



# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## ASSESSMENT REPORT JULY 2025

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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## ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance
AP	Active Partnership
BC	Bowls Club
BCGBA	British Crown Green Bowling Association
CC	Cricket Club
CFA	County Football Association
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
FF	Football Foundation
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HE	Higher Education
HC	Hockey Club
IRB	International Rugby Board
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
LP	Local Plan
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PPOSS	Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy & Outdoor Sports Strategy
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFL	Rugby Football League
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106 agreement
TC	Tennis Club
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under
WR	World Rugby

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.1: Introduction

Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) has been jointly commissioned by East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) and North Hertfordshire Council (NHC) to develop a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) for each individual local authority area. The commission also encompasses an Indoor Built Facilities Strategy for each of the three councils.

This is the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) Assessment Report for East Hertfordshire. It presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Guidance (for playing pitch sports) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for "non-pitch" sports. The PPS Guidance details a 13-stepped approach, separated into 5 distinct sections:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (1, 2 & 3).
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision (4 & 5).
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (6, 7 & 8).
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy (9 & 10).
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (11, 12 & 13).

ANOG guidance follows a similar process to the Sport England PPS guidance, and this is split into three formal stages which are:

- ◀ Stage A – Prepare and tailor the approach.
- ◀ Stage B – Gather information on supply and demand.
- ◀ Stage C – Assessment – Bringing the information together.

Stages A to C are covered in this report with Stage D covered in the subsequent strategy document.

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

The primary purpose of the PPOSS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities meets the local and community needs of both existing and future residents across East Hertfordshire. The Strategy will be produced in accordance with national planning guidance and will provide a robust and objective justification for future sporting provision.

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Paragraph 103 discusses the importance of access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

For the full national context, including for each of the sports covered please refer to Appendix 1.

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### Why the PPOSS is being developed

The PPOSS will form part of the evidence base for the new District Plan. It will provide a strategic framework to ensure that the provision of outdoor playing pitches meets the needs of residents (both existing and future) and visitors to the East Hertfordshire District Council area. It will also support those organisations, including the Council, involved in the delivery, provision and protection of outdoor sports facilities in the District. The Strategy will be produced in accordance with Sport England guidance and provide robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision and enhancement throughout East Hertfordshire.

In addition to this, the other key drivers for a new strategy are to:

- ◀ Improve our resident's health and wellbeing and increasing participation in sport.
- ◀ Provide a clear strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities.
- ◀ Inform assessments of planning applications, ensuring there is sufficient outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches provided on and off site as deemed appropriate.
- ◀ Monitor potential changes to the supply and demand due to capital programmes e.g., for educational sites.
- ◀ Providing evidence of need for capital funding. As well as proving the need for developer contributions towards pitch and facilities.
- ◀ Identify any cross-boundary issues specific to each authority and its neighbouring local authorities.
- ◀ Ensure that all clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and longer-term aspirations.
- ◀ Provide evidence to help secure internal and external funding.

### Local context

The East Hertfordshire District Plan was adopted in 2018 and outlines the plan for housing, jobs, community facilities and infrastructure to 2033. The plan seeks to provide a minimum of 18,458 new homes up to 2033, alongside new jobs, community facilities and infrastructure. The Plan sets out the importance of implementing this growth sustainability, to protect the natural and historical environment and the quality of life of people who live, work and visit the district.

The District Plan directs development across the district including urban extensions to the main towns and strategic development to the east of Stevenage, east of Welwyn Garden City and in the Gilston Area. These developments are at various stages of implementation, with a number of the larger sites coming forward in phases. The Council's latest Annual Report (2023-24) outlines that 9518 dwellings have been completed in the plan period to date.

The Gilston Area is a key component of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT), a large-scale development initiative designated as a Garden Town. Located north of Harlow and across the River Stort in East Hertfordshire, the Gilston area of the Garden Town will feature 10,000 homes and associated infrastructure for seven new villages. Gilston will also be connected to Harlow town centre by a new public travel route known as a Sustainable Transport Corridor, prioritising walking, cycling and high-quality public transport routes.

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The District Plan has outlined the following objectives for the Authority to achieve:

- ◀ Reduce carbon dioxide emissions and greener energy options.
- ◀ Support mixed communities which provide the needs for old, young and vulnerable people.
- ◀ Provide a balanced housing market.
- ◀ Protect the district's landscape from inappropriate developments.
- ◀ Encourage entrepreneurialism and maximising existing employment opportunities.
- ◀ Improve the travel network to ease road congestion and reduce carbon footprint.
- ◀ Provide good quality facilities for arts, culture, community, leisure, entertainment, recreation, faith and health.
- ◀ Reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of all residents.

To support the improvement of the health and well-being of the whole community, District Plan policies require the provision of open space, sport and recreation and new community facilities in conjunction with new development. Policy CFLR1- Open Space, Sport and Recreation expects provision on-site, or if appropriate, financial contributions towards new or enhanced off-site provision. Facilities should be provided in accordance with the Council's latest evidence and in consultation with Sport England and the Council's Leisure and Environment team. Policy CFLR7- Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation requires that provision of adequate and appropriately located community facilities will be sought in conjunction with new development.

### **New District Plan**

In October 2023 East Herts Council agreed to update the adopted District Plan (2018). The Council will commence formal work on the District Plan Review in late 2025 once the Government has published secondary legislation to implement the plan-making reforms.

Currently, the Council is updating the evidence base and undertaking other preparatory work needed to support the District Plan Review. The PPOSS is a key part of this evidence base and will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth.

### **Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document**

The Council adopted an Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in 2020, following the publication of an open space and sports assessment in 2017. The SPD supplements policies in the District Plan, providing guidance on the type and scale of open space, sport and recreation required in, and funded by, new development.

### **North East Central (NEC) Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP)**

The ten Hertfordshire local authorities, together with Hertfordshire County Council, established the Hertfordshire Growth Board in 2019. The purpose behind the Growth Board is to collaborate on place-based working across Hertfordshire to address sustainable growth. This joint approach is the development of two Joint Strategic Plans (JSPs), for South West and NEC Hertfordshire.

The purpose of the JSPs is to provide a long-term growth strategy where future collaboration is needed to deliver strategic-scale growth. The polycentric geography of Hertfordshire, with no dominant town or city, together with a number of tightly constrained new towns lends itself to a strategic approach that considers growth needs across administrative boundaries. The plans will identify a joint vision, long-term development needs, strategic development locations and strategic transport infrastructure, green infrastructure and climate change issues and policy responses.

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The authorities undertook a comprehensive scoping exercise to understand better some of the challenges and issues associated with the preparation of a JSP, including the issues where support was needed. These include the relationship of a JSP to local plans, the type of strategic plan that would best meet the area's needs and how its preparation would be resourced, as well as how long it would take.

The local authorities of Broxbourne, East Hertfordshire, North Hertfordshire, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield, together with Hertfordshire County Council make up the group for North East Central (NEC) Hertfordshire. Part one of a growth study was completed in October 2022 to understand the strategic elements affecting these authorities. Following this, visioning work was undertaken throughout late 2023 and 2024 and after public consultation it is expected to be finalised in 2025.

### **Vision and Corporate Priorities**

On 28th February 2024, the Council approved its "LEAF" corporate priorities. These set out the strategic priorities of the Council and are grouped under the following four headings: -

- Listening, Open and Transparent
- Environmentally Focused
- Acting with the Community
- Fair and Inclusive

Under each heading are a series of sub objectives and actions which officers are tasked with delivering. These LEAF priorities are kept under review and in July 2025, the Council approved some updates to priorities.

### **Housing Strategy 2022-2027**

Homelessness, poor condition homes or low levels of energy efficiency and an insufficient supply of affordable homes are all challenges in East Herts. The Housing Strategy 2022-2027 looks to address these issues by delivering more affordable homes, enabling a wider range of high-quality accommodation for vulnerable residents and improving the sustainability of existing properties.

### **Thriving Together Health and Wellbeing Plan 2024-2027**

The plan promotes an integrated approach to tackling health and wellbeing, working alongside national and regional health agencies, the Herts and Essex Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), the Integrated Care System (ICS) and the Integrated care Board (ICB), as well as Hertfordshire County Council and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Public Health has a key role to play in supporting good health and wellbeing and is tasked with the overall responsibility for achieving this across Hertfordshire.

The main priorities are to:

- ◀ Ensure that every child has the best start to life.
- ◀ Support communities to be healthy and sustainable.
- ◀ Support residents to maintain healthy lifestyles.
- ◀ Support people living with dementia.
- ◀ Improve support for people living with life-long conditions, long term health conditions, physical disabilities and their families.
- ◀ Improve residents' mental health.
- ◀ Supporting individuals to improve their health and wellbeing
- ◀ Enabling groups in the community to support themselves and each other



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- ◀ Using partnership co-operation and clear actions to improve community health and wellbeing.

An action plan has been developed to address these aims, with a range of actions including supporting and engaging with the voluntary sector and tackling inactivity and improving physical wellbeing by supporting residents to access sport, leisure and recreation opportunities.

### **East Herts Cultural Strategy 2021-2025**

The East Herts Cultural Strategy 2021-2025 outlines how strategic partners can contribute to highlighting the great physical and human assets of the District. The vision is that: “East Herts will lead the way in demonstrating that when residents, community organisations and the creative industries come together extraordinary, surprising and delightful things can happen that enrich and enhance everyone’s health, wellbeing and sense of inclusion”.

For the purposes of this Strategy, which places inclusion at its heart, arts and culture is considered to include the performing and visual arts, festivals, tourism and leisure, heritage and historical buildings, sports and physical activity, parks and open spaces, children’s play and common interest voluntary groups. The Strategy recognises that culture can be a key drive for prosperity in East Herts.

Population projections estimate that the number of people in all age groups are growing in the District. Housing developments in new neighbourhoods and garden villages will bring new cultural opportunities to East Herts through unlocking developer contributions. Ensuring that all residents have access to activities is a challenge, particularly those living in more deprived areas. Providing cultural activities is also seen to tackle wider societal issues such as crime and loneliness and improve educational attainment in young people. Residents need to be able to access these events in sustainable ways.

### **Management arrangements**

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

Further to this, a Steering Group is and will continue to be responsible for the direction of the PPS from a strategic perspective and for supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from East Herts District Council, Sport England, Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs). The responsibilities of the Steering Group have been:

- ◀ Setting a strategic framework.
- ◀ Ensuring that the process is robust and meets the methodology requirements of the PPS guidance as currently available.
- ◀ Preparing and signing off project management documents e.g., the project plan and project brief.
- ◀ Establishing the context and tailoring the approach.
- ◀ Setting club survey response targets.
- ◀ Assisting in the identification and engagement of those who should be consulted to gather the supply and demand of information.
- ◀ Check and challenge key finding, issues, solutions, recommendations and actions.
- ◀ Reviewing draft documents.

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It will be important for the Steering Group to continue once the PPOSS has been finalised to contribute to Stage E and help keep it up to date.

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### Scope

The following are the key outdoor sports in East Hertfordshire and as such are included within the scope:

- ◀ Athletics.
- ◀ Bowls.
- ◀ Cricket.
- ◀ Football
- ◀ Golf.
- ◀ Hockey.
- ◀ Netball.
- ◀ Rugby league.
- ◀ Rugby union.
- ◀ Tennis.
- ◀ Water sports.

### Extent of the study area

The study area is the East Hertfordshire District Council administrative area. Due to the size of the District, the array of influences acting upon it and the diverse and dispersed nature of its settlements there are a great variety of issues facing its communities. In order to establish a policy approach, appropriate to meeting these differing needs it is necessary to sub-divide the District. This sub-division is based upon the presence of common characteristics, including the prevailing economic, social, and environmental conditions and the existence of connections to, and the influence of, surrounding areas and centres.

As a result of this process five distinct and internally cohesive areas within the District have been identified as follows:

- ◀ Bishop's Stortford.
- ◀ Buntingford.
- ◀ Hertford, Ware.
- ◀ Sawbridgeworth.
- ◀ Watton-at-Stone.

Cross boundary issues have been explored to determine the level of imported and exported demand, recognising, for example, that people travel to and make use of strategic facilities irrespective of administrative boundaries. As can be seen the Buntingford Analysis Area as an example is much larger than the town of Buntingford itself. This is because the agreed analysis areas have been named after prominent settlements within each area.

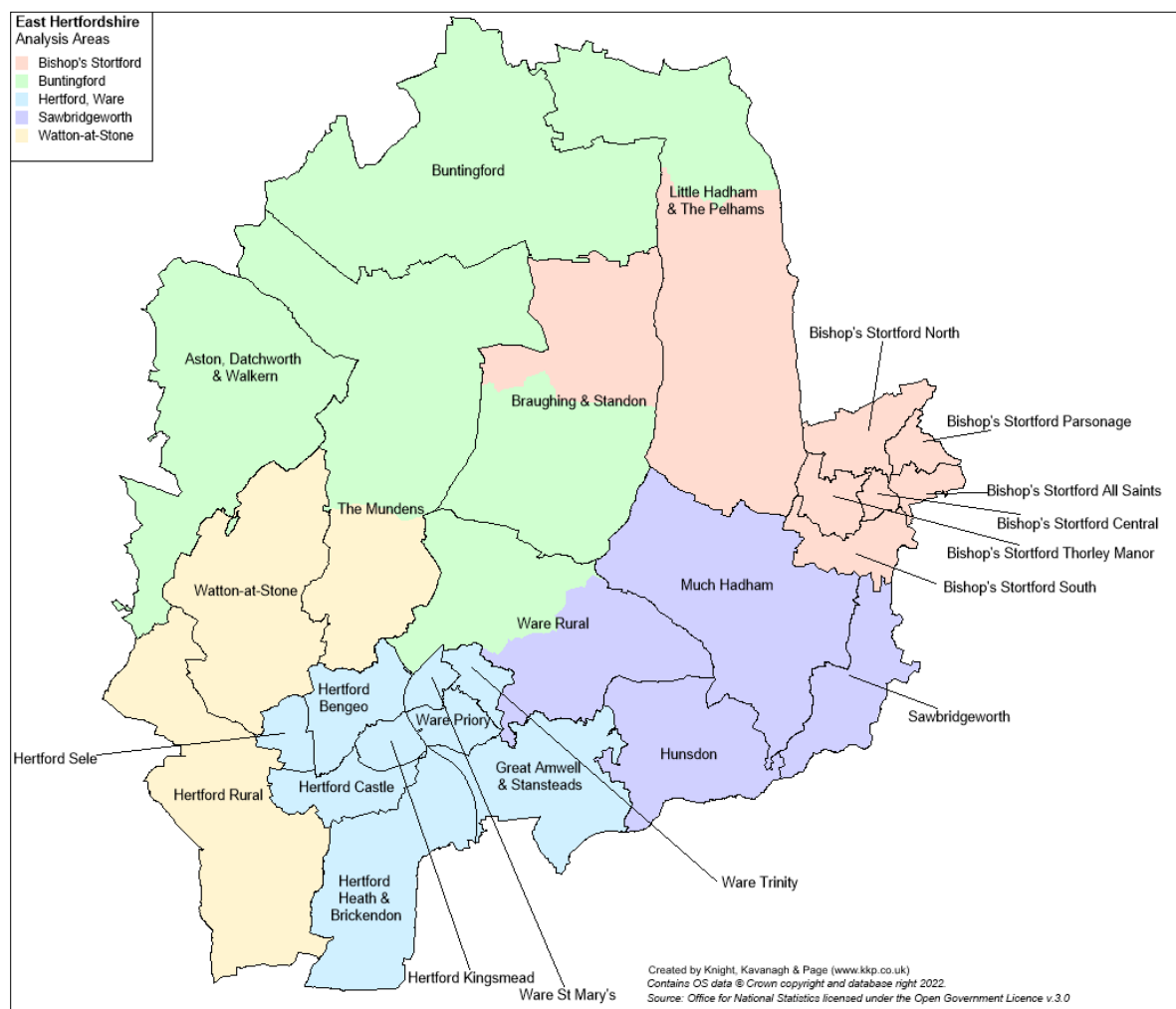
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Figure 1.1: Map showing analysis areas



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Figure 1.2: Map showing analysis areas and wards



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

A clear picture of supply and demand for outdoor sports facilities in East Hertfordshire needs to be provided to include an accurate assessment of quantity and quality. This is achieved through consultation with key stakeholders to ensure that they inform the subsequent strategy. It informs current demand, adequacy, usage, future demand and strategies for maintenance and investment for outdoor sports facilities.

### Gather supply information and views – an audit of playing pitches

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

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

1. [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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Although the statutory definition of a pitch is one that meets a minimum size of 0.2ha, this PPS takes into account smaller size pitches that contribute to the supply side, for example, a site containing a mini 5v5 football pitch. This PPS counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply. The definition of a playing pitch also includes artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

As far as possible the assessment report aims to capture all of the outdoor sports facilities within East Hertfordshire; however, there may be instances, for example, on school sites or private sites where access was not possible and has led to omissions within the report. Where pitches have not been recorded within the report, including those which are disused or lapsed, they remain as pitches and for planning purposes continue to be so. Furthermore, exclusions of a pitch does not mean that it is not required from a supply and demand point of view.

### Quantity

Where known, all outdoor sports facilities are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web based database, with the Council and NGBs supporting the process by checking and updating this initial data. This was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues.

For each site, the following details were recorded in the project database (which will be supplied upon completion of the project as an electronic file):

- ◀ Site name, address (including postcode) and location.
- ◀ Ownership and management type.
- ◀ Security of tenure.
- ◀ Total number, type and quality of outdoor sports facilities.

### Accessibility

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

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

### Quality

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

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It is not just the quality itself which has an effect on its capacity but also the quality, standard and range of ancillary facilities. The quality of both the outdoor sports facility and ancillary facilities will determine whether provision is able to contribute to meeting demand from various groups and for different levels and types of play.

The quality of all outdoor sports facilities identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual facilities and sites, a quality rating is also recorded within the audit for each. These ratings are used to help estimate the capacity to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the guidance and as determined by NGBs), users and providers were also consulted on the quality and in some instances the quality rating was adjusted to reflect this.

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

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for outdoor sports facilities (i.e. recording how and when provision is used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment.

Demand for outdoor sports facilities in the District tends to fall within the following categories:

- ◀ Organised competitive play.
- ◀ Organised training.
- ◀ Informal play.

Current and future demand for outdoor sports facilities is presented on a sport-by-sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

In addition, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section. Unmet demand is known to currently exist but is unable to access sports facilities; latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better quality provision. Exported and imported demand refers to those sports users who are playing outside of their local authority of choice.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate such demand information. Firstly, face to face consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport, thus allowing for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed. For all remaining clubs, an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised.

Local sports development officers, county associations and regional governing body officers advised which of the clubs to include in the face-to-face consultation and Sport England was also included within the consultation process prior to the project commencing. Issues identified by clubs returning questionnaires were followed up by telephone or face to face interviews.

As key providers and users of outdoor sports facilities, educational establishments were also consulted. This involved face to face meetings with secondary schools and colleges and an online survey being sent to primary schools.

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## Future demand/population growth

It has been agreed to project future demand to 2043 in East Hertfordshire as the Council is currently updating its adopted District Plan (2018-2033), so the revised housing targets will be set for beyond 2033.

The current resident population in East Hertfordshire is 150,158 (ONS 2021 Census). By 2043 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand) the East Hertfordshire's population is projected to increase 8% according to ONS data.

Alongside current demand, it is important for the PPOSS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using ONS population projections, as well as likely participation growth informed through consultation, an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

Team generation rates are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group) in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change.

Future demand for pitches is calculated by adding the percentage increases to the population increases in each analysis area. This figure is then applied to the team generation rates and is presented on a sport-by-sport basis.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand, especially for non-pitch sports (where team generation rates are not applicable) include:

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

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

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

### Understand the situation at individual sites

Qualitative pitch ratings are linked to a pitch capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. The quality and use of each pitch is assessed against the recommended pitch capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket) a pitch could accommodate.

This is compared to the number of matches actually taking place and categorised as follows, to identify:

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

As a guide, the FA, RFU, EH and the ECB have set a standard number of matches that each pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality.



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Table 1.1: Capacity of playing pitches

Sport	Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Football	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Football	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
Rugby union	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
Rugby union	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
Rugby union	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
Cricket	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	0 per season
Hockey AGPs	One AGP	4 matches per day	4 matches per day	0 matches per day

For non-pitch sports, capacity is not linked to the number of matches taking place but rather the number of members (and other users) attracted to a site. For example, for tennis, a hard court with sports lighting is said to have capacity for 60 members, whereas a hard court without sports lighting has capacity for 40 members (this varies for grass courts). For bowls, the capacity of a green is thought to be 60 members, although this can vary depending on how active the membership is and how many teams are fielded.

## Develop the current picture of provision

Once capacity is determined on a site-by-site basis, actual spare capacity is calculated on an area-by-area basis via further interrogation of temporal demand. Although this may have been identified, it does not necessarily mean that there is surplus provision. For example, spare capacity may not be available when it is needed, or the site may be retained as a 'strategic reserve' to enable pitch rotation to reduce wear and tear.

Capacity ratings assist in the identification of sites for improvement/development, rationalisation, decommissioning and disposal.

## Identify the key findings and issues

By completing Steps 1-5 it is possible to identify several findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of outdoor sports provision in East Hertfordshire. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues prior to development of the Strategy and Action Plan for East Hertfordshire.

## Develop the future picture of provision (scenario testing)

Modelling scenarios to assess whether existing provision can cater for unmet, latent, exported and future demand is made after the capacity analysis. This will also include, for example, removing sites with unsecured community use to demonstrate the impact this would have if these sites were to be decommissioned in the future. The scenario testing generally occurs in the Strategy report that follows on from this document and therefore does not form part of the Assessment Report.

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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### PART 2: FOOTBALL PITCHES

#### 2.1: Introduction

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

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Part 3 captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches) which are the preferred AGP (artificial grass pitch) surface type for football. In future, it is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Game Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project. A Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has now been produced for every local authority across England.

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

Each LFFP builds upon PPS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game, to also include strategic priorities for investment across small sided football (recreational and informal including indoors). LFFP's also incorporate consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as underrepresented communities. This includes those which may be key partners with regards to football for behavioural change and groups which may be key drivers of FA NGS priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all national football investment through the funding partners will be identified via LFFPs.

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

The original East Hertfordshire LFFP<sup>2</sup> was developed in 2019 and is currently being updated. It identifies 15 potential projects for investment which are outlined in this section and the 3G pitch section of the report. The updated LFFP has been published in 2025 and explores potential 3G pitch and ancillary provision projects for the Authority and will be published prior to the PPS strategy completion. The 2025 LFFP has not applied priority sites for grass football pitches as they are now funded under the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund and the Home Advantage fund.

There is a total of 58 football clubs identified as playing in East Hertfordshire. The larger clubs in the District were offered an opportunity to engage in face-to-face consultations to allow them to provide feedback in greater detail on issues relating to supply and demand.

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<sup>2</sup><https://localplans.footballfoundation.org.uk/local-authorities-index/east-hertfordshire/east-hertfordshire-executive-summary/>

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The remaining clubs were issued an online survey which was distributed by KKP and Hertfordshire FA. The following clubs were consulted with face to face or via virtual meetings:

- ◀ Bengoe Tigers FC.
- ◀ Bishop's Stortford Community YFC (BSC FC).
- ◀ Buntingford Cougars FC.
- ◀ Bury Rangers FC.
- ◀ Hertford Town YFC.
- ◀ Ware FC Academy.
- ◀ Ware YFC.
- ◀ Watton YFC.

Through face-to-face interviews, survey responses and phone calls, an 85% team response rate (432/511 teams) has been achieved having consulted with 18/58 (31%) of clubs. The difference in percentages is caused by consultations prioritising clubs that have the higher number of teams, such as BSC FC which has 65 teams identified as playing within the District.

The following clubs completed online surveys or were consulted with through telephone calls:

- ◀ Bishops Stortford Swifts Youth FC.
- ◀ Bullsmoor Utd.
- ◀ Buntingford Town FC.
- ◀ Enfield FC.
- ◀ Forest Hall Park FC.
- ◀ Hertford Heath.
- ◀ Hertford Heath Junior FC.
- ◀ Sawbo FC.
- ◀ St Margaretsbury FC.
- ◀ Thorley Manor FC.
- ◀ Ware Lions FC.

### **2.2: Supply**

The audit identifies a total of 184 grass football pitches in East Hertfordshire across 70 sites. Of the pitches, 178 are available, at some level, for community use across 66 sites. All non-community accessible pitches are located at education sites, other than Albury Football Ground where community access was removed by the council due to noise complaints. Site assessments reviewing the quantity and quality of provision across the Authority was undertaken by KKP during December 2024.

As presented in the table below, the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area contains the most football pitches in East Hertfordshire with 66 identified (equating to 36% of all provision). In contrast, the Watton-at-Stone Analysis Area contains the least provision with 10 pitches identified (5% of overall provision).

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Table 2.1: Summary of all grass football pitches

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Bishop's Stortford	11	8	6	13	6	<b>44</b>
Buntingford	10	8	6	13	9	<b>46</b>
Hertford, Ware	19	15	14	8	10	<b>66</b>
Sawbridgeworth	7	5	4	1	1	<b>18</b>
Watton-at-Stone	2	2	2	1	3	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>184</b>

In East Hertfordshire, out of the 184 pitches, 49 are adult size (27%) and makes up the majority of pitches with the next biggest allocation of pitches being youth 11v11 with 38 (21%). It can be common for youth 11v11 teams to play on adult pitches as a result of a lack of youth 11v11 pitches which is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

Table 2.2: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Bishop's Stortford	10	8	6	11	4	<b>39</b>
Buntingford	10	8	6	13	9	<b>46</b>
Hertford, Ware	19	15	14	7	10	<b>65</b>
Sawbridgeworth	7	5	4	1	1	<b>18</b>
Watton-at-Stone	2	2	2	1	3	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>178</b>

Of the community available pitches, 38 are of a youth 11v11 size representing 21% of the available supply, which is low in relation to the proportion of youth teams (128 teams – 25% of all teams) which should be playing matches on this size pitch. This issue often results in teams fast tracking youth sides to play on adult pitches given the relatively recent introduction of youth 11v11 pitches within football in the UK.

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for adult football is 100x64 metres. Please refer to the table below for more detail.

Table 2.3: FA recommended grass/3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

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Of the 85 pitches located at 33 education sites in East Hertfordshire 81 across 30 sites are open to community use. Meaning that 95% of schools allow community use of their pitches. The following schools do not allow community access of their respective pitches:

- ◀ Saint Mary's Catholic School (CM23 2NQ).
- ◀ Richard Whittington Primary School (CM23 3NP).
- ◀ Abel Smith Primary School (SG13 8AE).

In most cases the sites do not allow community use due to the small quantity of pitches provided meaning it would not be worthwhile opening up the whole site such as Richard Whittington Primary School and Abel Smith Primary School. Typically, smaller schools like these do not have any other sporting provision that is open to community use, so it is not used to hiring a lettings department or having its site team manage out of hour bookings. Conversely, St Mary's has more pitch space alongside tennis courts and could have more potential for community use.

Playing field sites which have previously accommodated formal pitches are categorised as disused. A disused site is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either. In the case of East Hertfordshire there are no known disused sites across the District.

There are, however, several sites which previously provided formal playing pitch provision that no longer does. The below sites are all open spaces and can still be accessed by the community. The following findings were picked up from site visits and consultations.

Albury Football Ground (SG11 2JG) previously accommodated one adult and one 7v7 pitch each and was accessed by BSC FC. However, access was removed during the season by Albury Parish Council after noise complaints from neighbours.

The Meads (SG9 0DY) previously marked out one adult, one youth 11v11, one 9v9, two 7v7 and one 5v5, however, there is no longer football pitches marked out, and it is operating as a play park and general amenity open space.

Horseman's Meadow (SG12 0LP) and Widford Playing Field (SG12 8SH) both previously accommodated one adult pitch, however, there was no pitch markings at the time of site visit. Consultation with both local clubs and the Hertfordshire FA confirms that there are no clubs playing at either site.

County Hall (SG13 8EH) previously provided two 9v9 and two 7v7, however, has not marked out pitches recently after a fire at the pavilion. The Council confirms the site has been proposed for redevelopment, but the plans are unclear at present.

Both Norfolk Road Playing Fields (SG9 9BT) in Buntingford town centre and Much Hadham Recreation Ground (SG10 6BS) previously provided one adult pitch. Neither site had pitches marked out or posts up at the time of site visits undertaken in December 2024. There are also no affiliated teams stating use of the playing fields for organised play. The sites are mainly used as open spaces now, although it is worth noting that Norfolk Road Playing Fields still has a cricket square.

Avanti Grange Secondary School is a recently built school with brand new community available grass pitches just across the A120. The pitches have not yet been marked out and are not accessible as of yet as a footbridge still needs to be built. BSC YFC is also planning to obtain a new site beside the new school pitches and has held several discussions with different parties. The land belongs to a local farmer which the Club states is in favour, although provision will be subject to planning permission.

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Buntingford Cougars FC is concerned around its future tenure position at London Road Playing Fields. The site is owned by both the Buntingford Relief in need and Diocese Church of England St Albans in equal shares and there appears to be some risk of the land being sold.

Hertford Town YFC has identified a grass area behind the 3G pitch it shares with Hertford Town as a potential space to develop a mini 7v7 grass pitch. Alongside this, the Club would like a youth 11v11 pitch to be marked out near the River Lea which originally had a pitch on the marked out but an agreement with the Town Council could not be reached. It feels that it is at capacity and cannot grow without additional pitch space.

Consultation with Sawbridgeworth Sports Association confirmed there is an ambition to develop a new site to be accessed by Sawbridgeworth Town FC and Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club. Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club raises frustrations with accessing Leventhorpe School as a second ground. Both clubs are seeking a shared new site to further growth ambitions.

Regarding the adopted District plan there have been several new community grass football pitches proposed in line with new major housing developments which will significantly increase the supply within East Hertfordshire. The Gilston development which will build 10,000 new homes has 15 new pitches proposed spread across adult, youth and mini pitches. North of Ware development will see 1,800 new homes built and provide one new adult and one new youth pitch. The Bishop's Stortford North development will add one new adult football pitch (Hoggates Park stadia pitch) that is designed to meet ground grading regulations for Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC. Initially the pitch will be grass but the club hopes to fundraise for a 3G pitch in the future.

Two new primary schools have been built in Bishop's Stortford and have community use agreements for sports provision. Avanti Brook and Avanti Meadows Primary School's may have football pitches marked out (layout and formats currently unknown which would be available for community use for the 25/26 season).

Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 overleaf identifies all football pitches servicing East Hertfordshire. For a key to the map, see Table [2.18](#).

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Figure 2.1: Football pitch locations



The quality of football pitches across East Hertfordshire has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) undertaken in December 2024, PitchPower reports for 10 sites which can be found in Table 2.6 and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%).

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Pitch quality primarily influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use. Pitches that receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work are likely to be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games they are able to accommodate each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality.

Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use. In total, 28 pitches are assessed as good quality (16%), 94 as standard (53%) and 56 (31%) as poor. Table [2.18](#) outlines the quality ratings of all grass pitches in the Authority.

Table 2.4: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Pitch type	No. of good quality pitches	No. of standard quality pitches	No. of poor quality pitches
Adult	8	28	12
Youth 11v11	7	19	12
Youth 9v9	5	16	11
Mini 7v7	4	15	14
Mini 5v5	4	16	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>56</b>

There are 56 poor quality pitches available to the community (31%), most of which are found at education or public open space sites. Pitches at the aforementioned types of site generally do not receive continued and stringent maintenance programmes and are used for other activities other than formal football demand. Consequently, pitch quality can suffer. Good quality pitches are commonly located at sites where Grass Pitch Maintenance Funding is being accessed, the site is fenced and not accessed by the general public and there is a paid groundsman.

The six pitches unavailable for community use are all of standard quality and at education sites other than Albury Football Ground. Albury Parish Council removed Bishop's Stortford Community FC's access to this site mid-season due to various noise complaints from neighbours.

The following clubs raised specific issues during consultation with regards to the quality of their pitches.

Hertford Town YFC raises concerns about the quality of pitches it accesses at Hartham Common and Kingsmead. The pitches are rated poor, and the Club states that the grass does not get cut frequently enough, alongside a basic maintenance regime with no off-season work being carried out. The site is an open space, so is subject to dog walkers and informal football use. Everyone Active manage the pitches on behalf of East Herts District Council.

Bury Rangers FC accesses Presdales Recreation Ground which is currently managed and maintained by East Herts District Council. The pitches are rated standard quality; however, there are issues relating to wider public access as it is within an open space. Ideally the Club would like to take on maintenance and management of the site. The pitches are chalk based so do not hold surface water which is common with most other clay based pitches in East Hertfordshire.



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BSC FC reports that the pitches at Pearce House Playing Fields (Birchwood High School) are poor quality as they are based on clay soil. This typically results in the pitches suffering from inclement weather with drainage problems. It also raises quality inconsistencies at Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre as the site is on a floodplain as well as being an open space site. It states that the pitches are a mix of poor and standard. Site assessment notes concur with these findings as most of the mini pitches were waterlogged at the time of the audit.

Ware YFC which is partnered with Ware United FC accesses its namesake site as well as Allenburys Sports & Social Club pitches which it deems good quality as it is privately maintained. Ware YFC home site is a mix of poor and standard pitches which it maintains itself. The Club does not access any grass pitch maintenance funding but are considering doing so in the future.

The FA has a general pitch improvement strategy which has been developed in partnership with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) to develop a grass pitch maintenance service that can be utilised by grassroots clubs with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and therefore the quality of pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide clubs with advice/practical solutions in a range of areas, with the simple aim of improving playing surfaces. The programme is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise council-maintained sites.

In addition, the FA's Strategy also aims to focus on developing improved maintenance with local authorities that can be utilised at local authority-maintained sites.

Further to the above, the Football Foundation and the FA has recently developed a new pitch maintenance grant fund that allows clubs and sports organisations to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Local authorities are currently ineligible applicants through this fund; however, clubs, leagues and or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure and/or a proforma is in place.

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

The football funding partners (Premier League, The FA, Sport England, and Department for Culture, Media and Sport) are increasing efforts to improve the quality of grass pitches in England with the launch of the PitchPower app. Launched in 2020 alongside the Football Foundation Pitch Preparation Fund, The app is a new digital self-assessment tool to allow reports and recommendations to be made more quickly and easily once submitted for review by GMA regional pitch advisors.

The tool across mobile app and desktop is open to access by all providers, for example clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower Assessment Report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches.

The PitchPower assessments use the new five step Performance Quality Standard rating system developed by the Grounds Management Association (GMA), with the Football Foundation and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS guidance.

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Alignment was agreed as follows:

Table 2.5: Equivalent PPS quality rating for pitch Performance Quality Standard ratings

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

The following sites have received an existing PitchPower report, the equivalent PPS Quality Ratings for which have been accepted and applied within the PPS audit and analysis.

- ✦ Bengo Sports Ground.
- ✦ Bishops Stortford Swifts FC.
- ✦ Crouchfields.
- ✦ Freman College.
- ✦ Leventhorpe School.
- ✦ Presdales School.
- ✦ Ralph Sadleir School.
- ✦ The Sele School.
- ✦ Ware Lions FC.
- ✦ Ware Youth Football Club.

Table 2.6: PitchPower report results

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PitchPower rating
12	Bengo Sports Ground	Adult	Poor
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Adult	Standard
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Mini 7v7	Good
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Mini 7v7	Poor
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Youth 11v11	Poor
35	Crouchfields	Adult	Poor
35	Crouchfields	Mini 5v5	Standard
35	Crouchfields	Mini 7v7	Standard
35	Crouchfields	Youth 11v11	Standard
35	Crouchfields	Youth 9v9	Standard
40	Freman College	Adult	Good
40	Freman College	Youth 11v11	Good
62	Leventhorpe School	Adult	Standard
62	Leventhorpe School	Youth 11v11	Poor
62	Leventhorpe School	Youth 9v9	Standard
75	Presdales School	Mini 5v5	Standard
75	Presdales School	Mini 7v7	Standard
75	Presdales School	Youth 11v11	Standard
75	Presdales School	Youth 11v11	Standard
75	Presdales School	Youth 9v9	Standard
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Mini 5v5	Good
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Mini 5v5	Standard
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Mini 7v7	Good
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Mini 7v7	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PitchPower rating
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Mini 7v7	Good
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Youth 9v9	Standard
108	The Sele School	Mini 5v5	Good
108	The Sele School	Mini 7v7	Standard
108	The Sele School	Youth 11v11	Standard
108	The Sele School	Youth 11v11	Standard
108	The Sele School	Youth 11v11	Good
108	The Sele School	Youth 9v9	Good
118	Ware Lions FC	Mini 5v5	Poor
118	Ware Lions FC	Mini 7v7	Standard
118	Ware Lions FC	Youth 11v11	Standard
118	Ware Lions FC	Youth 9v9	Standard
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Adult	Poor
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Adult	Poor
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Mini 5v5	Poor
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Mini 5v5	Good
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Mini 7v7	Poor
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Mini 7v7	Poor
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Youth 9v9	Standard
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Youth 9v9	Standard

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

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

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

Several clubs/schools within East Hertfordshire have been awarded funding from the FF to improve pitch quality, such as, Ware Lions FC, Bengeo Tigers FC, Leventhorpe School, Bengeo Trinity FC, Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC, Wodson Park Youth FC and Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC.

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

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

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

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

As a result of the above, those ancillary facilities that do not meet the above criteria, cannot be rated anything higher than standard quality for the purposes of this document. Additional context behind the rationale is provided below.

The table below presents a quality summary of provision at sites which provide dedicated changing rooms and pavilions based on consultation feedback. Furthermore, some sites have been excluded as ancillary provision is not available, additionally, education sites are not included within the list.

Table 2.7: Summary of ancillary facility quality

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Management	Ancillary facility quality
1	Albury Football Ground	Bishop's Stortford	Albury Parish Council	Standard
7	Aston Playing Field	Buntingford	Aston Village Hall Committee	Standard
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Hertford, Ware	Sport Club	Standard
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Bishop's Stortford	Sport Club	Standard
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Watton-at-Stone	Bramfield Parish Council	Standard
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Braughing Parish Council	Standard
31	Cottered Playing Field	Buntingford	Cottered & Throcking Parish Council	Standard
35	Crouchfields	Watton-at-Stone	Wodson Park FC	Poor
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Sport Club	Standard
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Everyone Active	Good
49	Hertford Heath Playing Fields	Hertford, Ware	Hertford Heath Parish Council	Poor
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	East Herts District Council	Standard
77	RDA Stadium	Bishop's Stortford	Sport Club	Good
84	Sawbridgeworth Town Football Club	Sawbridgeworth	Sport Club	Standard
86	Seth Ward Community Centre	Buntingford	Buntingford Town Council	Standard

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Management	Ancillary facility quality
94	St Margaretsbury FC	Hertford, Ware	Sport Club/Association	Standard
98	Standon Memorial Playing Field	Buntingford	Standon Parish Council	Standard
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Tewin Parish Council	Standard
104	The Bury	Buntingford	Sport Club	Good
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Thundridge Parish Council	Poor
118	Ware Lions FC	Buntingford	Sport Club	Standard
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Sport Club	Poor
122	Westmill Recreation Ground	Buntingford	Westmill Parish Council	Poor
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Private	Standard
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Private	Standard
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	Walkern Parish Council	Standard
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Sport Club	Good
141	St. George's Playing Field	Sawbridgeworth	High Wych Parish Council	Standard

Of the 28 ancillary facilities, four are rated good (14%), 19 are rated standard (68%) and five are rated poor (18%) quality. Sites which are listed as poor quality are all dated and have clear evidence of wear and tear throughout. Each requires modernisation to ensure it remains fit for usage in the future.

Ware YFC has 44 teams and accesses poor quality ancillary provision at its home site, it funded a new social room in 2024 as well as having home and away changing rooms and a kitchen. However, the site has a boiler, toilets and communal showers that do not work, while the changing rooms themselves are dated and need refurbishing. It also does not have suitable car parking to service its current demand although does have plans to extend this.

Hertford Heath Playing Fields currently has poor rated ancillary provision. The site is accessed by Hertford Heath FC which has two adult mens and one U16 boys team. The Club states it is planning to investigate rebuilding its changing rooms/clubhouse, however, does not currently have the funding to do so.

Crouchfields has a poor-quality ancillary provision that is accessed by Wodson Park FC which fields 11 teams ranging from U7's through to U18's teams. Westmill Recreation Ground has a poor-quality ancillary provision and one adult pitch. The site is accessed by Westmill Open FC which has two adult mens teams.

Thundridge Sports Ground has a basic poor quality ancillary provision servicing its three grass pitches. The site is not used for football and was formerly accessed by Thundridge Cricket Club which has folded since the previous PPS was written. Improving the ancillary provision could facilitate re-introducing demand to the site and utilising actual spare capacity.

BSC FC reports that Friedberg Playing Fields has three changing rooms and a referee's room which have limited use. The facility has no showers but does have a kitchen and social room. The building is dated and there is a lack of car parking at the site for the number of pitches.

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The Bury which is accessed by Buntingford Cougars is rated good quality and has two changing rooms with self-contained showers in each changing room. Alongside this, the site has a social room and bar with plenty of parking. The Club also states it only uses the toilets at Seth Ward Community Centre and Braughing Playing Fields without accessing the changing facilities as its teams generally come ready to play.

The Richard Hale School is working with Bury Rangers FC to enhance the changing rooms in the school and develop a new classroom and kitchen to be managed by the football club. Bury Rangers FC currently has 81 teams and is a 3\* England Accredited club and as such is seeking better facilities to support its off-field development.

Bury Rangers also access Presdales Recreation Ground which has standard quality facilities. There are eight changing rooms with one communal shower space and the boiler does not work. Consequently, the Corinthian League which also use pitches at this venue will not access the changing rooms.

As above mentioned, a barrier to women and girls' participation in grassroots football is the lack of suitable ancillary changing provision. Currently, there are only four sites (14%) which have dedicated female changing rooms to support women's and girls' participation in football, which are, Grange Paddocks, Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC, The Bury and Ware FC.

Many teams in East Hertfordshire access pitch provision associated with the District Council or town and parish councils. The tenure of these sites is classified as secure, i.e., unless known otherwise, there is a guarantee that pitches will continue to be provided over the lifespan of the PPOSS. An exception to this is usually found at schools and academies which although may allow community use, are able to terminate community access at any time, unless a written community use agreement is in place.

As an example, in East Hertfordshire, Datchworth Primary School is a site which is used for affiliated football through an agreement of good will, but as there is no long-term agreement in place with the site user Watton YFC, it could in theory, be asked to vacate the site at short notice.

Of education sites in the District, 19 are used for competitive football. In total, affiliated football use at education sites equates to 183 teams from 15 clubs as detailed in the table overleaf.

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Table 2.8: Affiliated football demand at education providers

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Tenure position
8	Aston St Mary's VA School	Watton YFC	The Club pays a donation toward the school to use the football pitches and has a good relationship.
15	Birchwood High School	BSC FC	The Club part funded the 3G pitch and is a partner club. It has an annual agreement in place for this and the two 9v9 pitches it access.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	BSC FC Thorley Manor FC	BSC FC pays an annual fee toward the school for use of its pitches. Thorley Manor FC rents the pitch from the school with no long-term agreement in place.
36	Datchworth All Saints C Of Primary School	Watton YFC	The Club pays a monthly fee to the school for use of the pitches. There is no official agreement in place.
40	Freman College	Buntingford Cougars FC	The Club pays an annual fee toward the school for use of its pitches.
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth Town FC	Position unknown.
66	Manor Fields Primary School	Thorley Manor FC	The Club rents the pitch from the school with no long-term agreement in place.
68	Morgans Field	Bury Rangers	Position unknown.
75	Presdales School	Hertford Town FC Bury Rangers FC	Position unknown for Bury Rangers. The tenure position for Hertford Town FC is unknown.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	Position unknown.
78	Reedings Junior School	Sawbridgeworth Town FC	Position unknown.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Bully's Crusaders Watton YFC	Watton YFC pays a monthly fee to the school for use of the pitches. There is no official agreement in place. Bully's Crusaders position is unknown.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC BSC FC	BSC FC pays an annual fee toward the school for use of its pitches.
105	The Chauncy School	Deaconsfield Vets FC Hartham United FC	Positions unknown.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	The Club has a rolling two-year agreement with the school and have been there for over 25 years.
113	Walkern School	AFC Walkern	Position unknown.
120	Watton-At-Stone Primary School	Watton YFC	The Club pays a monthly fee to the school for use of the pitches. There is no official agreement in place.
132	Hertfordshire & Essex High School Sports Centre	Thorley Manor FC	The Club rents the pitch from the school with no long-term agreement in place.
166	Layston C of E First School	Buntingford Cougars	The Club pays an annual fee toward the school for use of its pitches.

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Outside of education settings, many clubs have more complex tenure agreements in place with different landowners. Buntingford Cougars FC has a long-term lease with Hertfordshire County Council for the building and pitches at The Bury for 30 years. The other sites it accesses are all on annual rental agreements.

Ware YFC has a 30-year lease with Hertfordshire County Council for its home site with the same name. The lease applies to the pitches, building and car park all of which the Club is keen to invest into to enhance.

BSC FC signed a seven-year lease agreement in 2019/20 with East Hertfordshire District Council for the ancillary provision at Friedberg Playing Fields. The Club has a license agreement for the grass pitches at the site which runs until 2027. The Club maintains both the building and pitches. All other sites it accesses are annual rental agreements.

Sawbridgeworth Town FC has a long-term lease for its site, as the ground is in trust for the provision of sport.

Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC has a long-term lease in place with Silver Leys for the use of the football pitches and ancillary facilities at its site. The site is shared with Bishop's Stortford RFC.

Buntingford Cougars FC is concerned around the future of its lease at London Road Playing Fields. The site is owned by both the Buntingford relief in need and Diocese Church of England St Albans in equal shares and there appears to be some risk of land being sold.

As for other clubs, in most cases they access provision that is owned and managed by either the Council or a town or parish council. In such instances, it is safe to assume that the access to these sites is secured over the lifespan of the PPS.

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

Clubs playing within the National League System (NLS) must adhere to ground grading requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground grading requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Please refer to the FA website<sup>3</sup> for the full specifications for each.

In East Hertfordshire, there are five clubs which compete in the NLS which can be seen in the table overleaf.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading>



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Table 2.9: Non-league football teams in East Hertfordshire

Team	League	Level
Bishop's Stortford FC	Southern League Premier Division Central	Step 3
Enfield FC	Southern League Division One Central	Step 4
Ware FC	Southern League Division One Central	Step 4
Hertford Town FC	Southern League Division One Central	Step 4
Sawbridgeworth Town FC	Essex Senior League	Step 5

The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they must achieve the appropriate ground grade by March 31<sup>st</sup> of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard.

It is important to note that from a ground grading perspective, the jump from a regional feeder league to Step 6 is significant and that as a minimum, sites require a sports lit pitch with hardstanding areas for fans, turnstiles for fan entry and therefore clubs currently at this level ordinarily require a serious overhaul of their existing sites to meet the relevant criteria.

Hertford Heath FC states that its pitch does not meet FA regulations and the first team plays its games at St Margaretsbury FC. It currently plays at step 7 so initially needs to enhance its current provision to meet these regulations, specifically ancillary provision. If the Club was to gain promotion it would need a lot of investment to meet ground grading regulations for step 6.

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System (WNLS) similar to the adult men's system which provides structure to the women's game. As seen in the table below this ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 7 with each tier requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Table 2.10: Summary of ground grading for women's football

Level	League	Grading category
Tier 1	FA Women's Super League	Step S1
Tier 2	FA Women's Championship	Step S2
Tier 3	FA Women's National League Premier Division (Northern and Southern)	Step W1
Tier 4	FA Women's National League Division 1 North / Midlands / South East / South West	Step W2
Tier 5	Regional Premier Division	Step W3
Tier 6	Regional Division One	-
Tier 7	County Leagues	-

Although women's clubs within the WNLS still require ground grading requirements set out by the FA, these differ from the men's NLS. Ratings range from Step S1 to W3 each with differing minimum requirements. Step S1 and S2 in the WNLS is akin to Step 3 and 4 of the men's NLS, however, not identical. The system is also a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

In 2017, the FA announced plans to restructure the women's league for the highest performers in the football pyramid. The changes were implemented from the start of the 2018-19 season and saw the top league, FA Women's Super League Tier 1, expand from ten clubs to 14 and the creation of a new national league established at Tier 2 for a maximum of 12 teams. Hertford Town is the only club in East Hertfordshire which has a women's team competing in the WNLS, at Tier 6.

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## 2.3: Demand

Through the audit and assessment, 511 teams from 58 clubs are identified as playing in East Hertfordshire. This consists of 75 adult men's (15%), nine adult women's (2%), 194 youth boys' (38%), 35 youth girls' (7%) and 198 mini mixed teams (39%).

East Hertfordshire affiliated demand has increased by 104 teams since the previous Playing Pitch Strategy was written in 2017 when there were 407 teams. Women's and girls' football has also increased in demand since the writing of the previous PPS from 23 teams to 44 teams currently.

The Hertford, Ware Analysis Area provides for the highest number of teams by a large margin, with a total of 277 teams. The analysis area with the fewest number of teams is Watton-at-Stone, with 15 teams identified.

Table 2.11: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in East Hertfordshire

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Bishop's Stortford	19	21	23	31	13	<b>107</b>
Buntingford	9	21	18	20	22	<b>90</b>
Hertford, Ware	50	73	50	52	52	<b>277</b>
Sawbridgeworth	4	7	5	3	3	<b>22</b>
Watton-at-Stone	2	6	5	2	-	<b>15</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>511</b>

Youth 11v11 football is the most prominent format of play, whilst mini 5v5 has the fewest number of teams.

There are 44 dedicated women/girls' teams across six clubs playing in East Hertfordshire, representing 9% of the total number of teams. These are provided at the following clubs:

- ◀ AFC Walkern.
- ◀ Bengoe Tigers.
- ◀ BSC FC.
- ◀ Buntingford Cougars.
- ◀ Buntingford Town.
- ◀ Bury Rangers.
- ◀ Hartham United FC.
- ◀ Hertford Town.
- ◀ St Margaretsbury.
- ◀ Ware United Football Club.
- ◀ Ware YFC.
- ◀ Watton Youth.

The FA currently has a drive to increase women's and girls' participation by 50%. As such, it is imperative that sufficient facilities become suitable for female access, particularly in relation to toilets and appropriate changing facilities.

With the success of the 2022 UEFA Women's Euros and legacy plan of the event paired with the upcoming 2025 Women's World Cup, women's and girls' football is outlined to significantly develop across the country. Hertfordshire FA will be working to use this event as a catalyst for an increase in localised participation in East Hertfordshire.

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Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the study area, despite being registered in East Hertfordshire. Likewise, imported demand is demand from neighbouring authorities accessing pitches in East Hertfordshire to play competitive matches.

In total, there is one club and two teams accessing provision outside of East Hertfordshire for matchday purposes, Buntingford Town FC. The Club reports that its women's and vets' teams have to access Barkway Recreation Ground in North Hertfordshire when the Bury is unplayable after Saturday fixtures. Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC reports its men's team has to travel to Harlow to access training provision as it cannot find facilities locally.

Regarding imported demand, Forest Hall Park FC states it is based in Stansted Mountfitchet in Essex yet affiliates as a Hertfordshire team due to a lack of pitches in the area. Enfield FC are originally an Enfield Team which previously played in Enfield, however, have since relocated to ground share with Hertford Town FC. It states it is looking for its own ground in the Hertfordshire area with aspirations of one day relocating back to Enfield.

Latent demand refers to potential demand; clubs that would like to field more teams but currently do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack of pitches, appropriate facilities, and qualified coaches. Clubs that report latent demand relating to facilities and the reasons provided for this latent demand can be seen below.

Table 2.12: Latent demand summary

Club	Analysis Area	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
Bishops Stortford Swifts Youth FC	Bishop's Stortford	X	X	
BSC FC	Bishop's Stortford	X	X	
Forest Hall Park FC	Bishop's Stortford	X	X	X
Thorley Manor FC	Bishop's Stortford	X	X	
Sawbo FC	Bishop's Stortford	X		
Bullsmoor United	Buntingford		X	
Buntingford Cougars	Buntingford	X	X	
Buntingford Town	Buntingford	X	X	
Watton YFC	Buntingford	X	X	
Bengeo Tigers	Hertford, Ware		X	
Bury Rangers	Hertford, Ware		X	
Enfield FC	Hertford, Ware	X	X	
Hertford Heath FC	Hertford, Ware	X	X	X
Hertford Heath Junior FC	Hertford, Ware	X		X
Hertford Town YFC	Hertford, Ware		X	
St Margaretsbury FC	Hertford, Ware		X	
Ware Football Club	Hertford, Ware	X	X	
Ware Lions FC	Hertford, Ware	X	X	
Ware YFC	Hertford, Ware	X	X	

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As can be seen in the table above, the greatest issue identified is the need for additional match pitches located within East Hertfordshire, with 14 clubs stressing this as a problem. Several clubs also made reference to the need for greater access to 3G pitches for training and poor ancillary provision impacting upon the possibility of expanding.

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC confirms it has teams that it could field should more pitches become available. It is also important to note that BSC FC are currently operating a waiting list for new members to join. The Club would like to grow but states it cannot do so due to a lack of pitch space for both training and match play.

Future demand can be defined in three ways through club growth aspirations, population forecasts, and participation trends. Participation trends shall be covered in the Strategy Report where the growth in demand from the 2017 PPS will be forecasted for the upcoming years. The FA and Football Foundation stresses there are expectations of significant growth in demand during the lifespan of the PPOSS.

There are eight clubs which report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide by the 2025/26 season. In total, these potential demand increases would lead to the creation of 25 teams (if aspirations are realised).

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Table 2.13: Potential team increases identified by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions
Bishops Stortford Swifts Youth FC	Bishop's Stortford	1x Adult men 1x Youth 11v11 boys' team 2x 9v9 boys' teams 3x Mini teams	Adult Youth 11v11 Youth 9v9 Mini 7v7	3.5
Forest Hall Park FC	Bishop's Stortford	1x Youth 11v11 boys' team 2x 9v9 boys' teams 3x Mini teams	Youth 11v11 Youth 9v9 Mini 5v5	3
Thorley Manor FC	Bishop's Stortford	1x 9v9 boys 2x Mini teams	Youth 9v9 Mini 5v5	1.5
Buntingford Cougars FC	Buntingford	1x U11 girls 1x U9 mixed	Youth 9v9 Mini 7v7	1
Bengeo FC	Hertford, Ware	1x U9	Mini 7v7	0.5
Hertford Town YFC	Hertford, Ware	2x U9/10	Mini 7v7	1
St Margaretsbury FC	Hertford, Ware	1x Youth 11v11 1x Mini teams	Youth 11v11 Mini 5v5	1
Ware YFC	Hertford, Ware	2x U7/8	Mini 5v5	1

Future demand aspirations have been aggregated by analysis area and pitch format and are detailed in table 2.14.

Table 2.14: Potential increases by analysis area

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
Bishop's Stortford	1	2	5	3	5	16
Buntingford	-	-	1	1	-	2
Hertford, Ware	-	1	-	3	3	7
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>

In the case of Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC the future demand ambitions outlined above are dependent upon securing additional match pitches through relocating the club to new sites.

Team generation rates (TGRs) are used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group), in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change in the study area.

ONS population growth is applied to the TGRs to identify a predicted number of teams that will be generated. As such, TGRs are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth up to 2043 (in line with East Hertfordshire District Plan timeline).

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Table 2.15: Team generation rates (2043)

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Match equivalent session per week <sup>4</sup>
Adult Mens (18-45)	1:279.98	6.66	6	3
Adult Women's (18-45)	1:2,924.18	0.67	-	-
Youth Boys (12-17)	1:48.17	6.59	6	3
Youth Girls (12-17)	1:247.52	1.18	1	0.5
Youth Boys (10-11)	1:24.24	6.51	6	3
Youth Girls (10-11)	1:107.45	1.41	1	0.5
Mini Mixed (8-9)	1:29.71	9.32	9	4.5
Mini Mixed (6-7)	1:52.49	5.18	5	2.5

As seen above, based on ONS projections, it is forecasted that there will be an increase in football demand equivalent to six adult mens teams, 12 youth boys, two youth girls and 14 mini teams. Once team generation rates are broken down by analysis area, this growth decreases to generate only one adult, five youth 11v11 teams, three youth 9v9 teams, three mini 7v7 mixed teams and one mini 5v5 team.

Table 2.16: Future demand through ONS projections by analysis area

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
Bishop's Stortford	0.5	0.5	1	1	-	3
Buntingford	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	2
Hertford, Ware	2	2	1.5	2	1.5	9
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>

The predicted level of growth in table [2.18](#) is exclusively based on ONS projections and does not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport. As a comparison the East Hertfordshire 2017 PPS identified the Authority as having 407 teams, meaning there has been the growth in 104 teams in the last seven years. This gives an increase in demand of 15 teams per year, meaning the ONS projection of an additional 28 teams by 2043 would be noticeably below the growth rate experienced in recent years.

Similarly, they cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focus on certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus on developing female participation within East Hertfordshire and nationally which, as mentioned previously, is likely to lead to more women's and girls' teams in the future and therefore increase demand for pitches.

Outside of women's and girls' increases, given the large amounts of future demand identified through population forecasts, it is considered unlikely that aspirations from clubs will happen exclusively of population growth. Instead, it is thought that the ambitions will generally be absorbed within the increases. However, the strategy and action plan will further test the impact of participation increases including trend based analysis from affiliation data over the last few years.

<sup>4</sup> Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week on their relevant pitch type.

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FA Wildcats centres work with County FA qualified coaches to deliver local weekly sessions, which provide opportunities for girls aged five to 11 to develop fundamental skills and experience football in a safe and fun environment.

In East Hertfordshire, Wildcat centres are run by BSC FC (numbers unspecified) and Ware FC with 32 members. Bengeo FC and Bury Rangers do not do wildcats sessions however do a different club specific version instead.

In light of The FA's aspirations to increase female participation in football by 50% (Game Changer Strategy) and the establishment and foreseen future effect of the Wildcats programme, it is likely that the growth in affiliated women's and girl teams may exceed that shown through population growth. However, this is not able to be quantified through the Wildcats programme due to it being dependent on the localised success of the programme.

Future demand in this report will be applied via the application of population growth. This equates to the growth of six adult, 12 youth boys, two youth girls and 14 mini teams.

The growth in teams outlined through club aspirations will be scenario tested in the forthcoming Strategy, equating to 25 additional teams through the ambitions of eight clubs.

The Strategy will include a scenario showing the participation trends for the upcoming five years based in previous year on year growth.

## 2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affect the playing experience and people's enjoyment. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times. As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without it adversely affecting its quality.

The following ratings were used in East Hertfordshire:

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

Table 2.18 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play to determine a capacity rating as follows:

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

For clarity, the following section applies the methodology that one team accessing a pitch equates to 0.5 MES of demand during the peak period.

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the carrying capacity at such sites will need to be adjusted. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The adjustment is

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typically dependent on the amount of play carried out, the number of pitches on site and whether there is access to an on-site AGP.

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking.

In East Hertfordshire, one match equivalent session per week of demand has been attributed to each pitch based at school sites to account for curricular demand. This is based on consultation and the expectation that all pitches are in use, as well as experience of how school sites use pitches from other strategies both locally and nationally. In instances where a school site is already overplayed or the inclusion of one match equivalent session from curricular demand would create overplay it has been discounted.

Many football pitches in the area are located within open access sites. As such, these pitches are subject to informal use in the form of dog walkers, unorganised games of football and exercise groups. Informal use is not accounted for in the capacity analysis on the basis that it cannot be quantified on a site-by-site basis. However, it can be expected at popular sites such as Hartham Common & Kingsmead, that there will be a higher level of demand on each pitch (from informal use) over and above that identified.

It is important to understand what the peak time for football pitch access is, to accurately understand the supply and demand balance for football pitches. Peak time access translates to when the high demand is for pitch access during a week. In East Hertfordshire, the peak time for adult football is Saturday afternoon, Saturday morning for youth 9v9 and youth 11v11 and for mini 5v5 and 7v7 football it is Sunday mornings.

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

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

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

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to the already low carrying capacity of the pitches. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn will aid the improvement of pitch quality.

Furthermore, any pitches with unsecured tenure are not considered to have actual spare capacity as no further play should be encouraged on such sites given that future access cannot be guaranteed.

Table [2.18](#) identifies the way capacity balance is represented in Table 2.17.



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Table 2.17: Capacity balance examples

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

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Table 2.18: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch sizes	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
1	Albury Football Ground	-	SG11 2JG	Bishop's Stortford	No	Albury Parish Council	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	-	2	2	-	This pitch was previously used for community use; however, this was revoked by the Council during the season due to noise complaints. Consequently, spare capacity has been discounted from the supply.
1	Albury Football Ground	-	SG11 2JG	Bishop's Stortford	No	Albury Parish Council	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	-	4	4	-	This pitch was previously used for community use; however, this was revoked by the Council during the season due to noise complaints. Consequently, spare capacity has been discounted from the supply.
7	Aston Playing Field	Watton YFC	SG2 7HR	Buntingford	Yes	Aston Village Hall Committee	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity.
7	Aston Playing Field	Watton YFC	SG2 7HR	Buntingford	Yes	Aston Village Hall Committee	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
8	Aston St Mary's VA School	Watton YFC	SG2 7HA	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
8	Aston St Mary's VA School	Watton YFC	SG2 7HA	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo Trinity	SG14 3JL	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	-	Overplayed by 1.5 MES.
14	Benington Recreation Ground	Watton YFC	SG2 7QZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
14	Benington Recreation Ground	Watton YFC	SG2 7QZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	BSC FC	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Thorley Manor	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Thorley Manor	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch sizes	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
16	Bishop's Stortford College	BSC FC	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Thorley Manor	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	-	Overplayed by 1.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Thorley Manor	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Thorley Manor	CM23 2PJ	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	CM23 2QE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	CM23 2QE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Good	1	6	5	-	No actual spare capacity.
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	CM23 2QE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
20	Bishops Stortford Swifts FC	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	CM23 2QE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Golden Griffin	SG14 2QL	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Bramfield Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Buntingford Cougars	SG11 2QL	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Braughing Parish Council	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Buntingford Cougars	SG11 2QL	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Braughing Parish Council	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
24	Brewery Field	Casuals & Pelham	SG9 0LL	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Furneux Pelham Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
25	Bullfields	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 9EA	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Sawbridgeworth Town Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
25	Bullfields	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 9EA	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Sawbridgeworth Town Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
29	Christ Church C Of E (VA) Primary School And Nursery	-	SG12 7BT	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
30	Church Lane Playing Field	-	SG14 3ND	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Stapleford Parish Council	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
31	Cottered Playing Field	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9QW	Buntingford	Yes	Cottered & Throcking Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	-	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES
31	Cottered Playing Field	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9QW	Buntingford	Yes	Cottered & Throcking Parish Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.

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35	Crouchfields	-	SG12 0PS	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Wodson Park FC	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
35	Crouchfields	-	SG12 0PS	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Wodson Park FC	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES
35	Crouchfields	Wodson Park FC	SG12 0PS	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Wodson Park FC	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity.
35	Crouchfields	Wodson Park FC	SG12 0PS	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Wodson Park FC	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES
35	Crouchfields	Wodson Park FC	SG12 0PS	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Wodson Park FC	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
36	Datchworth All Saints C Of Primary School	Watton YFC	SG3 6RE	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
36	Datchworth All Saints C Of Primary School	Watton YFC	SG3 6RE	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
36	Datchworth All Saints C Of Primary School	Watton YFC	SG3 6RE	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
39	Edwinstree C Of E Middle School	-	SG9 9AW	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
40	Freman College	-	SG9 9BT	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	2 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
40	Freman College	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9BT	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 4RF	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 4RF	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	4.5	2	2.5	-	Overplayed by 2.5 MES
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 4RF	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	-	Overplayed by 1.5 MES
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 4RF	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	-	Overplayed by 2.5 MES
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Community Church Stortford BSC FC	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Football For Fathers	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Athletico Corvale	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.

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42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Grange United	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Sawbo Open Sawbo FC	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	BSC FC	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	BSC FC	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	BSC FC	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Forest Hall Park	CM23 2HH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Good	-	6	6	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	-	SG13 7NU	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Complex	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Good	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Green Rangers Hartham United FC Hertford Club de Futbol	SG14 1QR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford Stags Hertford Unite Lord Haig FC Northside Spartans	SG14 1QR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	-	SG14 1QR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	-	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.

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49	Hertford Heath Playing Fields	Hertford Heath	SG13 7QS	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Hertford Heath Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
62	Leventhorpe School	-	CM21 9BY	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	-	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 9BY	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
62	Leventhorpe School	-	CM21 9BY	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
65	London Road Playing Fields	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9HZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES
66	Manor Fields Primary School	Thorley Manor	CM23 4LE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
66	Manor Fields Primary School	Thorley Manor	CM23 4LE	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
68	Morgans Field	-	SG13 8DR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	-	2	2	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
68	Morgans Field	Bury Rangers	SG13 8DR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	3	4	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
68	Morgans Field	Bury Rangers	SG13 8DR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	3	4	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
68	Morgans Field	Bury Rangers	SG13 8DR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	4	4	-	-	Used at capacity.
68	Morgans Field	Bury Rangers	SG13 8DR	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Angel Open	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Broxbourne Albion	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	WGC Stormers	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Red Star Eagles Ware Herts FC	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Bury Rangers	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Bury Rangers	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Bury Rangers	SG12 9PD	Hertford, Ware	Yes	East Herts District Council	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.

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75	Presdales School	Bury Rangers	SG12 9NX	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	4	4	-	-	Used at capacity.
75	Presdales School	Hertford Town Bury Rangers	SG12 9NX	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
75	Presdales School	Bury Rangers	SG12 9NX	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
75	Presdales School	Hertford Town Bury Rangers	SG12 9NX	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
75	Presdales School	Hertford Town Bury Rangers	SG12 9NX	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	6	2	4	-	Overplayed by 4 MES.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Good	1	6	5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Good	0.5	6	5.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Good	0.5	6	5.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
77	RDA Stadium	Bishop's Stortford FC	CM23 5RG	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	No actual spare capacity.
78	Reedings Junior School	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 9DD	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
80	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	-	SG12 9HY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	-	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
80	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	-	SG12 9HY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	-	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
81	Saint Mary's Catholic School	-	CM23 2NQ	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
81	Saint Mary's Catholic School	-	CM23 2NQ	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular

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															use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
84	Sawbridgeworth Town Football Club	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 0DE	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	No actual spare capacity.
84	Sawbridgeworth Town Football Club	Sawbridgeworth Town	CM21 0DE	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	No actual spare capacity.
86	Seth Ward Community Centre	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9SG	Buntingford	Yes	Buntingford Town Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
86	Seth Ward Community Centre	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9SG	Buntingford	Yes	Buntingford Town Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
89	Simon Balle School	-	SG13 8AJ	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
89	Simon Balle School	-	SG13 8AJ	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
89	Simon Balle School	-	SG13 8AJ	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Bully's Crusaders	SG11 1DS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	0.5	3	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	-	SG11 1DS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	-	SG11 1DS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	-	SG11 1DS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Watton YFC	SG11 1DS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.



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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch sizes	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
91	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	-	CM23 2NL	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
94	St Margaretsbury FC	Hertford Heath St Margaretsbury	SG12 8EH	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club/Association	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
94	St Margaretsbury FC	Hoddesdon FC AFC Abbotts	SG12 8EH	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club/Association	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
95	St Marys Junior School	-	SG12 0RL	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
95	St Marys Junior School	-	SG12 0RL	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
98	Standon Memorial Playing Field	Standon & Puckeridge Hares FC Standon & Puckeridge Vets	SG11 1TF	Buntingford	Yes	Standon Parish Council	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	-	AL6 0LE	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Tewin Parish Council	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	-	CM23 3LU	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	-	CM23 3LU	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare of 1 MES.
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	-	CM23 3LU	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare of 1 MES.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	BSC FC	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	-	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch sizes	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	-	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	BSC FC	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	BSC FC	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC BSC FC	SG10 6FB	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	Used at capacity.
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	BSC FC	CM23 2TD	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Sport Club/Association	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
104	The Bury	Buntingford Town	SG9 9HZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
104	The Bury	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9HZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	2	4	2	-	No actual spare capacity.
104	The Bury	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9HZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
104	The Bury	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9HZ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	No actual spare capacity.
105	The Chauncy School	Deaconsfield Vets Hartham United FC	SG12 0DP	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
105	The Chauncy School	-	SG12 0DP	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
105	The Chauncy School	-	SG12 0DP	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Good	4.5	6	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.

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108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	3	4	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
108	The Sele School	Bengeo Tigers	SG14 2DG	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Good	3	4	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	-	SG12 0SU	Buntingford	Yes	Thundridge Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	-	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	-	SG12 0SU	Buntingford	Yes	Thundridge Parish Council	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	-	SG12 0SU	Buntingford	Yes	Thundridge Parish Council	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
113	Walkern School	AFC Walkern	SG2 7NS	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
118	Ware Lions FC	Ware Lions	SG12 0SJ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	3	2	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
118	Ware Lions FC	Ware Lions	SG12 0SJ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
118	Ware Lions FC	Ware Lions	SG12 0SJ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
118	Ware Lions FC	Ware Lions	SG12 0SJ	Buntingford	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware United FC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC Ware FC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC Ware FC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Good	6	6	-	-	Used at capacity.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	3	2	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	3	2	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC	SG12 7NN	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
120	Watton-At-Stone Primary School	Watton YFC	SG14 3SG	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.

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122	Westmill Recreation Ground	Westmill Open	SG9 9LH	Buntingford	Yes	Westmill Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	-	No actual spare capacity.
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Ware United FC	SG12 0UQ	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Private	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Bury Rangers	SG12 0UQ	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Private	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenbury Vets Allenburys Sports Allenburys Mangrove Vets Boca Seniors FC The Herts Prodigies Ware YFC	SG12 0AW	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Private	Secure	Adult	1	Good	3	3	-	-	Used at capacity.
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	-	SG12 0AW	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Private	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Good	-	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	AFC Walkern Walkern Vets	SG2 7NP	Buntingford	Yes	Walkern Parish Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	AFC Walkern	SG2 7NP	Buntingford	Yes	Walkern Parish Council	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton YFC	SG14 3SF	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Used at capacity.
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	-	SG13 7JY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	-	1	1	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	Hertford Town	SG13 7JY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	Hertford Town	SG13 7JY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	Hertford Town	SG13 7JY	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Everyone Active	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
132	Hertfordshire & Essex High School Sports Centre	Thorley Manor	CM23 5LH	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
139	Pearce House Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 5BD	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.
139	Pearce House Playing Fields	BSC FC	CM23 5BD	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Overplayed by 1 MES.

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Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch sizes	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
141	St. George's Playing Field	-	CM21 0JJ	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	High Wych Parish Council	Secure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	-	2	2	-	No actual spare capacity due to poor quality.
142	Hillmead Primary School	-	CM23 4PW	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
143	Richard Whittington Primary School	-	CM23 3NP	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
148	Thundridge Primary School	-	SG12 0SY	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1	2	1	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
149	Abel Smith Primary School	-	SG13 8AE	Hertford, Ware	No	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
166	Layston C of E First School	Buntingford Cougars	SG9 9EU	Buntingford	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 7v7	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Used at capacity.
167	Mandeville Primary School	-	CM21 0BL	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
167	Mandeville Primary School	-	CM21 0BL	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Education	Secure	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	1 MES of demand attributed to curricular use. Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
169	St John the Baptist CE VA Primary	-	SG12 9SE	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	Unsecure	Mini 5v5	1	Standard	-	4	4	-	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.

## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

To determine 'actual spare capacity', each site with 'potential capacity identified in Table [2.18](#) has been reviewed. A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting this criterion has consequently been discounted.

Pitches that are of a poor quality are not deemed to have actual spare capacity due to their already low carrying capacity. Any identified spare capacity should be retained in order to relieve the pitches of use, which in turn, can aid the improvement of pitch quality.

Unless tenure is considered secure through the operator, school sites that are currently available for community use but unused are also not considered to have actual spare capacity as the full availability of these pitches cannot be relied upon in the long term.

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch type across East Hertfordshire. It totals 15.5 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across 19 pitches at 12 sites.

Table 2.19: Summary of actual spare capacity by pitch

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Pitch Type	Capacity rating (sessions)
7	Aston Playing Field	Buntingford	Mini 7v7	0.5
31	Cottered Playing Field	Buntingford	Adult	1
35	Crouchfields	Watton-at-Stone	Mini 5v5	1
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	Youth 11v11	1
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Adult	0.5
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Adult	0.5
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Adult	0.5
74	Presdales Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Mini 7v7	1
86	Seth Ward Community Centre	Buntingford	Adult	0.5
91	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	Mini 7v7	1
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 11v11	1
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 9v9	1
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Adult	1
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Mini 7v7	1
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Mini 7v7	1
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Adult	0.5
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Adult	0.5
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Youth 11v11	1
167	Mandeville Primary School	Sawbridgeworth	Youth 9v9	1

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

Table 2.20: Summary of actual spare capacity (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
Bishop's Stortford	-	1	1	1	-	3
Buntingford	2.5	-	-	2.5	-	5
Hertford, Ware	2.5	2	-	1	-	5.5
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	1	-	-	1
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15.5</b>

In addition to the above, it is worthy of note that 31.5 match equivalent sessions per week of potential spare capacity at community use sites has been discounted due to either sites having unsecure tenure or poor pitch quality.

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (which can often be due to reduced quality). Once pitches become overplayed, their ability to accommodate match fixtures deteriorates due to issues relating to wear and tear and a difficulty in recovering after match play.

In total, 22 pitches across 13 sites are identified as being overplayed. Total overplay equates to 25.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 2.21: Summary of overplay by pitch

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Pitch type	Capacity rating (sessions)
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Hertford, Ware	Adult	1.5
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Adult	0.5
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 11v11	1.5
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 9v9	0.5
35	Crouchfields	Watton-at-Stone	Youth 11v11	0.5
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Mini 7v7	2.5
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 11v11	1.5
41	Friedberg Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 9v9	2.5
65	London Road Playing Fields	Buntingford	Youth 9v9	1
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	Youth 9v9	4
118	Ware Lions FC	Buntingford	Mini 5v5	1
118	Ware Lions FC	Buntingford	Youth 9v9	0.5
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Mini 7v7	1
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Mini 7v7	0.5
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Youth 9v9	1
120	Watton-At-Stone Primary School	Watton-at-Stone	Youth 9v9	0.5
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	Adult	0.5
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	Hertford, Ware	Youth 11v11	1
131	Hartham Common & Kingsmead	Hertford, Ware	Youth 9v9	1
132	Hertfordshire & Essex High School Sports Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 11v11	0.5
139	Pearce House Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 9v9	1
139	Pearce House Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Youth 9v9	1

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Table 2.22: Summary of overplay by analysis area (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	MES
Bishop's Stortford	0.5	3.5	5	2.5	-	<b>11.5</b>
Buntingford	0.5	-	1.5	-	1	<b>4</b>
Hertford, Ware	1.5	1	6	1.5	-	<b>10</b>
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	0.5	0.5	-	-	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25.5</b>

Most overplay taking place in East Hertfordshire is situated in the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area with 11.5 MES. Most of this (8.5 MES) is at youth football with 3.5 MES at youth 11v11 and five MES at youth 9v9. This can be attributed to big clubs such as BSC FC who field several teams at this level with the biggest overplay at its own site Friedberg Playing Fields and Birchwood High School.

Youth 9v9 pitches being overplayed is a common theme across East Hertfordshire with it being the most overplayed pitch type across all Analysis Areas, equating to 13 MES. The least overplayed pitch type is mini 5v5 equating to one MES.

Most of the pitches that are overplayed not only receive a lot of use but are also of poor quality, meaning the capacity is reduced. Should these pitches improve in quality the volume of overplay across the District would ease.

## 2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the current demand and future demand balance (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions per week.

Total future demand in East Hertfordshire accounts for population growth. As a reminder, growth from population increases equates to three adult men's teams, six youth boys', one youth girls and seven mini teams. Future demand from club ambitions and participation trends will be included as a scenario in the forthcoming Strategy.

On a districtwide basis, there is a currently a sufficient supply of adult provision to accommodate existing demand. However, should future demand be realised there would be a shortfall in adult pitches. The Buntingford and Hertford, Ware analysis areas show current spare capacity. Comparatively, the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area has a shortfall of 0.5 MES for adult provision.



## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Table 2.23: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>5</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Buntingford	2.5	0.5	2	-	2
Hertford, Ware	2.5	1.5	1	2	1
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>-</b>

Table 2.24: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>6</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	1	3.5	2.5	0.5	3
Buntingford	-	-	-	0.5	0.5
Hertford, Ware	2	1	1	2	1
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

The current picture is that there is an insufficient supply of provision of youth 11v11 pitches in East Hertfordshire to accommodate existing demand. This is largely caused sites such as Friedberg Playing Fields (BSC FC) contributing to three match equivalent sessions per week of overplay. This shortfall is exacerbated to six match equivalent sessions per week once future demand from population growth is considered.

If this is broken down by analysis areas it can be seen that there is a shortfall of youth 11v11 pitches in the Bishop's Stortford and Watton-at-Stone analysis areas, the Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth analysis areas are used at capacity and Hertford, Ware has actual spare capacity of one MES.

Table 2.25: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>7</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	1	5	4	1	5
Buntingford	-	1.5	1.5	0.5	2
Hertford, Ware	-	6	6	1.5	7.5
Sawbridgeworth	1	-	1	-	1
Watton-at-Stone	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>

<sup>5</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>6</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>7</sup> In match equivalent sessions

## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

There is insufficient supply of youth 9v9 pitches in East Hertfordshire to accommodate current demand due to 11 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay being identified. When considering future demand, this shortfall increases to 14 match equivalent sessions. Only the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area has actual spare capacity for youth 9v9 pitches. All remaining analysis areas have a shortfall of provision for this pitch type.

Table 2.26: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>8</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	1	2.5	1.5	1	2.5
Buntingford	2.5	-	2.5	0.5	2
Hertford, Ware	1	1.5	0.5	2	2.5
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3</b>

The table above shows that there is an insufficient supply on mini 7v7 pitches in East Hertfordshire to accommodate future levels of demand. There is current actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week, a figure that decreases to three sessions of overplay once future demand is considered. There is actual spare capacity in the Buntingford Analysis Area for mini 7v7 pitches. Sawbridgeworth and Watton-at-Stone are both used at capacity and the Bishop's Stortford and Hertford, Ware analysis areas have a shortfall of mini 7v7 pitches.

Table 2.27: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>9</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	-	-	-	-	-
Buntingford	-	1	1	0.5	1.5
Hertford, Ware	-	-	-	1.5	1.5
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	1	-	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Mini 5v5 pitches in East Hertfordshire are currently at capacity meaning there is currently a sufficient supply to accommodate demand. However, future demand from population growth would take the match equivalent sessions to two of overplay per week. The Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Ware and Sawbridgeworth analysis areas are currently used at capacity for 5v5 pitches, and there is actual spare capacity in the Watton-at-Stone Analysis Area. There is a shortfall of one MES for mini 5v5 pitches in the Buntingford Analysis Area.

<sup>8</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>9</sup> In match equivalent sessions

## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

The following five tables break the capacity balance down by analysis areas.

Table 2.28: Summary of supply and demand in Bishop's Stortford (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>10</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	-	0.5	0.5	0.5	1
Youth 11v11	1	3.5	2.5	0.5	3
Youth 9v9	1	5	4	1	5
Mini 7v7	1	2.5	1.5	1	2.5
Mini 5v5	-	-	-	-	-

As can be seen the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area has overplay across four of the five pitch types. Only mini 5v5 pitches are not showing overplay as they are used at capacity. Future demand exacerbates the shortfalls for all overplayed pitch formats.

Table 2.29: Summary of supply and demand in Buntingford (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>11</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	2.5	0.5	2	-	2
Youth 11v11	-	-	-	0.5	0.5
Youth 9v9	-	1.5	1.5	0.5	2
Mini 7v7	2.5	-	2.5	0.5	2
Mini 5v5	-	1	1	0.5	1.5

In Buntingford there is actual spare capacity present for adult and mini 7v7 pitches, whilst youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 pitches are overplayed. Youth 11v11 pitches are used at capacity. Future demand creates overplay for youth 11v11 pitches.

Table 2.30: Summary of supply and demand in Hertford, Ware (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>12</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	2.5	1.5	1	2	1
Youth 11v11	2	1	1	2	1
Youth 9v9	-	6	6	1.5	7.5
Mini 7v7	1	1.5	0.5	2	2.5
Mini 5v5	-	-	-	1.5	1.5

In Hertford, Ware there is actual spare capacity for adult and youth 11v11 pitches whilst mini 5v5 pitches are used at capacity. Shortfalls are present for youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitches. Future demand from ONS projections shows there will be an increase in teams across all pitch formats. If this takes place all pitch formats will become overplayed in Hertford, Ware.

<sup>10</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>11</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>12</sup> In match equivalent sessions

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Table 2.31: Summary of supply and demand in Sawbridgeworth (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>13</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	-	-	-	-	-
Youth 11v11	-	-	-	-	-
Youth 9v9	1	-	1	-	1
Mini 7v7	-	-	-	-	-
Mini 5v5	-	-	-	-	-

In Sawbridgeworth there is actual spare capacity for youth 9v9 pitches and all other pitch types are used at capacity. Future demand from ONS projections did not result in any growth meaning this position is unchanged in the future.

Table 2.32: Summary of supply and demand in Watton-at-Stone (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>14</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	-	-	-	-	-
Youth 11v11	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
Youth 9v9	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
Mini 7v7	-	-	-	-	-
Mini 5v5	1	-	1	-	1

Finally, the Watton-at-Stone Analysis Area is showing overplay for youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches. There is actual spare capacity for mini 5v5 pitches and adult and mini 7v7 pitches are used at capacity. Future demand from ONS projections did not result in any growth meaning this position is unchanged in the future.

### 2.6: Conclusion

Having considered the supply and demand position for each football pitch type, it is evident that the overall position is broadly an insufficient supply of grass pitches in the District.

Currently, youth 11v11, 9v9 and 7v7 pitches have a shortfall of provision whilst, 5v5 pitches are at capacity and adult pitches have spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. When accounting for future demand the actual spare capacity for adult pitches disappears and becomes played at capacity. Mini 5v5 pitches which are currently used at capacity becomes a shortfall of two match equivalent sessions and the rest of the current shortfalls are exacerbated.

<sup>13</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>14</sup> In match equivalent sessions

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Table 2.33: Summary of supply and demand in East Hertfordshire (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>15</sup>	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	5	2.5	2.5	2.5	-
Youth 11v11	3	5	2	3	5
Youth 9v9	2	13	11	3	14
Mini 7v7	4.5	4	0.5	3.5	3
Mini 5v5	1	1	-	2	2

<sup>15</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

### Football – grass pitch summary

- ◀ The current supply of football provision is broadly sufficient in accommodating football demand on adult, 7v7 and 5v5 pitches.
- ◀ Comparatively, youth 11v11 and 9v9 pitches are showing a combined shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Future demand through population increases creates a further 14 match equivalent sessions of demand which exacerbates existing shortfalls on youth 11v11 and 9v9 pitches whilst making mini 7v7, 5v5 overplayed and adult pitches played at capacity. This could be impacted further should growth scenarios in the forthcoming strategy demonstrate that higher future demand may be experienced.
- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 184 grass football pitches across 70 sites. Of these, 178 are available, at some level, for community use across 66 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites other than Albury Football Ground where community access was removed by the parish council due to noise complaints.
- ◀ Of the 96 pitches which offer community use, 28 pitches are assessed as good quality, 94 as standard quality and 56 as poor quality. The unavailable pitches are all of standard quality.
- ◀ Through the audit and assessment, 511 teams from 58 clubs are identified as playing in East Hertfordshire. This consists of 75 adult men's, nine adult women's, 194 youth boys', 35 youth girls' and 198 mini mixed teams.
- ◀ Since the previous PPS was developed in 2017 football teams in East Hertfordshire have increase by 104 teams. Alongside this, women's and girls' demand has increased by 21 teams.
- ◀ Future demand equates to the growth of six adult teams, 12 youth boys, two youth girls and 14 mini teams based on team generation rates. Club growth ambitions of 25 teams have been discounted.
- ◀ The PPOSS has not taken into account future demand generated through housing growth as the scale and location of new development is not yet know. As the new District Plan emerges, the Council can use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator to explore the pitch requirements of housing growth scenarios.
- ◀ Of the 28 ancillary facilities, four are rated good (14%), 19 are rated standard (68%) and five are rated poor (18%) quality.
- ◀ Currently, there are only four sites (14%) which have dedicated female changing rooms to support women's and girls' participation in football, which are, Grange Paddocks, Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC, The Bury and Ware FC.
- ◀ There is a sufficient supply of provision in East Hertfordshire to accommodate current demand on adult, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch types.
- ◀ There are existing shortfalls on youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches.
- ◀ Future demand exacerbates shortfalls on youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 and makes adult pitches played to capacity and mini 7v7 and 5v5 pitches overplayed, to give an overall picture of 24 match session per week of overplay in the District.
- ◀ There are shortfalls for grass pitches in four of the five analysis areas. Only the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area is not showing any shortfalls in provision for any pitch type. Comparatively, the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area has a shortfall of 8.5 MES across all pitch types which makes it the most overplayed analysis area within East Hertfordshire.

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) PITCHES

### 3.1: Introduction

Third generation (3G) artificial grass pitches utilise longer fibres with a combination of rubber and sand infill to offer heightened performance. They are predominately used for football matches but most commonly for football training. They can also be used for rugby matches dependent upon being constructed to World Rugby Regulation 22.

Competitive football can take place on 3G artificial grass pitches that have been FIFA or International Matchball Standard tested and approved by the FA for inclusion on the FA Pitch Register<sup>16</sup>. As such, a growing number of 3G artificial grass pitches are now used for competitive match play, provided that the performance standard meets FIFA Quality (previously FIFA One Star), as well as for training purposes. Football training does, however, take place on hockey suitable artificial grass pitches (please refer to Part 5: Artificial grass pitches for greater explanation on pitch specifications) but is not the preferred option.

World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby'<sup>17</sup>, 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 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the standard, meaning full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts, can take place.

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

England Hockey's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy (updated June 2018)<sup>18</sup> advises that third generation artificial grass pitches should not be used for hockey matches or training and that they can only be used for lower level hockey (introductory level) as a last resort when no sand-based or water-based artificial grass pitches are available.

Table 3.1: 3G type and sport suitability

Surface	Category	Comments
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (60mm with shock pad)	Rugby surface – must comply with World Rugby regulation 22 and/or RFL Community Standard, requires a minimum of 60mm pile.
Rubber crumb	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Preferred football surface. Suitable for non-contact rugby union/league practice or play.
Rubber crumb	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Acceptable surface for some competitive football, able to be used for low level curricular hockey.

It should be noted that the FA generally refers to 3G pitches as 3G football turf pitches, though this term is not adopted in this PPS as 3G pitches can be and are used for other sports including rugby union, rugby league, lacrosse and American football, amongst others.

<sup>16</sup> [Football Foundation | 3G Pitch Register](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.world.rugby/handbook/regulations/reg-22/>

<sup>18</sup> [Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey](#)

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## 3.2: Current provision

An 11v11 size 3G pitch is considered by the FA to measure at least 91 x 57 metres; however, for the purposes of this report, all pitches measuring this size and above will be considered as 11v11 pitches. Pitches of this size threshold are able to accommodate competitive adult football. Anything measuring below than this is considered small sided due to its inability to accommodate such activity.

On the above basis, there are eight 11v11 3G pitches provided in East Hertfordshire located at as many sites as seen below. All eight 11v11 3G pitches are sports lit and open to community use.

There are a further two small sided 3G pitches within the District across as many sites.

A breakdown of the supply is below.

Table 3.2: 3G pitch supply summary

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Pitch size	Surface type	No. of pitches	Sports lit?
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	92m x 53m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	105m x 70m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	Yes	35m x 20m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
54	Hertingfordbury Park	Hertford, Ware	Yes	105m x 70m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	100m x 60m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	103m x 64m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
79	Richard Hale School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	106m x 70m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
116	Ware Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	105m x 69m	Long Pile 3G (60mm)	1	Yes
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Yes	102m x 63m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes
126	Allenburys Sports and Social Club	Hertford, Ware	No	40m x 25m	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	1	Yes

All existing 11v11 size 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire are available for community use and are accompanied by sports lighting. One of the small sided 3G pitches is open to community use. The Allenburys Sports and Social Club pitch is managed by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) a private business and it services employees of the company.



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## Management

The management and availability of sites is summarised in the table below.

Table 3.3: 3G pitch operator and opening times breakdown

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	Pitch size	Operator	Opening times
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	11v11	School	18:00- 22:00 midweek 09:00-13:00 weekends
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	11v11	Everyone Active	06:00- 21:00 midweek 08:00-18:00 weekends
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	Yes	35m x20m	Everyone Active	06:00-22:00 midweek 07:00-17:00 weekends
54	Hertingfordbury Park	Hertford, Ware	Yes	11v11	Sports Club	17:00-21:00 midweek 09:00-18:00 weekends
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	11v11	School	17:00-22:00 midweek 09:00-16:00 weekends
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	11v11	School	17:00-22:00 midweek 10:00-18:00 weekends
79	Richard Hale School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	11v11	School	18:00-22:00 09:00-17:00 weekends
116	Ware Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	11v11	Sports Club	07:00-22:00 midweek 09:00- 16:00 Saturdays 09:00- 14:00 Sundays
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Yes	11v11	Registered Charity	07:00-22:00 midweek 09:00- 16:00 Saturdays 09:00- 14:00 Sundays
126	Allenburys Sports and Social Club	Hertford, Ware	No	40m x 25m	Private membership Club	No community use

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## Potential future provision

The East Hertfordshire 2025 LFFP identifies five potential investment projects for the District. This has been informed by the shortfalls for 3G pitches presented in the PPS. Table 3.4 below outlines the detail in the LFFP.

The validity of these projects will be assessed in the Strategy & Action Plan with recommendations around portfolio inclusions or expulsions.

Table 3.4: Site identified in the LFFP for new 3G provision and rationale provided

Site ID	Site name	LFFP rationale
104	The Bury	The site has four grass pitches and is accessed by Buntingford Cougars FC which has 32 teams. A pitch at the site will support the development of junior girls' football and align to the Football Foundation KPI of developing 11v11 3G pitches at Club managed sites.
105	The Chauncy School	The site has three grass pitches and is located centrally within the town of Ware. Given the scale of the site, the on-site management, the location within the town and the dual use form curricular and community demand the site is identified for an 11v11 3G pitch.
108	The Sele School	The site has six grass pitches that are accessed by Bengoe Tigers FC which fields 29 teams. A 3G pitch at the site will look to meet the 3G pitch shortfalls in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area presented in table 3.9.
119	Ware Youth Football Club	Ware YFC have 44 teams and has a 30-year lease for its site with eight grass pitches. Given the shortfalls identified in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area, the scale of the site and the Club managed operating model the site is identified for an 11v11 3G pitch.
-	New site Watton Youth Football Club	There is a shortfall of 3G provision in the Watton-at-Stone area. Watton YFC has 19 teams and is exploring developing a new site in the South East of the village which could result in a small sided 3G pitch, grass pitches and a new ancillary provision if developed.

The validity of these projects will be assessed in the Strategy & Action Plan with recommendations around portfolio inclusions or expulsions.

In addition to the LFFP potential 3G pitch developments, the following were identified through club consultation as part of the PPOSS.

Bishop's Stortford High School and Freman College are in the process of installing 11v11 3G pitches. Both pitches will be sports lit and open to community use for the 2025/26 season. Neither pitch has currently been counted in the current supply as they are not operational at the time of writing, however, they will play a role in meeting the training need across the Authority during the lifespan of the PPS. Additionally, the pitch at Bishop's Stortford High School will be a WR22 compliant pitch.

Bishop's Stortford Swifts is planning a move to a new site, Hoggates Park, from its current location at Bishop's Stortford RFC. The new site will initially be a stadia grass pitch and is located beside Hoggates Wood in Bishop's Stortford. However, the Club has aspirations to fundraise to upgrade the pitch to 3G.

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Watton YFC is working towards the possibility of building a 3G pitch and accompanying ancillary facilities at the site of a former depot for the A602 works on Ware Road. The Club has also agreed, in principle, a long-term lease with the landowner (Woodhall Estate). However, funding for the development is still uncertain. The Club confirms it has no home ground local to Watton-at-Stone and resorts to accessing multiple sites out of the area.

St Margaretsbury FC is seeking a business partner to help the Club change its main adult grass pitch to a 3G pitch. This only aspirational currently.

Consultation with Buntingford Cougars FC confirms that it uses the small sided AGP at Norfolk Road Playing Fields. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2010 so has surpassed its lifespan. The Club states that Buntingford Town Council is planning to convert this pitch to a 3G in 2025.

There are three major developments planned that will potentially add further 3G provision in the District. Firstly, The Gilston development which is providing 10,000 new homes is proposing four new pitches, 2 in a football hub site and two more in schools. Secondly, the North of Ware development, creating 1,800 new homes will generate a single 3G pitch whilst Birchall Garden Suburb will provide two more pitches servicing East Hertfordshire.

Figure 3.1 identifies all 3G pitches servicing East Hertfordshire. For a key to the map, see Table 3.3.

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Figure 3.1: 3G pitches servicing East Hertfordshire



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## FA Pitch Register

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

In the case of East Hertfordshire, all eight 11v11 3G pitches are on the FA Register and the Leventhorpe School and Presdales School pitches are on the FIFA register.

Table 3.5: Accreditation of provision

Site ID	Site	Accreditation type	Accreditation expiry
1	Birchwood High School	FA approved	31/05/26
12	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	FA approved	31/05/26
26	Hertingfordbury Park	FA approved	31/05/26
45	Leventhorpe School	FIFA approved	31/05/27
39	Presdales School	FIFA approved	31/05/27
57	Richard Hale School	FIFA approved	31/05/28
91	Ware Football Club	FIFA approved	31/05/26
92	Wodson Park Sports Centre	FA approved	31/05/28

## World Rugby (WR) compliant pitches

To enable 3G pitches to host competitive rugby union matches, WR has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification.

This is to ensure that the surfaces replicate the playing qualities of good quality grass pitches, provide a playing environment that will not increase the risk of injury and are of an adequate durability.

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

In East Hertfordshire there are currently no WR22 3G pitches, however the new Bishop's Stortford High School 3G pitch will be WR22 compliant.

## Quality

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

Taking the above into account, the quality of third generation artificial grass pitches across East Hertfordshire have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) during December 2024 and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

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The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (60-79%), Poor (<60%). The quality ratings assigned to the sites also consider the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

The quality of 11v11 size 3G provision is varied with four good, three standard and one poor quality pitch within the Authority. The pitches at Wodson Park Sports Centre are of a poor quality and is now in need of a replacement surface. Of the sites providing small sided provision, both pitches are of a poor quality.

Table 3.6: Age and quality of 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Site	Pitch type	Year installed or resurfaced	Quality
15	Birchwood High School	92m x 53m	2007 / 2017	Standard
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	105m x 70m	2022	Good
54	Hertingfordbury Park	105m x 70m	2021	Good
62	Leventhorpe School	100m x 60m	2024	Good
75	Presdales School	103m x 64m	2025	Good
79	Richard Hale School	106m x 70m	2017	Standard
116	Ware Football Club	105m x 69m	2018	Standard
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	102m x 63m	1995 / 2015	Poor
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	35m x20m	2016	Poor
126	Allenburys Sports and Social Club	40m x 25m	2009	Poor

## Ancillary facilities

The ancillary facilities at Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre, Richard Hale School and Birchwood High School are all of a good quality. The Leventhorpe School, Hertingfordbury Park, Presdales School, Ware Football Club and Wodson Park Sports Centre changing rooms were all of a standard quality.

## 3.3: Demand

The following table summarises the availability of all 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire which are available for community use. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). This equates to a peak time midweek available usage of 18 hours and a peak time weekend usage of 16 hours.

Table 3.7: Availability and capacity of provision summary

Site ID	Site	Management	Total hours available during peak period	Comments
15	Birchwood High School	School	18:00- 22:00 midweek 09:00-13:00 weekends	Site is fully booked during the week. There is spare capacity on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings.
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Everyone Active	06:00- 21:00 midweek 08:00-18:00 weekends	Site is fully booked during the week. Pitch is underutilised on weekends.
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Everyone Active	06:00-22:00 midweek 07:00-17:00 weekends	Usage of the pitch is limited. Pitch is potentially outlined to

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Site ID	Site	Management	Total hours available during peak period	Comments
				be converted into Padel provision.
54	Hertingfordbury Park	Sports Club	17:00-21:00 midweek 09:00-18:00 weekends	Site is fully booked on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. There is some spare capacity on Mondays and Fridays.
62	Leventhorpe School	School	17:00-22:00 midweek 09:00-16:00 weekends	Site is fully booked other than Friday evenings.
75	Presdales School	School	17:00-22:00 midweek 10:00-18:00 weekends	Pitch has only recently become operational. Bury Rangers FC is outlined as the partner Club and fields 81 teams.
79	Richard Hale School	School	18:00-22:00 09:00-17:00 weekends	Pitch is fully booked other than from 20:00 on Fridays.
116	Ware Football Club	Sports Club	07:00-22:00 midweek 09:00- 16:00 Saturdays 09:00- 14:00 Sundays	Pitch is fully booked, Ware YFC field 44 teams and manages and accesses the pitch.
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Registered Charity	07:00-22:00 midweek 09:00- 16:00 Saturdays 09:00- 14:00 Sundays	Pitch is fully booked.

All eight 11v11 3G pitches within East Hertfordshire are open to community use and accessed by affiliated teams. Only the small sided pitch at Hartham Leisure Centre has limited use by affiliated teams.

### Football

The FA considers high quality 3G pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development. The pitches can support intensive use and as such are great assets for football use. Primarily, such facilities have been installed for social use and training, however, they are increasingly used for competition, which The FA wholly supports.

#### Training demand

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at sports lit facilities.

Of the responsive football clubs, 16 clubs report that they require additional training facilities and specifically mention demand for 3G pitches. When asked a follow-up question of how many teams do not access a 3G pitch midweek training slot only five clubs state that it fields teams that do not train on a 3G pitch midweek. Club consultation states there are 39 teams not training on a 3G pitch midweek as outlined in the table below.

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Table 3.8: Latent demand for 3G pitches

Club	Number of teams not currently training	Analysis area	Need for more/better training facilities
Bengeo Tigers	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
Bishop's Stortford Swifts Youth FC	0	Bishop's Stortford	✓
BSC FC	22	Bishop's Stortford	✓
Buntingford Cougars	13	Buntingford	✓
Buntingford Town	1	Buntingford	✓
Bury Rangers	0 (once Presdales School becomes operational)	Hertford, Ware	✓
Enfield FC	1	Hertford, Ware	✓
Forest Hall Park FC	0	Bishop's Stortford	✓
Hertford Heath FC	2	Hertford, Ware	✓
Hertford Town YFC	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
Sawbo FC	0	Bishop's Stortford	✓
St Margaretsbury FC	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
Thorley Manor FC	0	Bishop's Stortford	✓
Ware Football Club	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
Ware Lions FC	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
Ware YFC	0	Hertford, Ware	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>39 teams</b>	-	✓

## Football supply and demand analysis

The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a sports lit 3G surface, together with priority access for every England football accreditation club through a partnership agreement. In order to calculate the number of football teams a 3G pitch can service for training, peak time access is considered to be from 18:00 until 22:00 Tuesday-Thursday resulting in an overall peak period of 12 hours per week. Mondays and Fridays are not included within this calculation as it is considered that most teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match (although these times slots are often popular as a recreational offer).

To ensure the current supply and any future supply is of a good enough standard to accommodate demand, providers are encouraged to put sinking funds in place to ensure long-term sustainability. This will allow for re-surfacing to take place when required and will ensure that FA certification remains in place.

An 11v11 3G pitch is divided into thirds or quarters for training purposes meaning they can accommodate either three or four teams per hour and either 36 or 48 teams per week (during the peak training period). Based on an average of these numbers, it is estimated that 38 teams can be accommodated on 11v11 3G pitch for training.

Given the above, with 511 teams currently accessing playing provision within East Hertfordshire, there is a theoretical need for 13.5 11v11 3G pitch equivalents to accommodate all affiliated training demand.

The contribution each pitch makes towards the 1:38 model is summarised in the table below. This then informs the proceeding modelling tables. Any pitch too small to



## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

accommodate training demand are discounted, as well as any pitches that are unavailable for community use.

Table 3.9: Contribution of 3G pitches in meeting training requirements

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Size (meters)	Context	Contribution towards 1:38 model
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	92m x 53m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
40	Freman College	Buntingford	11v11 scale	11v11 3G pitch outlined to be accessible for the 2025/26 season	1
42	Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre	Bishop's Stortford	105m x 70m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	35m x 20m	Too small to accommodate training demand.	0
54	Hertingfordbury Park	Hertford, Ware	105m x 70m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	100m x 60m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	103m x 64m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
79	Richard Hale School	Hertford, Ware	106m x 70m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	11v11 scale	11v11 3G pitch outlined to be accessible for the 2025/26 season. Used by rugby union demand midweek.	0.75
116	Ware Football Club	Hertford, Ware	105m x 69m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community. Used during the week for NLS fixtures.	0.75
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	102m x 63m	11v11 3G pitch fully available to the community.	1
126	Allenburys Sports and Social Club	Hertford, Ware	40m x 25m	Too small to accommodate training demand.	0

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As there are currently 9.5 11v11 3G pitches open to community use across the District, there is a theoretical need for an additional 4 11v11 3G pitches to accommodate football training demand. Neither of the small sided pitches have contributed to the 1 to 38 model below.

Table 3.10: Current demand for 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	11v11 3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Bishop's Stortford	107	3	2.75	0.25
Buntingford	90	2.25	1	1.25
Hertford, Ware	277	7.25	4.75	2.5
Sawbridgeworth	22	0.5	1	0.5
Watton-at-Stone	15	0.5	0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>4</b>

As can be seen above the shortfalls in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area are greatest as there is the need for 2.5 additional 3G 11v11 3G pitches. Demand in the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area is met by the one pitch at Leventhorpe School. With the Bishop's Stortford High School pitch contributing to the 1:38 model it is determined that the need for 3G pitches in Bishop's Stortford is showing a shortfall of 0.25 pitches. It should be stressed that the Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth analysis areas have imported demand from Essex and that growth in teams is expected during the lifespan of the PPOSS.

The table below examines what the need for 3G pitches is based on future demand identified in the football section of this report (Part 2: Football Pitches). Future demand is based on ONS projections which equates to the growth of a further 28 teams.

Table 3.11: Future demand for 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Future number of teams	11v11 3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Bishop's Stortford	113	3	2.75	0.25
Buntingford	94	2.5	1	1.5
Hertford, Ware	295	7.75	4.75	3
Sawbridgeworth	22	0.5	1	0.5
Watton-at-Stone	15	0.5	0	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>14.25</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>4.75</b>

Based on the above, the overall shortfall increases to 4.75 11v11 sports lit 3G pitches. This is based on future demand through ONS projections of 28 teams. Increases of facility from ONS projections are broken down by analysis areas. The Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford and Hertford, Ware analysis areas have all seen growth.

The Freman College (Buntingford Analysis Area) and Bishop's Stortford High School (Bishop's Stortford) will be operational for the 2025/26 season. Therefore, both pitches have contributed to the 1:38 model above.

The number of additional teams identified through club ambitions is 25 teams. Combining both ONS projections and club ambitions gives a total potential future demand of 53 additional teams. The forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan will explore how future demand through club ambitions and participation trend modelling impacts the need for more 3G pitches.

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The East Hertfordshire LFFP presents that FA forecasting is predicting significantly more growth than the ONS projections used the PPOSS and anticipated there will be an additional 216 teams by 2030 if national growth trends are achieved.

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches, providing that the pitch is FA approved, sports lit and available for community use during the peak period, and the location does not have an impact on other pitch sports.

The forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan will explore scenarios for the 3G pitch requirement for competitive match play. This will include a focus on accommodating both mini and youth football.

### **3.4: Conclusion**

In conclusion, there is an insufficient supply of 11v11 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football training demand based on the FA training model, in East Hertfordshire. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required, with the most explicit need identified in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area.

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### **3G summary**

#### **Supply:**

- ◀ There are eight 11v11 3G pitches within East Hertfordshire, located at as many sites. All eight pitches are serviced by floodlights and open to community use.
- ◀ There are also two small sided 3G pitches, both of which are open to community use.
- ◀ All eight 11v11 3G pitches in the Authority are on the FA Register and the Leventhorpe School, Richard Hale School, Ware Football Club and Presdales School pitches are on the FIFA register.
- ◀ The pitches at Richard Hale School, Hertingfordbury Park, Ware Football Club and Wodson Park Sports and Leisure Centre have been tested in June 2025 and have retained their FA or FIFA accreditations.
- ◀ Two new 11v11 3G pitches at Freman College and Bishop's Stortford High School are outlined to be operational for the 2025/26 season.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School 11v11 3G pitch will have a World Rugby compliant shock pad once delivered. This will be the only WR22 3G pitches in East Hertfordshire.

#### **Quality:**

- ◀ There are four full-size pitches located within East Hertfordshire that are of a good quality, three standard quality and one poor quality pitch. Of the small sided provision, both pitches are of a poor quality.

#### **Supply vs demand analysis:**

- ◀ With 511 football teams currently affiliated to East Hertfordshire, there is a need for 13.5 11v11 pitch equivalents to service current levels of demand. Future demand from ONS projections increases this requirement to 14.25 pitches.
- ◀ With the equivalent of 9.5 11v11 pitches within East Hertfordshire, there is the need for a further 4 of such pitch equivalents to be built. This shortfall does not include the small sided provision within the District as they are too small in scale to play a meaningful role in meeting the 3G training need. It does include the two pitches in the process of being developed at Freman College and Bishop's Stortford High School.
- ◀ When studying demand by analysis area, shortfalls are apparent in four of the five PPS analysis areas, with the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area adequately catered for. The Hertford, Ware has a shortfall of 2.5 pitches, Buntingford has a shortfall of 1.25 pitches, Watton-at-Stone has a shortfall of 0.5 of a pitch and Bishop's Stortford has a shortfall of 0.25 of a pitch.
- ◀ Once future demand from ONS projections is considered, shortfalls in the Buntingford and Hertford, Ware analysis areas increase.

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## PART 4: RUGBY UNION PITCHES

### 4.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions, of which East Hertfordshire falls into the southern region.

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

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

There are four rugby union clubs based in East Hertfordshire. Three of which, were responsive to consultation attempts, giving a response rate of 75%. All consultation was undertaken via face to face or phone calls.

Table 4.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Bishop's Stortford RFC	Yes
Blackhorse RFC	No
Datchworth RFC	Yes
Hertford RFC	Yes

### 4.2: Supply

Rugby union in England (as specified by the RFU) is played in the following formats and as such these references are used throughout this section to refer to supply (pitch types) and demand (team types)

Table 4.2: Rugby union age group and pitch format definitions

Team reference	Age group	Team type	Max dimensions (metres)
Senior men	Over 18 years old	Senior	100x70 (with posts at either end)
Senior women	Over 18 years old	Senior	100x70 (with posts at either end)
Age Grade Boys	U13s – U18s	U13s*, U14s, U15s, U16s, U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100x70 (with posts at either end) *90x60 (with posts at either end)
Age Grade Girls	U12s – U18	U12 (Single age band) U14s (as dual age band w/U13s), U16s (as dual age w/U15s), U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100x70 (with posts at either end)

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For age grade mixed rugby (for children aged between U7 through to U12) there is no requirement for rugby posts to be provided for competitive play. However, in most cases nationally, play of this type takes place on senior pitches which are overmarked for such activity. The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches with accompanying posts. The dimensions for age grade mixed rugby are detailed in the table below.

Table 4.3: Rugby union pitch dimensions

Team type (ages)	Team reference	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres)
Under 7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
Under 8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22
Under 9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
Under 10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
Under 11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43

Based on the above criteria, there is a total of 53 rugby union pitches identified within East Hertfordshire across 16 sites. This consists of 35 senior and 18 junior pitches.

Of the total supply, 11 pitches are unavailable for community use. All unavailable provision is located at education sites including as detailed in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4: Supply of all rugby union pitches by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of senior pitches	Number of junior pitches	Number of community accessible pitches
Bishop's Stortford	16	15	25
Buntingford	8	-	6
Hertford, Ware	8	2	9
Sawbridgeworth	3	1	4
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>42</b>

Most provision is situated within the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area, where a total of 31 pitches are identified (this includes pitches which are unavailable for community use). Comparatively, Sawbridgeworth has only four pitches whilst the Watton-at-Stone Analysis Area has no pitches. A site-by-site breakdown of identified provision can be found in the table overleaf.

Table 4.5: Supply of all rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community accessible?	No. of senior pitches	No of junior pitches
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	4	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	6	13
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	4	-
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	3	-
40	Freman College	Buntingford	No	2	-
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	Hertford, Ware	No	2	-
51	Herford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	5	-

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Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community accessible?	No. of senior pitches	No of junior pitches
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	Bishop's Stortford	No	1	1
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	1	1
89	Simon Balle School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	-	1
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	Yes	2	-
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	1	-
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	2	-
105	The Chauncy School	Hertford, Ware	No	1	-
108	The Sele School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	-	1
168	The Avanti Grange Secondary School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	-	1
170	Datchworth Village Hall	Buntingford	Yes	1	-
-	-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>

Avanti Grange Secondary School is a recently built school with brand new community available grass pitches just across the A120. The pitches have not yet been marked out and are not accessible as of yet as a footbridge still needs to be built. However, the School has a community use agreement in place for its future grass pitches, which is reflected in Table 4.5.

In addition to the above table, there are six mini pitches that were identified during site audits and consultation with clubs. Mini pitches are located at Datchworth Sports Club and Dane O'Coys Road which borders Bishop's Stortford RFC. It should be noted that there are several pitches (including the aforementioned mini pitches) within East Hertfordshire that service demand but have been discounted from this report due to not having accompanying posts. RFU regulations stipulate that a pitch should only be accounted for if it meets the aforementioned criteria. Despite being discounted it should be stressed that the additional pitches without accompanying posts equate to a substantial amount of playing field which accommodates a high amount of demand. An example of this are two junior pitches at Hertford RFC which cannot be counted as they are not posted but will host some form of demand.

Sports lit training areas are dedicated sections of playing field which are used for the specific purpose of accommodating midweek training demand away from formal pitches (which allows them to retain exclusive use for match purposes).

These areas constitute formal playing field, despite not accommodating any formal pitches, and are important for accommodating demand from clubs. Hertford RFC confirm having a dedicated training area at its site which it can use portable sports lighting on for junior training. For the remaining clubs; training predominantly takes place on grass pitches with sports lighting.

The senior rugby pitch at Richard Hale School has not been used for two years due to an issue with the neighbours. The school is hopeful of reaching an agreement with the neighbours to allow it to be used during the day again.

There is a new WR22 compliant 3G pitch currently being constructed at Bishop's Stortford High School which will be open for the 25/26 season.

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Figure 4.1: Rugby union pitches



Security of tenure refers to the rights of occupation on playing field and infrastructure. Clubs and stakeholders generally fall into the bracket of owner-occupier, tenant or licensee.

The table below identifies the current tenure position of each rugby union club based on information collated during the consultation. The tenure position of both Bishop's Stortford RFC, Datchworth RFC and Hertford RFC is that the clubs are operating with security of tenure. In the case of Blackhorse RFC, the Club rents both a pitch on a weekly basis with the Hertford RFC.



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Table 4.6: Rugby union clubs security of tenure

Club	Tenure arrangement	Secure?
Bishop's Stortford RFC	Two senior pitches at the back are owned by the Club, two senior pitches are rented from the Silver Leys Trust, two mini pitches on another piece of land are leased (unknown owner).	Yes
Blackhorse RFC	The Club rents a pitch at Hertford RFC.	No
Datchworth RFC	Tenure is complex as the land the sports club and accompanying pitches sits on is owned by a few different parties. All the pitches are leased from two different farmers, one individual owns the three pitches surrounding the clubhouse and another individual owns the grass space behind the village hall. There are long term lease agreements between the Club and individual farmers. The land under the clubhouse and car park is common land owned by Datchworth Parish Council but is also partly owned by aforementioned farmers. The Club has a long-term lease with the Parish Council with five years remaining.	Yes
Hertford RFC	Herts County Council owns two of the adult pitches at the clubs site which the Club leases on a 20-year agreement. Two more pitches are owned by Richard Hale Association which is an all-boys school. This season the Richard Hale Association are giving the land back to the rugby club. The Club owns the other pitch.	Yes

The quality of rugby pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) undertaken in December 2024 and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements: the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated. The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 4.7: Definition of maintenance categories

Category	Definition
M0	Action is significant improvements to maintenance programme
M1	Action is minor improvements to maintenance programme
M2	Action is no improvements to maintenance programme

Table 4.8: Definition of drainage categories

Category	Definition
D0	Action is pipe drainage system is needed on pitch
D1	Action is pipe drainage is needed on pitch
D2	Action is slit drainage is needed on pitch
D3	No action is needed on pitch drainage

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Table 4.9: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

Based on the above criteria, of those senior pitches available for community use, five are good quality, 12 are standard and eight are poor quality senior pitches. Of the 17 (community available) junior pitches, 14 are poor quality and three are standard quality.

From a community club perspective, there is a mixture of quality ratings. Bishop's Stortford RFC has comprehensive maintenance programmes which consist of pitch aeration, sand dressing, weed killing and post season pitch seeding.

The quality of pitches within East Hertfordshire have been determined through a combination of non-technical site assessments, consultation with clubs regarding its maintenance regimes and quantity of usage.

Bishop's Stortford RFC provides the best quality provision within the District, with its first and second pitch both of a good quality. The remaining pitches at the site are of a standard quality. The Club confirms it has a maintenance budget of £60,000 for all pitches and received compliments on the pitches from the Twickenham groundsman during a visit. The first and second pitches also host Herts County matches.

Datchworth RFC is similar as it also has a good quality first pitch alongside standard and poor pitches. The Club confirms a strict maintenance regime as well as resting the pitch and only allowing match play on it. It also states that the first pitch has the best drainage whereas the other pitches would struggle with inclement weather.

Comparatively, Hertford RFC has five standard quality senior pitches with no drainage which it shares with Blackhorse RFC and does not use any 3G pitches for training. The Club does all of the maintenance itself with the help of volunteers.

Please refer to Table 4.10 overleaf for a breakdown of pitch quality.

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Table 4.10: Site quality ratings at community available rugby union sites

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Number of senior grass pitches	Number of junior grass pitches	Sports lighting?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M2/D1	Good
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	Yes	M2/D1	Good
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth RFC	Buntingford	1	-	No	M2/D1	Good
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth RFC	Buntingford	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth RFC	Buntingford	1	-	Yes	M1/D0	Poor
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford Rugby Football Club Blackhorse RFC	Hertford, Ware	1	-	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	1	-	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
62	Leventhorpe School	-	Sawbridgeworth	1	-	No	M1/D0	Poor
62	Leventhorpe School	-	Sawbridgeworth	-	1	No	M1/D0	Poor
89	Simon Balle School	-	Hertford, Ware	-	1	No	M1/D1	Standard
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	-	Buntingford	1	-	No	M2/D1	Good
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	-	Buntingford	1	-	No	M2/D1	Good
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	-	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	-	Sawbridgeworth	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	-	Sawbridgeworth	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard
108	The Sele School	-	Hertford, Ware	-	1	No	M1/D1	Standard
168	The Avanti Grange Secondary School	-	Bishop's Stortford	-	1	No	M1/D1	Standard
170	Datchworth Village Hall	Datchworth RFC	Buntingford	1	-	No	M1/D1	Standard

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

Although the size and configuration of ancillary provision may alter based on the type of sport accessing provision, and the number of pitches it services, generally the same principles are recommended to allow for varied use from all demographics:

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

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

Consequently, any ancillary facilities that do not meet the outlined criteria cannot be rated above standard quality. Further context and rationale are provided below.

Table 4.11: Ancillary provision feedback

Club	Ancillary position	Overall rating
Bishop's Stortford RFC	The site currently has five changing rooms and a function room and bar. The changing rooms are dated and do not have dedicated showers and toilets in each room. The Club has built foundations to develop five new RFU compliant changing rooms, which will come at the loss of two old changing rooms. The main driver for this project is to obtain self-contained showers and toilets in the new changing rooms. The new facility will also cater for officials changing rooms.	Standard
Datchworth RFC	The Club accesses poor quality provision at its home site, Datchworth Sports Club. It contains five changing rooms and an official's room, with a communal shower room to service all. Consultation with the Club confirms that the building is very dated and needs refurbishing and it has had planning permission accepted to do this. The Club is currently still fundraising to enable this project to go ahead.	Poor
Hertford RFC	The clubhouse currently has six changing rooms with communal showers servicing all six changing rooms. It has made space for women's and girls' changing rooms; however, it has had planning permission granted to extend and rebuild its changing rooms. The site has plenty of parking as well as a bar and function room.	Standard

The broad position is that the current facilities are not entirely inclusive and do not encourage participation of all demographics. Hertford RFC is the only club that has separate changing rooms provided for women and girls. Despite this, it still has a communal shower room servicing all the changing rooms which is why it cannot score any higher than standard quality.

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With the women's rugby World Cup on the horizon, demand for the women's and girls' game is set to increase and clubs will need to have the facilities to accommodate existing and future demand. All three clubs have plans to change current ancillary facilities to bring them in line with the RFU specifications and modernise each building.

## 4.3: Demand

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

There are four rugby union clubs in East Hertfordshire which in total generate demand equating to 63 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of 12 senior men's, two senior women's teams, four boy's colts, 17 junior boys, nine junior girl and 19 mixed age grade teams.

Table 4.12: Demand summary

Club	Senior men's	Senior women's	Colt boys (U17/U18)	Junior boys U13 - U16	Junior girls U13 - U18	Mixed age grade U7 - U12	Club total
Bishop's Stortford RFC	5	1	2	8	3	7	26
Blackhorse RFC	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Datchworth RFC	2	1	1	5	4	6	19
Hertford RFC	4	-	1	4	2	6	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>63</b>

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

Full details of each of the clubs training schedules are detailed in the table below. The match equivalent sessions for training relates to the demand which takes place on grass pitches only, unless otherwise stated.

Table 4.13: Training demand summary

Club	Midweek training requirements	Match equivalent sessions (MES) on match pitches
Bishop's Stortford RFC	<p><b>Bishop's Stortford RFC pitches:</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday:</b> 1st and 2nd teams, colts (2) and women's team.</p> <p><b>Wednesday:</b> girls rugby (3) and boys' teams (8)</p> <p><b>Thursday:</b> 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and colts (2)</p> <p><b>Bishop's Stortford College</b></p> <p>Mini teams (7) on one senior pitch</p>	<p><b>13.25 MES total per week</b></p> <p>4 MES - senior men's and women's</p> <p>7.5 MES - colts, junior boys and girls</p> <p>1.75 MES - mini rugby</p> <p><b>Bishop's Stortford RFC - 11.5 MES</b></p> <p>Pitch 3 – 5.75 MES</p> <p>Pitch 4 – 5.75 MES</p> <p><b>Bishop's Stortford College - 1.75 MES</b></p> <p>Pitch 1 - 1.75 MES</p>
Blackhorse RFC	Unknown.	Unknown.

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Club	Midweek training requirements	Match equivalent sessions (MES) on match pitches
Datchworth RFC	<p>The Club rotates three pitches frequently for training depending on which need resting. The 1st pitch is never used for training although the pitch behind Datchworth Village Hall does get used.</p> <p>It has one sports lit pitch as, however, has portable sports lighting, enabling use of the other two pitches for training. All teams train once a week.</p>	<p><b>8 MES total per week</b>            1.5 MES - senior men's and women's            5 MES - colts, junior boys and girls            1.5 MES - mini rugby  <b>Datchworth Sports Club</b>            Pitch 2 - 2 MES            Pitch 3 - 3 MES  <b>Datchworth Village Hall</b>            Pitch 4 - 3 MES</p>
Hertford RFC	<p>Herford RFC pitches:  <b>Tuesday:</b> 1st, 2nd and colts training (1)  <b>Wednesday:</b> all youth (6), mini teams (6) and the mixed ability team  <b>Thursday:</b> 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th teams</p>	<p><b>8.5 MES total per week</b>            3 MES senior men's            4 MES colts, junior boys, girls and mixed ability team            1.5 MES mini rugby</p>

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

The specification includes a rigorous test programme that assesses ball/surface interaction and player/surface interaction and has been modified to align the standard with that of FIFA. Any 3G pitch used for any form of competitive rugby must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance. The compliancy standard is known as to as WR Regulation 22 (WR22).

There are no WR22 compliant 3G pitches located within East Hertfordshire. However, as previously mentioned there is a WR22 pitch currently being constructed at Bishop's Stortford High School that will be available for use in the 25/26 season.

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high-quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, however, the use of 3Gs for the fulfilment of competition fixtures does take place regularly in some areas if suitable provision is available, particularly on sites where Rugby 365 pitches have been provided. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 3: Third Generation Artificial Pitches.

In the case of East Hertfordshire Bishop's Stortford RFC delivers touch rugby sessions on the sand based AGP at Bishop's Stortford College once a week.

To actively encourage participation, rugby union clubs may provide alternative offers to traditional club competition. Touch rugby is one possible format which clubs can use. Touch rugby is non-contact rugby sessions, during which participants compete in teams to score tries, following similar laws to traditional rugby union formats. Clubs, schools or community organisations can establish their own touch rugby sessions or can become hosts of Touch Union<sup>19</sup> sessions.

Touch Union sessions are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are of mixed gender, ability and age and are based on touch rugby being a social activity. Bishop's Stortford offers touch rugby sessions all year round, however, does not operate any teams currently. Whilst Hertford RFC offers a touch rugby festival in the summer. Datchworth RFC reports that it does not offer touch rugby. In December 2024, the

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/ways-to-play/the-touch-union>

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Sawbridgeworth Sports Association launched a new rugby skills club in which it offers non-contact rugby for children aged eight to 11.

Walking rugby is a slower game of touch rugby that is accessible for disability groups and older participants, generally aged 55 years and above.

The game is less physical than traditional rugby, but the general aim remains the same, with passing and scoring laws applying; and tackling involves a two-handed touch to the waist or below. Sessions for over 55's are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace.

In East Hertfordshire, Datchworth RFC holds a weekly walking rugby on a Monday evening and has roughly eight people attending. During consultation, Bishop's Stortford discussed that it would like to offer walking rugby sessions but states a lack of space to offer the sessions. Hertford RFC states it is due to start a walking rugby session every Monday.

Exported demand refers to existing demand, which is transferred outside of the study area. Imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities in East Hertfordshire due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based. Locally, there is no known cases of either imported or exported demand, with all clubs accommodating demand at the respective sites. Unmet demand is existing demand at clubs which is not able to access sufficient supply of pitches for match play or training. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league or club operates a waiting list. Consultation did not highlight any potential unmet demand.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. Bishop's Stortford RFC is currently operating a waiting list for its junior and mini rugby sections. It also expresses how it does not have the pitch space to offer walking rugby sessions. Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts.

- ◀ During consultation with the District's rugby union clubs, each were asked how they would like to grow over the next three to five years (over the lifespan of the PPS). Details of aspirations are below. Bishop's Stortford RFC: Report growth equating to one senior ladies' team.
- ◀ Datchworth RFC: No growth ambitions identified.
- ◀ Hertford RFC: Report growth equating to one senior ladies' team.

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth (2043).

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Table 4.14: Team generation rates (2043)

Age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population	Peak time	Match equivalent session per season <sup>20</sup>
Senior Mens (19-45)	1:2,778.18	0.59	-	Saturday	-
Senior Womens (19-45)	1:5,891.82	0.30	-	Sunday	-
Junior Boys (13-18)	1:322.61	1.41	1	Sunday	0.5
Junior Girls (13-18)	1:812.28	0.52	-	Sunday	-
Mini Mixed (7-12)	1:627.18	1.41	1	Sunday	0.5

Based on future projections, it is forecast that there will be growth of one new junior boy and one new mini team for rugby through population increases to 2043.

It is important to note that population growth is exclusively applied to current team numbers and does not account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused on certain groups, such as coaching activity within schools linking to local clubs or specific RFU targets.

The RFU is focused on actively exploring opportunities to assist with the transition between late junior years and senior rugby with a specific focus on growing the senior game with the addition of adult teams (both men's and women's). This area has a strategic focus from the RFU and is being facilitated by encouraging casual play and midweek senior matches, along with touch rugby and cross pitch 7s. The RFU recognises the pressures on participation in the traditional forms of the game at this time and by offering alternative match times and formats then clubs may be able to retain a larger number of players.

With the Women's Rugby World Cup scheduled to be held in England in 2025, there is an expectation that there shall be a growth in women's and girls' demand within Rugby in the build up to the event. This shall be followed by a large push from the RFU to increase demand in women's and girls' rugby as a legacy for hosting the event.

The expanded showcase event will be hosted across eight venues and cities around England (Brighton & Hove, Bristol, Exeter, London, Manchester, Northampton, Sunderland and York) with 16 teams competing to be crowned world champions.

Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 will represent a generational moment for global rugby that will set new standards, welcome new fans and families to the sport and inspire a new generation of players, providing an exciting catalyst to nationwide and global rugby growth.

It should be noted that given the current and future levels of rugby union demand in East Hertfordshire immediate growth for women and girls demand is expected to be limited with any such demand travelling to larger clubs in neighbouring authorities.

This being said, based on current ancillary provision none of the clubs in the Authority currently have the facilities (separate changing rooms and showering facilities) to accommodate such demand. Hertford RFC has separated changing rooms but still only has a communal shower room servicing all changing rooms. As such, considerations should be made by the remaining clubs to modernise the changing and showering facilities to meet

<sup>20</sup> 2 teams require 1 pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, 1 team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.



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current RFU specifications. Bishop's Stortford is in the process of installing RFU specifications changing rooms at its site.

## 4.4: Capacity analysis

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

- ◀ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ◀ Use of school pitches by schools increases demand by one match equivalent session, unless school activity levels are known.
- ◀ All competitive play is on senior size pitches (except for where age grade specific pitches are provided).
- ◀ U13 teams generally play on a 90 x 60m pitch and play 13 vs 13.
- ◀ From U14 upwards, teams generally play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.
- ◀ Mini teams (U6-U12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch or a dedicated mini pitch. See RFU Age Grade Rugby Guidance for more details.
- ◀ For senior and youth teams the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away).
- ◀ For mini teams playing on a senior pitch, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis and playing across half of one senior pitch.
- ◀ Senior men's rugby generally takes place on Saturday afternoons.
- ◀ Senior women's rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons.
- ◀ Junior rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Mini rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels.

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

Table 4.15: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

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

Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and consultation. This guide, however, is only a very general measure of potential pitch capacity. It does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and it assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

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

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Table 4.16: Capacity table for senior rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Sports lit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	-	1.75	1.5	0.25	Curricular demand is unknown, however, Bishop's Stortford use this site for training its mixed age grade teams
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Secure	1	M2/D1	Good	Yes	3	-	3	-	Pitch is used at capacity
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Secure	1	M2/D1	Good	No	3	-	3	-	Pitch is used at capacity
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	Yes	1.5	5.5	2	5	One of two training pitches at the site and is overplayed by 5 MES when match play and training demand is accounted for. This is discounting mixed grade teams which play at Bishop's Stortford College.
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	Yes	2	6	2	6	One of two training pitches at the site and is overplayed by 6 MES when match play and training demand is accounted for. This is discounting mixed grade teams which play at Bishop's Stortford College.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	Secure	1	M2/D1	Good	No	2	-	3	1	The pitch has spare capacity of 1 MES, although has no actual capacity as it is used during peak period.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	1.5	2	2	1.5	The second pitch which caters for both training and match play is overplayed by 1.5 MES. It can be used for training as the Club has portable floodlights.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D0	Poor	Yes	-	3	1.5	1.5	As it is flood lit this pitch accommodates the majority of senior team training demand and is overplayed by 1.5 MES.
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	Yes	1	2	2	1	1st and 2nd team training take place on the floodlit 1st team pitch as well as games resulting in overplay of one MES.

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Sports lit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	Yes	1	1.5	2	0.5	This pitch accommodates the 3rd and 4th senior team match play and training as well as colts training.
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	2	-	2	-	Club has a training area which it can use portable floodlights on which accounts for five MES per week which has been discounted from total training demand. This pitch caters for four youth teams match play (including colts).
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	2	-	2	-	This pitch accommodates Blackhorse RFC, which is a single team club which plays it's home fixtures at Hertford RFC as well as three youth teams. It is worth noting that there is two junior pitches at this site which have been discounted from the total supply as they do not have posts up that could potentially cater for demand at the site.
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	1.5	-	2	0.5	This pitch hosts six mini rugby teams at 1.5 MES leaving 0.5 spare capacity.
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D0	Poor	No	1	-	1.5	0.5	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 0.5 MES
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M2/D1	Good	No	1	-	3	2	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 2 MES
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M2/D1	Good	No	1	-	3	2	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 2 MES
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	1	-	2	1	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 1 MES
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	1	-	2	1	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 1 MES
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	Unsecure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	1	-	2	1	Pitch used for curricular demand with spare capacity of 1 MES
170	Datchworth Village Hall	Buntingford	Yes	Secure	1	M1/D1	Standard	No	4.5	3	2	5.5	This pitch is used by Datchworth RFC for junior rugby demand as well as to spread training as the Club has portable lights it can use on this pitch.

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Mini (mixed age grade) pitches are accessed by Bishop's Stortford RFC and Datchworth RFC, which has been discounted from its capacity balance as per RFU regulations as to what constitutes a pitch, as these pitches are not posted. For reference, demand expressed by mixed age grade teams, on mixed age grade pitches, equates to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week (as opposed to 0.25 when expressed on senior pitches). The demand has therefore been placed onto senior pitches at 0.25 MES.

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

Table 4.17: Summary of spare capacity on senior

Site ID	Site	No of pitches	Potential Spare capacity (MES)	Actual Saturday Spare capacity (MES)	Comments
16	Bishop's Stortford College	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to poor pitch quality.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to poor pitch quality.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to poor pitch quality.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to poor pitch quality.
16	Bishop's Stortford College	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to poor pitch quality.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	1	1	-	The pitch is used during the peak period
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	1	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity for one senior team on Saturdays.
62	Leventhorpe School	1	0.5	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	1	2	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	1	2	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	1	1	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	1	1	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields (Jobbers Wood)	1	1	-	No spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.

When reviewing all potential spare capacity on senior pitches. It is evident that actual spare capacity exists on one senior pitch at Hertford RFC in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area. No other pitches, at any site, have spare capacity at peak time.

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Five sites and eight pitches are overplayed as detailed in the table below. Overplayed pitches are based in the Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford and Hertford, Ware analysis areas.

Table 4.18: Summary of overplay (senior pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of pitches	Overplay (MES)
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	1	0.25
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	5
18	Bishops Stortford RFC	Bishop's Stortford	1	6
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	1	1.5
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	1	1.5
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	1	1
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	Hertford, Ware	1	0.5
170	Datchworth Village Hall	Buntingford	1	5.5
-	-	<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21.25</b>

In total, overplay equates to 21.25 match equivalent sessions per week, with shortfalls deriving from eight pitches.

## 4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify the overall spare capacity or overplay in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week.

The analysis is undertaken for play on senior pitches only. In the instance of East Hertfordshire, the analysis results are the same for the peak time modelling for Saturday afternoons (senior men's rugby peak time) and Sundays (when it is the peak time for mixed aged grade rugby and junior/colts' teams). This is due to an overall limited amount of spare capacity for additional play throughout the District. Future demand is based on club ambitions and is equating to two senior ladies' teams.

Table 4:19: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches (in match equivalent sessions per week)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>21</sup>	Overplay	Current total demand	Future demand	Future total demand
Bishop's Stortford	-	11.25	11.25	0.5	11.75
Buntingford	-	8.5	8.5	-	8.5
Hertford, Ware	0.5	1.5	1	0.5	1.5
Sawbridgeworth	-	-	-	-	-
Watton-at-Stone	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>21.25</b>	<b>20.75</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21.75</b>

The table above shows that there is an insufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand, with shortfalls equating to 20.75 match equivalent sessions per week. Shortfalls predominantly originate from concentrated midweek training demand and the sheer quantity of demand.

<sup>21</sup> In match equivalent sessions

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When considering future demand shortfalls increase to 21.75 match equivalent sessions per week.

## **4.6: Conclusion**

Based on the supply and demand analysis, it is evident that there is insufficient supply of senior rugby union pitches in East Hertfordshire to accommodate for both current and anticipated future levels of demand. The main issues are centred around pressures on midweek training opportunities as well as the volume of demand at Bishop's Stortford RFC and Datchworth RFC.

The priority for rugby union in East Hertfordshire (which will be further explored in the forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan) is to ensure that pitches are of suitable quality for demand, sufficient sports lighting is available and ancillary infrastructures are of a good quality which supports the long-term development of rugby union across the local area.

Should Bishop's Stortford Swifts FC relocate to Hoggates Park and vacate Bishop's Stortford RFC this would enable the addition of new rugby pitches that could help better spread training demand across the site and reduce the overplay significantly on the third and fourth pitches.

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### Rugby union summary

- ◀ There is insufficient level of senior rugby union provision in East Hertfordshire to accommodate current and future demand with a current overplay of 20.75 match equivalent sessions on senior rugby pitches open to community use.
- ◀ There is a total of 53 rugby union pitches in East Hertfordshire across 17 sites. This consists of 35 senior pitches and 18 junior pitches. Of these, 25 senior pitches and 17 junior pitches are open to community use.
- ◀ There are no WR compliant 3G pitches located within East Hertfordshire. However, there will be one in Bishop's Stortford at the Bishop's Stortford High School for the 25/26 season.
- ◀ In terms of quality of senior pitches available for community use, five are good quality, 12 are standard and eight are poor quality pitches. Of the 17-community available junior pitches, 14 are poor quality and three are standard quality.
- ◀ From a community club perspective, poor quality pitch provision is an issue for Datchworth RFC with on one of its pitches.
- ◀ Of the three clubs in the District with sites, Bishop's Stortford RFC and Hertford RFC access standard quality ancillary provision, whilst Datchworth RFC access poor ancillary provision. All Clubs are in the process of upgrading current ancillary offerings to bring the facilities in line with RFU specifications, to encourage inclusivity and promote the women's and girls' game.
- ◀ Datchworth RFC has plans to rebuild and enhance its ancillary offering and has been granted planning permission to do. The Club is currently fundraising to enable this project.
- ◀ Hertford RFC has had planning permission to extend and rebuild its changing rooms whilst Bishop's Stortford have built foundations for its new changing rooms.
- ◀ There are four rugby union clubs in East Hertfordshire which in total generate demand equating to 63 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of 12 senior men's, two senior women's, four boy's colts, 17 junior boys, nine junior girls and 19 mixed age grade teams.
- ◀ Future demand from club ambitions equates to two senior ladies' teams.
- ◀ There is an overall insufficient supply of provision to cater for both current and future demand.



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## PART 5: ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (HOCKEY)

### 5.1: Introduction

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

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

Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
England Hockey Category 1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	<b>Essential</b> International Hockey - Training and matches	<b>Desirable</b> Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of EH Player Pathway Performance Centres and upwards England
England Hockey Category 2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b> Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	<b>Desirable</b> All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b> All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	<b>Essential</b> None	<b>Desirable</b> Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

In addition to the above pitch types, EH reports that it is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand on a pitch that is also suitable for other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2<sup>22</sup>, is a versatile surface that will ensure that the sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience; it will be a sand dressed synthetic turf with a compatible shock pad. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including schools, with a dynamic surface which reduces the amount of space required and enables the provision to be utilised to its full potential.

For senior teams, a full-size pitch for competitive matches must measure at least 91.4 x 55 metres excluding surrounding run-off areas, which must be a minimum of two metres at the sides and three metres at the ends.

<sup>22</sup> [Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey](#)

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EH's preference is for four-metre side and five-metre end run offs, with a preferred overall area of 101.4 x 63 metres, though a minimum overall area of 97.4 x 59 metres is accepted.

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on one day (peak time) provided the pitch has sports lighting Training is generally midweek and also requires access to a pitch with sports lighting.

There are two hockey clubs in East Hertfordshire, Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club and Hertford Hockey Club. Both clubs were consulted with either via telephone interview or a face-to-face meeting.

Table 5.2: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club	Yes
Hertford Hockey Club	Yes

## 5.2: Supply

There are eight full size hockey suitable artificial grass pitches in East Hertfordshire located across six sites. All sites are serviced by sports lighting and are open to community use, other than St Edmunds College which has no community use.

Table 5.3: Summary of full-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Quantity of provision	Size (metres)	Sports lit?
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	One pitch	100m x 63m	Yes
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	One pitch	100m x 62m	Yes
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	One pitch	100m x 60m	Yes
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	One pitch	98m x 62.5m	Yes
89	Simon Balle School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	One pitch	101m x 64m	Yes
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	No	One pitch	97m x 60m	Yes
163	Haileybury College	Hertford, Ware	Yes	One pitch	100m x 60m	Yes
163	Haileybury College	Hertford, Ware	Yes	One pitch	100m x 60m	Yes

There are also a further three small sided AGPs provided at Amwell View School, Heath Mount School and Norfolk Road Playing Fields. The latter being the only pitch open to community use and to have sports lighting.

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Table 5.4: Summary of small-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Quantity of provision	Size (metres)	Sports lit?
3	Amwell View School	Hertford, Ware	No	One pitch	29m x 13m	No
46	Heath Mount School	Watton-at-Stone	No	One pitch	70m x 44m	No
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford	Yes	One Pitch	51m x 32m	Yes

Consultation with the school operators within East Hertfordshire failed to raise any potential developments for additional AGP pitches in the District. Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club confirms it has an ambition to develop a second full sized hockey pitch at Herts & Essex Sports Centre alongside the existing pitch and references potential Bishop's Stortford Town Council Section 106 funding available. The Club states its long-term ambition is to operate two full sized AGPs at the site to reduce its dependency on the other school pitches in the town.

In line with the Gilston development a new full size hockey AGP has been proposed as part of one of the new secondary schools. In terms of delivery this is likely to be further down the line and will potentially not happen if the lifetime of this PPOSS.

There are no disused AGPs in East Hertfordshire.

A map of the current hockey provision is provided in Figure 5.1 overleaf.

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Figure 5.1: Location of full size AGPs



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

The table below identifies the availability of AGP provision (where known) which is available for community use. As can be seen both Herts & Essex Sports Centre and Hockerill Anglo-European College open its facilities for the full 34 hours per week in line with the Sport England Facilities Planning Model. Regarding Bishop’s Stortford College one of its AGPs is used solely for school use during typical community use hours. Its other pitch is open for 28 hours and is used for school team use on Saturday’s.

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Table 5.5: Management and availability (full size pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Management	Availability	Total hours available in peak period
16	Bishop's Stortford College	School	School use only during CU hours	0
16	Bishop's Stortford College	School	17:00-21:00 midweek 09:00-17:00 Sunday	28
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Sport centre	08:00-21:00 midweek 09:00-18:00 Saturday 09:00-17:00 Sunday	34
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	School	18:00-22:00 midweek 09:00-18:00 Saturday 09:00-17:00 Sunday	34
89	Simon Balle School	School	Midweek and Sunday unknown 09:30 - 17:30 Saturday	8
163	Haileybury College	Sport complex	19:00-20:30 midweek 17:30-18:30 Saturday 09:00-18:30 Sunday	15.5

Hertford HC is currently accessing Simon Balle School, Haileybury School and Queenswood School (Welwyn Hatfield) for training and match play. There are no official agreements between the Club and any of the schools, it accesses its pitches on a weekly rental basis.

Bishops Stortford HC accesses Herts & Essex Sports Centre and Hockerill Anglo-European School for training and match play as well as Bishop's Stortford School infrequently. The Club raised half the required funds for the pitches at Herts & Essex Sports Centre and Hockerill Anglo-European and currently pay an annual fee to each to access them.

Taking the above into account, the quality of hockey suitable artificial grass pitches have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by EH) undertaken in December 2024 and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (60-79%), Poor (<60%). The quality ratings assigned to the sites also consider the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

In addition, depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an artificial grass pitch usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. The table overleaf summarises the quality of artificial grass pitches in East Hertfordshire.

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Table 5.6: Summary of quality

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	User	Quality rating	Built/resurfaced
3	Amwell View School	Sand filled	-	Poor	2013
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Sand dressed		Standard	2016
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Sand dressed	Bishop Stortford Hockey Club	Poor	2012
46	Heath Mount School	Sand dressed	-	Poor	2004 / 2014
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Sand dressed	Bishop Stortford Hockey Club	Good	2019
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	Sand filled	Bishop Stortford Hockey Club	Standard	1993 / 2017
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Sand filled	-	Standard	1980 / 2010
89	Simon Balle School	Sand filled	Hertford Hockey Club	Poor	1965 / 2012
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Sand filled	-	Standard	2001
163	Haileybury College	Sand filled	Hertford Hockey Club	Standard	1989 / 2013
163	Haileybury College	Sand filled	Hertford Hockey Club	Standard	2014

Simon Balle School currently provides a poor AGP with it last being resurfaced in 2012 it has surpassed its suggested life span. Hertford Hockey Club also reports that the pitch has three nights of football bookings throughout a typical week, causing damage to the surface. The Club's biggest priority is to resurface the pitch and has tried to start discussions with the school. The school confirms it has a sinking fund in place to resurface the pitch.

Both pitches at Haileybury College are rated standard quality, despite having exceeded the suggested lifespan for an AGP, both pitches are still in a decent playing condition. Consultation with the school confirms that a regular and rigorous maintenance schedule is carried out as well as ensuring that there is a sufficient sinking fund in place to resurface both pitches. It also confirms that one pitch is used solely for hockey usage while the other allows both football and hockey.

The pitch at Heath Mount School is rated poor as it was last refurbished in 2014, meaning it has surpassed its lifespan. During the site assessment it was picked up that the pitch looked very tired and worn with poor line markings. Consultation with the school confirms that its main users are football clubs, mainly, Monday to Thursday. The school states that the surface is getting replaced in 2025 and is a self-funded project.

The Bishop's Stortford College has two AGPs on site, one rated poor and one rated standard quality. Both pitches are well used with the first pitch being solely used for the schools curricular and extracurricular use with very limited community use. It was last resurfaced in 2016, however, appears to be well used. The second pitch was last resurfaced in 2012 and is heavily used by clubs as well as the school therefore is more worn than the first pitch, resulting in a poor rating. There are sinking funds in place for both pitches to be resurfaced.

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Consultation with Buntingford Cougars FC confirms that it uses the small sided AGP at Norfolk Road Playing Fields 90% of the time 5pm – 9pm Monday – Friday. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2010 so has surpassed its lifespan. However, site visits carried out by KKP confirm that the pitch is still in a useable condition considering its age, with no rips, tears or clear signs of wear and tear. The Club states that Buntingford Town Council is planning to convert this pitch to a 3G in 2025.

Hockerill Anglo-European College last had its pitch resurfaced in 2017 and is of standard quality which is congruent with club consultation and the site audit. The School is partnered with Bishop's Stortford HC which use the pitch throughout the week and at weekends, alongside several football clubs.

The term ancillary facilities, relates to built facility infrastructures at sites. Typically, this includes (but is not limited too) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, car parking and toilet facilities.

The facilities at The Herts & Essex Sports Centre are in good condition with four changing rooms for its users. There is also a viewing balcony overlooking the pitch for spectators accompanied by a bar, offering food and drink.

Hockerill Anglo-European School currently offer poor changing room provision with issues such as the floorboards giving in. The School confirms that it will have to soon cease allowing teams to use the spaces due to health and safety concerns.

When using the AGP at Simon Balle School, Hertford Hockey Club share ancillary facilities with Hertford Cricket Club. The clubhouse is rated good quality, with plenty of parking, bar facilities with an outdoor patio and four changing rooms. Two of the changing rooms were only added 10 years ago. However, the hockey club would like to refurbish the men's changing rooms and showers but realise that fundraising for such a project is difficult.

### 5.3: Demand

Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club has seven adult men's teams, 10 adult women's teams, three junior girl's teams, three junior boy's teams, six mixed junior teams and one mini under eight team. Additionally, there are over 35s and over 45's men's and women's teams. The Club considers itself at capacity as it has seen an increase in membership over recent years, specifically in women's teams. It uses several sites for training and match play including, Bishop's Stortford College, where use is limited, Herts & Essex Sports Centre, and Hockerill Anglo-European College.

Hertford Hockey Club currently has seven men's teams, four ladies' teams, seven junior boys' teams and 10 junior girls' teams. Alongside both a men's over 35 and over 45 team and women's over 35 team. Demand has mostly stayed consistent over recent years, although has seen a slight increase for senior women's numbers. The Club is hoping to add an extra senior women's team, however, it states it will struggle for pitch space, umpires and coaches. It plays and trains at various sites yet, has no long-term lease agreements for any site it accesses and has demand for more midweek pitch time for training. It is currently playing out of Simon Balle School, Haileybury College and Queenswood School, located in Welwyn Hatfield.

Both Bishop's Stortford HC and Hertford HC delivers back to hockey sessions. Bishop's Stortford HC currently runs a six week back to hockey programme and has 20 members attend whilst Hertford HC mainly run it in the summer and couldn't quantify attendance. Bishop's Stortford reports it will be offering walking hockey starting in 2025, whilst Hertford HC do not offer it.

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Imported demand refers to teams which originate outside of the East Hertfordshire, accessing facilities within the area for its home fixtures and/or training needs, normally because its pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

There are no known cases of imported demand to East Hertfordshire from neighbouring authorities.

Exported demand refers to teams which originate within the East Hertfordshire, accessing facilities outside the area for its home fixtures and/or training needs, normally because its pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

Hertford Hockey Club reports playing some of its games at Queenswood School, in Welwyn Hatfield.

Access to artificial grass pitches for midweek training is important to sustain and grow all formats of hockey.

Bishop's Stortford HC trains at Hockerill Anglo-European College 19:00 – 22:00 on Tuesdays, 19:00 – 21:00 on Wednesday's and 19:00 – 20:30 on Friday's. It also accesses The Herts & Essex Sports Centre 18:00 – 19:30 on Monday's, 19:00 – 21:00 on Tuesday's, Wednesday's and Thursday's. It also runs coaching at both sites on a Sunday morning from 09:00 - 13:30 as well as Bishop's Stortford College 09:00 – 12:00 for master's and mixed training.

Hertford HC trains at Simon Balle School, Tuesday – Thursday for an hour and a half each night, Haileybury on Tuesday's and Wednesday's for an hour and a half and for three hours Sunday mornings. The Club finds it very difficult to book Haileybury as it is heavily used by the School and other clubs.

Growing participation is the number one aim within EH's Strategic Plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities and schools, regional and local leagues, developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Growth in participation will not only come from the traditional 11 a side game but from the informal, recreational ways to play hockey such as small-sided hockey, which can be played at any time during the week or at weekends.

There remains a desire from EH to increase participation within the club/ league-based game, not all future demand may be realised entirely as new formalised teams playing at peak time. Some clubs may decide to offer pay and play opportunities to participants or offer small-sided formats such in a bid to increase participation and club memberships by providing a different hockey offer.

Increased demand from new participants will lead to a requirement for increased capacity on available artificial grass pitches at peak time, but also midweek and on Sundays to deliver other formats of hockey activity. At present, it is not necessarily clear as to what format this may take or when it is likely to take place, however, it is clear that there will be a requirement for access to increased capacity on artificial grass pitches across the area. This should be considered when assessing demand for artificial grass pitches in the future, as not only will they be needed for peak match play times and midweek training to accommodate increased participation within the formalised hockey environment, but also throughout the week and at non-peak times to offer wider opportunities for play.



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Unlike other pitch sports, EH do not use team generation rates to determine future demand and instead likes to understand growth by participation, rather than dedicated teams. As such, team generation rates have not been used to calculate future growth for hockey in East Hertfordshire.

Bishop's Stortford HC recognises that it is at capacity with its current number of Saturday teams while Hertford HC is considering adding a fifth senior women's team but realises it might struggle for pitch space, umpires and people to run the team.

The Player Pathway (PP) is the junior talent development pathway. It encompasses the whole of the hockey landscape which includes club and school activity as well as the PP Development Centres (DCs). The purpose of the PP is to provide development opportunities for young people, which is fair, equitable and consistent. It is to ensure that a suitable level of coaching and competition is offered for people at the appropriate stage of their development and to maximise the chance they have of fulfilling their potential whether that potential is as a club or international player, coach or official. The PP can be accessed by playing at school, a local club or attending one of the local centres. There is one entry point into the PP centres which is at DC level. The first time a player accesses the player pathway they must enter at DC level.

To enter an Academy Centre (AC) players must be nominated by their DC coaches, school or must display a consistent high performance at club level. This is a PP into higher performance hockey.

DCs and ACs are local training centres for the U13 to U17 age groups. DCs are open to any hockey player who has been nominated by their club, school or coach, with ACs open to any player who has been nominated by a DC coach. After attending a DC, an AC is the next step on the player pathway. Included in the DCs/ACs are Goalkeeper (GK) Academies, which provide specific coaching sessions for goalkeepers.

There are no England Hockey DC or AC sites located within East Hertfordshire with the nearest talent academy located at Cambridge. Bishop's Stortford HC states it is hoping to become a Development Centre in 2025.

Most men's and women's hockey teams currently play matches on a Saturday which is therefore the peak time for use of artificial grass pitches for competitive play.

### **5.4: Supply and demand analysis**

The PPS Guidance suggests that a sports lit pitch is able to accommodate four match equivalent sessions on a Saturday with teams playing in a home and away format, as such this equates to one artificial grass pitch being able to cater for eight "home" teams. Teams play matches on home v away formats and therefore one team requires 0.5 match sessions per week on its "home" artificial grass pitch. On this basis, a pitch can cater for eight teams from a home club (with four playing away on the home vs away rotation) with each pitch considered to have a total capacity equating to four MES in the peak period.

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Table 5.7: Supply and demand analysis of peak time (Saturday) pitch access

Site ID	Site name	Number of pitches	Site user	Current use in peak period (MES)	Spare capacity?	Comments
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	1	Bishop's Stortford HC	5 MES	No	The site is open 09:00-18:00 with Bishop's Stortford HC using the pitch all day with the first push back at 10am.
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	1	Bishop's Stortford HC	4 MES	No	Hockerill Anglo-European College is open for community use 10:00 - 18:00 with Bishop's Stortford accessing it from 11:00 and the first push back at 11:30.
89	Simon Balle School	1	Hertford HC	4 MES	No	Hertford HC use this pitch 09:30 - 17:30 with the first push back at 10am. Three of its teams have to travel to Queenswood School in Welwyn Hatfield to fulfil its Saturday fixtures.

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Bishop's Stortford HC accesses two sites for its Saturday match play, Hockerill Anglo-European College and The Herts & Essex Sport Centre. The Club splits its teams between the two sites with 10 teams accessing The Herts & Essex Sport Centre on a home and away basis, allowing for five games. The other seven teams' access Hockerill Anglo-European College on a home and away basis meaning there is space for four games to be played. Consequently, there is no spare capacity at either site, the Club confirms it considers itself at capacity for its Saturday fixtures. It further uses both pitches on a Sunday morning 09:00-13:30 with youth fixtures taking place 13:30-17:30, however, no games are played at Herts & Essex at these times due to planning stipulations. It accesses Bishop's Stortford College 09:00-12:00 for master's and mixed training.

Hertford HC has 11 senior teams accessing pitches for Saturday fixtures, eight of which play at Simon Balle School with the remaining three travelling to Welwyn Hatfield to play at Queenswood School. The Club accesses Simon Balle School all day Saturday meaning there is no spare capacity at this site. It further uses both Simon Balle School and Haileybury School on Sunday mornings for training and youth games. It points out that Haileybury can be difficult to book due to other users, but this is not an issue as it has priority at Simon Balle School. Queenswood School has good access as no other clubs use it on a Saturday. It expresses a want to add a fifth women's team but realises that a lack of pitch space is an inhibiting factor.

### **5.5: Conclusion**

Within East Hertfordshire there are seven full-size AGPs available for community use with the two clubs accessing three of these, Simon Balle School, The Herts & Essex Sport Centre and Hockerill Anglo-European College for weekend match play.

The two pitches at Haileybury College are used all day on Saturdays by its own borders so are not available for clubs to access. The last two pitches are at Bishop's Stortford College, one of which is used solely for school use on midweek evenings and Saturdays so is not available to hire. The second pitch is available to hire and is heavily used midweek with some spare capacity on Sunday's which is intermittently taken by Bishop's Stortford HC as and when it needs it.

Both Hertford HC and Bishop's Stortford state that to grow the clubs would require more pitch space. Currently there is sufficient provision to cater for hockey demand, however, if the clubs aspire to grow the number of teams, then new pitch space will have to be provided. It is also important to note here that Hertford HC already has three teams displaced and using the pitch at Queenswood School in Welwyn Hatfield for home games.

With the pitches at Simon Balle School and Bishop's Stortford School having surpassed the suggested lifespan of an AGP questions surrounding funds to replace the surfaces will arise. Should these pitches become unsafe and not be replaced then the current lack of weekend pitch space will be multiplied, and more teams will have to export to play games outside of East Hertfordshire.

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### Hockey summary

- ◀ There is no spare capacity at any of the pitches available for weekend match play and there are currently teams exporting to play home games.
- ◀ Regarding future demand, both Hertford HC and Bishop's Stortford HC realise that growth cannot happen without more pitch space. Despite this, Hertford HC is looking to add a fifth women's senior team.
- ◀ With the AGPs provided at the Simon Balle School and Bishop's Stortford College having surpassed end of life, there is the need to provide a pitch replacement at each site in order to accommodate existing and future hockey demand. There are eight full size hockey suitable AGPs in East Hertfordshire located across six sites. Seven of these pitches are open to community use on, with only three available to hire at peak time on weekends.
- ◀ The full-size pitch at Herts & Essex Sports Centre resembles the only good quality playing provision within the District, with the AGP being built in 2019.
- ◀ Provision found at Bishop's Stortford School and Simon Balle School is poor quality with both having surpassed the suggested lifespan of an AGP. The condition of the pitches is now at a point where a replacement surface shall be required during the lifespan of the PPS.
- ◀ Finally, the pitch at Hockerill Anglo-European College is standard, however, the accompanying ancillary facilities are poor and need enhancing to continue to host external bookings.
- ◀ There are two hockey clubs within East Hertfordshire, those being Hertford HC and Bishop's Stortford HC.
- ◀ Bishop's Stortford Hockey Club has seven adult men's teams, 10 adult women's teams, three junior girl's teams, three junior boy's teams, six mixed junior teams and one mini under eight team. Additionally, there are over 35s and over 45's men's and women's teams.
- ◀ Hertford Hockey Club currently has seven men's teams, four ladies' teams, seven junior boys' teams and 10 junior girls' teams. Alongside both a men's over 35 and over 45 team and women's over 35 team.
- ◀ Hertford HC would like to add a fifth women's team however both it and Bishop's Stortford HC raise that there is a lack of peak time pitch space and would struggle to add teams.
- ◀ Based on high levels of demand there is an insufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand and should pitch replacements not be undertaken, both clubs will struggle to field current number of teams.
- ◀ Future demand cannot be accommodated with existing provision and would require an additional pitch.

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## PART 6: CRICKET PITCHES

### 6.1: Introduction

Hertfordshire County Cricket Club (HCCC) is the main governing and representative body for Cricket within East Hertfordshire. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), HCCC is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children. HCCC is currently working with the ECB on delivering its recently refreshed Strategy, 'Inspiring Generations', which has been live since 2020. See Appendix One: Sporting Context for more details.

For adult cricket in East Hertfordshire there are three main offerings: Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket. The youth league structure tends to be club-based matches which are played mid-week, although some matches are also played on Sundays.

### Consultation

In total, 23 cricket clubs are identified as playing within East Hertfordshire, of which, 19 responded to consultation requests, equating to an 83% response rate. Club responses are listed in the table below.

Table 6.1: Cricket club response rate

Club name	Club response?
Ardeley Walkern Cricket Club	Yes
Albury Cricket Club	No
Aston CC	Yes
Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	Yes
Allenburys & County Hall Cricket Club	Yes
Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts Cricket Club	Yes
Bengeo Cricket Club	Yes
Bishop's Stortford Cricket Club	Yes
Bramfield Cricket Club	No
Braughing Cricket Club	Yes
Buntingford Cricket Club	Yes
Datchworth Cricket Club	Yes
Hare Street and The Hormeads Cricket Club	No
Hertford Cricket Club	Yes
Hertingfordbury Cricket Club	Yes
Little Berkhamsted Sahibs Cricket Club	No
Little Munden Cricket Club	Yes
Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	Yes
St Margaretsbury Cricket Club	Yes
Tewin Cricket Club	Yes
Thorley Cricket Club	Yes
Ware Cricket Club	Yes
Watton-At-Stone Cricket Club	Yes

Thundridge CC has been discounted from the assessment, as since the last PPS was completed, the Club has folded.

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## 6.2: Supply

In total, there are 46 natural turf cricket squares (across 30 sites). Hertford Cricket Club, Datchworth CC and The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust all have a non turf pitch (NTP) on their second squares. There are also standalone NTPs situated at Morgans Field and Haileybury Sports Complex.

Heath Mount School, Haileybury Sports Complex, Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields and St Edmunds College & Prep School do not currently offer community use for their cricket facilities. There are therefore 38 community accessible squares across 26 sites.

Table 6.2: Summary of grass wicket cricket sites

Analysis area	No. of sites	No. of squares
Bishop's Stortford	6	15
Buntingford	9	10
Hertford, Ware	6	11
Sawbridgeworth	4	5
Watton-at-Stone	5	5
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46</b>

Bishop's Stortford Area provides the highest number of squares with 15 (33% of all provision), whilst the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area has the fewest squares with only four (11%).

### Non-turf pitches (NTPs)

There are 11 standalone NTPs across nine sites in East Hertfordshire as listed below. Each site contains one NTP each, other than Haileybury Sports Complex and St Edmunds College and Prep School which both have two. None of the schools are open to community use other than Avanti Grange Secondary School.

- ◀ Avanti Grange Secondary School.
- ◀ Edwinstree C Of E Middle School.
- ◀ Haileybury Sports Complex (x2).
- ◀ Hockerill Anglo-European College.
- ◀ Morgans Field.
- ◀ Presdales Recreation Ground.
- ◀ St Edmunds College & Prep School (x2).
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields.
- ◀ The Chauncy School.

There are also non-turf wickets accompanying natural turf cricket squares at six sites. All of which are available for community use, other than Heath Mount School.

- ◀ Heath Mount School.
- ◀ Hertford Cricket Club.
- ◀ Leventhorpe School.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust.
- ◀ Datchworth Sports Club.

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NTPs, particularly when located at club sites, can also aid with training and practice, and can help reduce overplay on grass wickets when used for matches. The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play. NTPs are also frequently used for junior matches across the country, and there are some instances of this in East Hertfordshire.

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

The map below shows the location of all cricket squares currently servicing East Hertfordshire. For a key to the map, see Table 6.4.

Figure 6.1: Location of grass cricket squares within East Hertfordshire



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## Disused provision

Playing fields which have previously accommodated formal pitch provision are categorised as disused. A disused site is a playing field which is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either. In East Hertfordshire there are both disused sites that are in an overgrown condition and unused cricket sites/provision that still actively accommodate alternative sporting provision (i.e., football is still played on the site).

Table 6.3: Summary of disused cricket provision within East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Disused/ unused site/ pitch	Comments
1	Albury Football Ground	SG11 2JG	Bishop's Stortford	Disused pitch	Site previously accommodated a grass cricket square now just has football pitches.
15	Birchwood High School	CM23 5BD	Bishop's Stortford	Disused NTP	Site previously accommodated an NTP.
31	Cottered Playing Field	SG9 9QW	Buntingford	Unused pitch	Site previously accommodated a grass cricket square now just services football demand.
51	Hertford Rugby Football Club	SG12 9NZ	Hertford, Ware	Disused NTP	Site previously accommodated an NTP now just services rugby demand.
106	The Meads (Lower Field)	SG9 0DY	Buntingford	Unused pitch	Site previously accommodated a grass cricket square although is now just a recreation space.
138	County Hall	SG13 8DQ	Hertford, Ware	Unused pitch	Site previously accommodated a grass cricket square and an accompanying NTP. However, since the pavilion burned down 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2023 the site does not provide any sports provision.
165	Little Hadham CC	SG11 2ED	Bishop's Stortford	Unused pitch	Site previously accommodated a grass cricket square.

## Potential future supply changes

Bengeo CC has approached the District Council to potentially start using the disused County Hall site as a second ground due to its rapidly growing expansion. The Council has shown interest in the Club taking on the ground, however, given that there is no pavilion servicing the site (due to fire damage) it would mean the Club having no access to onsite ancillary facilities.



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Sawbridgeworth CC is loosely planning to partner with Sawbridgeworth Town FC to build a new purpose-built facility for both clubs to use. Both are seeking a new site to further growth ambitions. Sawbridgeworth CC states that it has experienced operational issues when accessing Leventhorpe School. The Club has an agreement to access the site until 2027 but states its preference is using its club site for home games.

The new, proposed Gilston development will include a central cricket hub containing multiple squares and service cricket demand for both new and existing residents in the area. The development will see 10,000 new homes built.

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Table 6.4: Key to map of grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	No. of NTPs
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Buntingford	Yes	1	6	-
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Hertford, Ware	Yes	1	8	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	10	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	7	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	5	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	2	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	4	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	1	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	1	-
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	8	1	-
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	1	6	-
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	1	8	-
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	2	14	-
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Yes	2	11	-
40	Freman College	Buntingford	Yes	1	8	-
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	Hertford, Ware	No	4	13	-
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	Hertford, Ware	No	4	10	-
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	Hertford, Ware	No	4	8	-
43	Haileybury Sports Complex	Hertford, Ware	No	4	6	-
46	Heath Mount School	Watton-at-Stone	No	1	3	1
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	2	15	-
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	2	8	1
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Yes	1	9	-
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	1	9	1
63	Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	1	8	-
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Buntingford	Yes	1	4	-
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford	Yes	1	8	-
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	No	1	8	-
97	St Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	2	18	-

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	No. of NTPs
97	St Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	2	8	-
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	1	10	-
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields	Sawbridgeworth	No	2	9	-
102	The Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields	Sawbridgeworth	No	2	4	1
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	3	13	-
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	3	12	1
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	3	6	-
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	1	15	-
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Yes	1	8	-
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	1	14	-
115	Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	Yes	1	14	-
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	1	11	-
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	Yes	1	6	-
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	1	8	-
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Buntingford	Yes	1	4	-
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	1	10	-
136	Stocking Pelham CC	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	1	4	-

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## Security of tenure

Table 6.5 outlines the tenure agreement of cricket clubs across East Hertfordshire. Where provision is owned by the District Council or town/parish councils and either rented or leased to clubs, unless otherwise known, it is considered that this provision is secure and will be provided over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

The broad position is that most clubs have secure tenure and will therefore be able to service cricket for the foreseeable future (and as a minimum over the lifespan of the PPOSS). This is detailed club-by-club in the following table.

Table 6.5: Summary of club tenure arrangements (where known)

Club	Site	Tenure	Security of tenure	Management
Ardeley Walkern Cricket Club	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Rented from Walkern Parish Council.	Unknown	The Club maintain the playing provision.
Aston CC	Aston CC	Rented from Aston Centre Field Trust.	Unknown	Aston CC
Aspenden, Standon and Puckeridge Cricket Club	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	Leased from Aspenden Parish Council.	Unknown	Aspenden Parish Council manage the site, but the Club maintain the pitch.
Allenburys & County Hall Cricket Club	Allenburys & County Hall Cricket Club	Long term lease with GSK, which is in the process of being renewed.	Secure	Allenburys Sport & Social Club
Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts Cricket Club	Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts Cricket Club	Leased from Bayford Parish Council (25 years).	Secure	Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts CC
Bengeo Cricket Club	Bengeo Sports Ground	Freehold ownership by the Sports Association.	Secure	The Sports Association
Bishop's Stortford Cricket Club	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Tenure is a mix of freehold and on a lease depending on which part of the site.	Secure	Bishop's Stortford Cricket CC
Braughing Cricket Club	Braughing Playing Fields	Long term lease with community centre.	Secure	Braughing CC
Buntingford Cricket Club	Norfolk Road Playing Fields (Buntingford MUGA)	Rented from Buntingford Town Council.	Secure	Buntingford CC
Datchworth Cricket Club	Datchworth Sports Club	Leased from Datchworth Parish Council and Wallace Farms.	Secure	Datchworth CC
Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford Cricket Club	Long term lease with Hertfordshire County Council.	Unsecure	Hertford CC
Hertingfordbury Cricket Club	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Ground is in trust under a lease agreement (>40 years), paid annually.	Secure	The Club maintains field and the Trust maintains the building.

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Club	Site	Tenure	Security of tenure	Management
Little Munden Cricket Club	Little Munden Cricket Club	Leased from a private landowner.	Secure	Little Munden CC
Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	Town Fields	Freehold ownership by sports trust, for cricket tennis and bowls all on site.	Secure	Sawbridgeworth CC
St Margaretsbury Cricket Club	St Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Peppercorn long-term lease.	Secure	A Trust manage and maintain the site.
Tewin Cricket Club	Tewin Recreation Ground	Rented from Tewin Parish Council.	Unknown	The Council
Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley Cricket Club	Leased from Thorley Parish Council.	Unknown	Thorley CC
Ware Cricket Club	Ware Cricket Club	Rented from private landowner.	Unsecure	Private landowner
Watton-At-Stone Cricket Club	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Leased from Watton-at-Stone Parish Council.	Unknown	Watton-At-Stone CC

The position of the four unresponsive clubs is unknown.

As noted in the table above, Hertford CC has a lease agreement with Hertfordshire County Council. The Club is frustrated that it is being asked to maintain the trees and surrounding grass of the site rather than only maintaining the playing provision.

### Pitch quality

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

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-79%), Poor (<49%).

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

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

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With regards to maintenance of provision, most clubs consulted with confirm they have maintenance responsibility for their pitches. With the remaining clubs either having other arrangements or unknown.

Of the community available grass wicket cricket squares in East Hertfordshire (38 squares), 14 are assessed as good quality (37%), 20 standard quality (53%) and four poor quality (10%). The four poor quality squares are located at Bramfield Playing Field, Datchworth Sports Club, Leventhorpe School and Allenburys Sport and Social Club.

Table 6.6: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares

Site ID	Site name	Club accessing site	No. of pitches	Pitch quality
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Aston CC	1	Standard
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo CC	1	Standard
16	Bishop's Stortford College	-	8	Good
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Bramfield CC	1	Poor
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing CC	1	Standard
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	1	Poor
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	1	Standard
40	Freman College	Reed CC	1	Standard
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford CC	1	Good
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford CC	1	Standard
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertingfordbury CC	1	Standard
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth CC	1	Poor
63	Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Little Berkhamsted Sahibs CC	1	Standard
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Little Munden CC	1	Standard
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford CC Hare Street & Hormeads CC	1	Standard
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	St Margaretsbury CC	2	Good
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin CC	1	Standard
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	2	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	1	Standard
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley CC	1	Good
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	-	1	Standard
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth CC	1	Standard
115	Ware CC	Ware CC	1	Standard
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys & County Hall CC	1	Poor
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Ardeley Walkern CC	1	Standard
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-At-Stone CC	1	Standard
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	1	Standard
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Bayford & Hertford CC	1	Standard
136	Stocking Pelham CC	Albury CC	1	Standard

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Leventhorpe School provides a poorly rated cricket square, which is currently let out to Sawbridgeworth CC. The Club states there are no covers on the square and in recent years has taken it upon themselves to improve the square. Despite this the outfield is full of rabbit holes and has goalposts up. Further to this the school cuts the outfield grass to an incorrect length for cricket.

Allenburys Sport & Social Club highlights that the quality of its pitch has become much poorer due to a change in groundskeeper. It records the square as poor quality while the outfield is standard.

Bramfield Playing Field is an open space beside the village hall and as such is always open to the public. Consequently, the outfield suffers damage due to dog walkers and local children playing on it. Additionally, the outfield is used as a football pitch.

Datchworth CC's first and main square is currently rated as poor quality with the square having a low bounce. The outfield also has a paved walking track through it and is undulating on one side.

Table 6.7: Pitch quality club consultations findings

Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation feedback
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	The Club suggests that the pitch has improved in recent years due to good groundskeeping. In spite of this the ground does not have covers.
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo CC	The Club expresses the fact that the space is open to public and tends to attract dog walkers and local residents who both may be not the most considerate to the space.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing CC	The Club does not have any covers and use sheets instead which it would like to replace.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	There are two squares at this site, one rated poor and one rated standard. The Club reports a low bounce, and that the outfield of its main square is relatively good although undulates a lot on one side as well as having a public walking track going through the edge of the outfield.
40	Freman College	Reed CC (North Herts Club)	Reed CC reports that whilst the outfield is a good quality it does have a lot of weeds; despite the fact they were last weed picked in June. As this is the Club's second ground it struggles to keep up with the costs of doing the weeds on a more consistent basis.
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford CC	The first square is of good quality while the second square is of standard quality. The second square currently has no covers, and the Club has recently debated when an optimal time would be to relay it. It also expresses interest in acquiring a new roller as its current one is over 50 years old.
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertingfordbury CC	The pitch at this site is standard, however, the Club describes the outfield having weeds and suffering due to the wrong tractor being used. The site is also open to public and suffers from it.
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth CC	Through consultation, Sawbridgeworth has voiced its frustrations with the pitch at Leventhorpe. Specifically, the lack of sight screens and covers at the site.

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Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation feedback
			The Club goes into detail about a poor outfield, full of rabbit holes and goal posts being left there. It also reports that the school cut the outfield to the wrong length.
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Little Munden CC	The Club has an approved small grant coming in 2024 and plan to relay two of the wickets on the square.
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford CC Hare Street and the Hormeads CC	Buntingford CC points out that it is carrying out more maintenance work on the square. However, it is important to note that the square is also used by Hare Street & Hormeads CC.
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	St Margaretsbury CC	St Margaretsbury CC explains issues with being a recreation ground meaning it is open for public use as well as Club use. Potentially having adverse consequences for the square and outfield.
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin CC	Tewin CC reports its pitch to be of standard quality with the main problem it faces is "local youths".
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	The first and second square are both of good quality while the third square is standard. The third square was installed in 2022 making it relatively new and accommodates junior play only. The Third square has football pitches marked in the outfield and the Club is currently working to improve the third square.
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley CC	Thorley CC confirm that it has improved its groundwork and thus improved its ground quality.
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth know that it's square is overused but would rather this and playing elsewhere. The Club bought a new roller and square mower just over a year ago although has no covers and uses a sheet. Despite this the site is on a slight hill and so water finds its way under the sheet.
115	Ware CC	Ware CC	The Club reports that the groundskeeper is working hard to improve the pitch and that the pitch has already become slightly better. It should be noted that there are no covers for this site.
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys & County Hall CC	The Club describes how its ground has declined in quality significantly over the last few years due to changing groundskeeper. It describes the square as poor but the outfield as standard.
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Ardeley Walkern CC	The cricket Club concur that the pitch is of a standard quality. It maintains the square whilst the sports Club cuts the outfield.
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-At-Stone CC	The Club reports that this year has seen more weeds, however, do not think quality has declined as such.
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	The Club describes no difference in pitch quality the last few years, however, did detail a poor outfield.
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Bayford & Hertford CC	The Club states that most aspects of its ground are good, including the square and outfield. However, it also highlights a lack of portable covers for the square.



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In relation to the remaining squares across the District, quality is either standard or good. Of the NTPs all provision at club sites is in an adequate and useable condition.

## Ancillary facilities

Ancillary provision refers to the accompanying building to a site that is accessed as changing facilities and a social space, if applicable. All sites were assessed during non-technical site assessments and further evidenced was gained via consultation. Quality ratings were determined by assessing matters such as the condition of the building, the quantity and quality of changing rooms and the social space offering.

Table 6.8: Quality ratings for community available ancillary facilities

Site ID	Site name	Club accessing site	Analysis area	Ancillary quality
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Buntingford	Poor
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo CC	Hertford, Ware	Standard
16	Bishop's Stortford College	-	Bishop's Stortford	Good
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Bramfield CC	Watton-at-Stone	Good
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing CC	Bishop's Stortford	Standard
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	Buntingford	Poor
40	Freman College	Reed CC	Buntingford	Standard
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford CC	Hertford, Ware	Good
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertingfordbury CC	Hertford, Ware	Standard
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth	Standard
63	Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Little Berkhamsted Sahibs CC	Watton-at-Stone	Poor
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Little Munden CC	Buntingford	Poor
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford CC Hare Street & Hormeads	Buntingford	Good
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	St Margaretsbury CC	Hertford, Ware	Standard
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin CC	Watton-at-Stone	Standard
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop's Stortford	Good
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley CC	Bishop's Stortford	Poor
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	-	Buntingford	Poor
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth	Good
115	Ware CC	Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	Standard
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys & County Hall CC	Hertford, Ware	Standard
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Ardeley Walkern CC	Buntingford	Standard
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-At-Stone CC	Watton-at-Stone	Good
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	Buntingford	Poor
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Bayford & Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	Standard
136	Stocking Pelham CC	Albury CC	Bishop's Stortford	Standard

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All clubs in East Hertfordshire have access to ancillary provision, of which, there is a varying level of quality. Most provision is either good or standard quality; however, this is not the case at all sites. For example, Little Munden CC has a poor quality small wooden building that does not have electricity and as such is not fully utilised. Thorley CC states that the overall condition of its clubhouse is poor as well as its changing rooms and social area and needs replacement. Aston CC's provision is rated poor due to only offering a small building where both teams share the same shower area. Datchworth CC has had planning permission approved for extending and refurbishing its shared clubhouse, however, the Club is still fundraising to enable this project.

Table 6.9: Ancillary provision quality club consultation findings

Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation feedback
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Aston is a small club which only play friendlies and has no need for anything more than basic ancillary facilities. These facilities are poor quality.
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo CC	Bengeo CC access standard quality ancillary provision in the form of a medium sized brick building which also services the football team that also use the ground. The building provides standard, toilets, changing facilities and a social room.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing CC	Braughing playing fields offers standard quality ancillary provision with a large brick building and ample parking on site. The building has a kitchen, changing rooms and showers. However, the Club highlights it would like to have a clubhouse with a bar.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	The Club accesses poor quality provision at its home site, Datchworth Sports Club. It contains five changing rooms and an official's room, with a communal shower room to service all. Consultation with the Club confirms that the building is very dated and needs refurbishing and it has had planning permission accepted to do this. The Club is currently still fundraising to enable this project to go ahead.
40	Freman College	Reed CC (North Herts Club)	Reed CC has access to the common room which includes kitchen facilities and a sitting area as well as changing rooms and showers.
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford CC	During site assessment, work was being carried out on the pavilion, including painting and recladding. The facilities are of good quality and include plenty of parking, bar facilities with an outdoor patio and four changing rooms. Two of the changing rooms were only added 10 years ago.
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertingfordbury CC	Hertingfordbury CC has standard facilities including a clubhouse with two changing rooms with very small showers, male and female toilets, a kitchen area, and a social room. The Club has no licence for a bar on the premises.

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Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation feedback
			It aspires to either build changing rooms at the back or develop the existing garage into a larger changing area and acquire a container for storage.
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Little Munden CC	During consultation with the Club, it was highlighted that the only ancillary access that is used is a small wooden structure with no electricity. This building is used for everything in terms of changing facilities as well as a social area.
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford CC Hare Street and the Hormeads CC	Located at Norfolk Road Playing Fields is a good quality large brick building. The Club concurs that the facilities are good and confirmed it had, changing rooms, toilets, showers all in good condition. The building also has a social area as well as separate changing facilities for women and girls and umpires.
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	St Margaretsbury CC	St Margaretsbury CC confirms that out of its three sets of changing rooms changing rooms two are in poor condition due to being very old and the other is standard. The ladies' toilets and main changing room showers have recently been refurbished; however, the Club expresses that this is just papering over the cracks. The changing rooms are shared between the football and cricket so will get extra usage. The facilities also include a bar and social area.
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin CC	Tewin CC accesses standard ancillary facilities. Including, toilets, changing rooms, a clubroom and separate female changing rooms. Despite this there are not separate showers per team, communal only. There are also no officials changing rooms available.
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop's Stortford CC accesses good quality ancillary provision at the Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust site which is well maintained. The site has two pavilions, one for each adult square, both of which have basic home and away changing rooms. Additionally, there is also a large brick building, encompassing a large bar, clubroom, outdoor patio, and squash courts.
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley CC	Thorley CC currently has poor ancillary provision. The Club highlights poor changing and toilet facilities as well as the general condition of the pavilion. There are separate changing rooms for each team although communal showers only. There are no changing facilities for umpires or women and girls. It reaffirms the fact that its clubhouse is in major need of replacement.

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Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation feedback
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth CC	The Club confirms it has two buildings, which includes two changing rooms, a club room, and showers. It aspires to replace the changing rooms with more inclusive spaces to include provision for umpires and women and girls. This plan would also include a new patio to allow for socialising.
115	Ware CC	Ware CC	Ware CC has standard provision accessible to it. It provides basic changing and showering facilities as well as a kitchen. However, does not have separate facilities for women and girls.
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys & County Hall CC	Allenburys Sports and Social Club provides standard ancillary provision. There is a large building on site which provides changing rooms and toilets but no club room or social area.
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Ardeley Walkern CC	There is a large sports and community centre on the site that offers standard ancillary provision for Ardeley Walkern CC. It offers, toilets, changing rooms and a clubroom/social area. The building also has kitchen facilities and has a large car park.
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-At-Stone CC	Standard ancillary facilities are provided via the community hall and contains changing rooms for both male and female players as well as officials. The Club states the above are all standard condition.
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Aspenden, Standon & Puckeridge CC	The Club confirms that it provides poor ancillary facilities. There are no separate facilities for officials or for women and girls.
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Bayford & Hertford CC	Although the Club describes the good condition of its facilities, it does not provide separate facilities for women and girls.

Currently only five clubs confirm they can accommodate separate men's and women's changing facilities within the peak period. Those clubs are, Tewin CC, Bengo CC, Buntingford CC, Allenburys & County Hall CC and Watton at Stone CC. Although Bishop's Stortford CC does not have separate facilities for women and girls'; it does have separate buildings for each square so separation can be arranged if needed.

Of all the clubs only five report vandalism in the last year, those clubs being, Thorley CC, Bengo CC, St Margaretsbury CC, Datchworth CC and Allenburys & County Hall CC. Across the five sites the most regular occurrence is attempted break ins and damage to buildings. Additionally, mobile nets and score huts were also damaged.

### Ball strike issues

During consultation only Sawbridgeworth CC and Braughing CC highlight ball striking issues at their respective sites. Braughing CC is seeking a grant to rectify this and erect a net should one become available. Sawbridgeworth CC also describes that neighbouring properties are at risk from stray cricket balls.

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### Training facilities

Most clubs in the District have their own fixed practice lanes at their respective sites ranging from two to four lanes. Details can be found in Table 6.10 below.

There are six clubs which state there is also demand for additional training facilities at their home sites, those being Allenburys & County Hall CC, Tewin CC, Thorley CC, Sawbridgeworth CC, St Margaretsbury CC and Ware CC.

Table 6.10: Current Club training facilities and future needs (consultation findings).

Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation findings
6	Aston CC	Aston CC	Aston CC reports having a net with a concrete base and a runner mat on it.
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Bengeo CC	There are two practice lanes at this site.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing CC	Braughing CC has two fixed practice lanes and despite being quite old they are still used.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth CC	There are three high quality practice lanes currently on site.
48	Hertford CC	Hertford CC	The Club has four practice lanes that were installed in 2015 that are playing okay but would still like to re level the surface. The nets were re done in 2024.
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertingfordbury CC	The Club had a two-lane training net installed circa 12-15 years ago and recognise the batting area needs replaced. The Club also bought a second-hand roll-on net last summer.
64	Little Munden CC	Little Munden CC	The Club is in the process of renovating its single lane training net as it has issues with badgers biting the nets. It also has a roll on net.
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford CC	Buntingford CC has two fixed practice lanes.
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	St Margaretsbury CC	The Club currently has two lanes and reports the need for an additional permanent practice net.
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin CC	Tewin CC states it requires permanent fixed lane practice nets.
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	The Club currently has a four-lane practice net
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Thorley CC	The Club expresses the need for a permanent practice net at its site. It only has two mobile roll on net currently.
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth CC currently has two lanes and a mobile net although highlights the need for extra pitches and is hoping to partner with Sawbridgeworth Town FC to obtain a site of its own.
115	Ware CC	Ware CC	Ware CC details needing a second net at its site and does not currently use any indoor facilities.
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys & County Hall CC	Allenburys & County Hall CC has a mobile net and two-lane indoor nets at its facility. The Club desires to have a bowling machine on site.

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Site ID	Site name	Club	Consultation findings
6	Aston CC	Aston CC	Aston CC reports having a net with a concrete base and a runner mat on it.
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club	There are two practice lanes at this facility.

## Indoor facilities

Whilst the PPOSS only considers outdoor playing pitches, a cricket training programme includes accessing indoor net facilities over winter months in preparation for the start of the season. As such indoor training facilities are discussed below.

In total, 11 clubs report accessing indoor provision for winter net pre-season training sessions, with sites such as Hertfordshire University, Nobel School, Chancellors school, Freman College, Herts and Essex Cricket Centre (HECC), Haileybury, Leventhorpe school and Hatfield Sports Village being accessed.

St Margaretsbury Cricket Club is the only club to state that it believes there to be a lack of indoor facilities with the other clubs seemingly happy with access options.

## 6.3: Demand

There are 23 clubs in East Hertfordshire which collectively provide 108 teams. When broken down this equates to 50 senior men's, four senior women's, 48 junior boys and six junior girls' team. Of the 22 clubs, eight include both senior and junior sections, whilst the remaining 15 clubs' range in size but have between one and three senior teams.

Table 6.11: Summary of teams by club

Club	Analysis area	No. of senior men's teams	No. of senior women's teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams	Total
Albury CC	Bishop's Stortford	1	-	-	-	1
Allenburys and County Hall CC	Hertford, Ware	2	-	-	-	2
Ardeley Walkern CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-	1
Aston CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-	1
Aspenden, Standon and Puckeridge CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-	1
Bayford and Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	2	-	-	-	2
Bengeo CC	Hertford, Ware	3	-	2	-	5
Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop's Stortford	4	2	15	4	25
Bramfield CC	Watton-at-Stone	1	-	-	-	1
Braughing CC	Watton-at-Stone	1	-	2	-	3
Buntingford CC	Buntingford	2	-	1	-	3
Datchworth CC	Buntingford	5	-	6	-	11
Hare Street and Hormeads CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-	1
Hertford CC	Hertford, Ware	4	1	9	-	14

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Club	Analysis area	No. of senior men's teams	No. of senior women's teams	No. of junior boys' teams	No. of junior girls' teams	Total
Hertingfordbury CC	Hertford, Ware	1	-	-	-	1
Little Berkhamsted CC	Watton-at-Stone	2	-	-	-	2
Little Munden CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-	1
Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth	3	-	7	1	11
St. Margaretsbury CC	Hertford, Ware	4	1	6	1	12
Tewin CC	Watton-at-Stone	3	-	-	-	3
Thorley CC	Bishop's Stortford	3	-	-	-	3
Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	2	-	-	-	2
Watton-at-Stone CC	Watton-at-Stone	2	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>108</b>

As seen in the table below, the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area accommodates the most cricket demand with 34 teams (31%) identified. The areas with the least amount of cricket demand are the Sawbridgeworth and Watton-at-Stone with 13 teams (12%) each.

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

Analysis area	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Bishop's Stortford	8	2	15	4	29
Buntingford	12	-	7	-	19
Hertford, Ware	14	2	17	1	34
Sawbridgeworth	5	-	7	1	13
Watton-at-Stone	11	-	2	-	13
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>108</b>

### Participation trends

Throughout the District there are only two clubs that report some sort of increase in demand over the previous three years, Bengo CC, and Sawbridgeworth CC. Bengo CC has gained a second men's team two years ago and is taking on a new U9s team from its Dynamos and All-Stars sessions. It also details that it had its first all-girls colts' team despite only playing one game.

Sawbridgeworth CC has set up a separate girls' section which will require additional facilities for practical and safeguarding reasons. Its senior section is expanding to four teams (from three) on a Saturday in 2025 and due to the number of juniors coming through, expects that to further increase to five the following season. The Club is also looking to establish a women's team in the future to play league cricket. It explains how it is already struggling to accommodate all its training sessions at the Town Fields site.

At the other end of the scale Little Munden CC details how it nearly folded a few years ago but is managing to keep going with some new younger committee members helping. The Club did not express any future demand ambitions but confirm it has existed for over 100 years and does not want to fold.

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Thorley CC, Tewin CC and Hertingfordbury CC have all experienced a decrease in membership with Thorley CC detailing a struggle particularly after COVID-19 to get junior players to return and gain new adult players. Hertingfordbury CC lost its seconds men's team two years ago due to low numbers and has not been able to renew the team since. Tewin CC experienced a decrease in its junior section although does not plan to try and increase membership.

### **Imported/exported demand**

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the study area, despite being registered in East Hertfordshire. Likewise, imported demand is demand from neighbouring authorities accessing pitches in East Hertfordshire to play competitive matches.

Regarding imported demand, Reed CC is accessing the pitch at Freman College every other Saturday from April through to September for its 3<sup>rd</sup> team. Reed CC is a North Hertfordshire team and has an agreement with the school where it can use the pitch and some ancillary facilities (when the school is not) in return for maintenance of the field.

Welwyn Garden City CC is also using the facilities at Aston CC on some Saturdays; however, the Club did not go into specifics about how often. It is based in Welwyn Hatfield.

There are several clubs from Uttlesford that currently travel into East Hertfordshire to access indoor cricket nets for training. Chrishall CC and Little Hallingbury CC access Leventhorpe School whilst Easton CC, Hatfield Broak Oak CC, Hockerill CC, Safron Walden CC and Standsted Hall & Elsenham CC access Herts & Essex Sports Centre and Farnham CC access Bishop's Stortford College.

It is important to note that while not in East Hertfordshire, Hockerill CC services some cricket demand from Bishop's Stortford. The Club lies on the border between Bishop's Stortford and Uttlesford and just falls into the latter's jurisdiction. The Club's site, which is in Uttlesford, has two cricket squares with 10 and seven wickets respectively and has seven teams playing currently, four men's and three boy's teams.

### **Additional activity**

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

### **All Stars cricket**

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

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



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## Dynamo's cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of 'Inspiring Generations' will be the Dynamos programme for eight–11-year-olds. It plans on building on the significant growth of the All-Stars programme and will develop the pathway to retain juniors which progress.

Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamo's seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified softball format as competitive progression with a view to eventual transition through to hardball cricket.

The programme will be strongly linked to The Hundred, a short format competition which also launched in 2022. The table below details the 2023 participation figures.

Table 6.13: Summary of All Stars and Dynamos participation

Club	All Stars participation figures (2023)	Dynamos participation figures (2023)
Datchworth CC	50 participants	-
Bengeo CC	65 participants	35 participants
Ware CC	25 participants	25 participants
St Margaretsbury CC	40 participants	-
Buntingford CC	25 participants	25 participants
Sawbridgeworth CC	80 participants	-
Bishop's Stortford CC	50 participants	-
Hertford CC	70 participants	50 participants
<b>Total</b>	<b>405 participants</b>	<b>135 participants</b>

There are eight clubs currently delivering All Stars and four delivering Dynamos sessions. The highest level of All Stars and Dynamos participation can be seen at Hertford CC with a total of 70 All Stars participants and 50 Dynamos participants.

Braughing CC reports having delivered All Stars last year but has not continued this year.

## Softball cricket

Softball is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase female participation in cricket.

The aim of softball cricket sections is enjoyment and participation, without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and limited rules. Sessions are generally played on the outfield of a square and follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

During consultation none of the responding clubs discussed running any women's softball sessions, as detailed above.

## Chance to Shine

Chance to Shine is a national charity that aims to give all children the opportunity to play, learn and develop through cricket. It believes that cricket can help to develop the personal, social and physical skills of the 500,000 children that are worked with every year.

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It works in schools to provide children with their first experience of cricket, whilst it has also developed Chance to Shine Street. This is a format of the sport played with a tapeball, targeting children and young adults in inner-city areas and with matches lasting just 20-minutes. The following seven schools have received a whole school chance to shine programme:

- ◀ Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary School.
- ◀ Hertford St Andrew CofE Primary School.
- ◀ Morgans Primary School & Nursery.
- ◀ Abel Smith School.
- ◀ Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School.
- ◀ St Mary's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Junior School.
- ◀ Wareside Church of England Primary School.

### **Other usage**

Little Hadham CC is currently only playing friendly games in East Hertfordshire. The Club used to have its own site but now uses Thorley CC as a main base.

Sawbridgeworth CC states that it hosts finals day and the occasional county game at its site. Whilst Datchworth CC host North Hertfordshire regional cup games on two Sunday afternoons and Herts over 60s spread over two or three Tuesday afternoons throughout the season.

St Margaretsbury CC rent a square to Comilla Warriors CC every Sunday. Whilst Bayford & Hertford Nondescripts CC host Hertfordshire Youth on Sundays, Hertfordshire over 60s midweek and Bayford veterans also midweek. The Club did not divulge specifics into how often each team used the facilities.

### **Disability cricket**

Cricket is an inclusive sport by its nature; a sport that many people play, follow, and have a passion for, for life. Across England and Wales, the ECB wish to support cricket clubs to open their gates and deliver cricket opportunities for those with disabilities. The Disability Cricket Champion Club Programme will support cricket clubs through guidance, resource, and equipment, enabling them to welcome individuals with additional needs and varying abilities to support them to play, follow, officiate, and volunteer. Creating a truly equitable club game and providing fantastic new opportunities for cricketers and for the Champion Clubs.

There are currently no disability champion clubs within East Hertfordshire, however, it should be noted that Bishop's Stortford CC used to be. Currently the nearest disability club champion is Hatfield Hyde which is in Welwyn Garden City.

### **Future demand**

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

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## Population growth

Based on population projections to 2043 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) can estimate the likely additional demand for grass cricket pitches that will arise from any growth.

Using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, team generation rates (TGRs) have been established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

For reference total current population in 2024 of 150,158 will increase to 162,871 by 2043. The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

Table 6.14: Summary of population growth

Age group	Current population per sport age group	Team generation rate	No. of new teams generated by the new population	No. of new teams generated by the new population	Peak time	Average games for age group	MES per season <sup>23</sup>
Men (18-55yrs)	34,386	1:648	3.92	3	Saturday	12	36
Women (18-55yrs)	36,081	1:9,020	0.30	0	Sunday	12	0
Boys (7-18yrs)	12,301	1:251	3.63	3	Midweek	6	18
Girls (7-18yrs)	11,431	1:3,810	0.22	0	Midweek	6	0

The total amount of future growth is anticipated to equate to three senior men's and three junior boys' teams. Once the figures are broken down into analysis areas this potential growth in demand decreases to one junior boys' team in the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area and one senior men's and one junior boys' team in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area.

The population projection only accounts for ONS based projections of growth, it does not account for the significant additional growth associated with planned new developments such as Gilston.

## Participation growth

Through consultation, five clubs in East Hertfordshire have plans to increase the number of teams they currently provide, by a total of eight teams. To caveat this one of the clubs did not detail how many new teams it wishes to acquire. Details of a breakdown of this potential growth is listed in the table below.

<sup>23</sup> 2 teams require 1 pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, 1 team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

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Table 6.15: Future demand expressed by clubs (in teams)

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls
Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop's Stortford	-	-	-	-
Braughing CC	Bishop's Stortford	-	-	1	-
Datchworth CC	Buntingford	1	-	-	-
Hertford CC	Hertford, Ware	-	-	-	2
Sawbridgeworth CC	Sawbridgeworth	1	-	3	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

St Margaretsbury CC reports aspiring to add another Sunday team but has not yet put anything in motion to see this happen.

## Future demand summary

In summary, future demand is calculated at this stage using ONS population forecasts and equates to one senior men's and two junior boys' teams. A scenario exploring how future demand through club ambitions will impact the supply and demand analysis will be included in the forthcoming Strategy.

## Peak time demand

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

## 6.4: Capacity analysis

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

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

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

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

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

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

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

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

However, this is not considered to be actual spare capacity for senior weekend cricket due to league requirements generally not allowing usage.

Regarding midweek capacity, a maximum capacity rating of 36 match equivalent has been set for one square. This is calculated on the understanding that a square is to be rested at least two days during the week in order to enable necessary maintenance and reduce overplay. Therefore, on a home and away basis of three nights a week, a square has been set the capacity of six sessions per week for midweek play, multiplied by six (the average number of matches a junior team plays). Any square showing potential spare capacity for midweek demand shall be allocated six match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity, due to the fewer number of fixtures within a junior calendar.

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Table 6.16: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (MES per season)	Actual play (MES per season)	Capacity rating (MES per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Buntingford	Aston Cricket Club Tewin Cricket Club	1	Standard	6	24	15	9	No	No	Yes
12	Bengeo Sports Ground	Hertford, Ware	Bengeo Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	31	1	No	No	No
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Watton-at-Stone	Bramfield Cricket Club	1	Poor	6	0	6	6	No	No	No
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop Stortford	Braughing Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	17	15	Yes	Yes	Yes
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Datchworth Cricket Club	2	Poor	14	0	46	46	No	No	No
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Datchworth Cricket Club	2	Standard	11	44	34	10	No	No	No
40	Freman College	Buntingford	Reed Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	7	25	Yes	Yes	Yes
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	Hertford Cricket Club	2	Good	15	75	62	13	No	Yes	Yes
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	Hertford Cricket Club	2	Standard	8	32	38	6	No	No	No
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Hertingfordbury Cricket Club	1	Standard	9	36	8	28	Yes	Yes	Yes
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	1	Poor	9	0	28	28	No	No	No
63	Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Little Berkhamsted Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	21	11	No	Yes	Yes
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Buntingford	Little Munden Cricket Club	1	Standard	4	16	9	7	No	No	Yes
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields (Buntingford MUGA)	Buntingford	Buntingford Cricket Club Hare Street & Hornead Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	21	11	No	No	No
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	St. Margaretsbury Cricket Club Comilla Warriors	2	Good	18	90	58	32	No	No	Yes
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	St. Margaretsbury Cricket Club	2	Good	8	40	34	6	No	No	Yes
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Tewin Cricket Club	1	Standard	10	40	17	23	No	Yes	Yes
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop Stortford	Bishop's Stortford CC	3	Standard	6	24	30	6	No	No	No
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop Stortford	Bishop's Stortford CC	3	Good	13	65	70	5	No	No	No
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop Stortford	Bishop's Stortford CC	3	Good	12	60	57	3	No	No	No
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Bishop Stortford	Thorley Cricket Club Little Hadham Cricket Club	1	Good	15	75	24	51	No	Yes	Yes
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	Formerly Thundridge CC	1	Standard	8	32	0	32	Yes	Yes	Yes
112	Town Fields	Sawbridgeworth	Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	1	Standard	14	56	54	2	No	No	No
115	Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	Ware Cricket Club	1	Standard	14	56	17	39	No	Yes	Yes
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Allenburys and County Hall Cricket Club	1	Poor	11	0	16	16	No	No	No
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	Ardeley Walkern Cricket Club	1	Standard	6	24	8	16	Yes	Yes	Yes
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club	1	Standard	8	32	15	17	Yes	Yes	Yes
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Buntingford	Aspenden, Standon and Puckeridge Cricket Club	1	Standard	4	16	6	10	No	No	Yes

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (MES per season)	Actual play (MES per season)	Capacity rating (MES per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	Bayford and Hertford Cricket Club	1	Standard	10	40	15	25	No	Yes	Yes
136	Stocking Pelham CC	Bishop Stortford	Albury Cricket Club	1	Standard	4	16	7	9	No	No	Yes

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Actual spare capacity

Although a large amount of spare capacity is identified, it is not as simple as to aggregate this into a general oversupply of cricket squares. Despite 22 squares displaying some form of spare capacity, only seven are available for further senior cricket activity on a Saturday, whilst 12 sites are available for further Sunday play, as shown below.

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

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Spare capacity (MES)	No. of teams that could be accommodated on Saturday	No. of teams that could be accommodated on Sunday
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop Stortford	15	1	1
40	Freman College	Buntingford	25	1	1
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	13	-	1
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	28	1	2
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	23	-	1
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Bishop Stortford	51	-	1
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	32	2	2
115	Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	39	-	2
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	16	1	1
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	17	1	1
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	25	-	2
		<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>7 teams</b>	<b>15 teams</b>

For both Saturday and Sunday demand, total spare capacity equates to 284 matches equivalent sessions per season. When applying this to Saturday peak time cricket, actual spare capacity totals 84 match equivalent sessions per season. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available). The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time.

Actual spare capacity is identified across four of the five analysis areas, with the Buntingford Analysis Area accommodating most actual spare capacity each totalling 48 match equivalent sessions per season.

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

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (MES per season)
Bishop's Stortford	12
Buntingford	48
Hertford, Ware	12
Sawbridgeworth	-
Watton-at-Stone	12
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>84</b>



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All remaining squares are used to capacity on Saturdays, either because two teams are already assigned to them as a home venue or because the level of spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate an additional team without overplay being created or exacerbated (at least 12 match equivalent sessions per season of spare capacity is required).

For Sunday cricket, actual spare capacity is provided on 11 squares, as can be seen by Table 6.17, totalling 180 match equivalent sessions per season, with all five analysis areas showing some level of actual spare capacity. This is highest in the Buntingford Analysis Area as shown below.

Table 6.19: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (MES per season)
Bishop's Stortford	24
Buntingford	60
Hertford, Ware	36
Sawbridgeworth	24
Watton-at-Stone	36
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>180</b>

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

For junior midweek cricket, 18 squares have actual spare capacity. Working on the basis that a square can accommodate six midweek teams, and where actual spare capacity is present, six match equivalent sessions per season is accounted for, using this methodology, it can be calculated that 368 match equivalent sessions if actual spare capacity is present which can accommodate the growth of a further 48 junior teams.

Table 6.20: Site by site breakdown of spare capacity (midweek demand)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Spare capacity (MES)	No. of teams that could be accommodated midweek
6	Aston Cricket Club (Herts)	Buntingford	9	1 team
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop Stortford	15	2 teams
40	Freman College	Buntingford	25	4 teams
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	13	2 teams
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	28	4 teams
63	Little Berkhamsted Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	11	1 team
64	Little Munden Cricket Club	Buntingford	7	1 team
97	St. Margaretsbury Sport & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	32	5 teams
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	23	3 teams
109	Thorley Cricket Club	Bishop Stortford	51	6 teams
111	Thundridge Sports Ground	Buntingford	32	5 teams
115	Ware CC	Sawbridgeworth	39	6 teams
127	Walkern Sports & Community Centre	Buntingford	16	2 teams

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Spare capacity (MES)	No. of teams that could be accommodated midweek
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	17	2 teams
129	Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge Cricket Club	Buntingford	10	1 team
130	Bayford & Hertford CC	Watton-at-Stone	25	2 teams
136	Stocking Pelham CC	Bishop Stortford	9	1 team
		<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>48 teams</b>

Table 6.21: Actual spare capacity for junior cricket (midweek) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (MES per season)
Bishop's Stortford	54
Buntingford	84
Hertford, Ware	66
Sawbridgeworth	36
Watton-at-Stone	48
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>288</b>

The reason for midweek capacity being higher than the capacity for weekend cricket is because fixtures can be split across numerous days. Actual spare capacity for midweek demand is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by juniors' teams (six) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per day for three days of play per square that is available).

The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not actually be able to be accommodated at peak time. Clubs with a significant junior membership base tend to struggle for capacity, such as Bishop's Stortford CC.

### Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain. While it is possible to sustain certain minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a resolution is recommended to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

There are seven squares across six sites identified as being overplayed in East Hertfordshire as detailed in the table overleaf.

Overplay totals 113 match equivalent sessions per season. The highest amount of overplay is in the Buntingford Analysis Area with 46 match equivalent sessions per season and is all located at Datchworth Sports Club.

The identified overplay at Bramfield Playing Field, Datchworth Sports Club, Leventhorpe School and Allenburys Sport & Social Club is due to the sites having poor quality squares, meaning any demand taking place is immediately contributing towards overplay. The remaining sites are overplayed due to the quantity of demand being accommodated on the squares, with clubs such as Bishop's Stortford CC and Hertford CC having high demand.

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Table 6.22: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Overplay (MES per season)
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Bramfield Cricket Club	Watton-at-Stone	6
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth Cricket Club	Buntingford	46
48	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	6
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth Cricket Club	Sawbridgeworth	28
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop Stortford	5
103	The Bishops Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford CC	Bishop Stortford	6
126	Allenburys Sport & Social Club	Allenburys and County Hall Cricket Club	Hertford, Ware	16
-	-	-	<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>

Table 6.23: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (MES per season)
Bishop's Stortford	11
Buntingford	46
Hertford, Ware	22
Sawbridgeworth	28
Watton-at-Stone	6
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>113</b>

Although it is possible to sustain certain, minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a reduction in play is recommended on overplayed squares to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

## 6.5: Supply and demand analysis

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

As previously presented, future demand is calculated using population forecasts and team generation rates (using Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator). On this basis, it has been forecast that East Hertfordshire will see growth of one senior men's and two junior boys' teams between now and 2043.

When applied in match equivalent sessions, this equates to 12 per season for Saturday demand and 12 per season for midweek demand. As detailed earlier, total future demand has been equated to the entirety of East Hertfordshire.

## EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday). For actual spare capacity, please note that this is converted from the number of match equivalent sessions identified above to the number of match equivalent sessions that could feasibly be utilised by a growth in demand (shown in Table 6.18). This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available).

Table 6.24: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Saturday) in match play equivalent sessions per season

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	12	11	1	-	1
Buntingford	48	46	2	-	2
Hertford, Ware	12	22	10	12	22
Sawbridgeworth	-	28	28	-	28
Watton-at-Stone	12	6	6	-	6
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41</b>

As seen in the table above, there is current overplay equating to 29 match equivalent sessions per season. When considering future demand of one additional senior team by 2043, total actual spare capacity is exacerbated to 41 match equivalent sessions per season.

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

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

Table 6.25: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Sunday) in match play equivalent sessions per season

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	24	11	13	-	13
Buntingford	60	46	14	-	14
Hertford, Ware	36	22	14	-	14
Sawbridgeworth	24	28	4	-	4
Watton-at-Stone	36	6	30	-	30
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>67</b>

There is overall current spare capacity amounting to 67 match equivalent sessions per season, with only the Sawbridgeworth Analysis Area showing a shortfall. No future demand is identified through population growth, meaning no change takes place to the future capacity analysis.

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## Junior cricket supply and demand analysis (midweek)

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

Table 6.26: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket in match play equivalent sessions per season

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Bishop's Stortford	54	11	43	6	37
Buntingford	84	46	38	-	38
Hertford, Ware	66	22	44	6	38
Sawbridgeworth	36	28	8	-	8
Watton-at-Stone	48	6	42	-	42
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>163</b>

There is currently overall spare capacity for midweek cricket amounting to 175 match equivalent sessions per season, with most of the actual spare capacity being present in the Buntingford Analysis Area. When accommodating for future demand, the growth of two junior teams by 2043 reduces actual spare capacity to 163 match equivalent sessions per season.

## 6.6: Conclusion

In summary, the broad position in East Hertfordshire is there is insufficient capacity for current demand across Saturday peak time cricket. This is a consequence of the 29 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay identified across seven sites. Overplay is caused by a combination of poor quality provision at sites such as Bramfield CC, and sheer quantity of demand at clubs such as Bishop's Stortford CC.

There is, however, enough provision to accommodate all current Sunday and midweek demand, notwithstanding the isolated shortfalls in the Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area on a Sunday.

There is currently no future demand identified for Sunday cricket and future demand does not affect the capacity at East Hertfordshire sites midweek either.

The Strategy will consider the role in which disused provision could potentially play in accommodating demand and alleviating current/future shortfalls.

A scenario exploring how future demand, through club aspirations of two senior men's, four junior boys' and two junior girls' team will affect the future capacity analysis will be included in the proceeding Strategy document.

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

- ◀ The broad position in East Hertfordshire is there is an insufficient stock of supply for peak time senior men's cricket, with all remaining formats able to be accommodated.
- ◀ Overplay of 29 match equivalent sessions per season is present on a Saturday. This is exacerbated to 41 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity per season when considering future demand from population growth.
- ◀ There is currently spare capacity for both midweek and Sunday cricket and there will continue to be should future midweek demand be realised.
- ◀ Seven squares across six sites are overplayed: Bramfield Playing Field, Datchworth Sports Club, Hertford Cricket Club, Leventhorpe School, The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust (two squares) and Allenburys Sport & Social Club. Total overplay equates to 113 match equivalent sessions per season.

### **Cricket – supply summary**

- ◀ In total, there are 46 grass wicket squares in East Hertfordshire all of which are open to community use other than the squares at Heath Mount School, Haileybury Sports Complex, Bishop's Stortford High School Playing Fields and St Edmunds College & Prep School.
- ◀ There are 46 grass wicket squares across 30 sites of which, 38 are available for community use across 26 sites.
- ◀ There are NTPs accompanying grass wicket squares at six sites, all available for community use other than Heath Mount School. Additionally, there are eight standalone NTP's identified, all of which are at school sites, unavailable for community use other than Presdales Recreation Ground which is available for community use and not a school site.
- ◀ Three clubs in East Hertfordshire have freehold ownership of its sites, 11 have lease agreements in place and five rent sites. The tenure position of the four unresponsive clubs is unknown.
- ◀ The audit of the 38-community available grass wicket cricket squares found 14 to be good quality, 20 to be standard quality and four to be poor quality, located at Bramfield Playing Field, Datchworth Sports Club, Leventhorpe School and Allenburys Sport & Social Club.
- ◀ Aston CC, Little Berkhamsted Sahibs CC, Little Munden CC, Thorley CC, Thundridge Sports Ground and Aspenden Standon & Puckeridge CC access poor quality ancillary facilities.
- ◀ Datchworth CC have recently had planning permission granted to extend and refurbish its Clubhouse.
- ◀ Six clubs identify need for additional training facilities at respective home sites.
- ◀ There are five disused squares (former grass pitch) within East Hertfordshire, those being County Hall, The Meads, Cotteder Playing Fields, Little Hadham CC and Albury Sports Ground.

### **Cricket – demand summary**

- ◀ There are 23 clubs in East Hertfordshire which collectively provide 50 senior men's, four senior women's, 48 junior boys' and six junior girls' team.
- ◀ Eight clubs within East Hertfordshire currently offer the All-Stars program, whilst four clubs deliver Dynamos sessions.
- ◀ None of the consulted Clubs discussed running any women's and girls' softball sessions.
- ◀ Through population growth, future demand equating to the growth of one senior men's and two junior boys' teams is identified by 2043.
- ◀ Club aspirations equate to the potential growth of two senior men's, four junior boys' and two junior girls' team.
- ◀ There is currently no exported demand into neighbouring authorities. However, Reed CC, a Club from North Hertfordshire is currently accessing the pitch at Freman College forming imported demand.

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART 7: TENNIS COURTS

### 7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis. It has recently restructured its strategic approach to target several national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites and removing key barriers to participation in park and club sites.

In East Hertfordshire, the LTA is working with East Hertfordshire District Council to improve access to provision in parks. More detailed information on the LTA's ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access are set out later in the report.

### Consultation

In total, there are 13 tennis clubs in East Hertfordshire. Of these, 12 responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 92%. The table below outlines club responses.

Table 7.1: Consultation responses

Club name	Club response?
Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Yes
Aston Lawn Tennis Club	Yes
Bishop's Stortford Lawn Tennis Club	Yes
Braughing Tennis Club	Yes
Datchworth Tennis Club	Yes
Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Yes
Legends Tennis Centre	Yes
Much Hadham Tennis Club	Yes
Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Yes
St Margaretsbury Tennis Club	No
Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Yes
Tewin Tennis Club	Yes
Watton at Stone Tennis Club	Yes

### 7.2: Supply

There are 135 tennis courts identified in East Hertfordshire across 31 sites. Of these, 116 courts are categorised as being available for community use, located at 28 sites and 19 courts are identified as unavailable for community use, located at three sites.

Note that courts are classified as being available for community use if they are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a combination of both). All remaining courts identified as being unavailable are located at school sites, Heath Mount School, Richard Hale School, or St Edmunds College & Prep School.

The Bishop's Stortford Analysis Area contains the highest number of courts available to the community (49). All courts located in Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Analysis Areas are available for community use. A full breakdown can be seen in Table 7.2.

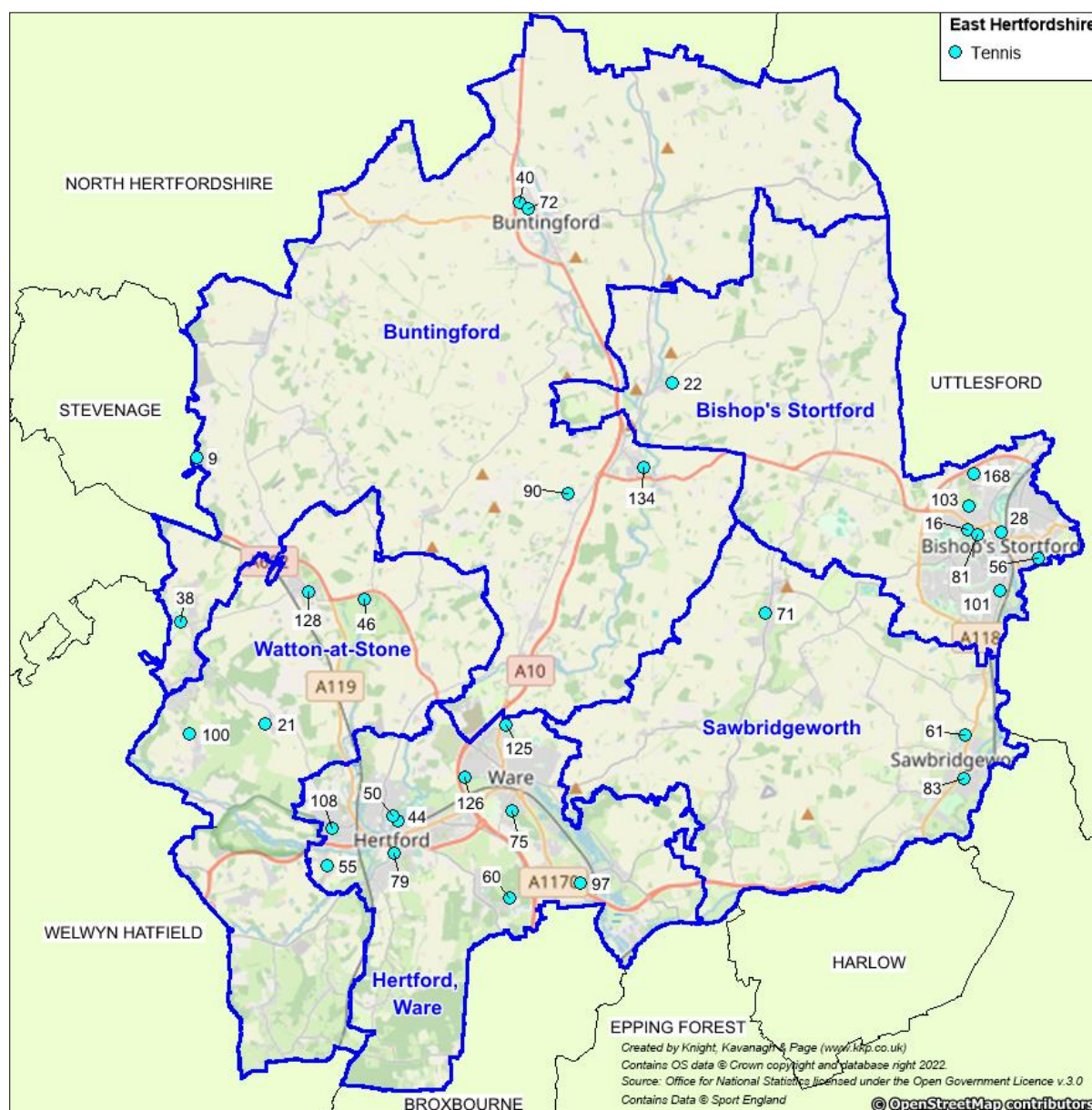
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Table 7.2: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use
Bishop's Stortford	49	0
Buntingford	13	6
Hertford, Ware	30	7
Sawbridgeworth	18	0
Watton-at-Stone	6	6
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>19</b>

Figure 7.1 below shows the location of the courts servicing East Hertfordshire, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 7.3.

Figure 7.1: Overview of tennis court locations





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## **Disused provision**

There is one site within the District accommodating three disused tennis courts, located at Marriot Leisure Centre (Hanbury Manor).

At the time of the site assessment at County Hall, the site was closed and was an active building site. Consequently, the courts have been discounted from total supply figures.

## **Potential future changes to supply**

Legends Tennis Centre has previously explored the idea of replacing one of its existing tennis courts with a padel court. It also states its plans to change current court surfaces to macadam to improve drainage.

Hartham Leisure Centre confirms that it plans to change its tennis court to a padel court in partnership with the operator of the site, Everyone Active. Additionally, the small sided football pitches are not well used, and one could also be converted to padel. However, no planning permission has been sought for this.

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Table 7.3: Summary of tennis courts in East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
9	Aston Tennis Courts	Buntingford	Sports Club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Good
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Education	Yes	8	Yes (4)	Macadam	Good
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Watton-at-Stone	Parish Council	Yes	1	No	Shale	Poor
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
28	Castle Park Tennis Courts	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Good
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	Sports Club	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Good
40	Freman College	Buntingford	Education	Yes	3	No	Shale	Poor
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	Other	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Poor
46	Heath Mount School	Watton-at-Stone	Education	No	6	Yes	Artificial turf	Standard
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial turf	Good
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Polymeric	Good
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Standard
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Education	Yes	6	Yes	Shale	Standard
60	Legends Tennis Centre	Hertford, Ware	Education	Yes	8	No	Polymeric	Good
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	Education	Yes	5	Yes	Polymeric	Good
71	Much Hadham Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford	Town Council	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial Turf	Good
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	Education	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
79	Richard Hale School	Hertford, Ware	Education	No	7	No	Shale	Poor
81	St Mary's Catholic School	Bishop's Stortford	Education	Yes	6	No	Shale	Poor
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial turf	Standard
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Sports Club	Yes	2	Yes	Clay	Good
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Sports Club	Yes	1	No	Clay	Good
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	Education	No	6	No	Macadam	Standard
97	St. Margaretsbury Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial turf	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Sports Club	Yes	2	No	Artificial turf	Good
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Education	Yes	4	Yes	Shale	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	2	Yes	Clay	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	5	Yes	Artificial turf	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	Sports Club	Yes	6	No	Grass	Standard
108	The Sele School	Hertford, Ware	Education	Yes	3	Yes	Shale	Standard
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Sports Club	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Sports Club	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Standard
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Parish Council	Yes	2	Yes	Macadam	Good
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	Parish Council	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Standard
134	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	Sports Club	Yes	3	Yes	Artificial turf	Good
168	Avanti Grange Secondary School	Bishop's Stortford	Education	Yes	4	Yes	Shale	Standard

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## Management

The table below highlights the management of tennis courts within East Hertfordshire.

Table 7.4: Tennis courts by management type (all courts)

Community use?	No. of club	No. of town/parish council courts	No. of education courts	No. of other
Available	56	8	51	1
Unavailable	-	-	19	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1</b>

Most community available tennis courts in East Hertfordshire are operated by sports clubs with 56 (41%) the rest are split between parish/town council sites with eight (6%), education sites, 51 (38%) or 'other' with one (1%). There are also 19 (14%) courts unavailable to use at education sites.

## Security of tenure

The table below outlines the current tenure position for the 13 tennis clubs across East Hertfordshire. This helps understand the long-term security of clubs and informs its ability to access various grants.

Table 7.5: Summary of club tenure arrangements

Site ID	Site name	Club	Management	Tenure
9	Aston Tennis Courts	Aston Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	25-year lease agreement from the Diocese of St Albans.
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing Tennis Club	Sports Club	The site is rented from the Village Trust.
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth Tennis Club	Sports Club	Site owned by Datchworth Parish Council.
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	Long term lease from East Hertfordshire District Council.
60	Legends Tennis Centre	Legends Tennis Centre	Sports Club	65-year lease with 55-years remaining. Leased from Haileybury College as an independent community benefit society.
71	Much Hadham Tennis Club	Much Hadham Tennis Club	Sports Club	The Club belongs to a larger sports association trust which owns the site.
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sports Club	Freehold owned.
97	St. Margaretsbury Tennis Club	St. Margaretsbury Tennis Club	Sports Club	Club pays a long-term peppercorn lease for the land to the Trust as do the cricket and football teams at the site.
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin Tennis Club	Sports Club	The site is owned by Tewin Parish Council and provided for the Club, with no cost to the club but they are required to provide money for upkeep of the pavilion close by.

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Site ID	Site name	Club	Management	Tenure
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	Grass courts are freehold but must be made public. The Sports Trust covers cricket, tennis and square. Tennis bought the clay and hard courts outright from the sports trust. Clubhouse is on a minimal lease with Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Secure tenure for whole site
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Sports Club	Lease agreement with a private landowner.
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton at Stone Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	The site is owned by the Watton-at-Stone Parish Council.
134	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Sports Club	Site owned by the Parish Council.

## Court type

The most common outdoor tennis court surface in East Hertfordshire is macadam, with 42 courts (31%) identified across 13 sites. Artificial turf surfaces are the next most prominent surface with 31 courts (23%) across seven sites, followed by, shale surfaces, 34 (25%), polymeric, 20 (15%), grass, six (4%) and clay with two courts (1%) across 11 sites.

The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is 10 years, depending on the levels of use and maintenance regimes. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment. This is also the case for artificial turf courts.

There are two air dome sites in East Hertfordshire located at Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust and Legends Tennis Centre. Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust cover its three polymeric courts in winter but take it down in summer. While Legends Tennis Centre has four polymeric courts under an air dome all year round. It is important to note that Legends Tennis Centre plan to convert its outdoor courts to macadam to improve drainage.

## Sports lighting

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

In East Hertfordshire, 79 of the 135 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 59% of the provision. Of the 116 courts available for community use, 73 are sports lit (63%). The courts with sports lighting are located at:

- ◀ Allenburys Sports & Social Club.
- ◀ Avanti Grange Secondary School.
- ◀ Bishop's Stortford College.
- ◀ Braughing Playing Fields.
- ◀ Buntingford MUGA.
- ◀ Heath Mount School.

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- ◀ Hertford Lawn Tennis Club.
- ◀ Herts & Essex Sports Centre.
- ◀ Leventhorpe School.
- ◀ Much Hadham Tennis Club.
- ◀ Presdales School.
- ◀ Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club.
- ◀ St. Margaretsbury Tennis Club.
- ◀ Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School.
- ◀ The Sele School.
- ◀ Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground.
- ◀ Wodson Park Sports Centre.

Access to sports lighting enables clubs to accommodate more members and can therefore be beneficial. In East Hertfordshire nine of the 14 clubs have access to sports lit courts at each of the respective sites.

Legends Tennis Centre has LED lighting on its four courts in the air dome but no lights for the outdoor courts. The Club states it would like to have sports lighting for its outdoor courts.

At Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club there is sports lighting on five out of its six courts. However, it reports that the lighting is old, and it is the Club's priority to replace with LED lights.

Bishop's Stortford LTC has 10 out of its 16 courts sport lit, with the grass courts being the only ones not floodlit. There is also sports lighting on its two padel courts.

Two of the clubs without sports lighting, Datchworth Tennis Club and Aston Lawn Tennis Club, have expressed a demand for courts with sports lighting.

Tewin Tennis Club does not have permanent sports lighting although it states that it can erect temporary lighting should it need to. This is typically used for Datchworth games or coaching sessions.

### Overmarking

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

Overmarking of tennis courts is identified at 17 sites, as seen below. When broken down there are 10 education sites showing overmarking. All overmarked courts are lined with netball markings, other than Legends Tennis Centre which is overmarked with pickleball on two of its courts and Bramfield Playing Field which is overmarked with basketball.

- ◀ Allenburys Sports & Social Club.
- ◀ Avanti Grange Secondary School.
- ◀ Bishop's Stortford College.
- ◀ Bramfield Playing Field.
- ◀ Buntingford MUGA.
- ◀ Freman College.
- ◀ Heath Mount School.
- ◀ Herts & Essex Sports Centre.
- ◀ Legends Tennis Centre.
- ◀ Leventhorpe School.

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- ◀ Presdales School.
- ◀ Richard Hale School.
- ◀ Saint Mary's Catholic School.
- ◀ St Edmunds College & Prep School.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School.
- ◀ The Sele School.
- ◀ Wodson Park Sports Centre.

## Quality

The quality of tennis courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments conducted in August 2024 and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness, and evidence of any inappropriate use (e.g., vandalism and/or littering).

The table below outlines the quality of all tennis courts in East Hertfordshire, regardless of availability.

Table 7.6: Summary of quality of tennis courts

Community use?	No. of good courts	No. of standard courts	No. poor of courts
Available	77	28	11
Unavailable	-	12	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>

In total, 77 courts are assessed as good quality (57% of all provision), 36 as standard quality (30%) and 18 as poor quality (13%).

As a further breakdown, quality at sites available for community use is presented on a site-by-site basis in the table overleaf.

Table 7.7: Summary of quality at sites available for community use

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of courts	Court type	Court quality
9	Aston Tennis Courts	Buntingford	2	Macadam	Good
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	8	Macadam	Good
21	Bramfield Playing Field	Watton-at-Stone	1	Shale	Poor
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Bishop's Stortford	2	Macadam	Good
28	Castle Park Tennis Courts	Bishop's Stortford	3	Macadam	Good
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Buntingford	2	Macadam	Good
40	Freman College	Buntingford	3	Shale	Poor
44	Hartham Leisure Centre	Hertford, Ware	1	Macadam	Poor
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	3	Artificial turf	Good
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	3	Polymeric	Good
55	Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground	Hertford, Ware	1	Macadam	Standard
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Bishop's Stortford	6	Shale	Standard
60	Legends Tennis Centre	Hertford, Ware	8	Polymeric	Good
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridgeworth	5	Polymeric	Good

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of courts	Court type	Court quality
71	Much Hadham Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	3	Macadam	Good
72	Norfolk Road Playing Fields	Buntingford	3	Artificial Turf	Good
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	4	Macadam	Good
81	St Mary's Catholic School	Bishop's Stortford	6	Shale	Poor
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	3	Artificial turf	Standard
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	3	Clay	Good
97	St. Margaretsbury Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	3	Artificial turf	Good
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	2	Artificial turf	Good
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	4	Shale	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	2	Clay	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	5	Artificial turf	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	3	Macadam	Good
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford	6	Grass	Standard
108	The Sele School	Hertford, Ware	3	Shale	Standard
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Sawbridgeworth	4	Macadam	Good
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	4	Macadam	Standard
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	2	Macadam	Good
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton-at-Stone	1	Macadam	Standard
134	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	3	Artificial turf	Good
168	Avanti Grange Secondary School	Bishop's Stortford	4	Shale	Standard

Of all community accessible courts, Bramfield Playing Field, St Mary's Catholic School, and Freman College provide poor quality provision. Issues recorded during site assessments include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, worn line markings, damaged nets, and loose gravel.

Hertingfordbury Recreation Ground, Herts & Essex Sports Centre, The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust (grass courts), The Sele School and Allenburys Sport & Social Club all provide standard tennis provision.

Despite being brand new, the courts at Avanti Grange Secondary School have been rated as standard. During consultation, the School highlights how unhappy it is with the new courts, stating how uneven the surface is, the lines being too thin and that the surface has already started to break up and crack.



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Bramfield Playing Field, St Marys Catholic School and Freman College are assessed as poor quality. They all have shale courts and at the time of site assessment, Freman College and Bramfield Playing Field had faded lines as well as poor grip underfoot. Both these courts were overmarked with other sports meaning they would have more use, explaining the poorer conditions.

The court at Hartham Leisure Centre has also been rated poor. Consultation with the Leisure Centre confirms that the court is not currently being used as it is not in good condition. Specifically, underfoot grip was not great as the surface is worn down with faded lines.

Most of the sites provide good quality tennis provision across their courts. Ten of the courts at Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust are good quality largely due to having recently had its courts resurfaced in the last five years. The artificial grass was replaced in 2019, the polymeric was replaced in 2020 and the clay was replaced in 2023. Hertford LTC similarly have had its courts resurfaced in recent years and are consequently of good quality.

Datchworth Tennis Club and Watton at Stone Tennis Club both express plans to resurface its courts in its development plans to ensure that the good quality courts are maintained.

Improving park court sites is a current national priority for the LTA, with a focus on suitable sites that cater for high levels of recreational demand or that have the potential to do so. This is especially the case if the provision is serviced (or could be serviced) by changing facilities and sports lighting, whereby a sustainable tennis programme could be supported. Improving the quality, offer and experience of tennis in parks is a strategic priority for the LTA to open up tennis. It reports that the biggest barriers to participate in tennis are:

- ◀ Not knowing where the closest courts are.
- ◀ Not knowing how to book or play on the courts.
- ◀ Poor quality playing surfaces.

Park tennis courts can be opened in a variety of ways to ensure greater use by residents. This can range from booking courts to offering coaching programmes. The LTA has three products for local authorities to use to remove the barriers and open tennis up to all the residents in their area; ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access (further explained in the demand section).

Renovation fund<sup>24</sup>

The LTA has secured a £22 million investment fund to be put into public tennis courts across Britain, together with an £8.5 million investment from the LTA. This will see thousands of public park tennis courts that are in poor or unplayable condition improved for the benefit of local communities.

The LTA's ambition is to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. As well as paying for the refurbishment of public park courts, the new investment will also pay for the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes and support to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

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<sup>24</sup>[Link to investment plans](#)

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## Ancillary provision

Ancillary provision refers to the accompanying building to a site that is accessed as changing facilities and a social space if applicable. All sites were assessed for its ancillary provision quality during non-technical site assessments and further evidenced by consultation responses. Quality ratings were determined by assessing matters such as the condition of the building, the quantity and quality of changing rooms and the social space offering.

Table 7.8: Ancillary quality breakdown

Club	Analysis area	Facility as a whole	Changing facilities	Car parking
Aston Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	Standard	Standard	Standard
Braughing Tennis Club	Bishop's Stortford	Good	Poor	Poor
Datchworth Tennis Club	Buntingford	Standard	Standard	Standard
Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	Good	Good	Good
Legends Tennis Centre	Hertford, Ware	Good	Standard	Standard
Much Hadham Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Good	Standard	Good
Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	Standard	Poor	Standard
St Margaretsbury Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	Good	Standard	Good
Tewin Tennis Club	Watton-at-Stone	Standard	N/A	Standard
Bishop's Stortford Lawn Tennis Club	Bishop's Stortford	Good	Good	Good
Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Standard	Standard	Standard
Watton at Stone Tennis Club	Watton-at-Stone	Standard	Standard	Poor
Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	Good	N/A	Good

Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club currently has a standard facility consisting of a small building containing changing rooms and toilets. The Club highlights that it plans to insulate the clubhouse better and generally upgrade it as the toilet and changing facilities are poor.

Bishop's Stortford Tennis Club share a clubhouse with the cricket and squash sections which is good a quality pavilion with a bar, changing rooms and a social room. However, there is no changing near the artificial turf courts. The Club also has its own clubhouse with a kitchen and social room for tennis members only. It says it would prefer to have its own clubhouse at the top of the site despite the fact it has good ancillary facilities servicing all sports in place currently.

Datchworth Tennis Club share a clubhouse with the other sports at Datchworth Sports Club and there are plans to rebuild the shared clubhouse.

Hertford LTC has recently had its small wooden clubhouse refurbished, with newly added bifold doors, a new kitchen, toilets, and flooring. It also has a small social area for members to use.

Watton-at-Stone Tennis Club describes how it would like to build a clubhouse on site, though has not yet secured funding.

Braughing Tennis Club describe its changing facilities as poor, largely due to separate teams having to share changing rooms and showering facilities.

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For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most of the other sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be used. Often, the facilities predominately service football/cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users. In some instances, quality is also poor.

Insight from the LTA indicates good quality ancillary facilities such as toilets, changing rooms and cafes encourage players to visit community available provision and stay for extended periods of time. Therefore, a potential way to increase usage of such provision would be to invest in suitable ancillary amenities nearby tennis courts.

## 7.3: Demand

### Competitive tennis

There are 13 tennis clubs in East Hertfordshire, with membership numbers only known for 12 of the clubs. Total known membership figures equate to 2,252, consisting of 1,432 senior and 820 junior members.

In terms of size, Bishop's Stortford LTC is the largest club, with 640 members, whilst Allenburys Sports & Social Club has the smallest membership figures with 15 members. This is summarised in the table below.

Table 7.9: Summary of tennis club demand

Club	Analysis area	Senior	Junior
Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	15	0
Aston Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	78	45
Bishops Stortford Lawn Tennis Club	Bishops Stortford	390	250
Braughing Tennis Club	Bishops Stortford	61	37
Datchworth Tennis Club	Buntingford	25	21
Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	210	90
Legends Tennis Centre	Hertford, Ware	100	150
Much Hadham Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	126	66
Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	120	50
St Margaretsbury Tennis Club	Hertford, Ware	-	-
Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Buntingford	88	67
Tewin Tennis Club	Watton-at-Stone	164	23
Watton at Stone Tennis Club	Watton-at-Stone	55	21
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,432</b>	<b>820</b>

No membership numbers could be gained for St Margaretsbury CC due to the Club not responding to consultation requests.

### Latent demand

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

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On this basis, there is a potential opportunity in East Hertfordshire for the District Council and other providers to understand if such barriers exist locally and if so, address such barriers, whilst also bettering understanding of court usage.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool<sup>25</sup> enables analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 2,848 people within East Hertfordshire resembling 1.1% of the District's population. As a comparison, the national average for people wanting to play tennis but are not currently doing so is 1.76%, putting East Hertfordshire directly in line with the national figures.

The highest latent demand is 'settling down males' which equates to 505 people wanting to play tennis that currently are not.

### Future demand

Four clubs report future growth aspirations, with total future demand amounting to 155 potential additional members (70 senior and 85 junior). All clubs hoping to increase in membership are outlined in future growth figures as seen in Table 7.10.

Table 7.10: Summary of future tennis club demand (in members)

Club	Analysis area	No. of senior members	No. of junior members
Datchworth Tennis Club	Buntingford	10	20
Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth	30	50
Braughing Tennis Club	Bishop's Stortford	10	15
Legends Tennis Centre	Hertford, Ware	20	-
-	<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>85</b>

The tennis section at Allenburys Sports & Social Club states it would like to increase membership but does not have specific numbers like the above clubs.

The Sport England Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) is an interactive tool which allows its user to help quantify the additional demand for key community sports facilities created by a new population. The SFC has been used to quantify how many new tennis courts would be needed to account for ONS based population projection rather than the growth associated with new housing developments in the district and therefore will not fully account for housing growth. The calculation results show that there is a need for an extra 1.65 tennis courts in East Hertfordshire at a cost of £192,333.

### Informal tennis

It is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in East Hertfordshire have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites. Most of the current use is assumed to take place throughout the summer months although it is also accepted that many courts are accessed unofficially for activities unrelated to tennis.

<sup>25</sup> [Sport England Segmentation Information](#)

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The LTA has developed a package of support for local authorities to grow the use of tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three initiatives are ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access, which are further detailed below. In East Hertfordshire, Standon & Puckeridge LTC use Big Tennis Weekend, Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club use Big Tennis Weekend and ClubSpark and Bishop's Stortford LTC, Aston Tennis Club, Datchworth Tennis Club and Watton at Stone Tennis Club are also on ClubSpark. Legends Tennis Centre are not currently using any LTA initiatives but plan to be on ClubSpark soon.

In relation to education providers, none report any regular demand from the community for tennis. It is believed by many that a lack of demand is a direct result of quality issues and/or a lack of sports lighting, as well as other courts being available for free. This results in the community being less likely to pay a hire charge for its provision.

ClubSpark – Improving the booking process

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

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

### RALLY

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

Rally provides a helpful customer journey, with a personal profile to review and manage bookings, and helpful reminders. Courts can be set to book for free of charge or at a fee agreed by the provider. The LTA confirm that it has improved its Rally and ClubSpark book a court features, with it now being accessible on the LTA website thus being easier for users to book a court and tennis class.

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### Gate Access

The LTA has developed two gate access systems that work in association with ClubSpark to secure courts and to allow access to booked customers only. Members of the public can book a court online (making payment if required) and receive a 4-digit access code via email to enter using a courtside keypad. The gate access system then allows entry for the time booked if a correct code is entered.

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

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

In East Hertfordshire, Braughing Tennis club, Much Hadham Tennis Club and Allenburys Sports & Social Club report currently having Gate Access technology.

### LTA Big Tennis Weekend

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs and venues can sign up to host open days, which are free of charge, and create a relaxed and welcoming environment for those new to tennis to participate. This in turn can potentially lead to the clubs attracting new members.

The LTA hosts three dedicated weekends a year (in May, July and September) that are the UK's biggest public tennis events. Furthermore, venues can run additional events outside these dates and will benefit from their events being promoted on the national LTA campaign website. All clubs running an open day are asked to promote a follow-on offer to all attendees, such as a reduced rate introductory membership or several free coaching sessions, to encourage people to continue playing after the event.

Currently both Sawbridgeworth TC and Standon & Puckeridge LTC state they run LTA big tennis weekends.

### LTA Youth

LTA Youth has superseded the former initiative of Mini Tennis as the new LTA flagship delivery programme. The initiative is tailored towards delivering a fresh, fun approach to coaching tennis for kids aged 4-18.

The programme is made up of an LTA Youth Start introductory course, followed by five stages that give young players the chance to practice and develop at an appropriate level. The five stages can be seen below:

- ◆ Blue Stage: Children improve balance, agility and co-ordination through fun games. This stage teaches the fundamental basics of tennis.
- ◆ Red Stage: Children practice overarm serves, volleys and learn how to serve. Play takes place using soft ball and on small courts.
- ◆ Orange Stage: Children are taught tactics, problem solving and guides to sportsmanship and leadership.
- ◆ Green Stage: Children play on a full-sized court. Sessions are spent fine tuning and developing techniques.
- ◆ Yellow Stage: Children play on a full-sized court using regular tennis balls. Players are encouraged to explore different play styles allowing them to choose their own approach.

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Mini tennis courts can be found at Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club (it has four) which has 143 senior and 48 junior members.

### **Padel tennis**

Padel is a form of tennis that is easy to play, fun and sociable. It is usually played in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities as it is not power dominant. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although players serve underhand and the walls are used as part of the game, with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

One of the fastest growing sports across continental Europe, it has gained increasing popularity over recent years. As of 2021, there are around 6,000 active padel tennis players across Great Britain, with 107 courts provided at 52 clubs. This is predicted to grow substantially in future years. LTA mapping identifies a need for 12 courts within East Hertfordshire, which is relative to the current population. With two courts already available this would mean the creation of 10 new courts which potentially could increase padel play across the District, provided the courts are well located and advertised.

There are currently two padel courts in East Hertfordshire located at Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust and used by Bishop's Stortford LTC. The Club reports that it has 120 members currently using the courts and that they will cap capacity at 150.

During consultation with Hartham Leisure Centre the conversion of a tennis court and small sided 3G football pitches to padel courts was highlighted. However, there are no current plans identified to progress this.

## **7.4: Supply and demand analysis**

### **Club tennis**

The LTA suggests that a non- sport lit hard court can accommodate 40 members whereas a hard court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members.

Using the above figures, the table below analyses whether courts currently in use by clubs are sufficient to meet current and future demand. However, it must be noted that this should only be used as a guide as capacity can vary from site to site depending on how the demand operates and the programmes of use in place. Some clubs can comfortably operate over capacity guidance, whilst others may have pressures without theoretically being over capacity.

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Table 7.11: Capacity analysis (club courts)

Site ID	Site	Club users	Current demand (members)	Future demand (members)	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Capacity (members)	Current capacity balance	Future capacity balance
9	Aston Tennis Courts	Aston Lawn Tennis Club	123	-	2	No	80	43	43
22	Braughing Playing Fields	Braughing Tennis Club	98	25	2	Yes	120	22	3
38	Datchworth Sports Club	Datchworth Tennis Club	46	30	2	No	80	34	4
50	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	Hertford Lawn Tennis Club	300	-	6	Yes	360	60	60
60	Legends Tennis Centre	Legends Tennis Centre	250	20	8	Yes (4)	560	310	290
71	Much Hadham Tennis Club	Much Hadham Tennis Club	192	-	3	Yes	180	12	12
83	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club	170	80	6	Yes (5)	340	170	90
100	Tewin Recreation Ground	Tewin Tennis Club	187	-	2	No	80	107	107
103	The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust	Bishop's Stortford Lawn Tennis Club	640	-	16	Yes (10)	840	200	200
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	15	-	4	Yes (3)	220	205	205
128	Watton At Stone Community Hall & Recreation Ground	Watton at Stone Tennis Club	76	-	3	Yes	180	104	104
134	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	Standon & Puckeridge Lawn Tennis Club	155	-	3	Yes	180	25	25

\*St Margaretsbury did not supply membership numbers, so a capacity analysis could not be conducted for the site.



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As identified in the above table, currently Aston Tennis Club, Much Hadham Tennis Club and Tewin Tennis Club have capacity issues with existing membership figures. Aston Tennis Club find itself over capacity by 43 members while Tewin Tennis Club is over capacity by 107 and Much Hadham Tennis Club is over by 12 members. The remaining clubs are all comfortably within the recommended LTA guidelines.

Allenburys Sports & Social Club, Tewin Tennis Club and Hertford LTC all state that intentions to grow club membership but were not willing to say by how much.

Braughing Tennis Club is currently operating within the guidelines and want to grow its membership by 25 members. Should the Club realise this potential, it would find itself operating over capacity by three members.

One caveat is that Legends Tennis Centre and Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust both have courts in an air dome which have a higher playing capacity (100) than outdoor courts as they can be used more often. This will also increase capacity at these sites.

Sawbridgeworth has six tennis courts although only five currently have sports lighting. The Club has plans to add sports lighting on the last court which would see its capacity increase by 20 members, in line with the LTA guidelines.

### **7.5: Conclusion**

Three clubs are currently operating over LTA capacity guidelines, Tewin Tennis Club, Much Hadham Tennis Club and Aston Tennis Club. Tewin Tennis Club states it has temporary lights it can put up if it has a Datchworth League match or for coaching which helps manage demand. Much Hadham Tennis Club has no interest in increasing its membership but does state it requires an additional floodlit court to help service demand. Aston LTC also states a desire to acquire sports lighting for both its courts. Should these clubs acquire sports lighting it would help alleviate capacity issues, allowing the clubs to operate during the evenings and increase court capacity from 40 to 60.

However, there are several sites that are comfortably operating within the LTA recommended guidelines and would continue to do so should they see future demand ambitions realised. Three clubs have space for over 200 new members should they be successful in recruiting. The clubs at these sites are, Legends Tennis Club, Bishop's Stortford LTC and Allenburys Sports & Social Club.

The quality of tennis courts across East Hertfordshire is generally good with only four sites being ranked as poor, equating to 17 courts. Three of these sites are education sites and unavailable for community use, however, Bramfield Playing Field is used by Braughing Tennis Club and as such should be a priority for investment.

Bishop's Stortford LTC is the only site in East Hertfordshire offering padel, with two courts and is currently close to capacity, with space for 30 more members. LTA PPS guidance for Padel provision suggests that East Hertfordshire has the need for 12 courts, meaning there is a need to develop additional Padel courts to meet this unmet demand.

Taking into consideration both club and non-club demand at the current cohort of community available tennis courts across the District it would be a fair assessment that East Hertfordshire is serviced by sufficient provision to accommodate both the current and future demand.

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### **Tennis – supply and demand summary**

- There are three tennis clubs within East Hertfordshire currently operating with potential capacity issues, those being Tewin Tennis Club, Much Hadham Tennis Club and Aston Tennis Club. Tewin Tennis Club are currently 107 members over the LTA recommended guidelines whilst Aston Tennis Club are 43 over and Much Hadham Tennis Club are 12 over.
- If future growth ambitions are achieved, Braughing Tennis Club will be three members over capacity.
- When pairing the findings from the supply and demand analysis for club courts with the large number of community park courts available, it can be considered that East Hertfordshire is serviced by sufficient provision to accommodate both the current and future demand. However, club-based capacity pressures are still present at some of the smaller yet heavily accessed sites such as Tewin Tennis Club, Much Hadham Tennis Club and Aston LTC.
- The LTA facility calculator estimates there is a need for 12 padel courts within East Hertfordshire. As there are currently two courts located at Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust there is the need to develop additional courts to address this shortfall.

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- There is a total of 135 tennis courts identified in East Hertfordshire across 31 sites, with 116 courts categorised as being available for community use at 28 sites.
- Most community available tennis courts in East Hertfordshire are operated by sports clubs with 56 (41%) the rest are split between parish/town council sites with eight (6%), education sites, 51 (38%) or 'other' with one (1%). There are also 19 (14%) courts unavailable to use at education sites.
- The most common outdoor tennis court surface in East Hertfordshire is macadam, with 42 courts (31%) identified across 13 sites. Artificial turf surfaces are the next most prominent surface with 31 courts (23%) across seven sites, followed by, shale surfaces, 34 (25%), polymeric, 20 (15%), grass, six (4%) and clay with two courts (1%) across 11 sites.
- In East Hertfordshire, 83 of the 135 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 61% of the provision.
- Of the 116 community available courts, 77 are assessed as good quality (66%), 28 as standard quality (24%) and 11 as poor quality (9%).
- There are two sites situated in East Hertfordshire that currently have air domed courts, Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust and Legends Tennis Centre. The Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust site also has two padel courts, built in 2024 and used by Bishop's Stortford LTC.
- Six clubs currently provide good quality ancillary provision, seven provide standard and none provide poor provision.
- Datchworth Tennis Club express plans to rebuild the shared clubhouse and resurface its courts in the next five years. Whilst Sawbridgeworth Tennis Club want to upgrade its Clubhouse and replace floodlights.
- There is a planning application in place for the development of eight padel courts at RDA Stadium, home of Bishop's Stortford FC.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- There are 13 tennis clubs in East Hertfordshire which collectively cater for 2,252 members, consisting of 1,432 senior and 820 junior members.
- Four clubs report future growth aspirations, with total future demand amounting to 155 potential additional members (70 senior and 85 junior).
- Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in East Hertfordshire have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites.

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## PART 8: NETBALL COURTS

### 8.1: Introduction

England Netball is the governing body for the sport across England. Levels of participation are quickly increasing, with over 100,000 affiliated members and at least 1 million women and girls playing during a typical week. Its aim is to provide its members and partners with the best possible service and experience in sport.

### Consultation

There are two leagues currently offering competitive netball demand within East Hertfordshire, the Bishop's Stortford District Netball League and the Hertford and District Netball League catering for 30 teams collectively. However, neither league has responded to consultation requests. Consultation has taken place with England Netball alongside desk-based research to inform this section of the report.

### 8.2: Supply

In total, there are 81 outdoor netball courts located across 32 sites in East Hertfordshire. Of these, 55 courts across 17 sites are open to community access, representing 68% of all outdoor courts. Tables 8.2 and 8.3 below, outline the total supply of provision within East Hertfordshire with these mapped in Figure 8.1.

The Bishop's Stortford analysis area provides the most community available courts in the region whilst Watton-at-stone provides the least with only one community accessible court.

Table 8.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use
Bishop's Stortford	28	9
Buntingford	5	8
Hertford, Ware	18	5
Sawbridgeworth	3	1
Watton-at-stone	1	3
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>26</b>

Table 8.2: Summary of supply

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	No. of courts	Floodlit ?	Court type
2	All Saints CE Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
8	Aston St Mary's VA School	Buntingford	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
10	Avanti Meadows Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	1	No	Tarmac
15	Birchwood High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	6	No	Tarmac

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	No. of courts	Floodlit ?	Court type
16	Bishop's Stortford College	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	9	Yes (4)	Tarmac (1) Macadam (8)
29	Christ Church C Of E (VA) Primary School and Nursery	Hertford, Ware	No	Education	2	No	Tarmac
36	Datchworth All Saints Primary School	Buntingford	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
39	Edwinstree C Of E Middle School	Buntingford	No	Education	3	No	Tarmac
40	Freman College	Buntingford	Yes	Education	3	No	Tarmac
46	Heath Mount School	Watton-at-Stone	No	Education	2	No	Tarmac
53	Hertfordshire And Essex High School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	3	No	Tarmac
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	6	Yes	Tarmac
57	High Wych Ce Primary School	Sawbridge worth	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
62	Leventhorpe School	Sawbridge worth	Yes	Education	3	Yes	Polymeric
73	Northgate Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	2	No	Tarmac
75	Presdales School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	4	Yes	Macadam
76	Ralph Sadleir School	Buntingford	Yes	Education	2	No	Tarmac
80	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	Hertford, Ware	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
89	Simon Balle School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	2	No	Tarmac
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	Buntingford	No	Education	3	Yes	Macadam
91	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	2	No	Tarmac
93	St Joseph's In The Park	Hertford, Ware	No	Education	2	No	Tarmac

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	No. of courts	Floodlit ?	Court type
95	St Marys Junior School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	2	No	Tarmac
99	Tewin Cowper Primary School	Watton-at-Stone	Yes	Education	1	No	Tarmac
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	3	Yes	Tarmac
105	The Chauncy School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	2	No	Macadam
108	The Sele School	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Education	3	No	Tarmac
120	Watton-At-Stone Primary School	Watton-at-Stone	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
124	Windhill 21 Primary School	Bishop's Stortford	No	Education	1	No	Tarmac
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Other	4	Yes	Macadam
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Yes	Sports Club	1	Yes	Macadam
168	Avanti Grange Secondary School	Bishop's Stortford	Yes	Education	3	Yes	Tarmac

### Disused provision

During this study no disused netball courts have been identified within East Hertfordshire.

### Future supply

A new primary school has been built in Bishop's Stortford and has community use agreements for sports provision. Avanti Brook Primary School's will have netball courts available for community use for the 25/26 season.

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Figure 8.1: Netball court locations



## Overmarking

Whilst it does help with usage levels and sustainability, an issue for netball nationally is that many of its courts are dual use tennis courts. This limits accessibility (especially during the summer when tennis nets are often permanently in place) and can impact on quality due to higher levels of wear and tear. However, in East Hertfordshire only 10 sites have courts that are overmarked with tennis markings and multi-use facilities. However, the courts provided at the following sites are overmarked:

- ◆ Allenburys Sports & Social Club.
- ◆ Avanti Grange Secondary School.
- ◆ Bishop's Stortford College.
- ◆ Freman College.
- ◆ Heath Mount School.
- ◆ Herts & Essex Sports Centre.
- ◆ Leventhorpe School.
- ◆ Presdales School.

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- ◀ St Edmunds College & Prep School.
- ◀ The Bishop's Stortford High School.
- ◀ The Sele School.
- ◀ Wodson Park Sports Centre.

## Surface type

Across East Hertfordshire, 56 netball courts (69%) have a tarmac surface, 22 courts (27%) have a macadam surface and three courts (4%) have a polymeric surface.

The estimated lifespan of a macadam court and a polymeric court is 10 years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

## Management

The table below highlights the management of netball courts within East Hertfordshire.

Table 8.3: Netball courts by management type (all courts)

Community use?	No. of club courts	No. of EHDC, town/parish council courts	No. of education courts	No. of 'other' courts
Available	1	-	50	4
Unavailable	-	-	26	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>4</b>

Most netball courts in the District are operated by education sites, with 76 (94%) although only 50 (62%) are available for community use. There are four courts (5%) operated privately and one court (1%) operated by a sports club all of which are available for community use.

## Security of tenure

Tenure is currently unclear as consultation requests are still pending a response. However, it is known that leagues based at education or local authority sites, generally do not operate with any security of tenure and block book fixtures on an annual basis.

## Quality

The quality of netball courts across East Hertfordshire has been assessed via a combination of site visits in August and September 2024 (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments are as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (70-80%), Poor (<70%).

Maintaining high court quality is an important aspect of netball and therefore the non-technical assessment (and consultation agreements) assesses several factors which evidence court quality. The criteria for the non-technical assessment consists of; court surface grip underfoot, damage to a court surface, line markings, evidence of moss/lichen, slope of courts, disability access, fencing and courts being of an appropriate size.

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As can be seen in the table below, most netball provision in East Hertfordshire is poor quality. However, of the 49 accessible courts, 23 are good quality (42%), 23 are standard quality (42%) and nine are poor quality (16%). The poor-quality courts provided are deemed so due to issues such as poor grip underfoot, damaged surfaces and a general need for surface replacements.

Table 8.4: Quality summary

Site ID	Site name	No. of courts	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Quality
2	All Saints CE Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
8	Aston St Mary's VA School	1	No	No	Poor
10	Avanti Meadows Primary School	1	Yes	No	Poor
15	Birchwood High School	6	Yes	No	Standard
16	Bishop's Stortford College	9	Yes	Yes (4)	Good
29	Christ Church C Of E (VA) Primary School and Nursery	2	No	No	Poor
36	Datchworth All Saints C Of Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
39	Edwinstree C Of E Middle School	3	No	No	Poor
40	Freman College	3	Yes	No	Poor
46	Heath Mount School	2	No	No	Standard
53	Hertfordshire And Essex High School	3	No	No	Poor
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	6	Yes	Yes	Standard
57	High Wych Ce Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
62	Leventhorpe School	3	Yes	Yes	Good
73	Northgate Primary School	2	No	No	Poor
75	Presdales School	4	Yes	Yes	Good
76	Ralph Sadleir School	2	Yes	No	Standard
80	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
89	Simon Balle School	2	Yes	No	Poor
90	St Edmunds College & Prep School	3	No	Yes	Standard
91	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	2	No	No	Poor
93	St Joseph's In The Park	2	No	No	Poor
95	St Marys Junior School	2	Yes	No	Poor
99	Tewin Cowper Primary School	1	Yes	No	Poor
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	3	Yes	Yes	Good
105	The Chauncy School	2	Yes	No	Standard
108	The Sele School	3	Yes	No	Standard
120	Watton-At-Stone Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
124	Windhill 21 Primary School	1	No	No	Poor
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	4	Yes	Yes	Good
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	1	Yes	Yes	Standard
168	Avanti Grange Secondary School	3	Yes	Yes	Standard

The courts at Wodson Park have recently been resurfaced offering better underfoot grip for its users. The courts are also serviced by sports lighting enabling use in the evening as well as the day.



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Many of the poorly rated sites are in schools, mostly primary, where the courts are mainly used as a playground meaning more wear and tear and faded lines. Usually, in these instances maintenance of the court is not a priority for a school and a maintenance scheme would not be as rigorous as at a club site.

Despite the courts being brand new, Avanti Grange Secondary School highlights that it has several issues with its courts. Consultation with the School confirms the surface is very uneven, line markings are too thin and the surface has started to crack and break up.

### 8.3: Demand

There are currently 30 netball clubs identified as competing within East Hertfordshire leagues, highlighted in tables 8.5 and 8.6. The teams compete across two outdoor netball leagues, the Bishop's Stortford District Netball League and the Hertford and District League.

#### Leagues

The Bishop's Stortford District Netball League runs on a Sunday morning from 09.30 until 12.30 and is based at the Herts and Essex Sports Centre. The centre offers six outdoor netball courts with ample parking and use of the indoor facilities for the league. The courts were built in 2019 and are currently rated as standard. The league has four separate divisions ranging from six to eight teams per league with 29 teams overall.

The Hertford and District League currently takes place Presdales School using all four outdoor courts. There are three leagues falling under this umbrella, a summer league on a Wednesday and two winter leagues taking place on a Wednesday and Saturday. The leagues have eight to 12 teams involved. The courts are of good quality and have recently had floodlights put in. The school also has one indoor netball court.

To clarify, details regarding indoor netball will be included in the Indoor Built Facility Report for East Hertfordshire.

#### Club demand

Tables 8.5 and 8.6 below outline the Bishop's Stortford District Netball League and Hertford and District Netball League Structure for each division.

Table 8.5: Bishop's Stortford District Netball League Structure

Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Swan 2 Black</li> <li>◀ Sparks 2</li> <li>◀ Saffron Walden 2 Lions</li> <li>◀ Swan 3 Pink</li> <li>◀ Richmond</li> <li>◀ Saffron Walden 1 Jaguars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Infinity Reds</li> <li>◀ Swan 4 Purple</li> <li>◀ Crosskeys 5</li> <li>◀ Sparks 3</li> <li>◀ Pinks 1</li> <li>◀ Bishop's Stortford 2</li> <li>◀ Swan 5 White</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Mystix</li> <li>◀ Bishop's Stortford 3</li> <li>◀ Royston 2</li> <li>◀ Swan 6 Spirit 1</li> <li>◀ Saffron Walden 3 Leopards</li> <li>◀ Crosskeys 6</li> <li>◀ Wodson Ladies 5</li> <li>◀ Corkers Allstars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Pinks 2</li> <li>◀ Crosskeys 7</li> <li>◀ Tegate</li> <li>◀ Wodson ladies 6</li> <li>◀ Crosskeys 8</li> <li>◀ Swan 8 spirit 2</li> <li>◀ Swan 7 Orange</li> <li>◀ Saffron Walden 4 Panthers</li> </ul>

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Table 8.6: Hertford and District Netball League Structure

Wednesday Winter League Division 1	Wednesday Winter League Division 2	Saturday Winter League
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Swan</li> <li>◀ Hertford Heath Rangers</li> <li>◀ Wodson Park Ladies</li> <li>◀ Bury</li> <li>◀ Ice</li> <li>◀ Crystal Phoenix</li> <li>◀ Hornets 1</li> <li>◀ Turnford</li> <li>◀ Bluebelles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Issi</li> <li>◀ Panthers</li> <li>◀ Hertford Heath Rangers 2</li> <li>◀ Oasis</li> <li>◀ Hornets 2</li> <li>◀ Wodson Park Ladies 5</li> <li>◀ Neons</li> <li>◀ Omega</li> <li>◀ Bengeo Tornadoes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Wodson Park Ladies 3</li> <li>◀ Ice</li> <li>◀ Bury</li> <li>◀ Pace</li> <li>◀ Oasis</li> <li>◀ Wodson Park Ladies 0</li> <li>◀ Hertford Heath Rangers</li> <li>◀ Hertford Hornets Topaz</li> <li>◀ Cheshunt</li> <li>◀ Crosskeys</li> <li>◀ Allenburys</li> <li>◀ Royston</li> </ul>

Several of the above clubs are not based in East Hertfordshire, however, access East Hertfordshire netball leagues. The bigger clubs typically field many teams across the divisions and can often have multiple teams in the same division. Across both leagues there are 30 clubs competing and fielding 60 teams.

## Play Netball

Play Netball is Britain's largest social netball league provider and arranges fixtures, league tables, umpires, netballs, and bibs so players can focus on playing. People can join as individuals to find a team, a group to join the same team or produce their own team of seven or 10 people.

In East Hertfordshire, Play Netball fixtures take place at Leventhorpe school on the outdoor courts on Wednesdays 7pm – 9pm forming part of the Harlow Wednesday league. The league currently has six teams competing meaning it only takes one of the four courts available at the venue and can have all six teams play on the same night. The league accommodates senior demand and will last 10 weeks (six teams play each other twice).

## Back to Netball and walking netball

Back to Netball sessions are running across England and provide women of all ages a welcoming re-introduction to the sport. Sessions cover the basics of the game including passing, footwork and shooting and finish with a friendly game. Since its creation in 2010, over 60,000 women have taken part.

Back to Netball sessions in East Hertfordshire are currently delivered at the Sele School in Hertford on Monday evenings from 7pm -8pm. The programme services adult demand and runs weekly priced from £2.

Walking netball has evolved from a growing demand of walking sports such as walking football. It is a slower version of the game and has been designed so that anyone can play regardless of age and fitness level and therefore offers opportunities for older adults to participate and enjoy. There are currently no walking netball sessions running in East Hertfordshire. Although there are sessions in North Hertfordshire located at North Herts Leisure Centre on Thursday afternoons from 1pm-2pm and at Royston Leisure Centre on Tuesday afternoons from 1pm-2pm.

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## Unmet/latent demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to courts. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already training but is unable to access a match court, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of court provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 437 people (0.29%) within East Hertfordshire. As a comparison, the national average shows 0.28% of the population would like to participate in netball but is not currently doing so, making East Hertfordshire just above the national average.

England Netball identify that there is a high demand for netball within Hertfordshire which is congruent with the District being above the national average. Outside of the Sport England segmentation tool, there is no other applicable way to quantify perceived latent demand by clubs or England Netball.

## Imported/exported demand

Imported demand is teams entering East Hertfordshire to access facilities for netball, whilst exported demand is clubs choosing to access provision outside the area. Locally, there are no known examples of imported demand for netball.

England Netball confirm that there is little exported demand from residents within East Hertfordshire accessing established leagues outside of the District but accepts it may still happen.

## Future demand

England Netball states that there is not much future demand for netball in the area. However, since consultations with leagues are yet to be successful, this cannot be completely confirmed.

## 8.4: Supply and demand analysis

Table 8.7: Summary of existing sports lit community use supply

Site ID	Site name	No. of courts	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Quality
16	Bishop's Stortford College	9	Yes	Yes (4)	Good
56	Herts & Essex Sports Centre	6	Yes	Yes	Standard
62	Leventhorpe School	3	Yes	Yes	Good
75	Presdales School	4	Yes	Yes	Good
101	The Bishop's Stortford High School	3	Yes	Yes	Good
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	4	Yes	Yes	Good
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	1	Yes	Yes	Standard
168	Avanti Grange Secondary School	3	Yes	Yes	Standard

As can be seen in Table 8.7 there are 33 sports lit, community available netball courts within East Hertfordshire accounting for 40% of the total supply stock. Of these, there are 23 good quality courts and 10 are standard quality. This is a good level of supply for the District and seems to service the demand well.

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## 8.5: Conclusion

England Netball identify a high demand for netball across Hertfordshire. East Hertfordshire currently has 33 sports lit, community available outdoor netball courts, 23 of which are rated good quality. It can therefore be determined that 40% of netball courts within East Hertfordshire are open to community use and sports lit.

The majority of netball courts are commonly found at schools and East Hertfordshire is no different with 94% of courts located at education sites. The remaining courts are located at Wodson Park Sports Centre and Allenburys Sports & Social Club and are both sports lit and available for community use.

### **Netball – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Given the demand for netball and that there are 33 sport lit community accessible courts it is determined that there is an adequate supply of netball provision in East Hertfordshire.

### **Netball – Supply summary:**

- ◀ In total, there are 81 outdoor netball courts located across 32 sites in East Hertfordshire. Of this total provision, 55 courts across 17 sites are community accessible.
- ◀ Of the 55 community accessible courts, 23 are good quality, 23 are standard and nine are poor quality.
- ◀ Good quality provision located at Leventhorpe school is accessed by the Play Netball League.

### **Netball – Demand summary:**

- ◀ Two leagues have been identified as offering competitive netball in East Hertfordshire, those being Bishop's Stortford District Netball League and the Hertford and District League.
- ◀ England Netball, and Sport England's Segmentation Tool outlines that there are somewhat low levels of unmet demand for East Hertfordshire with only 0.29% of the District identified as wanting to participate but not currently doing so.

# EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

## PART 9: ATHLETICS

### 9.1: Introduction

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities, and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing.

England Athletics (EA) is the not-for-profit membership and development body responsible for grassroots athletics and running in England. EA supports 1,750 affiliated clubs and organisations (covering track and field, road running, fell, hill, trail and cross-country clubs), 147,000 registered athletes, 18,700 licensed coaches and leaders, 3,800 officials and 6.2m regular running participants. EA's Athletics purpose is to inspire more athletes and runners of all abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential and to have a lifelong love for the sport. Their vision is for athletics and running to become an inclusive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish.

### Consultation

There are three affiliated athletics clubs within East Hertfordshire, Herts Phoenix AC, Hawcs AC and Ware Joggers. Both Herts Phoenix and Hawcs AC have been consulted with, resulting in a 67% response rate.

### 9.2: Supply

There is one formal athletics track provided in East Hertfordshire; the Stuart Storey athletics track located at Wodson Park Sports Centre. It is a community accessible eight lane 400-metre track. The track is provided with sports lighting to support activities on both the track and infield as well as all accompanying field event facilities including a throws cage (hammer, discus & club), javelin, high jump, long/triple jump, and shot-put area. Wodson Park replaced its hammer cage in late 2022, early 2023 which was reportedly much needed as it previously was not safe for use.

There is also a four lane 40 metre compact track at Hockerill Anglo-European College with associated long/triple jump runways/pit, High Jump fan and throws circle. This is located at a school and services curricular demand. The track is not floodlit and is not currently open for community use.

Both The Hawcs and Herts Phoenix AC train out of Wodson park sports centre. However, Herts Phoenix AC also train out of Gosling Sports Park, which is based in Welwyn Garden City, outside of East Hertfordshire.

Table 9.2: Summary of athletics tracks in East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Site	Surface	Analysis area	Length	Sports lighting?	Community use?
58	Hockerill Anglo-European College	Synthetic	Bishop's Stortford	40 metres	No	No
125	Wodson Park Sports Centre	Synthetic	Hertford, Ware	400 metres	Yes	Yes

Please see figure 9.1 for a map highlighting the location of the provision within East Hertfordshire.

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Figure 9.1: Location of athletics tracks in East Hertfordshire



## Management

The athletics provision located at Wodson Park Sports Centre is managed by the Wodson Park Trust which is, a registered charity.

## Quality

Key factors impacting upon the quality ratings include the condition and age of the track surface, the prominence of the line markings and any signs of wear and tear or unofficial use.

The non-technical assessment identified the Stuart Storey track at Wodson Park Sports Centre as standard quality, and it should be noted that the track at Wodson Park was built in 2003 and last resurfaced in 2005. Consultation confirms the track is maintained by Wodson Park and Hawcs AC deem the track to be of good quality. However, it was observed during the site audits that the track looked old and was patched up in places. The sports lighting is also not LED and requires reinspection, it is, track circuit (class 2=club standard), while infield throws is class 3 = recreation.

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The ANOG report completed by England Athletics in January 2025 details how the track would benefit from professional cleaning and minor repairs in the short term, before reaccreditation. Field events such as jumps and throws passed inspection. The venue is TrackMark accredited until the end of March 2026 and will likely need respraying in 2026.

The track at Hockerill Anglo-European College was identified during site audit standard. It is relatively new and has good line markings, although it was noted that the track had looked like it hadn't been maintained. The school confirms that the track is solely used for circular use.

### TrackMark

TrackMark is UK Athletics' quality assurance scheme for outdoor track and field athletics facilities. A venue that achieves TrackMark is recognised by UK Athletics as having well managed, compliant facilities that are accessible to participants of all abilities. From 2021, venues that actively choose not to pursue accreditation are not eligible to apply host UKA licenced competitions at any level.

The Stuart Storey track at Wodson Park Sport Centre is TrackMark accredited, having passed an assessment of the track, field, ancillary, operations, sports lighting, and competition grading criteria.

### Ancillary facilities

Wodson Park Sports Centre provides good level ancillary facilities for its users, including, changing rooms, toilets, and showers. The site also has a large car park and offers spectators covered seating beside the track. As well as athletics the site also has a 3G and grass football pitches, a gym, tennis and netball courts and badminton provision as part of two large multi-purpose sports halls.

### Future provision

England Athletics strategic position is that in most areas of the country there is a sufficient supply of traditional synthetic outdoor 400m tracks to meet club and competition needs and that there should focus on protecting and maintaining this provision. In addition to traditional facilities, EA is keen to support the development of a new generation of innovative athletics & running facilities (NewGen), as well as a country-wide network of indoor athletics facilities developed as part of future indoor multisport projects.

Priority for both NewGen and indoor developments will be given to those areas that sit outside EAs recommended drivetime catchment of existing facilities or where there is additional, demonstrable demand.

### NewGen facility concepts

Track and Field (run/jump/throw)

- ▶ **Play Track:** The simple animation of dated playground surfaces using colourful painted lines and markings to (KS1 & KS2) – encouraging participation in run/jump/throw activities by creating challenging and inspiring environments.
- ▶ **Compact Track:** A sports-lit, multiple lane, synthetic sprint straight with optional jumps and throws provision.
- ▶ **MiniTrack:** A sports-lit synthetic “mini” running oval, with sprint straight, multi-sport “infield” and optional jumps and throws provision.

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Recreational running/endurance running/multi-sport:

- ◀ **Active Track:** A free to access, macadam running / cycling circuit designed to be sympathetic to the local environment and support the recreational needs of local communities.
- ◀ Ideally lit by low level lighting / solar columns, ActiveTracks can be introduced to existing parks, open spaces and playing fields or integrated into the master planning of new housing developments.
- ◀ Sport England Case Study: ActiveTrack: [Sowerby Sports Village](#)

There is currently one compact track in East Hertfordshire located at Hockerill Anglo-European College.

### 9.3: Demand

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

#### Hawcs Athletics Club

Hawcs AC train out of Wodson Park Sports Centre, using the Stuart Storey athletics track. The Club caters for all athletic disciplines offering throwing and jumping as well as sprints, hurdles and middle distance. It competes in local and regional leagues. The Club currently has 86 junior members and one senior female member and confirms that its senior membership has decreased due to a falling out between coaches.

#### Herts Phoenix Athletics Club

The Club offers track and field from spring through summer and then switches its focus to road running through autumn and winter cross country and indoor competitions. It trains out of two sites, Wodson Park Sports Centre and Gosling Park, the latter being in neighbouring Welwyn Garden City. The main training takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays at both venues each week. The Club also runs various other sessions throughout the week for the different sections, disciplines, and age groups. Across all sections it has 270 members, 221 juniors, 21 female and 28 male. The Club is currently operating a waiting list with 25 people on it and wants to continue to increase its membership.

### Other running clubs

#### Ware Joggers

The Club is based out of the Stuart Storey Track at Wodson Park Sports Centre, and its current membership stands around 88 people. It runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7pm with the session lasting approximately two hours. There is also occasional Sunday morning runs if arrangements are made in good time.

#### Allenburys Running Club

The Club does a variety of sessions throughout the week including a long runs, interval and circuit training. It caters for runners of all ability and can adjust runs accordingly to suit the group.



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### Bishop's Stortford Running Club

Founded in 1983, the Club now has over 300 members and has includes triathlon, junior run and junior tri sub-sections. It runs every Wednesday evening starting at Bedlams Lane and can vary from three to 10 miles. There are also interval sessions on Tuesday and Saturday with ad hoc sessions being held on Friday evenings. The Club has access to ancillary facilities at Hockerill sports & social club including showers and changing rooms as well as a bar with food offerings. It also offers swimming and biking sessions to continue improving its triathlon section.

### Parkrun

Parkrun is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 1,300 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Parkrun events.

In East Hertfordshire, six Parkrun events are held each week. The events are known as Castle Park and Westmill Parkrun. Details of which are outlined in the table below.

Table 9.3: Summary of Parkrun and junior Parkrun in East Hertfordshire

Location	Post code	Event	Number of events	Average attendance
Castle Park Parkrun	CM23 2DL	Parkrun	298	37
Panshanger Parkrun	SG14 2NJ	Parkrun	472	31
Westmill Parkrun	SG12 0ES	Parkrun	318	24
Grange Paddocks Junior Parkrun	CM23 3HH	Junior Parkrun	243	7
Hertford Junior Parkrun	SG14 1QR	Junior Parkrun	285	9
Norfolk Road Playing Fields Parkrun	SG9 9TA	Junior Parkrun	37	5

Castle Park Parkrun is the most popular, averaging 37 runners per event.

### Run Together<sup>26</sup>

Run Together is an official England Athletics recreational running project which aims to get the whole nation running. Its aim is to provide fun, friendly, supportive, and inclusive running opportunities for everyone, regardless of ability and availability. It believes that running is more fun and easier to become part of a lifestyle when shared with others.

In East Hertfordshire, there are three clubs forming part of the initiative, Herts Girls Can, Active East Herts and Hertford Running Club.

A key focus for England Athletics is increasing demand for participation in initiatives such as Run Together, meaning this could be further targeted moving forward, especially given the number of other clubs that could be involved.

<sup>26</sup> <https://runtogether.co.uk/>

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### Other running events

The Bishop's Stortford Mitre 10k, 5k & 1K are a series of road racing events open to all, organised by Bishop's Stortford High school and beginning in Jobbers Wood. The races aim to fundraise for the Mitre Fund which in turn raises money for the school's sports facilities.

Many of the annual and bigger races within Hertfordshire take place in neighbouring districts and boroughs such as East Hertfordshire or North Hertfordshire.

### Couch to 5k

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise.

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the NHS particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

It is believed that an increase in people running through the Couch to 5k plan may increase interest and possibly have a knock-on effect of leading to increased demand at running groups and clubs as people may wish to continue develop their running further.

### Latent demand

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 3,211 people (1.26%) within East Hertfordshire. As a comparison, the national average shows 3.04% of the population would like to participate in athletics but is not currently doing so, making East Hertfordshire below the national average.

Hawcs AC is not currently operating a waiting list and has no latent demand for athletics. The Club details how it has recently lost membership, therefore, is not at capacity.

### Future demand

Hawcs AC has plans to grow its membership, however, the Club did not specify by how many members.

## 9.4: Supply and demand analysis

With one dedicated athletics facility in East Hertfordshire, that being the standard quality track at Wodson Park Sports Centre, supply is seemingly sufficient as to meet the identified demand in the District. Quality improvements such as respraying and cleaning the surface will be required in the future to ensure the quality of the Wodson Park track is sustained as long as possible.

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However, when taking into consideration that clubs want to expand membership, coupled with other running clubs like Ware Joggers training on the track. Supply might become an issue in the future.

It is important to note that some clubs, such as Herts Phoenix AC, are using provision outside of the District, mainly Gosling in Welwyn Garden City.

### 9.5: Conclusion

The track and field athletics facilities at Wodson Park Sports Centre requires protection and enhancement to ensure that the venue can continue to service the demand of its users and promote further usage. Furthermore, it is imperative that the track retains its UKA TrackMark accreditation thus should be monitored closely.

The compact track at Hockerill Anglo-European College should also be protected to allow for continued use of the track in addition to the track at Wodson Park to further offer athletics provision to the local community.

With one full-size athletics track and a compact track within East Hertfordshire, it can be determined that the area is adequately catered for to accommodate the existing levels of demand. However, it is likely that within the lifespan of this PPOSS the track at Wodson Park Sports Centre will decline in quality and will require maintenance, as it is already showing signs of wear and tear.

Away from the formal athletics track at Wodson Park, priority should also be placed on supporting activity being accommodated by the various running clubs in East Hertfordshire and the events that are being held. For instance, Bishop's Stortford Running Club accommodates significant demand within the District with over 300 members.

#### **Athletics – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ The supply of dedicated athletics facilities is sufficient to meet demand.
- ◀ A key priority is the resurfacing of the track at Wodson Park as it is now over 20 years old and reaching end of life.
- ◀ Priority should also be placed on supporting activity being accommodated by the various running clubs in East Hertfordshire and the events that are being held.

#### **Athletics – supply summary**

- ◀ There is one purpose-built athletics track in East Hertfordshire, provided at Wodson Park sports centre.
- ◀ Wodson Park provides a 400m track with eight lanes; it has a synthetic surface, is serviced by floodlighting and is open to community use.
- ◀ The track is of a standard quality but is reaching end of life having last been resurfaced in 2005.
- ◀ Wodson Park is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.
- ◀ There is also a four lane 40 metre compact track at Hockerill Anglo-European College with associated long/triple jump runways/pit, High Jump fan and throws circle. The facility has no sports lighting.

#### **Athletics – demand summary**

- ◀ Five clubs have been identified that have a current focus on athletics and/or running activity, with only Hawcs AC, Herts Phoenix AC and Ware Joggers having a requirement for a purpose-built facility.
- ◀ None of the clubs consulted with have a waiting list in place and all clubs are open to gaining new members.
- ◀ There are six Parkrun events held each week at as many venues across East Hertfordshire.

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## PART 10: LAWN BOWLS

### 10.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in East Hertfordshire is played almost entirely on flat greens, with a typical season running in the Summer from May until September. Bowls England is the NGB with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of the sport.

Crown green bowling is another version of bowls played in England, governed separately by The British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA). This format of the sport is played predominately in the North of England and there is a no presence of this locally.

### Consultation

There are 14 bowls clubs identified as currently using outdoor bowling greens in East Hertfordshire. Of these, 11 responded to consultation requests, equating to a response rate of 79%. Unresponsive clubs have been contacted via email and telephone on several occasions.

Table 10.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Club response?
Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Yes
Aston Bowls Club	No
Bengeo Bowls Club	Yes
Buntingford Bowls Club	Yes
Datchworth Bowls Club	Yes
Havers Park Bowls Club	Yes
Hertford Bowls Club	Yes
Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Yes
Much Hadham Bowls Club	Yes
Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	No
Sele Farm Bowls Club	Yes
Shire Park Bowls Club	Yes
Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Yes
Ware Lawn Bowling Club	No

Bishop's Stortford BC has been omitted from this report as its ground is in the Uttlesford District and as such is included in the Uttlesford PPOSS.

### 10.2: Supply

There are a total of 13 bowling greens identified in East Hertfordshire across 13 sites. Most provision is in the Hertford, Ware Analysis Area with five greens provided (38% of all provision) whilst both Bishop's Stortford and Watton-at-Stone analysis areas have the least provision with one green each (8% of provision, respectively totalling 16%).

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Table 10.2: Summary of the number of greens by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of greens
Bishop's Stortford	1
Buntingford	4
Hertford, Ware	5
Sawbridgeworth	2
Watton-at-Stone	1
<b>East Hertfordshire</b>	<b>13</b>

Figure 10.1 shows the location of all bowling greens currently in East Hertfordshire. For a key to the map, see Table 10.3.

Figure 10.1: Location of bowling greens in East Hertfordshire



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Table 10.3: Location of all bowling greens

Site ID	Site name	Club using site	Analysis area	No. of greens
5	Aston Bowls Club	Aston Bowls Club	Buntingford	1
11	Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	1
26	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford	1
37	Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	Buntingford	1
45	Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	Bishop's Stortford	1
47	Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	1
69	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Sawbridgeworth	1
82	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Sawbridgeworth	1
85	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	1
87	Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	Watton-at-Stone	1
117	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	Hertford, Ware	1
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	1
135	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Buntingford	1

### Disused provision

There are no disused bowling greens in East Hertfordshire.

### Security of tenure

The table below highlights the tenure position of clubs which have responded to consultation. Mainly, clubs have secure tenure, with most having either long term lease arrangements in place with East Hertfordshire District Council, town and parish councils, or private landowners.

Table 10.4: Summary of club tenure arrangements

Site ID	Site	Club	Tenure
11	Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	The green is owned by Bengeo Club which the bowls Club are a part of.
26	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford BC owns the site Freehold.
37	Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	The Club rent the site from the Parish Council and pay annually.
45	Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	The land is owned by Sawbridgeworth Masons and is in perpetuity until it is no longer used for bowling. Therefore, the Club do not pay anything towards the use of the land.
47	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Club is three to four years into a 20-year lease. Land is owned by East Hertfordshire District Council.

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Site ID	Site	Club	Tenure
69	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	The Club leases the land from Much Hadham Parish Council.
85	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	The Club leases the site from East Hertfordshire District Council and pays annually.
87	Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	The Club owns the site.
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	The green is associated with the Social Club who have an agreement with GSK, the private landowner. The Club has a long-term lease in place with the owner which is in the process of being renewed.
135	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	The Club owns the site.

The current tenure position is unknown for Aston Bowls Club, Sawbridgeworth Bowls Club, and Ware Lawn Bowling Club.

## Quality

The quality of bowling greens across East Hertfordshire have been assessed via a combination of site visits conducted in August 2024 (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good.
- ◀ Standard.
- ◀ Poor.

For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use.

Table 10.5: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site name	Club using site	No. of greens	Quality
5	Aston Bowls Club	Aston Bowls Club	1	Good
11	Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	1	Good
26	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	1	Good
37	Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	1	Standard
45	Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	1	Standard
47	Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	1	Standard
69	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	1	Standard
82	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	1	Good
85	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	1	Standard
87	Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	1	Standard
117	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	1	Standard

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Site ID	Site name	Club using site	No. of greens	Quality
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	1	Good
135	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	1	Good

Of the 13 bowling greens in East Hertfordshire six are deemed good quality (46%) and seven are deemed standard quality (54%), there are no poor quality greens identified. In the case of the standard quality provision, instances of highly worn patches and slight undulations were present.

Nine clubs state their greens are maintained by members as outlined below:

- ◀ Allenburys Sports & Social Club.
- ◀ Bengoe Bowling Club.
- ◀ Buntingford Bowls Club.
- ◀ Datchworth Bowling Club.
- ◀ Havers Park Bowling Club.
- ◀ Much Hadham Bowling Club.
- ◀ Sele Farm Bowling Club.
- ◀ Shire Park Bowls Club.
- ◀ Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Club.

Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club, Ware Lawn Bowling Club and Aston Bowling Club have not yet responded to consultation requests and therefore it cannot be stated how the respective greens are managed.

Hertford Castle Bowling Club and Hertford Bowling Club share a green and both pay into a joint account to pay a greenkeeper to maintain the green.

Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Club report its green quality is much better due to the members paying for professional advice.

Shire Park Bowls Club describes how its green quality is declining due to poor weather early in the year, encouraging fungus paired with machinery breaking down.

Buntingford Bowls Club and Havers Park Bowls Club both express that their respective greens have slightly improved since the last season, largely due to hard work and investment. Havers Park specifically describes the use of top dressing working particularly well in combination with rainfall.

### Ancillary provision

Most clubs which responded to consultation have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site or through an adjoining public house. The quality of these facilities ranges from purpose-built brick pavilions to basic wooden huts and shelters. Nine sites are accompanied by good quality facilities, a further five sites have standard quality ancillary provision. With zero sites having poor quality ancillary provision.

The table below outlines the quality of ancillary provision for each club site.



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Table 10.6: Summary of club ancillary provision

Site ID	Site name	Club using site	Analysis area	Quality
5	Aston Bowls Club	Aston Bowls Club	Buntingford	Good
11	Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Standard
26	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford	Good
37	Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	Buntingford	Good
45	Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	Bishop's Stortford	Good
47	Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Standard
69	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Sawbridgeworth	Good
82	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club	Sawbridgeworth	Good
85	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Standard
87	Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	Watton-at-Stone	Standard
117	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	Ware Lawn Bowling Club	Hertford, Ware	Good
126	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Allenburys Sports & Social Club	Hertford, Ware	Standard
135	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Buntingford	Good

Shire Park Bowls Club has a standard rating. The clubhouse is a medium size brick building which is in good condition. However, the Club reports that due to it being over 30 years old it requires some refurbishments. It currently carries out renovations whenever urgent or when funding becomes readily available.

Hertford Castle Bowls Club has access to a small wooden building, providing standard provision. The Club use it to host social events with changing rooms, a kitchen and a bar. It states that it would like a better clubhouse, and that high heating costs are a main concern presently.

Sele Farm Bowls Club confirms that its ancillary provision is of standard quality with toilets and a social space. However, as the Club is based in Hartham Common Park there is no dedicated club parking, meaning members must pay to park.

During consultation, Bengeo Bowls Club confirms it has a standard large brick building serving as a clubhouse with changing facilities and adequate parking for its members.

## Sports lighting

Greens with sports lighting offer opportunities to access provision for training and matches during evenings outside of the summer months. However, they are relatively uncommon across the Country, meaning the levels identified in East Hertfordshire are comparative to the national picture of sports lighting supply and should not be of any particular concern.

Only Sawbridgeworth Bowling Club is serviced by sports lighting in East Hertfordshire.

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## 10.3: Demand

There are 14 bowls clubs in East Hertfordshire. Of the 11 clubs that have responded to the consultation, it was only possible to obtain membership numbers for ten clubs. The total membership equates to 560 members. This comprises 283 senior male, 153 senior female and four juniors (mixed gender) members.

The average membership across clubs is 56 members. The highest membership figures are at Buntingford Bowls Clubs with 141 members, whilst the lowest known figures are found at Standon & Puckeridge Bowls Club, and which has 23 members. Standon & Puckeridge Bowls Club does state its plans to increase membership in the future.

### Pay and play

Pay and play refers to the opportunity for residents to turn up to existing facilities and access them on a casual, commitment free basis. Locally, only Bengoe Bowls Club and Datchworth Bowls Club offer pay and play to residents and Havers Park Bowls Club offer pay and play on the basis that you come with an existing member. All remaining clubs (which were responsive to consultation) do not offer pay and play with the general rationale being that there is nobody on site able to collect fees.

### Play Bowls and Bowls Bash

Play Bowls<sup>27</sup> is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play participants. Clubs are now able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then able to be secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website. The aim is for this to help the sport become much more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience. Bowls Bash<sup>28</sup> offers a shortened format normally played in teams of two, with players delivering 30 bowls each per match.

Both schemes are being delivered across the country as a means of growing participation for lawn bowls.

Table 10.7: Summary of club membership (where known)

Club name	Site name	Analysis area	Men	Women	Juniors	Total
Bengoe Bowls Club	Bengoe Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	22	21	0	43
Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford	79	58	4	141
Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	Buntingford	45	25	0	70
Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	Bishop's Stortford	23	9	0	32
Hertford Bowls Club*	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	-	-	-	75
Hertford Castle Bowls Club*	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	-	-	-	45
Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Sawbridgeworth	26	7	0	33

<sup>27</sup> <https://play-bowls.com/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.bowlsengland.com/bowlsbash/>

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Club name	Site name	Analysis area	Men	Women	Juniors	Total
Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	20	14	0	34
Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	Watton-at-Stone	52	12	0	64
Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Buntingford	16	7	0	23
<b>Total</b>			<b>283</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>560</b>

\*Specific membership breakdown was not known at time of consultation

## Latent demand

Latent demand refers to potential demand; clubs that would like to gain more members but currently do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack of provision, appropriate facilities, and qualified coaches. Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to provision. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already playing for a club but is unable to access a match green, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowling' but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 146 people or 0.06% within East Hertfordshire. As a comparison the national average shows that 0.15% of the population is looking to play lawn bowls but is not currently doing so.

Hertford BC confirms that it has recently turned away new members as it is at capacity because of having to share the site with Hertford Castle BC. If both clubs are playing at the same time, then the green is at capacity meaning that neither club can afford to accept new members.

## Future demand

For bowls it is more appropriate to consider population changes for persons aged 65 and over. Office of National Statistics population projections (2018-2043), identify that the number of persons aged 65 and over living in East Hertfordshire is likely to increase continuously from 26,528 in 2018 to 37,191 in 2043, representing an increase of 40.2%.

Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, it can be said that demand for bowling greens in East Hertfordshire is likely to increase with additional pressure placed on the existing stock of provision. In addition, consultation identifies six clubs which aspire to increase their existing memberships. Details of this are provided in the table below. Total future demand identified across six clubs equates to 54 new members.

Table 10.8: Future demand aspirations of clubs consulted with

Club name	Site name	Analysis area	Future demand aspiration (members)	Method to increase membership
Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Five members	Open days.
Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford	Did not specify	Coaching sessions for all ages in April & May each year.

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Club name	Site name	Analysis area	Future demand aspiration (members)	Method to increase membership
Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	Buntingford	Did not specify	The Club confirms that it would like to increase its membership but is finding it difficult.
Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	Bishop's Stortford	Seven members	Advertisement and through allowing scout and guide groups to play as well as open days.
Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Did not specify	The Club would like to grow its membership, however, feels its capped as it shares a site with another club.
Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Hertford Castle Bowls Club & Hertford Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	Did not specify	The Club holds recruiting days but does not attract many new players.
Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Sawbridgeworth	10 members	Through advertisement and open days.
Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Hertford, Ware	No future demand expressed	-
Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	Watton-at-Stone	22 members	Open days and a reduced membership fee for newcomers.
Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Buntingford	10 members	The Club hopes to increase membership through word of mouth and local promotion.

### 10.4: Supply and demand analysis

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity in the afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be underused for the rest of the week.

However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members which bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Bowls England has no specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-club. However, as a guide, it states that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable, whilst any green operating with a membership of over 60 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting its required level of demand.

Therefore, capacity ratings for bowling greens in East Hertfordshire are classified as follows:

<b>Within capacity range</b>	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
<b>Outside capacity range</b>	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

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Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green in East Hertfordshire receives, where the information is known. Where no membership information is known, further communication is required with clubs to fully understand their needs and any potential capacity or sustainability issues.

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Table 10.9: Bowling green supply and demand analysis (where membership figures are known)

Site ID	Site name	Club name	No. of greens	Analysis area	Total membership	Future Demand	Current capacity (members)	Future capacity (members)
11	Bengeo Bowls Club	Bengeo Bowls Club	1	Hertford, Ware	43	5	17	12
26	Buntingford Bowls Club	Buntingford Bowls Club	1	Buntingford	141	-	81	81
37	Datchworth Bowls Club	Datchworth Bowls Club	1	Buntingford	70	-	10	10
45	Havers Park Bowls Club	Havers Park Bowls Club	1	Bishops Stortford	32	7	28	21
47	Hertford Castle Bowls Club	Hertford Bowls Club Hertford Castle Bowls Club	1	Hertford, Ware	129	-	69	69
69	Much Hadham Bowls Club	Much Hadham Bowls Club	1	Sawbridgeworth	33	10	27	17
85	Sele Farm Bowls Club	Sele Farm Bowls Club	1	Hertford, Ware	34	-	26	26
87	Shire Park Bowls Club	Shire Park Bowls Club	1	Watton-at-Stone	64	22	4	26
135	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	Standon & Puckeridge Bowling Green	1	Buntingford	23	10	37	27

\*Two clubs share this site, so the total membership number is for both clubs combined

The table above shows that five clubs are operating within a “sustainable” capacity range. While Buntingford BC, Datchworth BC, Hertford Castle BC and Hertford BC (both share a green) and Shire Park BC is operating above Bowls England guidelines. It is important to note that during consultation Hertford Bowls Club and Hertford Castle Bowls Club both express that capacity is capped as both clubs share the site. When factoring in future demand, Datchworth BC, and Shire Park BC are forecast to go further above its capacity threshold.

Standon & Puckeridge BC have the most capacity currently with space for 37 more potential members. With this however, the Club is dangerously close to having unsustainable membership levels and would benefit from increasing membership.

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### 10.5: Conclusion

Despite Hertford Castle Bowls Club and Hertford Bowls Club expressing capacity issues due to sharing a green, there is spare capacity across the District to accommodate more bowls use. Furthermore, with most of the clubs having good quality greens, existing demand is being fully accommodated. Therefore, supply is deemed sufficient to meet the current level of demand.

A caveat to this finding is that the current supply of bowling greens across East Hertfordshire should be protected and monitored to ensure that they retain sufficient capacity in the future should there be an increase in demand in line with population projections for the typical bowling demographic.

For clubs which are operating over Bowls England sustainability guidelines, none note a need for increased access to provision.

All sites in East Hertfordshire, are rated standard or good regarding ancillary and bowling provision so there is limited scope for improvement work. However, many sites could have improved maintenance which may help to increase the standard rating to a good.

#### **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- There is a sufficient supply of bowling greens in East Hertfordshire to accommodate current demand; however, some shortfalls may appear if future demand from club ambitions are to be realised. The current level of provision requires protection.

#### **Bowls – supply summary**

- There are 13 bowling greens in East Hertfordshire provided across 13 sites.
- All clubs that have responded to consultation attempts are deemed to have security of tenure.
- Sawbridgeworth CC is the only club in East Hertfordshire that is serviced by sports lighting.
- Of the 13 bowling greens in active use, six are good quality, seven are standard quality and none are of a poor quality.
- Ancillary provision ratings across East Hertfordshire, confirms eight clubs' access good quality clubhouses, five access standard quality and none are poor quality.

#### **Bowls – demand summary**

- There are 14 clubs using bowling greens in East Hertfordshire. Where membership is known, it equates to 560 members.
- The average membership across all of the identified clubs is 56 members.
- Due to a predicted increase in persons aged 65 and over (to 2043), demand is likely to increase for greens over the coming years.
- Five clubs report future demand to increase membership by a combined total of 62 members, with methods of increasing numbers such as recruitment via coaching, reduced first year fees, localised advertisement, and open days in line with Bowls England.
- Two clubs have suggested that there is latent or unmet demand. Hertford BC and Hertford Castle BC share a site and as such have previously had to turn would be members away. Should the clubs both need to use the green at peak times it would be at capacity.

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### PART 11: RUGBY LEAGUE

#### 11.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in England. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League and the championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game in the UK.

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

#### Consultation

Although there is no demand for rugby league within East Hertfordshire, consultation was undertaken with North Herts Crusaders, a team in the neighbouring Authority of North Hertfordshire to help inform this section of the report.

#### 11.2: Supply

There are currently no rugby league pitches located within East Hertfordshire.

#### 11.3: Demand

No demand has been identified for community rugby league in East Hertfordshire itself. In effect, any residual demand for the sport is unlikely to be sufficient for a club to be created, with individuals instead likely to travel to play at North Herts Crusaders which is based at Hitchin Rugby Club in North Hertfordshire or St Albans Centurions RLFC based in neighbouring St Albans.

North Herts Crusaders fields both senior and junior teams and currently has two senior men's, one senior women's and three junior boy's teams. The Club is based and plays in North Hertfordshire and reports that many of its players travel over five miles to access the sport.

With two established clubs in nearby local authorities, it can be determined that any residual demand is exported to play at either North Herts Crusaders or St Albans Centurions rugby league clubs.

#### 11.4: Supply and demand analysis

As no formal demand is identified within East Hertfordshire, there is no need to suggest a rugby league pitch is required. However, there is clearly exported demand to neighbouring authorities so this should be observed closely as to ascertain whether the need for a pitch could become a possibility in the future.

#### 11.5: Conclusion

With no demand for rugby league currently identified in East Hertfordshire, it can be concluded that there is no requirement for rugby league pitches to be provided. However, should any demand exist, if not already, should be signposted to North Herts Crusaders or St Albans Centurions in neighbouring authorities.



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

- ◀ Demand for rugby league is met outside of East Hertfordshire, with opportunities in North Hertfordshire and St Albans.

## **Rugby league – supply summary**

- ◀ There are no rugby league pitches in East Hertfordshire.

## **Rugby league – demand summary**

- ◀ No demand has been identified for rugby league in East Hertfordshire.
- ◀ Individuals from East Hertfordshire likely travel to form part of North Herts Crusaders who are based at Hitchin rugby club in North Hertfordshire or St Albans Centurions based in neighbouring city of St Albans.
- ◀ Any residual need is unlikely to be sufficient for a club to be created, with individuals instead likely to travel to form part of the clubs outside of the District.

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### PART 12: GOLF

#### 12.1: Introduction

Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in England, with around 730,000 members belonging to one of 1,800 affiliated clubs and a further two million people playing independently outside of club membership. There are an estimated 3,000 golf courses across the Country, with approximately 90 designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because apart from the intensively managed trees and greens they have other habitats with high wildlife value. Many other courses also exist within designated Heritage Coast sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or listed Historic Parklands.

Nationally, the sport is governed by England Golf. Its role includes providing competitions for players of all ages and abilities, identifying and developing the most talented golfers, maintaining a uniform system of handicapping, administering and applying the rules, and introducing new golfers via its initiatives such as 'Get into Golf'.

#### Consultation

The section was informed via consultation with England Golf, which has provided information relating to all facilities and clubs within East Hertfordshire.

#### 12.2: Supply

There are three different types of golf facilities recognised by Sport England and governed by England Golf, as defined in the table below. Facilities such as pitch and putt courses and miniature/crazy golf courses are not included as these are not considered to be traditional formats of the game and are not comparable offerings.

Table 12.1: Definitions of golf facilities

Facility type	Description
Standard	A standard par course, with a minimum of 9 holes but normally associated with 18-hole courses; many 9-hole courses have different tee boxes which allow the provision to be played as an 18-hole course. Some courses provide 27 holes, with any two loops of 9-holes played to make up an 18-hole round.
Par 3	Shorter length of holes than a standard course, with no hole longer than Par 3. Most likely to be a 9-hole course although 18-hole offerings do exist. Does not include pitch and putt courses, which are even shorter offerings and are not considered to be a traditional version of the sport.
Driving Range	Includes covered and uncovered driving range bays but not practice areas within golf courses; ranges are based on the hiring of balls, with users not required to retrieve, whereas practice areas are generally for members to use with their own balls (although a growing number have dispensers). Does not include 'entertainment' ranges or virtual offerings, although some driving ranges have expanded to also provide these features.

Within East Hertfordshire, there are nine golf venues that provide facilities conforming with the above definitions, as identified in Table 11.1 and Table 11.2 below.

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Table 12.2: Golf facilities within East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Sitename	Postcode	Analysis area
171	Manor Of Groves Golf Club	CM21 0JY	Sawbridgeworth
172	Brickendon Grange Golf Club	SG13 8PD	Hertford, Ware
173	Bishop's Stortford Golf Club	CM23 5HP	Bishop's Stortford
174	East Herts Golf Club	SG9 9NB	Buntingford
175	Whitehill Golf Club	SG12 0JS	Hertford, Ware
176	Ash Valley Golf Club	SG10 6HD	Sawbridgeworth
177	Great Hadham Golf & Country Club	SG10 6JE	Sawbridgeworth
178	Hanbury Manor Golf Club	SG12 0SD	Hertford, Ware
179	Chadwell Springs Golf Centre	SG12 9LE	Hertford, Ware

Within East Hertfordshire there are eight affiliated clubs operating from as many affiliated facilities, listed in Table 12.3. Each facility offers a standard 18-hole course with some further offering short courses and driving range provision also.

Figure 12.1 below highlights the location of all golf provision in East Hertfordshire.

Figure 12.1: Location of golf provision in East Hertfordshire



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Table 12.3: Summary of standard hole provision in East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Sitename	Holes	Par	Yardage <sup>29</sup>		Slope rating	
171	Manor Of Groves Golf Club	18	71	6,126	5,797	5,139	116-135
172	Brickendon Grange Golf Club	18	71&73	6,483	6,053	5,735	128-134
173	Bishop's Stortford Golf Club	18	71	6,404	6,161	5,757	113-136
174	East Herts Golf Club	18	71	6,428	6,186	5,520	116-131
175	Whitehill Golf Club	18	72	6,802	6,271	5,482	127-133
176	Ash Valley Golf Club	18	71	6,661	6,469	5,797	119-126
177	Great Hadham Golf & Country Club	18	72	6,854	6,465	5,887	120-129
178	Hanbury Manor Golf Club	18	72	7,052	6,678	6,124	128-139

There are eight standard length golf courses within East Hertfordshire, all of which consist of 18 holes and are in excess of 6,000 yards. The longest course is provided by Hanbury Manor Golf Club spanning 7,052 yards. The smallest course is Manor of Groves Golf club which is 6,126 yards in total.

Slope ratings are new to golf across the World. The intention is for them to allow the handicap system to reflect course difficulty and the difference in difficulty for all players compared to scratch golfers. In effect, this enables each player to have a handicap that will vary from course-to-course, depending on difficulty, as well as a general handicap.

The maximum slope rating is 155, whereas the minimum is 55. The standard difficulty is considered to be 113.

Most commonly, Par 3 provision is used by beginner and casual players, although they are also frequented by more traditional golfers wanting to practice their short game. They offer a course for all ages to enjoy which is ideal for families whilst offering a great entry point for driving range users to transition to standard course use.

Ash Valley Golf Club and Chadwell Springs Golf Centre both provide a 9-hole, Par 3 short course. The courses are in Sawbridgeworth and Hertford, Ware analysis areas respectively, meaning residents outside these areas have limited access to these types of facilities.

Within East Hertfordshire there are five driving ranges with a total of 63 bays, which are listed in table 11.4 below.

<sup>29</sup> White denotes Championship tees, yellow denotes men's tees and red denotes ladies' tees.

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The use of driving ranges was higher in 2021 than in any of the previous 10 years, no doubt impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic but also due to the rise in popularity of the gamification options available through the use of ball tracking technology. Driving Ranges provide the ideal location for those looking to start out in the sport and with the option of now accessing technology which helps to make the experience more fun, they are appealing to a new audience of future golfers. Nationally, many driving range providers are updating their facilities with such provision in a bid to increase demand. Others also seek the installation of automatic tees or entertainment systems such as TopTracer and FlightScope. These allow for users to simulate playing on courses across the world and provides ball tracking and statistical feedback. Such technology is offered at Bishop's Stortford Golf Club. Great Hadham Golf & Country Club offers the largest number of bays across the district with 18 as well as offering pay and play which can be more enticing for newcomers.

Table 12.4: Summary of driving range bays

Site ID	Sitename	No. of bays provided	Covered?	Sports lighting?	Ball Tracking technology?	Access
173	Bishop's Stortford Golf Club	10	Yes	No	Yes	Members only
175	Whitehill Golf Club	12	Yes	Yes	No	Members only
177	Great Hadham Golf & Country Club	18	Yes	Yes	No	Pay & play
178	Hanbury Manor Golf Club	6	No	No	No	Pay & play
179	Chadwell Springs Golf Centre	17	Yes	Yes	Yes	Pay & play
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	-	-	-	-

There are three main types of ownership and management models of golf facilities in England: members clubs, proprietary clubs, and municipal facilities. Each of these is summarised in the table below.

Table 12.5: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities

Management type	Description
<b>Members</b>	Traditionally owned by members and run by committees. They are likely to hire caterers and green staff. Most members' clubs offer some level of pay and play and encourage golf societies but are mostly focused on membership numbers.
<b>Proprietary</b>	Owned or managed by businesses or individuals, these can include country club type facilities at the high end of the golfing market alongside more localised facilities. Many have clubs operating within them but can also take a much more relaxed attitude to dress and traditions of golf. Pay and play opportunities tend to be a key feature of the business plan.
<b>Municipal</b>	These are generally owned by a local authority, although in a growing number of instances, management has been contracted and externalised to private companies. Due to a lack of financial viability, many have closed across the Country in recent years and many that remain are under threat.

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It is recognised that members clubs and visitors to such clubs are normally expected to dress appropriately, have a registered handicap certificate (a certificate issued by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU) and be familiar with the rules and etiquette of the game. This is not uncommon at some proprietary clubs, but municipal courses tend to be more relaxed with regard to dress codes and do not require people to have handicaps, making golf much more accessible.

Consequently, municipal courses are, in many instances, seen as entry level facilities, with players using them before having the confidence to move on to a members' or high-end proprietary club (although many people can and do stay attached to a particular course). They also tend to offer a more affordable golfing experience.

The business model for members clubs tends to rely heavily on income through membership subscriptions and use of ancillary facilities, rather than from pay and play usage, although attention has somewhat switched at many sites in recent years due to demand falling. The same can be said for some proprietary clubs, although, in general, more emphasis is placed on supplementing regular activity with green fee sales.

Conversely, municipal sites have always been heavily reliant on visitors even though membership packages are normally available (often in the shape of season tickets). On occasion, these can be linked to access to other local authority operated sports facilities, such as leisure centres and swimming pools.

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability.

In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment. On the other hand, more income can be brought in through regular users compared to what would be the case had they been part of a membership scheme.

In East Hertfordshire there are six proprietary clubs and three members clubs with no municipal clubs, which table 11.6 explores further.

Table 12.6: Summary of ownership/management in East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Management type
171	Manor Of Groves Golf Club	Sawbridgeworth	Proprietary
172	Brickendon Grange Golf Club	Hertford, Ware	Members
173	Bishop's Stortford Golf Club	Bishop's Stortford	Members
174	East Herts Golf Club	Buntingford	Members
175	Whitehill Golf Club	Hertford, Ware	Proprietary
176	Ash Valley Golf Club	Sawbridgeworth	Proprietary
177	Great Hadham Golf & Country Club	Sawbridgeworth	Proprietary
178	Hanbury Manor Golf Club	Hertford, Ware	Proprietary
179	Chadwell Springs Golf Centre	Hertford, Ware	Proprietary

A key issue for the wider golf population is whether golf courses are available to the general population at a price point which is accessible to the majority of residents. Better quality courses tend to cost more to use, whilst 18-hole provision is generally more expensive to access than 9-hole provision.

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Nationally, over the past few years, many facilities have altered their pricing structures to allow for discounts following a previous decline in golf membership. England Golf has positively encouraged this as its view is that clubs are more likely to experience growth when flexible packages are available. For instance, some now offer five and/or six-day memberships (whereby members can access the course on specific days but not on one or both weekend days), whilst others provide discounts that are no longer limited solely to junior players (e.g. discounts for those aged 18-21 and 21-30 or for those aged 65 and over). In the past, it was common for clubs to have membership waiting lists, but this has become rarer. That being said, a rise in demand following the Covid-19 pandemic has tested this and resulted in capacity pressures, with a third of clubs now thought to have waiting times before new members can join.

England Golf reports that the average cost of a full adult membership across the Country is currently £1,071. None of the clubs in East Hertfordshire operate below this figure, with the cheapest being at Ash Valley Golf Club at £975. The average membership price for 18-hole courts is £1,656 which is 55% higher than the national average. Green fees are available at most Golf Club. Pricing for weekday access ranges from £20-£65, and weekend prices range from £30-£75.

Table 12.7: Pricing structures at golf facilities within East Hertfordshire

Site ID	Sitename	Joining fee	Full membership (per year)	Green fee (per round) <sup>30</sup>	
				Weekday	Weekend
171	Manor Of Groves Golf Club	Yes	£1,315	£33.50	£37.50
172	Brickendon Grange Golf Club	Yes	£1,980	£65	Unknown
173	Bishop's Stortford Golf Club	Yes	£1,650	£65	£70
174	East Herts Golf Club	Yes	£1,895	£65	£75
175	Whitehill Golf Club	No	£1,542	£44	£48
176	Ash Valley Golf Club	No	£975	£20	£30
177	Great Hadham Golf & Country Club	No	£1,210	£33	£44
178	Hanbury Manor Golf Club	Yes	£2,680	Unknown	Unknown

There are no official national or county golf facility rankings. Generally, the better course quality and supporting infrastructure is, the higher the joining/membership and green fees are likely to be. Some sites gain status through hosting county, national and international golf events and some tend to feature in ranking articles put together by golf magazines.

In terms of golf course quality within East Hertfordshire, it is relatively good across the district, with no significant issues identified.

The ancillary facilities across clubs in East Hertfordshire are also generally good. Each of the aforementioned venues offer members a clubhouse offering a lounge that serves food and drinks, alongside a function room which is available for event hire, other than Ash Valley Golf Club that does not hire out space for functions/meetings. Alongside this, Manor of Groves, Great Hadham and Hanbury Manor provide additional leisure facilities.

Golf clubs often need such revenue sources to operate effectively and the provision of a good quality, well equipped clubhouse is a key opportunity to provide a secondary income stream. This emanates from a variety of sources including bar and catering income from

<sup>30</sup> Where more than one course is provided, the price displayed is for the larger course.

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members and visitors as well as venue hire for special occasions including weddings, christenings and funerals.

From a golfing perspective, given the current emphasis on increasing levels of female and junior golf membership across the Country, it is also imperative that ancillary provision can adequately cater for all types of members e.g. by providing gender specific changing facilities.

### 12.3: Demand

Around 2004, participation in golf began declining; however, recent signs show that the reduction has not only levelled off, but that demand has started to increase, especially following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, both in 2020 and 2021. As one of the first sports to be allowed on both occasions, people have been able to play whilst maintaining social distancing and England Golf has provided very clear guidance as to how this should manifest itself (e.g. by not allowing the flag to be taken out or rakes to be used). Some courses have reported a near doubling of usual demand compared to pre-pandemic levels, highlighting that a significant opportunity now exists to retain increased participation in the long-term. An opportunity now exists for this to represent a long-term increase in demand, although to what level is unclear as retention may in some instances be challenging as more and more users return to normal working/living conditions.

### Membership

The average member number of clubs in England for 2022 was 407 so this can be used as a benchmark to compare this data against. Given the nature of the affiliation fee collection process, this report cannot provide 2023 average membership numbers nationally, however, it is known from research performed by Club & County Support Officers that over 70% of clubs in the country had either grown or sustained their membership levels from 2022 levels, despite an on average 9% increase in subscription fees. To ensure consistency, all the membership number data used has also been considered factoring in the 18-hole equivalent value to help establish the averages. So, for 9-holes courses this has been doubled and 36-hole the number has been halved.

Table 12.8: Average Membership Numbers in eight affiliated facilities within East Hertfordshire

Authority	2015	2016	2017	2018	2022	2023	2024* 31
East Hertfordshire	362	359	389	376	496	502	529

Within the East Hertfordshire, membership numbers at affiliated clubs are significantly higher than the national average. The current average number of members is 30% above the national average.

It is also worth referencing that this also includes relatively low number from Ash Valley Golf Club. Membership numbers have also grown during the documented period above. Between 2015 and 2024 there has been an increase of 46% in the local authority.

<sup>31</sup> As of July 2024



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## Pay and play

Whilst pay and play usage has generally increased across England in recent years, usage figures at the sites within East Hertfordshire are not known as it is not something that is tracked by England Golf. However, all clubs provide green fee rates.

Nationally, England Golf utilises a figure of 3.5 million people that are considered to be regular golfers, with this defined as those that have played on a standard-length course at least twice within the last 12 months. Using this, it is able to indicate how much demand exists per facility within a catchment area before then comparing this to a national benchmark.

Within the formula, it calculates the participation number in an area by establishing what proportion of the population is likely to be golfers, which can then be used to determine the number of participants per facility. This can then be compared to the national rate, with an index created for comparison purposes. Using 100 as the average, anything below this suggests that an area has either low demand or a high facility count, whereas anything above provides evidence that an area has high demand and/or a low level of provision.

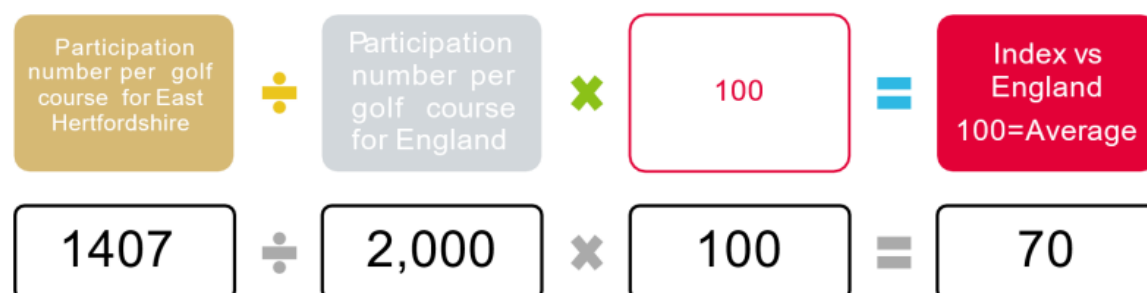
The calculations for the catchment area for the East Hertfordshire area can be seen via the image below, as provided by England Golf.

Figure 12.2: Regular golfer demand index calculations for East Hertfordshire

Diagram 1 – Regular Golfer Demand Index Calculation



Diagram 2 – Regular Golfer Demand Index Calculation for East Hertfordshire Authority



As shown, the index rating for the catchment area (70) is below the national benchmark (100). Therefore, indicating East Hertfordshire provides enough facilities to meet the demand of those in the authority who play golf regularly.

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### Unmet demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to golf facilities. This could be reflected via a waiting list at a club, although it is likely that people on a waiting list are still playing golf elsewhere, either via membership of another club or through pay and play access. Bishop's Stortford Golf Club is the only club that is currently operating a waiting list in East Hertfordshire.

### Latent demand

Latent demand is demand for golf that is not currently being realised. This could be for numerous reasons, such as time constraints, financial reasons and a lack of suitable, available provision.

Whilst the reasoning for the latent demand is unknown and is likely to be varied, the data does show relatively high demand which would significantly increase membership and/or pay and play usage across facilities if realised. England Golf is supportive of clubs that proactively target new audiences in an attempt to tap into such demand i.e. through developing a variety of golfing offers, coaching programmes and a range of membership options.

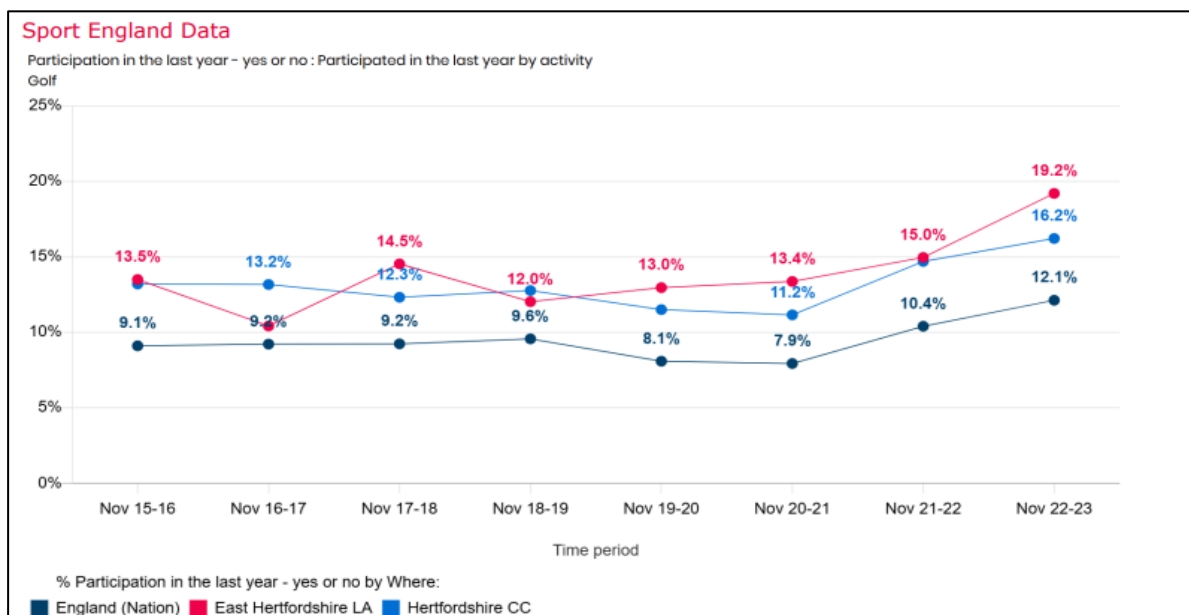
In addition, England Golf has a mapping tool that enables an assessment of potential demand within a 20-minute drive time of each golf facility, with the population broken down into nine golfing segments. These segments are defined to help provide an indication as to what type of golfing offer each would be most likely to access. They are:

- ◀ Relaxed members.
- ◀ Older traditionalists.
- ◀ Younger traditionalists.
- ◀ Younger fanatics.
- ◀ Younger actives.
- ◀ Late enthusiasts.
- ◀ Occasional time pressed.
- ◀ Social couples.
- ◀ Casual fun.

In East Hertfordshire, demand from each of the segments is relatively evenly split across the nine segments; the highest demand is from "casual fun" (4,313 people), whilst the lowest is from "older traditionalists" (3,848 people).

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Figure 12.3: Sport England participation data



As evidenced in the above chart, Sport England data suggests that participation in golf is the highest it has been since 2015 when data started being collected. Between 2021 and 2023 there has been an increase of over 4%, with circa 4.8 million people participating in the sport during that 12-month period.

When looking specifically at East Hertfordshire, the popularity of golf currently sits above the national average by 7.1% and is in line with the regional average. 19.2% of the population participated in golf during 2023 in East Hertfordshire, a growth of nearly 6% from the previous 24-month period, and similar to the national trend, the highest participation rate for the authority since 2015.

## Future demand

England Golf has an aim to increase membership of clubs nationally; however, after reaching its previous target, it no longer has a fixed goal in terms of growth. Nationally, many clubs, especially the most established ones, will be happy to retain current demand levels, whilst others will be open to growing and some considerably so. In that regard, England Golf reports that many providers are proactively targeting new audiences through coaching programmes and a wider range of membership and playing options.

## 12.4: Supply and demand analysis

With nine golf facilities in East Hertfordshire, there is a good level of supply to meet current and future demand with a variety of facilities on offer. With only one club operating a waiting list currently it can be suggested that the opportunity for newcomers to play golf is an option. Given the range of facilities and offerings, it can be said that all golfers are catered for with differing course lengths and driving ranges. Golf is clearly a popular sport in East Hertfordshire with an abundance of facilities and participation being 7.1% over the national average with 19.2% of the local population participating.

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## 12.5: Conclusion

There is a good variety of golf provision within the area, with two par 3/short courses, and eight 18-hole courses offering standard length traditional golf. In addition to course access, four of the above-mentioned facilities offers a driving range, with one stand-alone driving range and short course facility available at Chadwell Springs Golf Centre.

Membership numbers in the authority are much higher compared with the national average of 407 members but has increased by 46% since 2015. Numbers have continued to increase steadily over the last 3 years. It is also worth noting that each club will have a different financial model in terms of income generation from membership vs green fees etc.

Participation and membership in golf has seen a large renaissance recently and particularly as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it was considered to be a much safer and more accessible sport when the Country emerged from the various periods of restrictions. England Golf know that clubs showing growth are developing new income streams and catering for a wide range of needs, so there is clearly scope for clubs to offer additional non-traditional and flexible playing opportunities wherever appropriate.

In summary, there is a good amount of provision in the authority, with a variety of facilities. The existing facilities are clearly servicing a demand as evidenced by the high membership numbers across the listed facilities. The Regular Golfer Demand figure shows that there are enough facilities to meet current demand but doesn't take into account the lack of shorter forms of golf or driving ranges. It is the view of England Golf that all current facilities should therefore be retained and protected to ensure no gaps in golf provision are created.

To protect and support the facilities, England Golf offers assistance, primarily through a variety of tools that can be used to better understand the local market. There may also be opportunities for some clubs across the area to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways where appropriate to collectively cater for all types of players.

### **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ East Hertfordshire has a sufficient supply of provision to accommodate the identified high levels of golf demand within the Authority.
- ◀ In East Hertfordshire, golf remains more popular than the national averages by 7.1%. In 2023, 19.2% of the local population participated in the sport, reflecting a 6% increase over the previous two years. While East Hertfordshire has historically seen strong participation in golf, the current rate is the highest recorded for the authority since 2015.

### **Golf – supply summary**

- ◀ There are nine golf facilities within East Hertfordshire, eight of which offer standard 18-hole courses, two offering par/short courses and four offering a driving range and a dedicated standalone driving range at Chadwell Springs Golf Centre.
- ◀ Six of the clubs are proprietary owned while three are members owned with no municipal owned courses.
- ◀ Quality across East Hertfordshire is good with no issues reported and members paying higher fees than the national average.

### **Golf – demand summary**

- ◀ East Hertfordshire demand for golf is high with membership growing year on year
- ◀ Bishop's Stortford Golf Club currently have a waiting list in place suggesting unmet demand at the Club.
- ◀ Pay and play usage is unknown but clubs in East Hertfordshire provide green fee rates and pay and play is also available at three of the driving ranges.

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### PART 12: OUTDOOR WATER SPORTS

#### 12.1: Introduction

East Hertfordshire is a landlocked authority providing somewhat limited space for outdoor water-based activities. Water sports in England are governed by various bodies, including:

- ◀ British Canoe Union.
- ◀ British Kite Surfing Association.
- ◀ British Rowing.
- ◀ British Sub-Aqua Club.
- ◀ British Swimming.
- ◀ British Water Ski.
- ◀ Royal Yachting Association.
- ◀ Surfing Great Britain.

#### 12.2: Supply

Abbotts Lake is a 25-acre lake based in Stanstead Abbots in East Hertfordshire. The lake caters for various water sports including yachting and canoeing. The Lake forms part of the Lea Valley Regional Park.

The river Stort runs for 24 miles through Essex and Hertfordshire and offers another opportunity for those wishing to partake. The river takes its name from Bishop's Stortford, located in East Hertfordshire.

East Hertfordshire is also home to Ware Priory Lido, situated in Ware Priory. The site offers a 30m main pool as well as a 'teaching pool as ancillary provision for its users which includes changing facilities as well as food and drink offerings. The Lido was built in 1934 and last renovated in 2021 to be reopened to the public in 2023 after an investment of £1m. The funding came from Ware Town Council and the Public Work Loan Board. This was after a previous investment in 2016 from GSK to complete some 'extensive renovation work.

#### 12.3: Demand

Abbotts Lake is home to Hertford County Yacht Club who use the lake for casual sailing, open and handicap racing and B Fleet which is aimed at novice racers who would like to compete. The Club describes itself as a grassroots Club with the main aim of getting people into or back into sailing. It is Royal Yachting Association (RYA) an accredited training centre and offers memberships for all ages. For juniors, the Club offers a more informal introduction to sailing based on the RYA onboard scheme.

Whoosh Explore Canoe Club (WECC) and Bishop's Stortford Canoe Club (BSCC) both use the River Stort for canoeing. BSCC, affiliated to Paddle UK, were founded in 1972 and owns its own land beside Southmill Lock enabling it to build ancillary provision. The Club's focus is flatwater sprints and marathon racing in kayaks and canoes. WECC is an amateur club offering paddling sessions for its users, with canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards able to hire or under a structured session. The Club also runs several club trips to the UK's best paddling venues.

Ware Priory Lido is open to local residents for community use all year round for heated swimming from May – September and cold-water swimming from October – April. The Pool is also available for private hire for different types of groups and is sometimes used by Ware Swimming Club although the Club is mainly based out of Fanshawe Pool which is an indoor pool.

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### 12.4: Conclusion

#### **Outdoor water sports – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ East Hertfordshire is well provided for regarding outdoor water sport facilities given its location, enabling the District to cater for a range of activities.
- ◀ The clubs are adequately meeting demand levels, with no capacity issues evidenced.

#### **Outdoor water sports – supply summary**

- ◀ The River Stort runs through Hertfordshire and Essex providing the opportunity for various water sports.
- ◀ Abbots Lake offers 25 acres of open water, providing space for yachting and canoeing, forming part of the Lea Valley Regional Park.
- ◀ Ware Priority Lido has been servicing local residents since 1934 and is open all year round for both warm and cold-water swimming, depending on the season.
- ◀ Activities offered in the District include canoeing, kayaking, yachting, sailing and paddle boarding.

#### **Outdoor water sports – demand summary**

- ◀ There are currently four clubs in East Hertfordshire providing outdoor water sport activity.
- ◀ No clubs report any unmet or latent demand, although it could exist for activities that are not collectively offered by the clubs.

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### APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

#### National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

#### Department of Culture Media and Sport Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)

The Government published its new strategy for sport in August 2023. The 2015 government sport strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for a More Active Nation, was a fundamental re-framing of sport and physical activity in the UK. It set out five outcomes delivered by sport and physical activity:

- ◀ Physical wellbeing
- ◀ Mental wellbeing
- ◀ Individual development
- ◀ Social and community development
- ◀ Sustainable economic development

This new strategy builds on the foundations of Sporting Future and retains these five outcomes at its core. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of three core priorities, with seven indicators to achieve these priorities as follows:

- ◀ **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active**
  - ◀ Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030
  - ◀ Focusing on evidence, data and metrics

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- ◀ Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active
- ◀ **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport**
  - ◀ Helping the sector to be welcoming to all
  - ◀ Improving how issues and concerns are dealt within the sector
- ◀ **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust**
  - ◀ Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment
  - ◀ Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector

Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences. The vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country.

### **Sport England Uniting the Movement: Our 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport (2021-2031)**

Sport and physical activity makes people happier and healthier, and movement is the lens through which we can make that happen. It does the same thing for our communities, with life-changing, sustainable benefits that have huge economic and social value. That's why Sport England wants sport and physical activity to be recognised as essential to help overcome these national challenges.

The Strategy recognises the need to invest in sport and physical activity through NGBs, other sports bodies and local sports clubs, organisations and community groups to increase engagement for different groups as part of our core purpose. It states that there is now a need to go further in promoting movement in general as the means to unlock sport and activity for some people.

#### **Tackling inequalities**

There are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which means that there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities aren't there. These inequalities are at the very core of the Uniting the Movement.

Sport England plans on having a laser focus on tackling inequalities in all that it does, because providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity is vitally important.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.



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The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

### The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: "Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;

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- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;  
**Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

### Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Game Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project. A Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has now been produced for every local authority across England. Each plan is unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

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

Each LFFP will build upon PPS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game, to also include strategic priorities for investment across small sided football (recreational and informal including indoors). The LFFP will also incorporate consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as underrepresented communities. This could include those which may be key partners with regards to football for behavioural change and groups which may be key drivers of FA NGS priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

LFFPs will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all national football investment through the funding partners will be identified via LFFPs.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal. A LFFP will, however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

The FA launched its new Strategy which aims to 'take English football forward, with clear focus on the biggest opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed'.

To achieve this, eight key strategic priorities are identified which include four 'Game Changer' objectives and four 'Drivers' objectives as detailed below. The strategy also outlines how The FA's plans to achieve these objectives.

#### Game Changers:

- ◀ Win tournaments
  - ◀ Develop pathways

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- ◀ Support elite players
- ◀ Enhance environments
- ◀ Collaborate and influence
- ◀ A game free from discrimination
  - ◀ Boost representation
  - ◀ Drive more inclusion
  - ◀ Tackle discrimination
- ◀ Equal opportunities for women & girls
  - ◀ Increase school participation
  - ◀ Increase club participation
  - ◀ Enhance women's competitions
  - ◀ Support female coaches and referees
- ◀ Transform the pitch landscape
  - ◀ Sustain and grow high-quality grass pitches
  - ◀ Deliver new 3G pitches
  - ◀ Support inclusivity accessibility and environmental sustainability of facilities

### Drivers:

- ◀ Thriving community clubs
  - ◀ Develop club opportunities
  - ◀ Support the current and future generation of club leaders
  - ◀ Equip clubs to add long-term value to local communities
- ◀ World-class FA cups
  - ◀ Broaden commercial appeal
  - ◀ Evolve the Adobe Women's FA Cup format
- ◀ Participant led
  - ◀ Place participants at the centre of decision making
  - ◀ Create flexible models to meet participants needs
  - ◀ Provide digital tools to improve experiences
- ◀ Progressive governance
  - ◀ Support integration of women's and girls' football
  - ◀ Support governance of the NLS
  - ◀ Support our County Football Associations (CFAs)

The FA's 2020-2024 strategy, 'Inspiring Positive Change', coincided with record growth across the sport, with more women and girls playing, coaching, officiating and supporting the flourishing professional game than ever before.

This strategy aims to build on the success achieved to date and strives to continue working to unlock the full potential of the women's and girls' game. The strategy outlines four strategic priorities as seen below.

1. **Build and Protect the Uniqueness of the Women's Game:** Continue to honour the history of women's football and recognise those who have contributed towards making it so unique, whilst ensuring the distinct qualities and unique culture of the women's game are valued and protected.
2. **Win a Major Tournament:** Continue to be world-leaders both on and off the pitch, developing players and building an inclusive talent pathway system to make football more equal and accessible at every level of the game, ensuring the England pathway and teams represent society.
3. **Build Robust, High-Quality Competition:** Create compelling competition structures and support clubs to develop to the appropriate level within the game, while enabling people to grow and develop within The FA's competition structures.
4. **Deliver Equal Opportunities for Women and Girls to Play:** Sustain growth in schools whilst tackling inequalities. Continue to grow the number of female teams and deliver vibrant league offers whilst extending and enhancing the sessional

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football offer. The ambition is for 90% of schools to deliver equal access for girls to play football in key stages two and three.

There are five golden threads which weave through each of the four strategic priorities and across all levels of the women's and girls' game, which will be instrumental for delivering the next phase of growth by 2028:

1. **Female Health and Wellbeing:** Develop the game to support women and girls with their health and wellbeing needs, providing them with environments in which they can thrive.
2. **Safeguarding:** Support the evolution of an ever-safer culture across the women's and girls' game.
3. **Refereeing:** Grow and nurture a new generation of referees who are representative of our society.
4. **Coaching:** Support and develop brilliant coaches capable of unleashing every player's potential in a safe and inclusive game.
5. **Diversity and Inclusion:** Ensure the game is more reflective of our society.

### Inspiring Generations – Cricket's Game-wide Strategy (2025 – 28)<sup>[1]</sup>

In October 2024 the ECB released its new strategy Inspiring Generations – Cricket's Game-wide Strategy (2025 – 28). Cricket in England and Wales has seen transformative growth since the publication of its previous strategy Inspiring Generation (2020-24). Its new strategy represents an evolution of its plans, however, many of its previous themes are still relevant. Its main purpose is to say 'Cricket is a game for me' through its vision:

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

It aims to obtain this vision through six key objectives

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

Underpinning these six ambitions are a series of enablers that cut-across multiple areas of the game, alongside Cricket's Core Values.

### The Rugby Football Union Strategic Plan 2021 onwards

The RFU has released its new strategic vision for rugby in England. The strategy is based on four main elements which are; Protect, Engage, Grow and Win. It covers all elements of rugby union ranging from elite rugby to grassroots, although the general relevancy to the PPS is centred around growing the game.

The RFU exists to promote and develop rugby union in England and ensure the long-term sustainability of clubs by growing player numbers and retaining them across all age groups. Responding to wider market influences, work will continue on developing new ways to take

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<sup>[1]</sup><https://resources.ecb.co.uk/ecb/document/2024/10/22/19a925d7-3c92-4a36-8e7b-f49cb470377f/ECB-Inspiring-Generations-2025-2028.pdf>

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part in all forms of the game, without comprising the sports traditions. This will ensure a lasting legacy from elite success by attracting new players and encouraging current male and female adult players to play.

### England Hockey Strategy (2023 – 2028)

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

Aiming to make hockey more noticeable, relevant, and accessible to all, England Hockey have launched their new strategy 'Creating a Future for Our Game Together' on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. The new strategy is a continued effort to re-engage with the current hockey community and to reach out to potential newcomers to introduce them to hockey.

Underpinning the strategy and of importance to the hockey community are four values, "collaborate inclusively, care for people and places, play with spirit win with grace and resilient in everything we do".

The strategy is the culmination of two years consultation with various stakeholders across the sport and larger sporting sector. Hockey will be guided by five key objectives over the next five years.

1. **Lead Positive Change:** to create and champion positive change within the community by broadening and widening the engagement of the sport and making it more ethnically and culturally diverse.
2. **Meaningful Growth:** to make sure that our sport thrives and grows into the future, we want to nurture a love of hockey within a more diverse group of young players and communities to reflect society.
3. **Drive Visible Impact:** to produce and release high-quality, engaging content that shares the love of the game, captures the passion, builds a deep connection and amplifies the voices of the hockey community with new and existing participants.
4. **Responsible Leadership:** to provide forward thinking, compassionate and inclusive leadership. Leadership that fosters trust within physically and psychologically safe environments and which puts players, the community and sustainability at heart of every decision.
5. **Inspirational International Success:** inspirational club and national teams delivering podium success in Europe and on the world stage, underpinned by a thriving talent system and domestic game.

The strategy aligns with Sport England's 'Uniting the movement' strategy and UK Sport's 'Powering Success, Inspiring Impact' strategic plan.

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### Rugby Football League – National Community Facilities Strategy (2024 – 2030)

The RFL has developed a new National Facilities Strategy which will guide investment into the game from 2024 through to 2030. The proposed investment package aligned to the Strategy will not only transform facilities, but also bolster the sport's social impact, reinforcing its position as a vital part of the nation's sporting and social fabric. The four focus areas of the Strategy are:

- ◀ **Security of Tenure** – allowing clubs to plan for the long-term
- ◀ **Accessible and Inclusive Facilities** – providing suitable facilities for all and creating safe spaces for the wider community
- ◀ **Adequate and Appropriate Pitch Provision**– investment both in playing surfaces, and in upskilling a volunteer workforce to maintain them
- ◀ **Sustainability**– both environmental and financial

The Strategy will deliver on the four focus areas by delivering against a set of five recommendations which are set within the Strategy and are detailed below. These recommendations reflect the wider strategic aspirations across the sport and are for the RFL to work to deliver.

#### ◀ **Focus community clubs**

- ◀ Ensure the RFL has sufficient capacity and resource to deliver the recommendations identified within this Strategy to support its community clubs.
- ◀ Ensure all community clubs have the knowledge and resource to provide good quality grass pitches.
- ◀ Supporting clubs to have good quality changing and social facilities which can support the scale of need at each club. These must be inclusive for all participants and benefit target user groups such as women and girls' participants.
- ◀ Ensure clubs can accommodate a sustainable operational programme for clubhouses to ensure the longevity of provision.
- ◀ Work with clubs and key partners to increase the number of clubs with secured tenure of their club facilities.
- ◀ Develop a dedicated funding programme which is specifically aimed at supporting clubs to gain security of tenure at their respective site.
- ◀ Highlight success stories and best practices from community clubs to inspire others and showcase the positive impact of these efforts.

#### ◀ **Deliver positive social and environmental impact**

- ◀ Support clubs through training and advice on how to promote facilities for non-rugby league purposes.
- ◀ Work with Active Partnerships across England to enable higher usage and activation of rugby league assets for non-rugby league activity.
- ◀ Prioritise clubs for wellbeing hubs which may offer the widest social benefit (relative to local need) – particularly those in high deprivation areas.
- ◀ Use the activation of club facilities as a prerequisite to capital funding for club house improvements / new development.
- ◀ Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies

#### ◀ **Collaborative working with sports partners and key agencies**

- ◀ Ensure continued working with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of other sports to capitalise on shared investment opportunities.
- ◀ Work with the Football Foundation to maximise Multi-Sport funding opportunities – utilising the framework provided in this Strategy as the baseline of shared investment.
- ◀ Work closely with Active Partnerships in areas with high club densities to establish opportunities for pitch access via the Open School Facilities programme.

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### ◀ **Technological solutions**

- ◀ Ensure the RFL gathers greater levels of information from clubs via affiliation. To include (e.g.) security of tenure information and an integrated self-assessment audit of community facilities.
- ◀ Continue expanding the use and application of PitchPower so all clubs can self-assess provision and support clubs to make positive contributions to improving the quality of grass pitches.
- ◀ Promote technological solutions which progress clubs into being more sustainable, energy efficient and ensure their long-term viability as community assets.
- ◀ Create a platform or resource hub where clubs can access information on funding opportunities, facility management, and sustainable operational practices.

### ◀ **Working with Charitable Community Organisations and Wheelchair Rugby League**

- ◀ Develop an investment package to support the operational delivery of professional club foundation led wheelchair activity focusing on storage and logistical solutions.
- ◀ Prioritise capital investment into community club sites which also accommodate professional club foundations as tenants for community Rugby League activity.
- ◀ Begin work on the feasibility of developing a national wheelchair centre which includes exploring partnership opportunities with other sports to maximise multisport value and return on investment.
- ◀ Consult with professional club foundations, where possible, to understand the need for 3G access and work to ascertain sufficient access hours during peak times of need.

## **England Netball**

In November 2021 England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.

England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead.

The 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:-

- ◀ accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,
- ◀ elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- ◀ lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, England Netball, with its proud and unique female foundations, will remain dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority, working tirelessly to address the gender participation gap in sport that has widened since the global pandemic.

Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, the organisation pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

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Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation. The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

### Facility Development

The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- ◀ Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- ◀ Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- ◀ Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- ◀ For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:-
  - ◀ Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
  - ◀ Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
  - ◀ Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
  - ◀ Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.
  - ◀ Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
  - ◀ Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

### Tennis in Britain - LTA Strategy

The LTA's vision for 2019 – 2023, Tennis Opened Up includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around its mission 'to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable'.

#### Objectives

- ◀ Increase the number of fans on our database from [623,602] to [1,000,000] by 2023.
- ◀ More people playing more often;
  - Increase the number of adults playing tennis each year from [7.7% (4,018,600)] of the population to [8.5% (4,420,460)], and the frequency of adults playing tennis twice a month 2.5% 1,311,800 to 1.9% 1,500,000 by 2023.
  - The number of children playing tennis once a week from 550,000 to 700,000 (7.9% to 10% of the population) by 2023.
- ◀ Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.



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### Strategies

1. Visibility -Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
2. Innovation - Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
3. Investment - Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play
4. Accessibility - Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone
5. Engagement - Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.
6. Performance - Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
7. Leadership - Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

### British Crown Green Bowling Association

Please note there is no current facility guidance provided by British Crown Green Bowling Association responsible for crown green bowls in England.

<https://www.bcgba.org.uk/>

### Bowls England: Fit for the Future (2021-2026)

Bowls England's Strategy; 'Fit For The Future' frames an exciting course for the sport. The five-year plan has been designed with the ultimate goal of getting more people playing & enjoying bowls. It sets out its vision for the sport, how it plans to achieve its objectives and what success looks like in 2026. The priorities that will get it to the target of 1 million bowls experiences per year by 2026 are:

- ◀ Building the brand of bowls by increasing focus on international & top domestic bowls, and utilizing opportunities such as Birmingham 2022 to achieve larger media coverage;
- ◀ Ensuring the sport is truly accessible to all by offering different formats of the game which suit all time constraints, as well as driving more people to clubs in new ways;
- ◀ Creating positive playing experiences for everyone who steps on the green, both for casual and competitive players, as well as growing our events calendar and introducing a Performance Pathway
- ◀ Putting volunteers first, as the lifeblood of our sport, by increasing our support for clubs in order to empower them to thrive;
- ◀ Leading the sport with purpose by developing our Governance structures, diversifying our revenue streams, and work collaboratively with all the sport's key stakeholders.

### England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

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For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

### England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims "To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England".

England Golf has always had a mission to lead, support, inspire and deliver for its community of golfers, golf clubs and counties. To help enable this, its Course Planner forms the core of its strategy, with 18 guiding principles established that are designed to best position growth in the game:

- ◀ Strengthen governance in all aspects of the sport
- ◀ Deliver safeguarding throughout the golfing community
- ◀ Utilise data and technology to enhance decision making
- ◀ Drive equality and equity in everything it does

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- ◀ Support golf clubs with member recruitment and retention
- ◀ Connect and engage with all golfers
- ◀ Inspire and educate golf's network of volunteers
- ◀ Increase golf's influence
- ◀ Advocate and inform on all elements of sustainability
- ◀ Drive diversity at all levels of golf
- ◀ Create more opportunities for junior and young adults
- ◀ Promote the health and wellbeing of golf
- ◀ Inspire more women and girls to play golf
- ◀ Develop greater access for disabled people
- ◀ Enthuse all golfers through relatable role models
- ◀ Communicate a positive perception change for golf
- ◀ Deliver an excellent talent development pathway
- ◀ Host best-in-class competitions for all golfers

<https://www.englandgolf.org/englandgolfstrategy/>