleyball and tennis. There is a need for at least one of the MUGA types listed in **Table 12.1** in the west to cater for tennis/netball.

Table 12.1: Types of MUGA suitable for Netball

Surface	MUGA Type	Sport
Painted open textured Macadam	MUGA (Type 1)	Tennis / Netball
Open textured Macadam	MUGA (Type 2)	Netball / Tennis
Polymeric surfaced	MUGA (Type 3)	Netball / Tennis
Polymeric surfaced	MUGA (Type 4)	Football / Netball

This facility could be part of the multi sports hub proposal at Belhus Park or be located in an Academy school development.

12.12 3G Rubber Crumb Training Pitches

The strong demand for the training 3G rubber crumb pitch (60m x 40m) at Gable Hall School indicates that it would be appropriate to consider the provision of similar facilities in each of the main settlements in the borough to meet the needs for football and possibly rugby training. The possible locations would therefore be:

- Grays
- Aveley/Ockendon/Belhus/West Thurrock
- Tilbury

12.13 Athletics

Existing provision is adequate to meet both current and future needs. This view is supported by England Athletics.

12.14 Golf

Existing provision is adequate to meet both current and future needs. This view is supported by the English Golf Union.

13. Objectives

13.1 The audit and the assessment of need indicates that, in order to maintain and enhance outdoor sports provision in Thurrock, the following key areas need to be addressed:-

- Any quantitative surpluses or shortfalls
- Any qualitative deficiencies
- Accessibility
- The need to protect existing provision
- The development of a local standard
- The future management and funding of outdoor sports provision

13.2 Key Aims

The key aims of Thurrock Council's Outdoor Sport Strategy are to:

- provide a sufficient number of adult and junior sports pitches and other outdoor sports facilities to meet both current and future demand;
- ensure that the quality of outdoor sports facilities and ancillary changing accommodation meets the expectations of current and future participants;
- ensure that outdoor sports facilities and ancillary changing accommodation are easily accessible to participants;
- secure improvements in the operational management and maintenance of outdoor sports facilities and changing rooms.

13.3 Quantitative surpluses and deficiencies

Playing Pitches

In the context of a shortfall in the provision of grass football pitches to meet both current and future demand at the peak time there is a need to protect existing areas of playing pitch land in public, private and educational ownership located in Thurrock. There is a heavy reliance on school pitches in secured community use. If schools decide to withdraw their pitches from community use, as has happened with Ockendon School, the picture will change and there could be a further shortfall in provision.

The Need for a “Strategic Reserve” of Pitches

Sport England advises that there should *always* be a “strategic reserve” of pitches. The reasons for this are:

- There will usually be some pitches out of use because, for example, they are waterlogged or the surface is damaged and the pitches need to be “rested”.
- The demand for each of the different pitch sports is changing and it is necessary to keep the number of pitches for each sport under review. It may be possible to re-mark a pitch from, say, adult football to junior football; but a need for an additional junior football pitch does not automatically mean a local need for one less adult football pitch.
- There are initiatives currently to increase pitch sport participation over the next decade.
- There is a growing need for small-sided pitches for mini soccer, mini-rugby and other junior coaching initiatives.

This “strategic reserve” should be at least 10% and may need to be higher where pitch drainage is poor and levels of pitch use are high.

Objective 1.

To safeguard existing playing fields and outdoor sports provision from development.

Such protection should be afforded through the development of planning policies within the emerging Local Development Framework and would give the additional safeguard of making Sport England a statutory consultee on any planning application to develop a site.

Playing pitches should not be developed unless a playing pitch or pitches of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location would replace the playing pitches that would be lost as a result of any proposed development.

The former football pitch at Bulphan Recreation Ground is no longer used as a playing pitch. Whilst there are no immediate plans for this site to be used in the future it nevertheless could provide additional capacity, should the need arise.

Objective 2.

To meet shortfalls in the provision of youth football pitches in part through the development of additional sports pitch provision and in part by converting existing pitches of types that are assessed to be surplus to current demand (senior football) into those types for which there is a deficit (youth/junior football, mini-soccer).

The PPM analysis found that there is a surplus of adult football pitches and a shortfall in the provision of youth pitches. It has been assumed that youth teams are therefore playing on senior pitches at the peak times of demand. Converting senior to youth pitches could theoretically address a significant proportion of the deficiencies in youth pitch provision. However, this would need to be demonstrated in practice before any disposal is considered because there may not be enough pitches that are not needed for senior football to allow enough to be converted in practice to youth pitches.

Shortfalls would only be balanced if adult pitches were suitable for being marked out for youth football. Some surplus adult pitches may not be on sites that are suitable

for youth football or may be in the wrong places within Thurrock to meet needs of youth football. In addition, many senior pitches will be used more than once over a weekend and it will not be practical to change pitch markings and goals from day to day, it will only be possible to guarantee converting senior pitches to youth pitches where they are surplus during the busiest period i.e. Sunday.

Objective 3.

To ensure that there is an adequacy of existing and future pitch and outdoor sports facility provision in Thurrock through the adoption of local standards of provision and the development of new outdoor sports facilities.

An important outcome from a playing pitch strategy is the development of local standards of provision, in accordance with national planning policy. Such standards will:

- underpin negotiations with developers over their contributions towards new pitch provision to meet the needs of new residential developments
- provide an additional overview of the general supply of pitches/level of provision
- assist in protecting land in playing field use
- assist in benchmarking with other areas/authorities.

For each site, a calculation has been made of the area of land in the principal types of outdoor sport use. The areas were totalled and then related to the population to obtain an existing 'standard'. Estimates were then made of the land required to achieve a balance in provision in 2016.

Playing Pitches

The current level of provision is 0.81 hectares per 1,000 population (excluding STPs). This area is based on the average size of pitch together with an allowance of 50% for safety/run off. In addition a site multiplier of 15% has been applied to take into account changing, parking, landscaping etc. The measurement of the area of playing pitches in this strategy differs from the approach set out in 'Towards a Level

Playing Field'. The pitch sizes used in 'Towards a Level Playing Field' are those recommended by the 'Fields in Trust' (formally the NPFA). The approach adopted for this study has been agreed with Sport England and more accurately employs the pitch sizes recommended by the National Governing Bodies for each sport. The method is set out in **Appendix B**.

The number of playing pitches required to meet the demand in 2016 is shown in **Table 13.1**. These figures incorporate the 10% contingency recommended by Sport England.

Table 13.1 Number and Type of Pitches required for 2016

Type of Pitch	Number*
Senior football pitches	47
Youth football pitches	49
Mini soccer pitches	46
Cricket pitches	16
Senior Rugby	10
Junior Rugby	7

* Includes 10% contingency as recommended by Sport England

The area required for this number of pitches is then calculated. Relating this to the estimated population for Thurrock in the year 2016 provides a minimum target standard for provision for the period up to 2016. The standards are based on the total projected population for 2016 and not the Active Population, which is used for the Playing Pitch Model. The 2026 population projection has not been used as the basis for calculating the standards because of the difficulty of projecting the demand for outdoor sports up to 2026 with any reasonable accuracy. It is for this reason that the standard will need to be reviewed in 2016 for the period up to 2026 (**Objective 14**).

Table 13.2: Playing Pitches Local Standard of Provision

(A) Area of existing pitches in secured community use (hectares)	(B) Shortfall for 2016 (hectares)	(C) Hectares required by 2016 (A+B)	Allowance 10% for rest and recovery	Total Required	2016 Population	Hectares required per 1000 population
125.70	42.73	168.43	16.84	185.27	163600	1.132

The recommended standard is 1.132 hectares per 1,000 population. This standard incorporates the 10% contingency (see **Table 13.2**)

The standard will need to be reviewed in 2016 for the period up to 2026.

Synthetic Turf Pitches

There are 3 STPs in Thurrock which are available for community use. Community use provision equates to 2.34 hectares based on the standard dimensions of a full size STP. There is a requirement for 2 additional STPs based on the Facilities Planning Model assessment. The calculation of the standard is shown in **Table 13.3** below.

Table 13.3: Synthetic Turf Pitches Local Standard of Provision

(A) Area of existing pitches in secured community use (hectares)	(B) Shortfall for 2016 (hectares)	Hectares required by 2016 (A+B)	2016 Population	Hectares required per 1000 population
2.34	1.56	3.90	163,600	0.024

The recommended standard is 0.024 hectares per 1,000 population.

Multi-Use Games Areas

There are two existing MUGAs and a need for additional MUGAs. The calculation of the standard is shown in **Table 13.4** below.

Table 13.4: MUGAs Local Standard of Provision.

(A) Area of existing MUGAs (hectares)	(B) Shortfall for 2016 (hectares)	Hectares required by 2016 (A+B)	2016 Population	Hectares required per 1000 population
0.355	0.276	0.663	163,600	0.004

The recommended standard is 0.004 hectares of MUGAs per 1,000 population.

Bowling Greens

There is current provision of 13 bowling greens. Whilst levels of participation are declining, the increased numbers and proportion of the population over 65 justify the retention of 12 bowling greens to meet future demand. The calculation of the standard is shown in **Table 13.5** below.

Table 13.5: Bowling Greens Local Standard of Provision

(A) Area of existing bowling greens (hectares) ⁶¹	(B) Surplus (hectares)	Hectares required by 2016 (A-B)	2016 Population	Hectares required per 1000 population
4.97	0.38	4.59	163,600	0.028

The recommended standard is 0.028 hectares of bowling greens per 1,000 population.

Tennis Courts

There are 25 tennis courts in 14 locations although only 12 courts are still in a usable condition. There is a need to provide at least two courts in the west. The calculation of the standard is shown in **Table 13.6** below.

⁶¹ When paths, surrounds and pavilion are included the size of a bowling green is 3822m² per facility.

Table 13.6: Tennis Courts Local Standard of Provision

(A) Area of existing tennis courts (hectares) ⁶²	(B) Surplus (hectares)	Hectares required by 2016 (A+B)	2016 Population	Hectares required per 1000 population
8.28	1.38	9.66	163,600	0.059

The recommended standard is 0.059 hectares of tennis court per 1,000 population.

Athletics

The criteria for the provision of athletics facilities is one outdoor synthetic track (6 or 8 lanes) per 250,000 within 20 minutes drive time.

Golf

There is no recommended standard for golf course provision but the current provision is 0.71 holes per 1000 population and this meets current levels of demand.

Proposed Planning Policy Guidance

A number of key policy guidance principles proposed for new playing pitch provision are recommended. These are:

- All new or upgraded pitch and pavilion developments should meet Sport England, Football Foundation and the relevant national governing body for sport recommendations applicable at the time.
- Single pitch site developments will be discouraged. The priority is for multi pitch site developments.
- Where a residential development creates the need for new outdoor sports provision such additional provision should be made on multi pitch/multi sport sites either:

⁶² The typical club court which meets the Lawn Tennis Association Recreational Standard covers an area of 34.75m x 17.07m (0.6 ha) including back and side runs.
http://www.saa.gov.uk/practice_notes/s_to_z/mpc16.html

- through the creation of a multi pitch site funded by contributions from a number of developers where each individual development creates the need for less than two sports pitches, bowling green or tennis court, or
- through the provision of additional pitches on existing sites, or
- as a contribution to improving existing pitches/land and changing accommodation (or the provision of changing accommodation) to increase existing pitch capacity or bring redundant pitches into use.

The solution will depend on the specific development circumstances and location, but this strategy should inform the requirements.

Objective 4.

To promote a sustainable approach to Higher League Football

The presence of five higher league clubs in Thurrock each with their own stadium and associated facilities may not be sustainable in the longer term. It may be appropriate to consider 'ground sharing' to facilitate the long-term survival of these clubs.

The long-term sustainability of the higher league clubs should be supported by seeking to work in partnership with the five clubs to secure their future in Thurrock and potentially to develop partnerships in the development of the multi sport hub proposals. This should include examining the potential for facilitating ground share arrangements.

Any club seeking to be promoted to the higher league will need to institute ground improvements to meet league requirements. Support for ground improvements could assist with the development of football in Thurrock by encouraging young players to follow the natural progression to the Conference and fulfil their aspirations to play at higher levels.

13.4 Qualitative Deficiencies

Playing pitches

A poor playing surface will be detrimental to the quality of the playing experience and at times will result in the pitch being unavailable. Many factors can affect the quality of the pitch including slope, exposure (openness to elements), soil type, drainage and grass cover. These factors will have a major impact on the number of games that can be played on a pitch over a given period, and hence the overall pitch capacity. Factors such as drainage and soil type will also greatly influence the extent to which matches may be lost during periods of wet weather.

The quality of ancillary facilities such as changing, car parking, social provision and practice areas also determine whether the facility can contribute to meeting the demand from various groups and for different levels of play.

Objective 5.

To ensure that all existing sports pitches, bowling greens and tennis courts meet a minimum quality standard.

A realistic level of quality and standard for all pitches in Thurrock is the Performance Quality Standard⁶³, which is the minimum quality standard for the maintenance and construction of pitches recommended by the National Governing Bodies for football, cricket and rugby.

Club and ground staff should endeavour to achieve this standard through the effective management of the pitch. It is recognised that standards and desired parameters will probably not be achieved all of the time, especially as the season

⁶³ Facilities Guidance Note 3: Maintenance of Grass Pitches for Rugby. RFU 2006.

TS4 Recommended Guidelines for the Construction, Preparation and Maintenance of Cricket Pitches and Outfields at all Levels of the Game. England and Wales Cricket Board 2007

http://www.thefa.com/GetIntoFootball/Facilities/Performance_Quality_Standard.aspx

progresses. However, the intent should be to aspire to this standard throughout the whole year.

The Performance Quality Standard (PQS) sets the basic standard recommended for natural grass pitches, which may be located at a variety of locations including a club site, within a park or recreational ground. Principally, this recommends that a natural grass pitch must:

- Have adequate grass cover
- Low level of weed coverage
- Be flat
- Have the ability to drain water

If met, the PQS ensures a flat drained surface suitable for ‘recreational’ and competitive pitch sports.

The quality of sports pitches was assessed using the Visual Quality Assessment. The median scores for football, rugby and cricket pitches were as follows:

Football	65%
Rugby	75%
Cricket	84%

All pitches should at least meet this minimum standard.

Objective 6.

To develop a programme of improvement and maintenance for playing pitches, bowling greens and tennis courts.

It is recommended that the Council and all other providers should adopt a rolling programme of improvements to their playing pitches with a view to meeting the minimum quality standard for all pitches.

New residential development should contribute to the improvement of the quality of existing playing fields (and changing facilities) because the residents of such development will be using existing sites for meeting their needs. This requirement should be explicitly set out in the relevant Supplementary Planning Documents.

Priority should be given to locations identified as hub sites in the hierarchy of provision.

Football

Improvements could be achieved through:

1. Implementation of a programme of levelling and drainage improvements such as the re-instatement of sand slits to link up with existing drainage, at the following sites:
 - a) Blackshots
 - b) Belhus Park
 - c) Chadwell Recreation Ground
 - d) South Ockendon Recreation Ground
 - e) Horndon Recreation Ground
 - f) The Billet
 - g) Nutberry Playing Fields
 - h) Daisyfields
2. Initiation of a programme of re-turfing/re-seeding the worn areas of goalmouths and other areas of the playing surfaces of pitches that have

suffered damage. Where possible there should be sufficient space to facilitate variation in the layout of pitches to help them to recover from natural wear and tear.

3. Reducing the number of pitches at selected sites to allow pitches to be re-orientated and moved to reduce the impact of wear and tear.
4. Introduction of kickabout goals at sites that are subject to unauthorised use. Often children and young people will play casual games on pitches and inevitably will seek to use the area in front of the goals when goalposts are left in place. This leads to excessive wear in the goalmouth area. Some of the pitches at Belhus Park are particularly vulnerable to damage from informal football games. One way to counter this is to provide alternative facilities in the form of kickabout areas with goalposts away from the main pitch areas.
5. Co-ordination of the provision of grounds maintenance courses for clubs and organisations who are currently maintaining their own facilities.

Cricket

A cricket pitch should ideally be

- even throughout, with no undulations or depressions;
- well consolidated, giving good and appropriate ball bounce;
- covered with a dense sward of desirable grasses that have good root density and depth;

In addition, a well-prepared pitch should ideally be able to withstand the equivalent of three, five-hour games. The England and Wales Cricket Board suggested that a maximum of five matches per pitch during the season should ideally be observed⁶⁴.

The aim should be for a cricket pitch that plays well, is safe and is managed in a cost-effective manner. Pitches should conform to nationally accepted criteria (IOG Performance Quality Standards).

⁶⁴ Recommended Guidelines for the construction, preparation and maintenance of cricket pitches and outfielders at all levels of the game. England and Wales Cricket Board 2007.

Clubs should be encouraged to take advantage of the ECB Pitch Advisory Scheme⁶⁵ to obtain advice on the quality performance of pitches / squares and recommendations (where necessary) for any improvements.

This approach should be considered for the following sites:

- a) Blackshots
- b) Stanford Recreation Ground
- c) Corringham Recreation Ground
- b) South Ockendon Recreation Ground

Rugby

Implementation of a programme of levelling and drainage improvements at the following sites:

- a) Thames Sport R.U.F.C. (in accordance with the recommendations of the R.F.U. pitch advisor)
- b) Stanford Recreation Ground
- c) Blackshots

Bowling Greens

The playing surface of the bowling greens at the following locations is in need of improvement:

- The Billet (subject to it being retained)
- Corringham Recreation Ground
- Blackshots
- Orsett

⁶⁵ There are two bands of fees applicable to Pitch Advisers.
1. Prioritised detailed assessment - £250 (inclusive of follow up visits).
2. Basic Assessments - £75-150 (by arrangement with club).

Greens should ideally be even and level throughout, with no undulations or depressions. The surface should also be firm and with a complete coverage of desirable grasses.

Tennis Courts

There are a number of tennis courts that are no longer 'fit for purpose'. These are the tennis courts at:

- The Billet
- West Thurrock Recreation Ground
- Fobbing Recreation Ground

Action is required to either refurbish these facilities or seek alternative outdoor sports uses for the sites.

Given the lack of good access to tennis courts in the west of Thurrock, consideration should be given to the inclusion of tennis court provision in the proposals for the multi sport hub at Belhus Park.

Training Areas

Clubs need not only access to playing facilities, but also to training facilities. Given that most training during the season will take place during the evenings, these facilities need to be floodlit. Given also the inclement weather during the winter floodlit Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) are more likely to provide consistent training opportunities.

Objective 7.

To ensure that there is adequate provision of floodlit synthetic turf pitches and training areas that are fully accessible to community sports clubs.

Synthetic Turf Pitches

Training on grass pitches that are also used for matches leads to greater wear and tear and has a significant impact on pitch quality. The quality of pitches can only be improved if the measures taken to improve pitch quality are matched by the provision

of good training opportunities. Synthetic Turf Pitches provide opportunities for training and practice for football and rugby.

However, there is evidence that clubs in Thurrock are not making use of the STPs for training because of the high cost of hiring the facilities. This is particularly the case with Youth Football clubs.

It is therefore recommended that Thurrock Council examines ways of making these facilities more accessible and affordable.

MUGAs

There is potential to provide training facilities, particularly for football, through the provision of Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)

Changing accommodation

Objective 8

To ensure that changing accommodation meets a minimum quality standard.

The quality of existing changing rooms does not meet the expectations of many users.

Changing room designs and layouts should follow the minimum standards which are acceptable to the National Governing Bodies. Pavilions and changing rooms should be in conformity with the minimum quality standards set out by Sport England.⁶⁶ The Sport England Guidance concentrates on pavilions that are free-standing and designed primarily for cricket, football, hockey and rugby. The recommendations also apply to pavilions for bowls, tennis and athletics, and to outdoor changing facilities that form part of a sports centre. The standards outlined can be applied to the upgrading of existing accommodation. In addition facilities should comply with Sport England Access for Disabled People Guide to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Playing pitches changing facilities

⁶⁶ Guidance Note - Pavilions and Clubhouses (Ref: 798R, ISBN 1 86078 090 7) 1999.

There is a need to ensure that the quality of changing facilities at all first and second tier⁶⁷ locations meets the minimum quality standard.

The lack of segregated changing rooms is considered to be an impediment to the development of women's football.

Associated with the changing rooms is the issue of car parking which is inadequate and not secure in some locations.

Actions to improve the quality of changing facilities

It is recommended that all facility providers should adopt a rolling programme of improvements to changing facilities, such that all eventually conform with at least the 'average' standard set out in the Sport England Visual Quality Assessment.

Particular attention should be paid to:

- Provision for use by women and girls.
- Access and use by people with disabilities.
- Provision of fire precautions.
- Child Protection - adults should not change or shower at the same time as youth teams using the same facilities.⁶⁸

This particularly applies to locations that have been identified as hub sites in the hierarchy of provision where there are sub-standard changing facilities. Sites identified for improvement are as follows:

- a) Belhus Park
- b) Blackshots
- c) South Ockendon Recreation Ground
- d) Nutberry Playing Fields
- e) Horndon Recreation Ground

⁶⁷ See Accessibility for definition of first and second tier.

⁶⁸ http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu/helpandadvice/organisations/clubguidelines/clubguidelines_wda60689.html#Changing_rooms

- f) Corringham Recreation Ground
- g) The Billet
- h) Chadwell Recreation Ground
- i) Orsett Recreation Ground
- j) Daisyfields

However, there are issues about security at Daisyfields and any new changing facilities will need to be designed, following 'Secured by Design' principles, to achieve a good standard of security.

Bowling Greens Changing Facilities

There is a need to improve the facilities at the following locations:

- Orsett Bowling Green
- The Billet
- South Ockendon Recreation Ground
- Corringham Recreation Ground

13.5 Accessibility

Sports pitches will only have value to the local community if they are able to be reached by those who want to use them. Sports pitches that are inaccessible will have little relevance in terms of meeting identified local needs. Centralising a number of sports pitches on a single municipal site will have major effects on accessibility, particularly for young people and those without a car. Local community pitches are still needed to meet local need. At the same time, the majority of the community must consider the cost of use reasonable and affordable.

In addition there is a requirement to provide people with disabilities with full access to all sports facilities. Full access means being able to make full use of the facility as a participant, spectator or as a member of staff. Pavilions and changing facilities should comply with the Sport England Access for Disabled People Guide to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This guidance note presents the minimum requirements for achieving good access.

Objective 9.

To ensure that all existing and future sports pitch provision is easily accessible to all members of the local community who wish to use them.

Hierarchy of provision

In looking at the relative value of facilities, a hierarchy has been developed to guide future investment in the improvement of pitches. This hierarchy seeks to reflect the role and value of local authority, school and private pitches. There is a need to provide facilities which enable progression through various stages of competitive play, i.e. are there facilities to cater for the various standards of league competition played by local teams?

Playing pitch provision is not just about grass facilities; access to STP facilities, MUGAs and training areas to facilitate training and junior development is similarly important.

The aim has been to design a hierarchy to suit the local context of Thurrock which satisfies the different aspirations of users. The hierarchy set out in **Figure 1** provides a framework for future provision.

Figure 1: Hierarchy for playing pitches

Tier One	Belhus Park Hub Site						Blackshots Hub Site					
	Secondary Hub Site		Secondary Hub Site		Secondary Hub Site		Secondary Hub Site		Secondary Hub Site		Secondary Hub Site	
Tier Two	Local Provision		Local Provision		Local Provision		Local Provision		Local Provision		Local Provision	
Tier Three	Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games	
Tier Four	Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games		Casual games	

The hierarchy allows for progression by individuals from learning basic skills at an early age in a 'doorstep' location, moving on to becoming members of a local team playing on a pitch close to their local community and finally playing with a larger club that may be located at a 'hub' site.

Within the diagram:

- the **hub** level represents the peak of the hierarchy and might cater for clubs in regional leagues. Facility requirements will be commensurate with the standard of play and might include spectator facilities, floodlighting and so on. The catchment for this type of facility is the 20 minute drive time. (**Tier 1**).
- the **secondary hub** level offers facilities for those teams that have reached a good standard of play and are playing regular league matches where there may be requirements for well-drained, 'true' playing surfaces and changing facilities. This type of facility will also attract users from a wider area with a 20 minute drive time. (**Tier 2**).
- the **local** level offers facilities for those clubs on the lowest rungs of regular competitive play, where changing accommodation will normally be available and pitches will be of a reasonable quality. Local facilities indicate a walking distance of between 1,000 metres to 1.6km. (**Tier 3**).
- the **casual** level of the hierarchy would include kick-about areas, five-a-side pitches, MUGAs and 'rough' pitches for casual use which encourage initial participation. These should be within easy walking distance from the place of residence, indicating a catchment of around 800 to 1000 metres walking distance. (**Tier 4**).

Informal facilities clearly play an important part in the local hierarchy of provision. Their provision should not be considered in isolation from formal facilities.

For the purpose of the Outdoor Sports Strategy, hub sites are considered primarily as facilities which provide multi-sport and multi-activity opportunities. However, Sport England's concept of hub sites goes beyond this. They see the facilities as a method for improving the coaching and voluntary workforce. Therefore, the model for a hub site is effectively a campus style facility at which a number of sports take place, and within which there will be benefits from the common elements of organised sport and physical activity. These common elements would include:

- Coaching and coach education
- Administration and facilities

- Changing and social provision
- Training and conditioning
- Child protection
- Club development

The centre of the hub may be a school or leisure centre and the overall concept embraces neighbouring or “satellite” hub sites that are able to add value, as additional, complementary opportunities through their being associated with the core facility. The hub concept therefore calls for a shift in outlook away from the traditional sports approach.

The cohesion between each part will be vital in ensuring that individuals can readily access the activity that attracts them. As their skills develop, individuals will also be better placed to be able to find pathways to the level of participation or performance to which they aspire.

These multi-sport, multi-activity sites will provide opportunities to establish common management structures. They also represent an optimum basis for planning, and the allocation of resources, whilst providing for effective co-ordination of membership, fees, and promotion.

The hubs will enable economies of scale to be realised. These include:

- changing facilities that service different sports;
- a direct contribution from STP income;
- grass pitches that can be more frequently let, due to their improved condition; and,
- improved security, through controlled access and increased presence (where a school or leisure centre site is used).

The Football Association has developed the concept of the ‘Sports Village’ which extends the multi sports hub model developed by Sport England by combining sports facilities with a range of other community services such as schools, colleges, health centres, dental surgeries, youth centres etc. An example of this type of facility is that

provided by Tooting and Mitcham.

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy for Thurrock⁶⁹ recommended that:

‘The principle of providing two main sports hubs at the Blackshots and Belhus areas should be further explored and an options appraisal carried out.’

This report also stated that there is a need for a hierarchy of facilities and sports hubs providing a quality network of facilities.

The North Grays Masterplan prepared for Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation also develops the concept of the ‘Community Hub’ at Blackshots.

The Local Development Framework also includes proposals for multi sport hubs. Several clubs have indicated an intention to relocate to a better location. Clubs of this stature could provide an ‘anchor’ for the development of football at these sites.

The recommended Thurrock hub sites therefore are:

a) Belhus Park where the proposal is to have core provision of 12 adult/junior football pitches and a full sized Synthetic Turf Pitch. There is also potential for a football stadium with total capacity of 1,500 -2,000 spectators and a MUGA⁷⁰.

Potential secondary hub sites include:

- i) Thames RUFC
- ii) Lakeside Football Ground
- iii) South Ockendon Recreation Ground

b) Blackshots where the proposal is to have core provision of 14 adult/junior football and 8 mini soccer pitches; a stand-alone cricket pavilion, 4 new rugby pitches; 4 tennis courts and a full sized Synthetic Turf Pitch. There is also potential for a football stadium with total capacity of 4,000-5,000 spectators, a MUGA and possibly a 5-a-side centre.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Sport and Active Recreation Strategy for Thurrock /Executive Summary and Recommendations/October 07 Strategic Leisure

⁷⁰ The core provision proposed will need to be reviewed in the light of the findings of this study.

⁷¹ The core provision proposed will need to be reviewed in the light of the findings of this study.

Potential secondary hub sites include.:

- i) Stanford Recreation Ground/The Billet
- ii) Chadwell Recreation Ground/Orsett Recreation Ground

The application of the hierarchy to outdoor sports provision is shown in **Table 13.7** below.

Table 13.7: Hierarchy of Provision in Thurrock

Hierarchy	Belhus Park	Blackshots
<i>Central Hub Sites (Tier One)</i>	Belhus Park	Blackshots
<i>Secondary Hub Sites (Tier Two)</i>	Thames RUFC	Stanford Recreation Ground/ The Billet
	Lakeside Football Ground	Orsett Heath/ Chadwell Recreation Ground
	South Ockendon Recreation Ground	

Additional Playing Pitches

Potentially, there is land available adjacent to Belhus Park which could provide additional playing pitches as part of a new multi sports hub which could address any shortfall in provision in the future. It is possible that additional pitches could be included in the multi sports hub development at Blackshots.

New playing pitches, funded by the Football Foundation, will be provided at Ship Lane by Thurrock F.C. At this stage the number and size of pitches is not known.

Bowling Greens

Bowling greens and pavilions should be accessible to people with disabilities to help club members to become fully integrated into their local clubs and play in league games, matches and competitions at club and higher levels.

Tennis

Tennis courts and changing facilities should enable tennis to become affordable and accessible to people of all ages and abilities, all the year round.

Netball

Given the lack of good access to netball provision in the west of Thurrock, consideration should be given to the inclusion of netball courts in the proposals for the multi sport hub at Belhus Park.

Accessibility Standard

Consultation undertaken for the Community Needs assessment indicated that the majority of people walk to outdoor sports facilities. The accessibility standard is therefore mainly based on walking distance.

There is no accessibility standard for playing pitches. This is because it is not possible to identify a given catchment area for playing pitches. To do so would misrepresent the actual travel patterns involved and would not be related to the location of demand, capacity of the pitches or reflect the different levels of play. In the case of Thurrock it is clear that players are prepared to travel a significant distance in order to be able to play for specific teams. This may be because they wish to play under a particular coach or are will to travel to a location with good quality pitches and facilities. A catchment area would therefore give a misleading impression about the total picture of supply and demand.

The accessibility standard for different types of outdoor sports provision are shown in **Table 13.8** below.

Table 13.8: Accessibility Standards

Type of Outdoor Sports Facility	Accessibility Standard
Playing Pitches	Not Applicable
Bowls	15 minute walking time (1200 metres)
Tennis	15 minute walking time (1200 metres)
STP	20 minute drive time (approximately 7 miles straight line distance)
MUGA	10 minute drive time (approximately 3.5 miles straight line distance) or 10 minute walking time (800 metres)

Objective 10.

To make available the outdoor sports facilities together with access to toilet/changing facilities at schools in Thurrock for use by the community outside school hours.

Community use of education facilities

The opening up of school sports facilities is a cost effective means of maximising access for all in the community to sporting opportunities. The challenge is to promote and manage community use in ways which will achieve worthwhile results in terms of sport and generate community satisfaction, without being in any way detrimental to the over-riding educational role of the school or socially exclusive. Schools themselves can benefit from a widening of networks with a whole range of other organizations such as local sports clubs and an improved relationship with their communities.

School sports pitches could potentially provide a valuable resource in providing opportunities for local people and sports organisations to participate in sport and physical activity and to develop their skills. Opening up school facilities could provide the opportunity to address quantitative deficiencies in sports pitch provision and ensure that residents have access to facilities close to their homes.

Whilst the community use of sports pitches in schools seeks to make optimal use of existing resources there are some issues which need to be considered, including:

- the capacity of school pitches to accommodate both curricular use in school time and community use 'out of hours' without detriment to the quality of the playing surface;
- the poor quality of the playing surface of many school sports pitches with poor drainage and low quality of maintenance;
- difficulties of providing access to changing facilities;
- problems of availability during school terms; and
- change of pitch use from football to cricket for curricular use may not coincide with the requirements of community use terms.

In addition, there are discussions about the possibility of Ormiston Park Academy in Aveley replacing Belhus Chase School.

Thurrock Council's Primary Strategy for Change was submitted and approved by Government in January 2009. The Council was granted a total of £8.3m for 2009/10 and 2010/11. There may be opportunities to negotiate community access to new facilities such as MUGAs and junior football pitches.

Access to existing and proposed school facilities by the general community will be secured through the following actions:-

- a) Securing Community Use Agreements for new football pitches for use by local junior football teams.
- b) Securing Community Use Agreements for school sites in Thurrock where there is potential for existing playing pitches to be used by community teams without detriment to the requirements for curricular use.
- c) It might not be appropriate to develop secured community use agreements with all schools, but priority should be given to securing agreements with the following schools:
 - (i) The Grays;

- (ii) The Ockendon;
 - (iii) William Edwards;
 - (iv) Hassenbrook
 - (v) Gable Hall;
 - (vi) Ormiston Park Academy (subject to discussions).
- d) MUGAs at primary schools have the potential to provide casual (Tier 4) opportunities for children and young people living in the locality of the school. There is potential to secure greater community access to these facilities.
- e) Community Use Agreements should include securing community access to STP provision on school sites.

13.6 Management

Self Management

Objective 11.

To consider the introduction of self management agreements for outdoor sports facilities and changing facilities to be managed by individual sports clubs.

Responsibility for running outdoor grassed pitches and changing facilities has been handed over to users in a number of successful self-management arrangements in Thurrock. Aveley Bowls Club has a self management agreement which gives the club greater control over facilities and longer term sustainability of their facilities. The key to the success of this club is the presence of two individuals with the drive and enthusiasm to make the club a success. This may not be the situation with all clubs.

Self management has the benefit of empowering the community to manage the facilities they use, instilling ownership and pride. In addition, there is the potential for facilities to be better maintained and it could help to reduce vandalism. Other

benefits include an increase in help from volunteers, improved partnership working with local community groups, and an increase in external funding, often match funding for Football Foundation grants to improve facilities. This could lead to cost savings for both the council and the clubs in terms of administration and officer time. The potential result would be the long term sustainability of high quality local community facilities.

If suitable arrangements could be put into place, self-management could help support the long term development of facilities at other sites.

Funding Opportunities

Objective 12.

To maximise external funding opportunities.

The Council will need to maximise its ability to secure external funding for improving pitch facilities and working in partnership with other agencies as an important means of unlocking additional funding sources.

- (a) The Council should work with the Essex County FA and the Football Foundation to improve facilities for football and other sport in local communities.
- (b) The Council should work with the National Governing Bodies for Cricket, Rugby and Hockey to secure additional funding for facility improvement.
- (c) The Council could seek to work in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association to help support the Stanford-le-Hope Recreation Ground User Group (S.R.G.U.G.) to establish a tennis club at Stanford Recreation Ground.
- (d) There is little evidence that the Council has sought to engage with the National Governing Bodies for Bowls (Bowls England). Whilst this body does not have access to external funding, a number of clubs that are currently struggling to survive could benefit from their support. In addition there may be opportunities to secure loans for improvements to facilities.

A number of other funding potential sources could support improvements to outdoor sports provision. These can be found in **Appendix F**.

Objective 13.

To secure Planning Obligations and Section 106 Agreements

The Local Development Framework will be the statutory instrument for implementing the Thurrock Outdoor Sport Strategy through the planning process. Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 can secure the provision of recreational, sports, and other community facilities as part of new developments. Government Circular 05/05 gives further guidance on the use of Section 106 agreements.

On-site provision or developers' contributions to off-site provision

The need for on-site provision or developers' contributions to off-site provision may arise from applications for two types of development:

- Residential applications where development creates the need for outdoor sports provision in the area.
- Applications relating to the redevelopment of existing outdoor sports provision for some other use i.e. replacement of lost facilities.

These types of development require the application of adopted provision standards. The standards of provision determine whether there is a deficiency or surplus in terms of accessibility, quality and/or quantity deficiency, within a defined area. This will determine the need for either additional provision or the enhancement of existing provision.

The process proposed for considering planning obligations relating to new housing includes five steps by which the scale of any contributions due will be calculated. Developers would need to enter into discussion with the Council at an early stage in the development process in order to determine the likely outdoor sport requirements for their schemes.

The five steps start with the consideration of whether the scheme contains eligible types of development. If the scheme does include eligible types of development, the requirements for outdoor sport can be calculated based on the standards of provision. A determination of whether the provisions should be on site or off site

constitutes the third step. If the provision is off site the level of contribution can then be calculated. Step five covers the calculation of commuted maintenance sums.

Details of the recommended approach to the calculation of developer contributions can be found in **Appendix G**. This approach could be included in the policy and guidance on Planning Obligations when this element of the LDF is finalized.

Objective 14.

To undertake regular monitoring and review of this strategy

It is important that this strategy is monitored and reviewed. Sport England recommends a review of Playing Pitch Assessments (PPA) every 2 years or every five years if annual monitoring of supply and demand takes place.

Monitoring should be based on a number of indicators including:

- changes in the levels of pitch and facility bookings each season;
- changes in the number of outdoor sports facilities available each season;
- changes in the numbers of clubs and teams for each of the outdoor sports;
- changes in the quality of facilities, including sports pitches.

It may be appropriate to hold an annual liaison meeting with NGB representatives which the needs of their sport are changing.

Changes in demand and supply mean that it will be necessary to undertake a fundamental review in 2016 when all aspects of the Strategy will need to be reassessed. The review will develop a revised strategy that will cover the period 2016-2026 to ensure consistency with the Local Development Framework (LDF) plan period which ends in 2026.

14. ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	LEAD/PARTNER	PRIORITY	TIMESCALE
<p>Objective 1: To safeguard existing playing fields and outdoor sports provision from development.</p>	<p>Develop planning policies within the emerging Local Development Framework based on the policy principles (NE10.1) guiding the determination of applications affecting playing fields.</p> <p>Planning permission to develop on playing fields and other outdoor sports facilities should be refused unless:</p> <p>(i) the proposed development is ancillary to the use of the site as a playing field (e.g. new changing rooms) and does not adversely affect the quantity or quality of pitches and their use</p> <p>(ii) the proposed development only affects land which is incapable of forming a</p>	<p>Sports and Leisure/Planning</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Short Term</p>

	<p>playing pitch (or part of one)</p> <p>(iii) the playing fields that would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by a playing field or fields of equivalent or better quantity and quality and in a suitable location; or</p> <p>(iv) the proposed development is for an outdoor or indoor sports facility of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to outweigh the loss of the playing field.</p>			
<p>Objective 2: To meet shortfalls in the provision of youth football pitches in part through the development of additional sports pitch provision and in part by converting existing pitches of types that are assessed</p>	<p>Development of two multi sport hubs at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackshots • Belhus Park 	<p>Sports and Leisure</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>

This will require the following detailed actions:

- Identify community needs.

<p>to be surplus to current demand (senior football) into those types for which there is a deficit (youth/junior football, mini-soccer).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the outdoor sports facility mix. • Consideration of capacity and location of changing accommodation. • Consideration of what facilities could be provided by the Private Sector • Consideration should be given to other activities / organisations who may be based on the site. • Development of a Masterplan 			
	<p>Development of two second tier hubs linked to Blackshots at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chadwell Recreation Ground/Orsett Heath • Stanford Recreation Ground/Billet 	<p>Sports and Leisure</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium Term</p>

	<p>Recreation Ground/Mobil Fields</p> <p>Development of three second tier hubs linked to Belhus Park at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames RUFC • Lakeside Football Ground • South Ockendon Recreation Ground <p>Test the feasibility (in terms of type of facilities, location, local need and cost) of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-profiling and drainage of existing public playing pitches; • new sports pitches (sizes to be determined); • ancillary facilities including changing rooms (number to be determined), store room, office, 			
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	<p>etc;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provision of adequate car parking to serve playing pitches. <p>The aim will be to ensure that the proposed development reflects local need and that local stakeholders are appropriately consulted.</p>			
	Support Orsett Cricket Club in the development of a second pitch to compensate for the loss of the current second team pitch.	Sports and Leisure	High	Short Term
	Provide third rugby pitch at Stanford Recreation Ground	Sports and Leisure	High	Short Term
<p>Objective 3: To ensure that there is an adequacy of existing and future pitch and outdoor sports facility provision in Thurrock</p>	<p>Formal adoption of the recommended local standards of provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing Pitches Synthetic Turf Pitches 	Sports and Leisure/Planning	High	Short Term

through the adoption of local standards of provision and the development of new outdoor sports facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Use Games Areas • Bowling Greens • Tennis Courts <p>Employ the adopted local standards of provision in the development of a Supplementary Planning Document for Layout and Standards.</p>			
Objective 4: To promote a sustainable approach to Higher League Football	<p>Develop design and management criteria based policy for new football grounds. This will consider location, capacity and orientation, viewing, access and egress, toilets and refreshment bars, hospitality, commercial ventures, safety, crowd management and segregation and catering facilities. Any future proposals will need to conform with Planning Policy and in particular policies covering development in the Green Belt.</p>	Sports and Leisure/Planning	Medium	Long Term

	<p>Support the long-term sustainability of the higher league clubs by seeking to work in partnership with the five clubs including the potential for their involvement in the development of the multi sport hub proposals. The five clubs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aveley FC • East Thurrock United • Grays Athletic FC • Thurrock FC • Tilbury FC 	Sports and Leisure/Planning	Medium	Long Term
	Explore the potential to work with clubs to find sustainable solutions to facility provision e.g. though ground sharing.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Long Term
	Support higher-level clubs in providing a pathway for young players to develop higher league experience.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Medium Term

<p>Objective 5: To ensure that all existing sports pitch provision, bowling greens and tennis courts meet a minimum quality standard.</p>	<p>All new natural grass pitches and bowling greens are required to meet the Performance Quality Standard (PQS), which is the recommended minimum quality standard for the maintenance and construction of pitches. Principally, this recommends that a natural grass pitch must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have adequate grass cover • low level of weed coverage • be flat • have the ability to drain water • be of sufficient carrying capacity – 	<p>Sports and Leisure/Planning/ Grounds Maintenance</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Short/Medium /Long Term</p>
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	Association and the Football Foundation as a basic requirement for all natural grass pitch schemes.			
	All existing football and rugby pitches should aspire to achieve a Visual Quality Assessment score of between 71-90% to achieve a 'good pitch' rating.	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance	High	Short/Medium /Long Term
	All existing cricket pitches should aspire to achieve Thurrock Council's 'Bronze Standard' see Appendix I).	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance	High	Short/Medium /Long Term
	Encourage clubs to seek advice and expertise from the ECB Pitch Advisory Scheme.	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance/ ECB	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	Encourage clubs to seek advice and expertise from the Bowls England Greens Maintenance Advisory Service.	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance/ Bowls England	Medium	Medium/Long Term

	Upgrade irrigation facilities at bowling greens currently lacking automatic systems.	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance	Medium	Medium/Long Term
Objective 6: To develop a programme of improvement and maintenance for playing pitches, bowling greens and tennis courts.	<p>Develop a programme of improvement and maintenance in partnership with the Ground Maintenance Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority will need to be given to improvements to the playing surface of sports pitches e.g. drainage. 	Sports and Leisure/Grounds Maintenance	High	Short/Medium /Long Term
	<p>A review of options for either relocation of sports usage and reversion to alternative type of open space or enhancement of pitches and provision of changing facilities will be undertaken for the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linford Recreation Ground • Bulphan Recreation Ground 	Sports and Leisure	Low	Long Term

Objective 7: To ensure that there is adequate provision of floodlit synthetic turf pitches and training areas that are fully accessible to community sports clubs.	Provide either one new full size floodlit 3G rubber crumb pitch or two floodlit 60 metre by 40 metre 3G training pitches as part of the Belhus Park multi sport hub.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Long Term
	Support club development and provision of floodlit all weather training facilities at the Lakeside FC site.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Long Term
Objective 8: To ensure that changing accommodation meets a minimum quality standard.	All new changing rooms should comply with Sport England ⁷² and National Governing Body Guidance ⁷³ .	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Long Term
	A programme of improvements to changing facilities will prioritise the following sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corringham Recreation Ground - 	Sports and Leisure/South Ockendon Users Group	High	Short/Medium Term

⁷² Pavilions and Clubhouses, Sport England, 1999.

⁷³ Changing Rooms and Clubhouses, Rugby Football Union, 2009; Changing Accommodation, Football Foundation. Clubhouses and Pavilions, Lawn Tennis Association, 2008. TS5 Pavilions and Clubhouses, ECB.

	<p>separation of bowls club facilities from football changing and creation of segregated changing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daisyfields – refurbishment and creation of segregated changing. • Orsett Recreation Ground - improvements to changing facilities and creation of segregated changing. • South Ockendon Recreation Ground - Continue to work with users to develop new changing facilities, with segregated changing, to accommodate all users. <p>Consider options for the provision of changing facilities at Nutberry Playing Fields.</p>			
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<p>Objective 9: To ensure that all existing and future sports pitch provision is easily accessible to all members of the local community who wish to use them.</p>	<p>Undertake an access audit of all existing sports pitch provision to identify how accessible each facility is in accordance with Sport England Guidance.⁷⁴</p> <p>Ensure that the access audit informs the design and management strategies for existing and future outdoor sports facilities to achieve and sustain quality access.</p>	<p>Sports and Leisure</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium/Long Term</p>
<p>Objective 10: To make available the outdoor sports facilities together with access to toilet/changing facilities at schools in Thurrock for use by the community outside school hours.</p>	<p>Ormiston Park Academy</p> <p>Work with Education to ensure integration with adjoining multi sports hub to avoid unnecessary duplication of facilities.</p>	<p>Sports and Leisure/ Education/ Ormiston Park Academy/ England Netball</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Medium/Long Term</p>

⁷⁴ 'Accessible sports Facilities'. Sport England, 2010.

Work with Academy to secure Dual Use Agreement for sports facilities.

	Seek to promote development of Netball as 'western' centre linked to Hassenbrook Centre of Excellence..			
	Palmers College Seek to avert possible re-location of Thurrock Hockey Club to facility outside the borough by exploring opportunities to provide club facility 'on site'.	Sports and Leisure/ Education/ Palmers College/ English Hockey	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	Gable Hall School Examine opportunities to enhance the playing pitches and provide changing facilities at the Southend Road site. Engage Corringham Cosmos F.C. in discussions about the clubs future use of the sports pitches.	Sports and Leisure/ Education/ Corringham Cosmos F.C/Gable Hall School	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	The Gateway Community College	Sports and	High	Short Term

	<p>Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the College to secure community use of the STP.</p> <p>Work with College to promote greater community use of the STP.</p>	Leisure/ Education		
	<p>The Ockendon School</p> <p>Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the School to secure community use of the sports pitches.</p>	Sports and Leisure/ Education	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	<p>Chafford Hundred School</p> <p>Explore opportunities to secure greater community use of the STP.</p>	Sports and Leisure/ Education/ Chafford Hundred School	Medium	Medium Term
	<p>The Grays School</p> <p>Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the School to secure community use of the</p>	Sports and Leisure/ Education.	Medium	Medium/Long Term

	sports pitches.			
	William Edwards School and Sports College Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the School to secure community use of the sports pitches.	Sports and Leisure/ Education	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	Hassenbrook School Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the School to secure community use of the sports pitches.	Sports and Leisure/ Education	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	St Cleres Secondary School Negotiate Dual Use Agreement with the School to secure community use of the STP and sports pitches	Sports and Leisure/ Education/ St Cleres Secondary School	Medium	Medium Term
Objective 11: To consider the introduction of self	Review future options for sustainable self management agreements at appropriate	Sports and Leisure/Property	High	Short/Medium Term

management agreements for outdoor sports facilities and changing facilities to be managed by individual sports clubs.	sites.	Services/Legal Department/ Thurrock FC.		
	Develop Policy Framework for self management.	Sports and Leisure	High	Short/Medium Term
Objective 12: To maximise external funding opportunities.	Work with Essex FA and Football Foundation to develop a Local Area Plan for Football.	Sports and Leisure/Essex FA/Football Foundation.	High	Short Term
	Work with Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation or any successor body to secure funding for outdoor sports provision from the Corporation's Community Fund.	Sports and Leisure/Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation or successor organisation.	High	Short/Medium Term

	Work with the Tennis Foundation to engage with the 'Delivery of the Places to Play' strategy will increase the number and standard of facilities available in Thurrock ⁷⁵ . Explore opportunities to develop a floodlit Tennis Centre.	Sports and Leisure/ Tennis Foundation	High	Short Term
	Encourage applications to the Landfill Communities Fund to support community sports club projects.	Sports and Leisure/ Landfill Communities Fund	Medium	Medium/Long Term
	Provide support to local community sports clubs wishing to make applications for external grant aid.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Medium/Long Term
Objective 13: To secure Planning Obligations and	Establish regular review meetings with the Planning Department to jointly identify	Sports and Leisure/Planning	High	Medium/Long Term

⁷⁵ (<http://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk/tennisproviders/improvefacilities/>)

Section 106 Agreements	projects for investment of finance secured through planning obligations.			
Objective 14: To undertake regular monitoring and review of this strategy	Establish programme for conducting a review of the strategy every 2 years with fundamental review in 2016 when all aspects of the Strategy including standards will need to be reassessed. The review will develop a revised strategy that will cover the period 2016-2026 to ensure consistency with the Local Development Framework (LDF) plan period which ends in 2026.	Sports and Leisure	Medium	Medium/Long Term

Timescales

Timescale	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Short Term																	
Medium Term																	
Long Term																	

Appendix A: Where Players Live

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

CLUB	Main home match pitch(es)	Area in which majority of players live.	Thurrock	RM15 (South Ockendon, Aveley)	RM16 (Grays, Chafford Hundred, Chadwell St Mary, North Stifford, Orsett)	RM17 (Grays)	RM18 (Tilbury)	RM19 (Purfleet)	RM20 (West Thurrock, South Stifford)	SS16 (Langdon Hills)	SS17 (Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham)	RM9 (Dagenham)	RM10 (Dagenham)	RM11 (Hornchurch)	RM12 (Hornchurch)	RM13 (Rainham)	RM14 (Upminster, North Ockendon)	SS8 (Canvey Island)	SS13 (Basildon)	SS14 (Basildon)	SS15 (Basildon, Landon)	CM11 (Billericay)	Outside Thurrock
AFC Blackshots	Belhus	Grays/ Tilbury			1		1																
AFC Chadwell		SS17; RM20; RM16; SS15; CM11			1				1		1										1	1	
AFC Corringham	Corringham Rec	Corringham									1												
AFC Horndon	St Cleres School	Thurrock and Basildon	1																				1
AFC Stags			1																				
Allied Rec	The Drive Warley (was Belhus)	Chafford 100 Romford upminster			1																		1
ASDA Tilbury	Blackshots	Tilbury					1																
Aveley Girls Football Club	Belhus Park	RM15 RM16 RM17		1	1	1																	
Aveley Northend	Aveley Sports and Social	Grays (first team). East London, Rainham (33% in Thurrock)			1																		1
Aveley Working Mens Club	Belhus Park	Aveley		1																			
Aveley Youth	Belhus	Aveley 60%;		1	1																		1

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Football Club	Chase School	Ockendon 20%; Grays 15% Rainham 5%																					
Azzurri	Blackshots	Stanford SS17; Hrays RM17; Ockendon/ Aveley RM15.		1		1					1												
Balmoral	Belhus Park	Chadwell St. Mary			1																		
Belhus Colts Youth Football Club	Thames Rugby Ground Garron Lane RM15 5JQ	RM15; RM14; RM13. RM16		1	1											1	1						
Belhus Park Athletic	Lakeside	Grays. Stanford le Hope. Billericay			1						1											1	
Belhus Park Rangers	Lakeside	RM15. RM13. RM16																					
Benfleet Social	Blackshots	Stanford le Hope; Benfleet. Brentwood									1												1
Brandon Groves Youth Football Club	South Ockendon Rec	South Ockendon		1																			
Busolona	Belhus Park	East London. South Essex	1																				1
C100	Belhus Park	RM9, RM10, RM16			1							1	1										
Campus Wanderers Youth Football Club	Firemans - older team	Mainly Grays based. Also Ockendon. Chafford, Purfleet, Barking.		1	1																		1
Catford Park Royals	Wm Edwards	RM16 (16(. RM17 (14) RM 18 (15)			1	1	1																
Chadwell	Chadwell Rec	Chadwell RM16. Tilbury RM18			1		1																
Chafford (Lions) Youth Football Club	Thames Rugby Club	Chafford Hundred RM16			1																		
Colts United YFC	Belhus Park	Thurrock - Ockendon, Aveley and Grays		1	1																		

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Concept FC	Springhouse Club (Shell), Springhouse Road, Corringham	Corringham									1												
Copeland Colts Youth Football Club and girls	Stanford Primary (4 mini soccer teams). Westlake Park, Basildon (2 teams) St Cleres - rest	Mainly Stanford le Hope. Some from Grays and Basildon.				1					1										1		
Corringham Athletic Youth Football Club	Manorway, Corringham	SS17; RM15		1							1												
Corringham Cosmos Youth Football Club	Corringham Junior School	Stanford, Corringham									1												
Coryton Athletic FC	Belhus Park	RM16; RM17. SS17			1	1					1												
Cricketers FC (veterans)	Horndon Rec	Horndon and surrounds									1												
Cricketers YFC	Horndon Rec	Horndon and Thurrock									1												
Cromer Park	Belhus Park	Havering area																					1
Crosskeys Chadwell	Palmers College	6 Tilbury 6 Chadwell 2 Grays 2 Dagenham. Rest Orsett and Stamford			1	1	1				1		1										
East Thurrock FC	East Thurrock United FC, Rookery Hill, Corringham	Stanford - le Hope, Grays, Basildon				1					1												1
East Thurrock Ladies FC	East Thurrock United FC, Rookery Hill, Corringham	RM15; RM 16; RM 17; SS5 911), SS7 (12); SS15 (11); SS17 (17).		1	1	1					1										1		1

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Essex Comets Football Club	Blackshots	RM17 (Thurrock/Aveley). Stanford le Hope. Basildon				1					1											1
FC Deportivo Thurrock	Blackshots	Grays RM17 AND RM16. Tilbury. Stanford le Hope SS17			1	1	1				1											
Fobbing F.C.	Aveley Sports and Social	RM18					1															
Fulbrook FC	Belhus Park	RM15			1																	
Garrison	Aveley SSC Firemans pitch 4	Thurrock area	1																			
George & Dragon	The Billet	SS17. RM18					1				1											
Giffordside Wanderers	Chadwell Rec	Most in Chadwell. Also Stanford and Grays			1	1					1											
Grays Athletic Football Club (under 21s, youth and girls)	Firemans	Thurrock and London. (70% all players are Thurrock based. Including all under 8s,	1																			1
Greyhound	Blackshots pitch 3	9 at RM16. 3 AT RM15. 5 AT RM17. 5 AT RM18. 1 AT RM13 AND RM20		1		1	1		1						1							
Inn on the Green	Selex Sports and Leisure Club	Stanford le Hope/Corringham									1											
Jacks Lads	Belhus Park	RM15. SS8		1														1				
Jurgens Sports	New Gateway Academy	75% live in RM16 AND RM17 area			1	1																
Kaktus	Corringham Rec	within Thurrock and Basildon districts	1																			1
Kynoch Sports	Pegasus	Stanford and									1											

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

	Club	Corringham																					
Lakeside Youth Football Club	Belhus CC, North Stifford	RM15; RM16; RM17		1	1	1																	
Le Hope United	Blackshots pitch 1	SS17. RM18					1				1												
Legend	Billet	Tilbury RM188DU. Chadwell St Mary RM18				1	1																
Linford Dragons	St Cleres School	SS17. Hornden on the Hill									1												
Linford Wanderers (adult)	Lakeside/ Corringham Rec/ Linford Rec	Thurrock and Basildon RM and SS	1																				1
Linford Wanderers Youth Football Club	Lakeside/ Linford Rec	Chafford 100 and Grays- RM16. Stanford le Hope, East Tilbury - SS17			1						1												
Little Thurrock Dynamos	Loft Hall Farm, Orsett		1																				
Mossops	Palmer's College	Grays Tilbury				1	1																
Mustang	Belhus Park	RM16; RM17; RM18			1	1	1																
Oaks Athletic	Blackshots	Thurrock - all areas	1																				
Ockendon Motor Spares	Aveley SSC pitch 1	RM15 most. Also SS14, SS15, RM16, RM20, SS17, RM12, RM17,		1	1	1			1		1				1					1	1		
Ockendon Motor Spares Youth Football Club	Rugby Club Garron Lane	Aveley, Ockendon, Grays		1		1																	
Ockendon Rhinos Youth Football Club	Belhus woods Country Park	Ockendon RM15, Aveley, Grays		1		1																	
Old Courthouse FC	Corringham Rec	Stanford le Hope SS17									1												

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Orsett Cock	Chadwell Rec	Grays, Tilbury, Chadwell ST Mary				1	1																
Orsett Green	Orsett Rec	RM16. RM17. RM18			1	1	1																
Osnas	Chadwell Rec	RM16. RM18. RM17. CH8. SS13. SS17			1	1	1				1												1
Pegasus Coryton and Youth Team	Pegasus	Stanford le Hope. Corringham									1												
Pegasus Coryton 'B'	Pegasus	Stanford le Hope. Corringham									1												
Real Tavern	Corringham Rec	SS17. RM17. SS16								1	1												1
Rec Rovers	Belhus Park Pitch 4	South Ockendon - RM15. Chafford 100/ Grays RM16. Basildon/ Stanford le Hope- SS17.		1	1						1												
Romford	Aveley - Mill Lane. Aveley Firemans. Youth Redbridge.	Some players in Aveley, Grays and Chafford. Uner 18s all in Havering		1	1	1																	
Rookery United	New Gateway Academy	Grays, Chadwell St Mary Stanford le Hope Brentwood Southend London			1	1					1												1
Shell (Sunday)	Shell Club	Tilbury Grays Stanford le Hope				1	1				1												
Shell Club (Corringham) FC	Shell club	Stanford/ Corringham 80%. Tilbury/ Grays 20%				1	1				1												
Sockets Heath	Blackshots	Thurrock	1																				
Southern Park Colts	Aveley Sports and Social	Grays (50%) and Upminster				1											1						
Sporting Ockendon	Belhus	Ockendon, Upminster, Grays		1		1											1						
Sports & Social Club	Orsett Rec	Most in Orsett,		1	1						1												

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Orsett		Stanford, Ockendon plus other areas of Thurrock																					
St George (Corringham)	Hassenbrook School	Corringham and Stanford									1												
Stadium United Youth Football Club	William Edwards School and Sports College	RM16. RM17. RM18. RM19			1	1	1	1															
Stanford Athletic	Billet	Stanford									1												
Stanford Wanderers	The Billet	Stanford le Hope. Linford. Grays				1					1												
Stifford Scorpions Youth	Belhus Park	Aveley		1																			
Taca	Daisyfield						1																
Thames Gateway Youth Football Club	Lakeside Sports Ground	Grays				1																	
Thames Sports	Lakeside	Grays RM16, Chafford Hundred RM16, Stanford SS17			1						1												
Thames Sports Youth Football Club (under 21s)	Lakeside Sports Ground	RM15; RM16; RM17		1	1	1																	
Thameside	Thames Sports Ground	Stanford/Corringham. Orsett/ Horndon + 3 in Dagenham			1						1		1										
Thurrock All Stars	Belhus Park	RM16 RM17			1	1																	
Thurrock Tigers YFC	Chafford Hundred	Chafford Hundred - lots. Also Grays, Aveley and Ockendon		1	1	1																	
Thurrock Youth Football Club	Nutberry Corner, Grays	Majority of players from all areas of Thurrock, Rainham, Dagenham and	1										1			1							1

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

	School	Newham																						
Tilbury Football Club	Chadfields	RM area. Romford					1																	1
Tilbury Terrors	Thames Gateway	Tilbury and Chadwell			1		1																	
TMA Sports	Blackshots 2	RM18. RM17. Brentwood				1	1																	1
Top Flight Athletic	Thames RFC	SS17 110. SS13 14. RM15 13. SS11 13. RM17 11.		1		1					1								1					
Tophouse	Belhus Park	RM15 NB, RM15 SU		1																				
United Ockendon	Thames RFC			1																				
Uphorn Park	Aveley Sports and Social	Hornchurch Upminster															1							
Ventura FC	Belhus Park	Thurrock all over the borough	1																					
White Hart united	Palmers College	Grays, Stanford all within 2 miles from pitch			1						1													
Wilburn Wanderers	Belhus Park	RM15. RM16. RM17		1	1	1																		
Young Knights	Belhus Park	Thurrock - Tilbury, Grays S Ockendon		1		1	1																	
TOTAL			12	28	41	39	24	1	3	1	42	42	4	0	1	3	4	1	1	1	1	4	2	20

APPENDIX B: PITCH SIZES

Calculation of Area of Playing Pitches

		Original calculation - see below*			Using TaLPP figures**		
	No of pitches from Thurrock study	Pitch size	Total	ha/1000	Pitch size	Total	ha/1000
Football							
Senior	58	0.9	52.20		1.40	81.20	
Junior	17	0.75	12.75		0.50	8.50	
Mini	25	0.36	9.00		0.30	7.50	
Rugby	12	1.25	15.00		1.20	14.40	
Cricket	11	1.85	20.35		2.00	22.00	
Total	123		109.30	0.71		133.60	0.86
Total		With 15% site multiplier	125.70	0.81		153.64	0.99
		* based on average size of pitch +50% safety/run off					
		** using figures in Towards A Level Playing Field Appendix					
		Assume population of 154,700					

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

	No of pitches from Thurrock study	Pitch size*	Total	ha/1000
Football				
Senior	58	0.9	52.20	
Junior	17	0.75	12.75	
Mini	25	0.36	9.00	
Rugby	12	1.25	15.00	
Cricket	11	1.85	20.35	
Total	123		109.30	0.71
Total		With 15% site multiplier	125.70	0.81

* based on average size of pitch +50% safety/run off

Assume population of 154,700

Calculation using pitch sizes in Towards a Level Playing Field

	No of pitches from Thurrock study	Pitch size	Total	ha/1000
Football				
Senior	58	1.40	81.20	
Junior	17	0.50	8.50	
Mini	25	0.30	7.50	
Rugby	12	1.20	14.40	
Cricket	11	2.00	22.00	
Total	123		133.60	0.86
Total	With 15% site multiplier		153.64	0.99

Assume population of 154,700

Appendix C: Pitch Assessment

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

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	
About the winter pitch/cricket field										
Grass cover - entire pitch / cricket field	>94%		85-94%		70-84%		60-69%		<60%	Where, 90%+ grass cover should be given 'Excellent'; less than 60% should be considered 'very poor'. Bare goal mouths would represent about 5% each.
Presence of weeds	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Very Poor	Weed cover should be treated as 'bare patches of grass'. Estimate the % of weed cover on the pitch and subtract it from the total grass cover %. The common weeds are dandelion, clover, plantain, daisy and white clover.
Length of grass	Good				Average				Poor	The ideal length of grass will vary between sports. The grass should be maintained at between 25 & 30 mm in the playing season for football.. Lngth should never exceed 60 mm.
Size of pitch / cricket field	Yes - fully				No- but adequate				No - not adequate	Does it meet the NGB standard? See pitch sizes tab for dimensions
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully				No- but adequate				No - not adequate	Does it meet the NGB standard? See pitch sizes tab for dimensions. Football (adult) a minimum of 2.25m (ideally 2.75m) between touch lines, goal lines and the pitch perimeter barrier. No formal requirements for safety margins or for the space to be left between adjoining mini-soccer pitches but, ideally, a gap of 6m (20 ft).
Slope of pitch / cricket outfield (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Slight		Gentle		Moderate		Severe	Cricket wickets should be flat.
Evenness of pitch / cricket field	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Very Poor	Where field is completely level = 'Excellent'
Goalmouth	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Very Poor	Is the goalmouth flat or scoured? What is the extent of wear?
Areas of excessive wear	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		Very Poor	Likely to be in the centre, penalty area of a football pitch.
Problem Areas: Evidence of Dog fouling	None				Evidence				Unacceptable	If no evidence, assume none. May wish to refer to user survey
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None				Evidence				Unacceptable	If no evidence, assume none. May wish to refer to user survey
Problem Areas: Evidence of Unofficial use	None				Evidence				Unacceptable	eg informal, casual use, unbooked use, kids kickabout etc. If no evidence, assume none .May wish to refer to user survey
Problem Areas: Evidence of Damage to surface	None				Evidence				Unacceptable	eg. golf divots, car-parking on field etc. If no evidence, assume none.May wish to refer to user survey
Training area	Full Provision		Part provision		Outfield				None	Training which takes place on the pitch area
Changing Accomodation										
Changing Accomodation	Yes				No					Is the pitch served by changing facilities
About the equipment/ wicket...										
Winter Sports Only- Goal Posts - quality	Good				Moderate				Poor	Upright, straight, painted and correct size. For football goals, are there safe net hooks at both ends? The use of metal cup hooks on goals is banned. Goalposts should be 7.32m (24 ft) apart. The underside of the crossbar should be 2.44m (8ft) from the ground. The goalposts must have the

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

						same width and depth, not exceeding 120mm (5 ins).
Cricket Only - Is the wicket protected when not used	Yes			No		Is the wicket protected when not in use - can be roped off or covered.
Line markings - quality	Good		Moderate		Poor	e.g. Have they been painted recently; are lines straight and clear etc
Condition of outfield	Good		Moderate		Poor	Condition of ground adjacent to the pitch where linesman runs. Also, nets/ goals/ grids off main body of pitch.

Appendix D: Changing Assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Changing Accomodation

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	
	About the Changing Accomodation												
a)	Overall Quality	Excellent		Good		Average		Poor		No changing		Perceived quality of changing accomodation? Does it look well maintained, clean, safe etc	
b)	Evidence of vandalism	None		Yes - some				Yes - lots				Damage to pavillion, graffiti, broken glass etc	
c)	Showers	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Are there showers facilities, what is their quality (if known)?	
d)	Toilets	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Are there toilets - what is their condition (if known)?	
e)	Cleanliness	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Has the mud and litter been cleared away with floors corridors etc all clean?	
f)	Lighting	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Is the building well lit or are there areas that are poorly illuuminated?	
g)	Heating	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Is the heating system capable of maintaining a reasonable temperature?	
h)	Benches/Hooks	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Are there a sufficient number of benches/hooks in each changing room for the number of players likely to use it?	
i)	Disabled Access	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Is there full disabled access?	
j)	Floor (non slip etc)	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Is the floor surface suitable e.g. non slip, and in good condition?	
k)	Fire Safety	Yes - Good		Yes - OK			Yes -poor			No		Does the building have appropriate means of escape and fire extinguishers?	
l)	Parking	Good				OK				Poor		Is there enough for circa 20 cars, bays marked out etc	
m)	Links to public transort	Good				OK				Poor/non		Is the site close to public transport links, proximity to bus stop, train station, hubs.	
n)	Security	Good				OK				Poor		Does the accomodation look secure - secure doors/windows, evidence of breakins (may get info from User Surveys)	
o)	Segregated changing	Yes					No					Are there separate changing rooms for each team - can accomodation be	

						used by both male and female teams at same time
p)	Officials Changing	Yes		No		

APPENDIX E: PITCH CAPACITY CALCULATIONS

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

Site	Number of adult football pitches	Factor	Score (no. x Factor)	Number of junior football pitches	Factor	Score (no. x Factor)	Number of mini football pitches	Factor	Score (no. x Factor)
Belhus Park	7	1	7	1	1	1	1	1	
Billet Recreation Ground	2	0.5	1						
Blackshots	4	1	4	2	1	2			
Bulphan Recreation Ground	1	1	1						
Chadwell Recreation Ground	2	1 + 0.5	1.5						
Corringham Recreation Ground	2	0.5	1						
Daisyfields	2	1	2						
Horndon Recreation Ground	1	1	1				1	1	1
Linford Recreation Ground				1	1	1	1	1	1
North Stifford Recreation Ground							1	1	1
Nutberry Playing Fields	1	1	1	1			1	1	1
Orsett Recreation Ground	1	1	1						
South Ockendon Recreation Ground	2	1	2				2	1	2
Corringham Primary							2	1	2
Stanford Le Hope Primary							2	0.5	1
Belhus Chase Specialist Humanities College	3	0.5	1.5				1	1	1
Chafford Hundred School				1	1	1	2	1	2
Gable Hall School	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	3

Thurrock Outdoor Sports Strategy

The Gateway Community College	3	1	3	3	1	3			
The Grays School				2	0.5	1			
Hassenbrook School	1	1	1						
The Ockendon School	2	0	0						
Palmers College	1	1	1						
St Clere's School	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
William Edwards School and Sports College	4	1	4				4	1	4
Aveley Sports and Social Club	4	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1
East Thurrock FC	1	1	1				1	1	1
Lakeside	2	1 + 1.5	2.5						
Old Hall Farm (Manorway Recreation Ground), Manorway, Coryton	1	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	0.5			
Pegasus Club	2	1.5	3						
Shell Club	1	1.5	1.5						
Thames RUFC	3	0.5	1.5	1	0.5	0.5	1	0.5	0.5
Total	58	21.5	52	17	9.5	14	25	15	22.5

Appendix F: Other Funding Sources

Other Potential Funding Sources

(a) **Football Foundation** - the UK's largest sports charity which aims to improve grass roots football facilities. The scheme provides funding for new or improve facilities for community benefit. These include changing rooms or clubhouses, grass or artificial pitches and multi-use games areas.

(b) **Awards for All** - Sport England's small grants programme which funds community projects that encourage people to become involved in sport. The scheme is for not-for-profit sports clubs, voluntary and community organisations, local authorities and education institutions. Grants of between £300 and £10,000 are available for revenue and small capital projects.

(c) **Barclays Spaces for Sports** - a £30 million community investment programme funded by Barclays in partnership with the Football Foundation and Groundwork, which supports the creation of community sports facilities and opportunities in areas of identified need. Barclays Spaces for Sports combines both capital and revenue funding.

(d) **Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs)** – this scheme enables sports clubs working at a grass roots level. Both property and non property owning clubs can significantly benefit from the scheme through:

- 80% mandatory business rate relief. (the local authority can offer up to 100% relief to clubs at their discretion);
- the ability to raise funds from individuals under Gift Aid which means that a registered CASC can reclaim up to £28 in tax for every £100 donated;
- CASCs are exempt from Corporation Tax on profits derived from trading activities if their trading income is under £30,000 pa; and
- profits derived from property income are exempt if gross property income is under £20,000 pa.

(e) **Dickie Bird Foundation** - offer grants to children under 18 yrs to help with the cost of clothing and equipment

(f) **Peter Harrison Foundation** – provides grants for capital projects and will consider revenue funding for a new project or if funding is key to the continuing success or survival of an established project.

(g) **Land Fill Tax Credits Scheme** – funds projects that provide or improve a general public amenity including facilities for sports clubs.

(h) **Lord's Taverners** – aims to give a "sporting chance" to those in need focusing on three key areas:

- Youth cricket in disadvantaged areas.
- Sports and recreational equipment for young people with special needs.
- Specially-adapted minibuses for disabled youngsters.

(i) **National Heart Research Fund** – runs a Lifestyle Grants programme aims to support lifestyle interventions in communities to prevent or reduce the risk factors of heart disease. Grants of between £1000 to £10,000 are available.

(j) **National Sports Foundation** - is funded by Sport England to help generate money for sports projects. The Cash 4 Clubs is a sports funding scheme which provides grants to improve facilities, purchase new equipment, gain coaching qualifications, and generally invest in the sustainability of their club

(k) **Rugby Football Foundation** - administers a Capital Fund for the financing of capital projects aimed at improving facilities which lead to the recruitment and retention of rugby players.

(l) **Sportsmatch** - funded by Sport England to support the development of grassroots sport in England. It makes awards to organisations running projects aimed at increasing participation in sports at community level. The Sport England Sportsmatch programme increases investment in community sport by matching new sponsorship money pound for pound.

Appendix G: Planning Obligations and Section 106 Agreements

Section 106 Planning Obligations

Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will be used to secure the provision of outdoor sports provision as part of new developments. Government Circular 05/05 gives further guidance on the use of Section 106 agreements.

Types of development that will be subject to a requirement for planning obligations or developer contributions

The Council's standards for the provision for outdoor sports facilities will be applied to all applications for new residential development.

This includes proposals that involve:

- New build including affordable housing
- Conversions
- Changes of use
- Flats
- Bedsits
- Agricultural workers dwellings
- Planning applications to make temporary dwellings permanent, and

The following forms of development will not be subject to the policy:

- Residential homes
- Nursing homes
- Extra care/sheltered housing
- Residential extensions
- Residential annexes
- Temporary dwellings
- Redevelopment schemes where there is no net gain in occupancy.

Stage 1: Does the housing development create a need for new open space sport and recreation facilities?

For each of the types of outdoor sport facilities, the Council will firstly assess whether a new facility needs to be provided as a result of the proposed housing development. This will be done as follows:

Step A. Estimate the number of residents living in the proposed development.

A sliding scale of the average number of persons per dwelling is used, which takes into account the different sizes of dwellings. The dwelling occupancy rate is based on information from the Dept of Community and Local Government's Survey of English Housing, 2003 – 2006 and is shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Dwelling Occupancy Rate

One bedroom units	Two bedroom units	Three bedroom units	Four bedroom units	Five + bedroom units	Five + bedroom units
1.3	1.9	2.6	3.2	4	4

When a planning application is received and the maximum number and type of dwellings is indicated, the outdoor sports requirement will be estimated by applying the dwelling occupancy rates shown in **Table 1**. This is intended to provide an initial guide to the likely open space requirement. The initial figure will in all circumstances be updated by a detailed calculation based on the number of bedrooms, once a reserved matters application is submitted.

Step B Assess if adequate existing outdoor sports facilities are available following the standards (quantity, accessibility and quality where appropriate) set out in Objective Two. For ease of measurement and clarity for developers, each of these distance thresholds is measured 'straight line distance' from the edge of the new housing development.

Step C Assess whether the developer is required to provide for a new outdoor sports facility. A new outdoor sports facility will normally be required if the existing outdoor sports facilities are insufficient to cater for the needs of the total population

or cannot be upgraded.

This assessment will be carried out for each type of outdoor sports facility. For each type, a requirement to provide a new facility will normally only be waived if it is found that the relevant accessibility or quantity standard is met or exceeded or if the quality of an existing facility cannot be upgraded.

Stage 2: Does development create a need to enhance existing provision in the local area?

It may be the case that, when assessed against the relevant quantity or accessibility standards, there are enough facilities in the local area to meet the needs of the population. If this is the case, the Council may instead expect a developer contribution to enhance the quality of existing facilities in the area.

Where are the types of outdoor sports facilities to be provided?

In many circumstances it will not be possible to provide any or all of the types of open space that are required on-site. In assessing how to provide open space it is necessary to have regard to the guidelines on minimum size standards for each type. To ensure the provision of usable outdoor sports facilities which can be easily and economically maintained, outdoor sports facilities should not normally be provided on-site if the levels required fall below the minimum size standards.

How are developer contributions for off-site open space calculated?

The level of developer contribution for outdoor sports facilities will always depend on whether it includes the cost of land acquisition.

The following costs are for the development of community sports facilities are provided by Sport England and are based on providing good quality sports facility for the 4th Quarter 2009. These are shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Outdoor Sports Facilities Construction Costs

Facility Type	Facility Details	Costs
Changing Rooms	4 team changing pavilion	£555,000
Outdoor Tennis Court	2 court, macadam, fenced and floodlit	£140,000
Synthetic Turf Pitches	Sand based 100 x 64m fenced and floodlit	£590,000
	Rubber crumb 100 x 64m fenced and floodlit	£750,000
	Water based 100 x 64m fenced and floodlit	£910,000
Grass pitch	100 x 64m	£80,000
Multi-use games areas	40 x 18m fenced and floodlit	£80,000
Athletics Track	6 lane floodlit	£1,130,000
Bowling Green		£55,000

Source: Sport England Construction Costs 2009

Costs of provision per person are based on the standard of provision for each type of outdoor sports facility. The rule of thumb land value is £10,000 per acre (£24,711 per hectare). However the costs employed in these calculations will need to be adjusted over time. Costs per person for each type of outdoor sports facility is shown in **Table 3**.

Costs for sports pitches are based on two pitches plus a four room changing facility. The standard of provision for sports pitches is 1.13 hectares per 1000 population or 11.3 square metres per person. To this must be added the cost of the changing facility. The overall cost is £28.76 per square metre and £324.99 per person. The same approach is applied to other types of facility. However, no allowance has been made for the provision of a pavilion for either bowls or tennis and this would need to be calculated separately based on the type of facility required.

Table 3: Costs per Person

Standards	Ha per 1000	(m2) per person	£ per (m2)	Cost Per Person
Pitches with Changing Rooms	1.13	11.3	£28.76	£324.99
Bowls	0.029	0.29	£8.34	£2.42
Tennis	0.061	0.61	£67.63	£41.26
STP	0.025	0.25	£67.93	£16.98
MUGA	0.004	0.04	£64.41	£2.58
Land Value		10	£2.47	£24.71
				£412.94

The overall planning contribution for outdoor sport is £412.94 per person.

The formula for the cost of new provision per person is:

Occupancy Rate multiplied by Cost Per Person

Example:

3 Bedroom dwelling:

Occupancy Rate (2.6 persons) multiplied by £412.94 = £1,073.64.per dwelling.

Table 4 provides guidance for the calculation of commuted payments by developers for the provision of outdoor sports facilities. They provide a starting point for negotiations between the Council and developers.

Table 4: Calculation of Financial Contribution for Outdoor Sport

Dwelling Type	1 Bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom	5+ bedroom
Persons	1.3	1.9	2.6	3.2	4
Outdoor sports facilities contribution	£536.82	£784.59	£1,073.64	£1,321.41	£1,651.76

Maintenance

For new on-site provision long term maintenance will be arranged through one of two

options:

- Developers will establish a mechanism for maintenance e.g. through a management company for which residents would pay annual service charge.
- When a developer hands over title and responsibility for on-site provision to the local authority or a third party, the long term maintenance would be the responsibility of the body in whom the facility is vested.

The calculation which the Council uses to determine commuted sums for maintaining on-site outdoor sports provision in perpetuity is based on a multiplier of 25 years and is shown in **Table 5** below. Using the formula, it is possible to calculate the level of commuted sum that a developer will be required to pay for each type of outdoor sports facility. These figures are based on the average current contract costs for Thurrock. However the costs employed in these calculations will need to be adjusted over time to take account of the effects of inflation etc.

Table 5: Maintenance Costs

Sports Surface	Size	Number	Total Area m2	Total Cost	Costs £ per m ² per annum
Football	6000	109	654000	£536,280.00	£0.82
Cricket	700	15	10500	£222,915.00	£21.23
Rugby	6600	12	79200	£57,024.00	£0.72
Bowling Greens	1444	13	18772	£141,540.88	£7.54
Average Outdoor Sport Maintenance Cost		149	762472	£957,759.88	£1.26

The commuted sums are then calculated for each dwelling type. The figures shown in **Table 6** assume 2.5% inflation over a 25-year period. They comprise costs per year at 2009 prices, multiplied by a factor of 34.16 to allow for inflation over a 25-year period.

Table 6: Maintenance Costs for each Dwelling Type

Dwelling Type	1 Bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom	5+ bedroom
Persons	1.3	1.9	2.6	3.2	4
Maintenance Costs	£55.78	£81.53	£111.56	£137.31	£171.64

Worked Example

Example 1, assessment of Outdoor Sport Requirements

The proposal is for a hypothetical development of 30 two bedroomed flats and 25 three bedroomed houses at a site in Grays.

Stage 1 Does the housing development create a need for new outdoor sports facilities?

Step A – Calculate the number of residents in the proposed development

30 two bedroomed flats = 57

25 x 2.6 three bedroomed houses = 65

Total number of residents is 57 + 65 = 122

Step B - Assess if there are adequate outdoor sports facilities.

Step C – Assess whether the developer is required to provide a new outdoor sports facility.

Provision analysis shows that there are gaps in provision, however the levels required are below the minimum size standards.

Stage 2 – Does the development create a need to enhance existing provision in the local area?

This is a small development and does not require new provision. The requirement can be met by enhancing existing facilities or by combining a financial contribution with that from another development to create a new outdoor sports facility. The total contribution required is shown in **Table 7** below.

Table 7 Commuted sum requirement.

Dwelling type	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	Requirement for 30 x 2 bed flats	Requirement for 25 x 3 bed houses	Total for development
Outdoor sports facilities contribution	£784.59	£1,073.64	£23,537.70	£26,841.00	£50,378.70
Maintenance	£81.53	£111.56	£2,445.90	£2,789.00	£5,234.90
Total	£866.12	£1,185.20	£25,983.60	£29,630.00	£55,613.60

Appendix H: Facilities Planning Model Report

(Commissioned and Provided by Sport England)

Section 1.01 ASSESSMENT OF SYNTHETIC TURF PITCH PROVISION IN THURROCK

(i) 2009 FPM run

(b) Supply/capacity

There are **2** synthetic turf pitches in Thurrock, on **2** sites. Both are on education sites, one available to clubs and associations on block bookings and one for pay and play. Both are full size and floodlit, one is sand based, and one is a third generation pitch. There are also two additional pitches relatively recently provided which are privately used, and not the subject of this assessment.

The total capacity in visits per week in the peak period is **1,500**.

The number of pitches per 10,000 people in Thurrock is **0.1**, compared with 0.2 in England, Essex and the East region. The best provision in the region is 0.6 pitches per 10,000.

Section 1.02 Demand

Demand is based on population and participation rates. The population of Thurrock used in the model is **153,229**.

Demand expressed for STPs in Thurrock is **3,700** visits per week, or the equivalent of **5 pitches**.

Demand is influenced by accessibility and by the mobility of local residents. Car ownership and accessibility to a car is relatively high in Thurrock - only **14%** of the population has no access to a car, compared with 13% in the region and 20% nationally.

Satisfied demand (i.e. the proportion of demand met because there is spare capacity at STPs and people live within the driving or walking catchment) is **1,800** visits per week, or **48%** of total demand, much less than the national (64%), regional (66%) or county (71%) averages. 92% of satisfied demand is met by car, 3% by public transport and 5% on foot (more by car than the national and regional average)

Thurrock is a significant net exporter of demand from neighbouring local authority areas of about **300** visits (**8%**). About 850 visits per week are exported, while about 550 visits are imported. This is due to lack of capacity at Thurrock pitches, and better accessibility to pitches in neighbouring areas on the one hand, and better access to some of Thurrock's pitches by some residents of neighbouring areas. Only about 25% of local demand is met in the district.

Unmet demand is for about **1,900** visits per week (or about **52%** of total demand). This is higher than the national average of about 36%, and about 7th highest in the region. In total this represents the equivalent of about **3 pitches**. As is common, this is spread thinly over the whole district, and there is no one location in Thurrock where more than about xx pitches could be justified for this reason (maps not currently available)

Most unmet demand in Thurrock is due to lack of capacity at existing STPs (95%) – very little is caused by residents living outside the catchments of existing pitches.

Relative Share

This is a more refined measure of facility provision and availability than STPs per 10000 as it incorporates a measure of accessibility, and compares relative provision with a national average. The relative share of STPs in Thurrock is 31% below the national average. Maps are not available, and this relative share is probably higher in the xxxx area.

Section 1.03 Throughput and usage

The total number of visits to STPs in Thurrock is 1,500 per week (compared with total capacity 1,500 and demand for 3,700). Overall this equates to 100% of total capacity, more than the national average. Both pitches are operating at or above absolute capacity.

Accessibility

100% of the population of Thurrock lives within 20 minutes drive of at least 2 STPs, 96% within two + pitches and 21% within a 1.6km walk of 1 pitch. Accessibility to STPs in the district is therefore very good, particularly to those with access to a car.

Summary and conclusions

- There are 2 publicly available STPs in Thurrock, both on school sites and therefore in school use during the daytime. One is a sand based pitch more suitable for hockey and recreational sport, and 1 is 3G pitches, provided primarily for football. Both are full size and floodlit. Per capita provision is only half the national average, and relative share is 31% below the average. The latter figure takes into account pitches in neighbouring LA areas, and suggests that local provision in the wider area is generally poor. There is therefore a relative sparsity of STPs in Thurrock and the surrounding areas.
- Demand exceeds supply and capacity by nearly 2.5 times.
- Satisfied demand is less than 50%, well below the national and regional average.
- Unmet demand is over a half, the equivalent of three pitches, and much higher than the average. Most of this is caused by lack of capacity at existing pitches that are operating full, and little by inaccessibility to pitches. (It is likely that this is distributed across the borough, and the absence of maps means that the actual number of additional pitches that can be justified cannot be calculated precisely)
- There is significant movement across local authority boundaries by users, but a small net export of demand to neighbouring local authorities. Only about a quarter of local demand is met in the borough.
- Accessibility to STPs by local residents is good –all Thurrock residents live within a 20-minute drive of at least 2 pitches, and walking accessibility is also quite good.

- Throughput at pitches is very high – 100% of capacity is used. All pitches are operated at (or above) capacity.

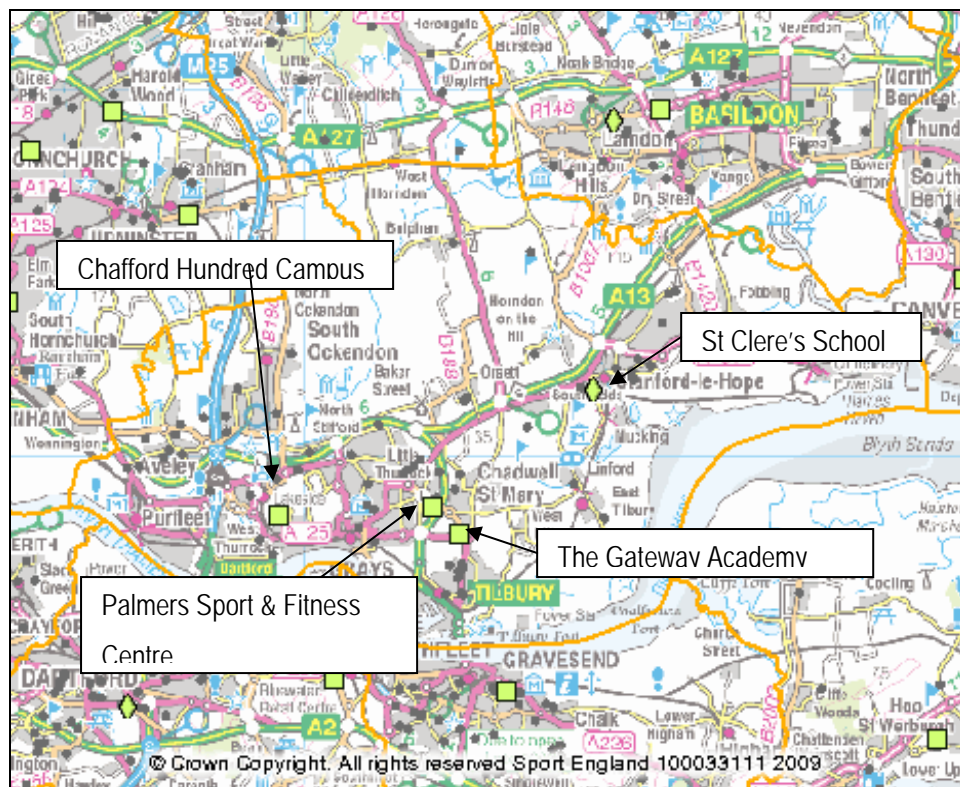
Conclusions

Relative provision of STPs in Thurrock is poor, and there is significant unmet demand in the borough, sufficient in total for about 3 additional pitches. This is caused almost entirely by lack of capacity at existing pitches, resulting in some export of use to pitches in adjacent areas. At least two additional community pitches can probably be justified at the present time. These might comprise new provision in the west and central parts of the borough, or the enhancement of community access to existing STPs at Chafford Hundred and Gateway Academy. Some spare capacity would also be released by additional pitch construction in neighbouring towns and districts.

2019 FPM run

- The FPM was also run nationally for 2019, with an assumed Thurrock population of 168,035, an increase over 2009 of about 10%. No new STPs were included in this assessment. The aim of this assessment is to determine broad general levels of pitch need in coming years compared with today. Precise local needs assessments are only possible with individual tailored runs of the model for the local authority area.
- The effect of additional population and similar numbers of STPs is to make little difference to the need for additional pitches by 2019. Demand increases by about 5%, as the population ages, and unmet demand increases by about 10%, as existing pitches are unable to accommodate more usage. Utilised capacity is maintained at 100% levels, and slightly more demand is exported, as there is insufficient capacity. The relative share of pitches in Thurrock remains constant.
- An increased population by 2019 reinforces the need for additional pitches in Thurrock, and the need for more pitches outside the borough. However the population increases are based on government estimates, and assume that the population grows in and around existing locations. They take no account of new development areas as set out in LDFs. Specific attention will need to be made to the STP needs of any new areas of significant growth over the next few years.

Figure 1 Location of STPs in Thurrock



Facilities considered in FPM run

Name	Number of Pitches	Size	Type	ATTR %	Built/ refurbishe d	Facility Capacity	% Demand of Capacit y
PALMERS SPORTS & FITNESS CENTRE	1	102 x 60m	Sand	L	2002	740	100
ST CLERES SCHOOL	1	100 x 65m	3G	L	2008	740	100
THURROCK	2					1480	100

STPs are weighted in the model according to their attractiveness to the public, depending on their age and date (if any) of refurbishment. This makes a significant difference to usage levels.

Appendix I: Thurrock Pitch Standards

Thurrock Pitch Standards

Bronze Standard

League standard Club and /or District and County Representative Junior Cricket up to age 11.

1. Pitch & Square - Reference ECB Technical Specification TS4

The square should be (Council responsibility):

- Well maintained and in good condition
- Clearly distinguishable from the remainder of the square
- Cut, marked and rolled before play.
- Appropriate for matches of at least 90 overs.
- The bounce of the pitch should be true and predictable throughout the match and not produce excessive spin or movement off the seam.
- Holes or ruts on the square should be levelled, filled and firmed.
- Not artificially watered within 48 hours of the start of the match.
- Sufficient size to allow regular rotation of match pitches and ensure maximum of 6 full games are played on the same strip throughout the season.

2. Outfield

The outfield should be (Council responsibility):

- Well maintained and adequately drained.
- Closely mown with no noticeable grass cuttings.
- True for balls to run and free of holes, ruts or other obstructions that might pose a hazard to fielders.

3. Boundary

The boundary should be clearly marked by rope (Club responsibility) or a white line (Council responsibility) with markers approx 20 yards apart (Club responsibility).

- No boundary shall be less than 50 yards or more than 90 yards from the near middle stump on the match pitch unless specific as specified in junior age group cricket.

4. Sight screens (Club responsibility)

- Sightscreens are recommended and where available should be (where applicable) of non-reflective paintwork.
- They should be of an adequate and appropriate size for the ground.
- A rope or boards should be provided to define the boundary if the sight screen(s) stand within the playing area.

5. Rollers Light (5-10cwt, 254-508 kg) (Club responsibility) and heavy (minimum 30cwt, 1524kg) (Council responsibility) rollers should be available for use on the pitch.

6. Ground Surrounds

The surrounds should be well maintained by regular cutting (Council responsibility).

- Fences and walls should be well maintained.
- The entrance(s) should be clearly signed, showing the name of the club (Club responsibility).
- Any seating for spectators should be in good condition.
- Suitable measures should be taken to ensure that lost balls do not delay play.

7. Scoreboards (Club responsibility).

- A scoreboard shall be supplied that is clearly visible from all areas of the ground.
- This should indicate the current innings total, wickets taken, overs bowled. The scoreboard should be easily operable by one individual.