KNIGHT, KAVANAGH & PAGE

LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT
October 2024

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AC	Athletic Club
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance
BC	Bowls Club
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
EPPP	Elite Player Performance Plan
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LBC	Luton Borough Council
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non turf pitch
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106 Agreement
SLT	Schools Learning Trust
TGR	Team Generation Rate
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1: Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by Luton Borough Council (LBC) to undertake an assessment of all formal playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities across the Borough to assist it to strategically plan for the future.

This is the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) Assessment Report for Luton. It presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and other outdoor sports in accordance with Sport England's PPOSS Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a PPS (2013) and Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014) (ANOG) used for non-pitch sports. Both guidance documents detail a stepped approach that, for pitch sports, is separated into five distinct stages, with similar stages set out in ANOG:

- Stage A: Preparation
  - Step 1: Clarify why the PPS is being developed
  - Step 2: Set up the management arrangements
  - Step 3: Tailor the approach
- Stage B: Information Gathering
  - Step 4: Develop an audit of playing pitches
  - Step 5: Develop a picture of demand
- Stage C: Assessment
  - Step 6: Understand how each site is being used
  - Step 7: Develop the current picture of provision
  - Step 8: Carry out scenario testing
- Stage D: Strategy & Action Plan
  - Step 9: Develop conclusions & recommendations
  - Step 10: Develop an action & implementation plan
- Stage E: Implementation
  - Step 11: Apply and deliver the Strategy
  - Step 12: Keep the Strategy robust and up to date
  - Step 13: Adopt, monitor and review the PPS

Stages A to C are covered in this report, with Stage D covered in the subsequent strategy document. This Assessment and subsequent Strategy will run to 2031, in line with the current Local Plan subject to annual monitoring and review taking place. If no review has been taken forward within three years from the date of the baseline data being collated, then the PPOSS will no longer be considered up to date or robust.

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 Luton. 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 98 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.

Why the PPOSS is being developed

The current Luton Local Plan identifies plans for growth in Luton to the year 2031. During the public examination hearings into the Local Plan held from 2016 to 2017, a number of issues were highlighted for specific attention in the next review of the Local Plan. Several of these matters were perceived as pressing issues, tending towards an early review. That early review is now underway.

This approach balanced the need for urgency on some matters, for example a review of school provision, but was also for giving time to allow the potential for local plans within neighbouring areas (particularly Central Beds and N Herts.) to be progressed following the completion of the Joint Growth Options Study. The Growth Options Study was particularly important in helping address Luton's unmet housing needs across the wider Housing Market Area.

The Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) 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.

Paragraphs 98 of the NPPF states that Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate as relevant.

Paragraph 99 of the NPPF discusses assessments and the protection of "existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields". Paragraphs 101 and 102 also promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields.

This may provide opportunities to develop new playing pitches or improve the quality of existing playing pitches in Luton in response to housing developments that create additional demand for pitches (as well as the accompanying ancillary offer) by use of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator[1]. Where possible, this will be aligned to existing community sport clubs in Luton which play an integral part in providing sport and physical activities to the local community

Luton 2020-2040

The Luton 2040 Strategy sets out the vision to make Luton healthier, fairer and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive, and no-one has to live in poverty. The existing strategic document sets the priorities for the years 2020 – 2025.

The Strategy sets a significant ambition for the future of Luton, by setting clear priorities to support children and young people to have the best start in life and ensuring that it responds to the climate crisis by making Luton a greener and more sustainable town. Central to these priorities is making long-term commitments to ensure that Luton is recognised as a carbon-neutral town and a UNICEF child-friendly town. Community will also be at the heart of Luton's future vision. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic it has seen the resilience and strength that exists throughout its community. As of 2022, Luton has been determined a Marmot Town, following the latest Marmot review from the UCL Institute of Health Equity.

[1] https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport/playing-pitch-calculator

The vision will build on this, to develop a fairer town, where residents have a crucial role and a powerful voice in shaping the future of Luton. This document also demonstrates how the Council has worked collaboratively with residents and organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop the vision as well as setting out in more detail how the Council and its partners will work together to deliver the vision for the town, through strategic partnership boards (Health and Wellbeing Board and Inclusive Economy Board) and their respective strategies.

The Luton 2040 Strategy identifies five vision, priorities and strategies to be achieved between 2023- 2028, each with target outcomes which are as follows:

- Inclusive economy:
  - Increased inward investment supporting the growth of our key and emerging sectors including aviation, manufacturing, digital and creative industries.
  - More of our residents in well-paid, high value and fair employment within Luton.
  - A more highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of local employers.
  - Increased local spending and social value through supply chains of large employers and anchor institutions.
  - A thriving town centre with the right mix of coffee, retail, leisure, residential and community space.
- Population wellbeing:
  - A preventative approach to improving physical and mental wellbeing that addresses the wider determinants of health to achieve better and more equal health outcomes.
  - A healthier start for our children and young people with better and more equal physical and mental health outcomes.
  - A stronger care sector with increased capacity to help people and families to manage long-term conditions.
  - More of our households living in good quality and affordable housing.
  - A safer community with fewer cases of crime, domestic abuse, serious violence and addiction.
- Net zero town:
  - Reduced net carbon emissions from businesses, organisations and households.
  - A greener transport network, with a reduction in car usage and an increase in walking, cycling and sustainable public transport usage.
  - The most sustainable airport in the UK.
  - Enhanced greenspace and richer biodiversity that offset emissions and enriches our local environment.
  - Improved air quality across our town to support better health outcomes.
- Child friendly town:
  - Our children and young people will have access to good quality services that keep them safe and secure.
  - Every child has an excellent education that raises aspiration and achievement and reduces educational inequalities.
  - More opportunities for our children and young people to develop, play and socialise.
  - Greater and more equal opportunities for children and young people with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities).
  - All of our children and young people will have meaningful voice that is heard and that matters.
- Fairness, resilience and social justice:
  - A town built on fairness with equitable outcomes for all our residents.
  - Increased resilience across our community protecting and enabling the most excluded and vulnerable.
  - A thriving voluntary and community sector delivering on shared priorities with our residents.
  - A stronger and meaningful voice for all our residents to shape the vision and direction of our town.

- A welcoming and compassionate town, with respect, social responsibility and increased civic pride at its heart.

The PPOSS shall look to improve each of the five target areas to progress Luton towards being a healthier, fairer and more sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.

An inclusive economy can be developed through sporting hubs through the economic opportunities generated by operating financially independent centres within the town that create economic opportunities, enhance business skills and interpersonal skills. Working towards supporting sports clubs across Luton can bring a plethora of benefits to the populations wellbeing through the physical, mental and social wellbeing that tie with participating in sport and physical activity.

A child friendly town is developed through supporting the sports clubs within Luton who are collectively increasing sports participation for people aged under 18. Strides can be made towards a net zero target by reducing emissions through providing local sporting venues for nearby residents to access, as well as supporting sports clubs to improve the energy efficiency of its ancillary provisions.

Finally, farness, resilience and social justice can be supported by increasing sports participation as a means of reducing crime rates, as well as using sports hubs to deliver non-sport related services such as local community work and charitable support.

Aims of the Luton PPOSS

- To protect playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities for the long term benefit of sport and that disused and lapsed playing fields are lost only where there is clear evidence that they are surplus to requirements;
- To promote a sustainable approach to the provision of new playing pitches;
- To ensure that there are enough facilities in the right place to meet current and projected future demand;
- To ensure that all clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and longer term aspirations;
- To ensure that adequate facilities are in place to tackle the health inequalities and carbon neutrality within Luton;

Objectives of the Luton PPOSS

- To engage with Sport England and the relevant National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and use the national PPS methodology to provide the project with a structure proven across the rest of England;
- To provide a robust evidence base on the current and future demand and need for playing pitches taking into account existing supply whilst assessing the quantity, quality and accessibility of existing provision that can be used by multiple Council departments and other stakeholders for a wide range of future projects;
- To gather a representative evidence base, by achieving a high response rate from the surveys sent to clubs, schools and parish councils/community organisations;
- To identify cross boundary NGB issues, the nature and location of any overuse, unmet demand and spare capacity for play across all pitch types and sports including all elements of current and future demand;
- To establish clear, prioritised, specific and achievable recommendations and actions to address the key issues around pitch provision and participation;
- To provide an estimated base cost for any additional provision/ upgrades of existing provision that is recommended using the Sports England cost guidance as a starting point; and

- To provide evidence that will help to protect existing supply of playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities, to enhance playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities and to provide new playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities where there is current or future demand to do so.

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 LBC, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs).

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

- Be a champion for playing pitch provision in the area and promote the value and importance of the PPOSS.
- Ensure implementation of the PPOSS's recommendations and action plan.
- Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the PPOSS.
- Ensure that the PPS is kept up to date and refreshed.

Scope

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

- Cricket
- Football
- Rugby union
- Rugby league
- Hockey
- Bowls
- Tennis
- Netball
- Athletics
- Multi use games areas (MUGA) designed for formal sport such as basketball and netball.

For the non-pitch sports, (i.e., tennis, bowls, netball, athletics and MUGAs) included within the scope of this study, the supply and demand principles of Sport England Guidance: Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG) are followed to ensure the process is compliant with the NPPF. Please note that although this is less prescriptive than the PPS Guidance, the same approach is applied to provide a full supply and demand assessment for each sport.

Study area

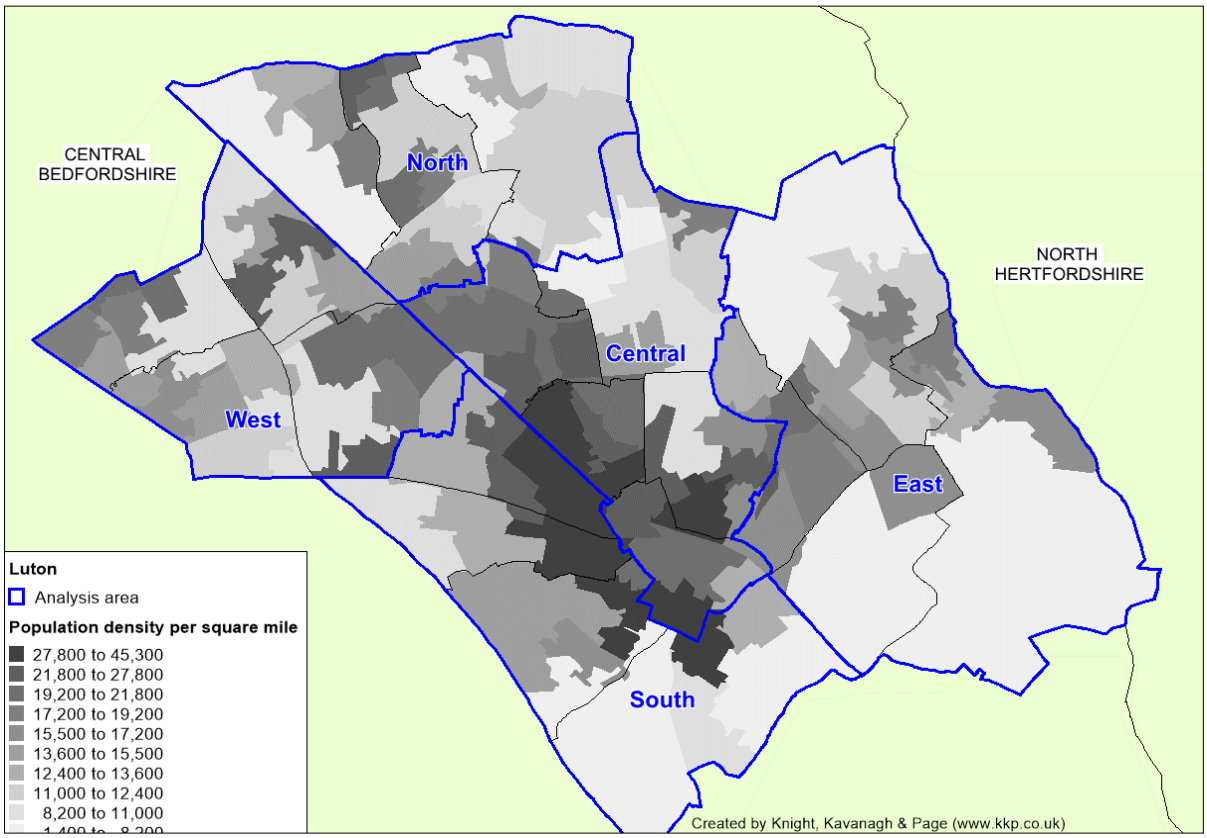
The study area will comprise the whole of Luton Borough Council's administrative area. The 2014 Luton PPOSS used five sub-analysis areas to produce localised assessments of demand.

These were as follows:

Table 1.2: Analysis area breakdown

Analysis area	Wards
Central	Barnfield, Biscot, Central, High Town, Saints
East	Round Green, Stopsley, Vauxhall, Wigmore
North	Bramingham, Northwell, Sundon Park
South	Beech Hill, Dallow, Farley, South
West	Challney, Leagrave, Lewsey, Poets

Figure 1.1: Luton analysis area breakdown



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.

1.4 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 Luton 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'.[2]

- ***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.

Although the statutory definition of a pitch is one that meets a minimum size of 0.2ha, this PPOSS takes into account smaller sized pitches that contribute to the supply side, for example, a site containing a mini 5v5 football pitch. This PPOSS 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 Luton; 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.

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

- ***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.

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 Luton 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.

Future demand/population growth

The current resident population in Luton is 213,528 (2020 MYE). By 2031 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Local Plan) Luton's population is projected to decrease to 204,718[3] representing an decrease of 8,810 (or equivalent to a percentage decrease of 4.1% according to ONS data.

The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan (Stage D) will also contain a housing growth scenario to test what additional demand will be generated throughout the Local Plan period.

Future demand

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).

1.5 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 Luton. 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.

[3] Source: ONS 2018-based projections 2018-2043.

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 and the ECB have set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality.

Table 1.3: Capacity of playing pitches

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

For tennis, the capacity of courts is determined by membership levels rather than through matches. The LTA suggests that a floodlit hard court can accommodate a membership of up to 60 members, whereas a non-floodlit hard court can accommodate a membership of up to 40 members. This varies for other court types (e.g. grass).

For all remaining non-pitch sports (i.e. bowls and netball) there are no nationally recognised capacity recommendations set out by NGBs. Instead, potential capacity is evaluated on a site by site basis following consultation and site assessments.

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 Luton This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues prior to development of the Strategy and Action Plan for Luton.

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.

PART 2: FOOTBALL PITCHES

2.1: Introduction

The organisation primarily responsible for the development of football in Luton is Bedfordshire 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.

Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)

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 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 Luton LFFP[4] was completed in 2019 and identifies 20 potential projects for investment which are outlined in this section and the 3G section of the report. The subsequent Strategy will go on to recommend any changes/update to these project lists.

[4] https://localplans.footballfoundation.org.uk/local-authorities-index/luton/luton-local-football-facility-plan/#tab-section-luton

Consultation

There is a total of 74 clubs identified as playing in Luton. The larger clubs in the Borough 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. The remaining clubs were issued an online survey which was distributed by KKP and Bedfordshire County FA. The following clubs were consulted with face to face:

- 61 FC
- Crawley Green FC
- Luton Celtic Youth FC
- Luton Sporting Club FC
- Luton Town Ladies FC
- Luton United FC
- Sacred Heart FC
- Stopsley United FC

Through both face-to-face consultation, survey responses and phone calls, an 80% team response rate has been achieved (54% of clubs).

2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a total of 152 grass football pitches in Luton across 64 sites. Of the pitches, 104 are available, at some level, for community use across 33 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites other than those located at Ely Way Open Space, Luton Town (The Brache) and Kenilworth Road, all three of which fall under the management of Luton Town FC. Table 2.13 provides a summary of all pitches across the Borough.

As presented in the table below, the East Analysis Area contains the most football pitches in Luton with 41 identified (equating to 26% of overall provision). In contrast, the South Analysis Area contains the least provision with 20 pitches identified (13% of overall provision).

Table 2.1: Summary of all grass football pitches

Analysis area	Number of pitches					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	7	2	8	4	4	**25**
East	11	6	8	8	8	**41**
North	15	4	5	8	8	**40**
South	11	0	2	6	1	**20**
West	6	2	3	12	3	**26**
Total	**50**	**14**	**26**	**38**	**24**	**152**

Of available pitches, 40 (38% of all available provision) are adult size which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches. This is not ideal for youth players at U13-U16 and is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

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

Analysis area	No. of pitches available for community use					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	6	2	8	3	2	**21**
East	10	6	7	4	6	**33**
North	13	3	3	4	6	**29**
South	7	0	1	2	1	**11**
West	4	1	0	4	1	**10**
Total	**40**	**12**	**19**	**17**	**16**	**104**

Of available pitches, 12 are of a youth 11v11 size representing 11% of the available supply, which is low in relation to the proportion of youth teams (64 teams – 31% 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

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 the case of Luton an adult pitch at Kent Athletic Sports and Social Club formerly accessed by Kent Athletic FC has been derelict since 2015 after the Club folded. The site holds particular relevance given the lack of Step compliant provision within Luton. Foxdell Recreation Ground has also been out of use for the 2022/23 season. The site provides two 7v7 and one 5v5 pitch that Bedfordshire FA confirms shall be re-instated for the following season.

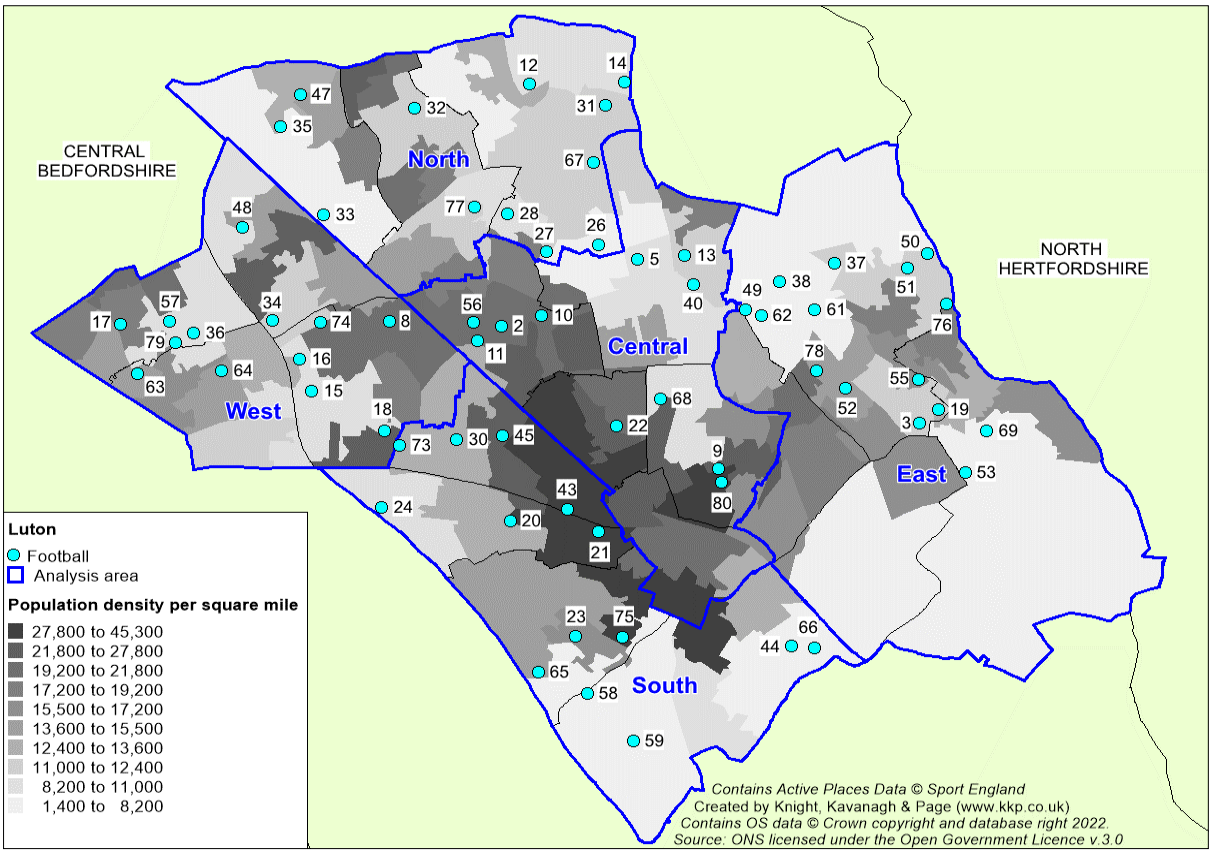
Bishopscote Recreation Ground currently provides one adult and two youth 9v9 pitches. Luton Borough Council confirm the site is outlined to be developed into a new school. As the PPS is capturing the 2022/23 season in which demand has been accommodated at the site, the purpose of the PPOSS the site is included within the existing stock of supply.

Future provision

Crawley Green FC is looking to regain an additional 5v5 pitch near the car park, at its home ground Crawley Green Recreation Ground after the pitch come out of use following the travelling community damaging the playing surface. Luton United FC also has ambitions to install a 5v5 pitch at Blundell Road Recreation Ground near the basketball court. Finally, an overarching plan to re-design the layout of Stockwood Park, a site currently featuring rugby, football, athletics, golf and lawn bowls shall be presented in the forthcoming strategy document (due to its future facility mix yet to be determined).

Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 overleaf identifies all football pitches servicing Luton. For a key to the map, see Table 2.13.

Figure 2.1: Football pitch locations



Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches across Luton have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) 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%).

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, two pitches are assessed as good quality, 37 as standard and 65 as poor. The two good quality pitches are located at Luton Sixth Form College.

Table 2.4: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
Central	2	0	4	0	1	9	0	1	4
East	0	4	6	0	2	11	0	4	6
North	0	6	7	0	2	4	0	4	6
South	0	5	2	0	0	1	0	3	1
West	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	3	2
Total	**2**	**17**	**21**	**0**	**5**	**26**	**0**	**15**	**18**

Poor quality non-technical audit scores are a result of issues relating to natural drainage problems, and basic maintenance regimes.

Of the 41 pitches located at unavailable education sites, just over half (53%) are deemed to be poor quality. This is due to the sites providing basic maintenance regimes (aligned to limited budgets) which broadly consist of general grass cutting and line marking as appropriate throughout the curricular year. When accounting for curricular use, extracurricular use and community demand, obvious signs of wear and tear become apparent.

Poor quality pitches available to the community are located at sites listed below. Some of these sites (identified in Table 2.13) also contain pitches which are standard quality.

- Alder Crescent Recreation Ground
- Bishopscote Recreational Ground[5]
- Blundell Road Recreational Ground
- Cardinal Newman Catholic School
- Chaul End Lane Open Space
- Denbigh High School
- Foxdell Recreation Ground
- Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground
- Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)
- Lealands High School
- Lewsey Park
- Lothair Road Recreation Ground
- Luton Regional Recreation Ground
- Luton Sixth Form College
- Raynham Way Recreation Ground
- Selsey Drive
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
- Stopsley High School
- The Chalk Hills Academy
- The Stockwood Park Academy

Consultation with Crawley Green FC highlights that pitch quality at Crawley Green Recreation Ground has improved noticeably following a maintenance grant from the Football Foundation in 2020 which enabled aerations, fertilisations and overseeding to take place. The Club state that pitch quality was previously poor but has now improved to standard. Ambitions for the site are to install a form of drainage for the 5v5 pitch that is being brought back to life and the adult pitch on site as to further improve quality.

Luton Celtic Youth FC, which export demand for several teams to Dunstable Queen Borough Academy, report that teams formerly accessed the Athletics track pitch at Stockwood Park for fixtures, but as of four years ago it decided to move from the site due to rising pitch hire rates and deteriorating quality of playing provision.

Luton Town Ladies FC report frustrations with motor bikes damaging the quality of pitches at Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground and shared general frustrations with the poor quality of the pitches provided at the site.

[5] See page 17 for detail regarding the future of the site.

Stopsley United FC access Raynham Way Recreation Ground for mini teams and raise frustrations with the fact that the goals at the site were not included the in Bedfordshire FA's enhancements of the goals across the Borough. The Club also requested that respect lines were added to the Raynham Way and Lothair Road Recreation Ground sites as to improve the overall experience for people accessing the site.

Finally, a consistent point shared by many clubs listed below throughout consultations is the frustrations with the perceived lack of investment into pitch maintenance by LBC, resulting in many sites across the Borough being deemed as of a poor quality. This was raised by the following clubs:

- 2TouchFC
- Athletico Luton FC
- Globe (Luton) FC
- Luton All Stars FC
- Luton Borough FC
- Luton Bulls FC
- Luton Phoenix FC
- Luton Sporting FC
- Luton Stallions FC
- Luton Town Ladies FC
- Luton United FC
- Newman United FC
- Real Luton FC
- Stopsley Sharks FC
- Stopsley United FC
- Warden FC

The FA's Pitch Improvement Strategy

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 have 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.

Grass Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP)

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).

PitchPower Assessment Tool

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. 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	
High	

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

Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund[6]

Following a Grass Pitch Assessment Report, clubs can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Clubs can also utilise the report as an evidence base to acquire potential funding streams to obtain the relevant maintenance equipment.

Once a Grass Pitch Assessment Report has been produced for the site, clubs are then eligible to apply for funding through the Football Foundation through the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF), a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help clubs enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 quality grass pitches by 2030. If a site is categorised as ‘poor’ or ‘basic’ then clubs can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good or standard quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

All applicants must have the required security of tenure and have received a PitchPower Pitch Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs, leagues, National League System Clubs at Steps 1-6 and charities (with an annual turnover of under £500,000).

[6] https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund

Local authorities are not currently eligible applicants, however clubs, leagues and charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure. Although local authorities are not presently eligible for the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund, the Football Foundation is currently exploring other options and ways in which it can support local authorities to improve Council managed provision. The FA confirms that local authorities can however apply for funding of equipment. It is presently inviting expressions of interest from local authorities across the Country to be part of a pilot programme for investment into pitches currently owned and managed in-house by local authorities.

In the case of Luton, three sites have recently received Pitch Power assessments, those being Stockwood Park, Stopsley Common (Lothair Road) Kingsway. The results of these were a mixture of Poor and Basic scores. 12 pitches scored poor (akin to a PPS score of poor) and eight basic (akin to a PPS score of standard).

The LFFP for Luton identifies ten sites for targeted pitch improvements. Prioritisation of these sites was based on a rationale of selecting sites with large numbers of pitches which are in poor condition; thus optimising impact on capacity. The ten selected sites are:

- Bishopscote Recreation Ground[7]
- Blundell Road Recreation Ground
- Crawley Green Recreation Ground
- Icknield Way Recreation Ground
- Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground
- Leagrave Park
- Lea Manor Recreation Centre
- Lewsey Park
- Stockwood Park
- Stopsley Common (Lothair Road)

Bishopscote Recreation Ground[8] features one adult and two 9v9 pitches, all of which, are of a poor quality. The site is accessed by Luton Allstars who raise frustrations with pitch quality across the Borough being an issue. As the site is outlined to be developed into a school by Luton Borough Council this site shall likely no longer be targeted for pitch improvements.

Blundell Road Recreation Ground features one of every pitch type, all of which, are poor quality and in need of enhancement. Given the variety of pitch scales provided it holds a greater importance to football within the Borough than majority of sites as it can accommodate demand for a full range of team age groups.

Crawley Green Recreation Ground has two adult, one youth 11v11, one mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5 pitches that are now of a standard quality following investment from the Football Foundation in 2020 which led to two aerations, two fertilisations and an overseed. Prior to this the quality of provision was poor, however, during consultation with the Club it reports that quality has improved. Icknield Way Recreation Ground has three adult and one youth 11v11 pitch that are all of a standard quality accessed by Luton Bulls, Luton Sporting Club and Real Luton. The action for the site is to enhance the existing playing and ancillary provision.

Lancaster Avenue is serviced by one of every youth and mini pitch format, all a poor quality. Consultation with Luton Town Ladies FC which accesses the site for fixtures stress the frustrations with the playing quality and also report issues of motorbikes damaging the pitches. Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) has six adult pitches, one youth 11v11 and one 7v7 pitch all of a poor quality and accessed by Luton Panthers FC, Sundon Athletic Youth FC, Sundon Park Rangers FC and Warden Hill Tigers FC. Given the large quantity of provision, enhancing the pitches at this site could better service the 22 teams currently accessing the site.

[7] See page 17 for detail regarding the future of the site.
[8] See page 17 for detail regarding the future of the site.

Lea Manor Recreation Centre has two adult, one 7v7 and one 5v5 pitch, all of which, are standard quality. The pitches are positioned alongside a 91m x 53m 3G pitch which caters for lots of training and match play demand for Luton Celtic YFC, Luton All Stars FC, Luton Stallions FC and St Joseph's FC, giving the site an important presence within the Borough. Lewsey Park features three adult, one youth 11v11 and one 5v5 pitch which is all of a poor quality. The recommendation is to enhance the playing pitches and accompanying poor quality ancillary provision.

Stockwood Park has five standard quality adult pitches that have been outlined for pitch improvements.
As already referred to, the upcoming strategy report shall feature detailed discussions regarding the future layout of the multi-sport site and how this shall affect not only football but demand for other sports. Finally, Stopsley Common (Lothair Road) has ten pitches of various formats, making it one of the largest sites within the Borough. All pitches provided are of a poor quality and consultations with Stopsley United stress the frustrations with pitch quality at the site.

The forthcoming PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will determine if the list of priority sites in the LFFP requires amendment and whether there is a case to include new sites or remove sites based on assessed demand.

Ancillary facilities

Similar to football pitches, the quality of ancillary facilities in Luton has been assessed via a combination of site visits and user consultation.

The ancillary facility rating is primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site accompanied by their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated official and spectator facilities and boundary fencing. Whilst not related to the determined quality rating, there is also an opportunity to develop ancillary facilities with greater energy efficiency as to work towards Luton's goal of being a carbon neutral town.

Table 2.5 presents a quality summary of provision at sites which provide dedicated changing rooms and pavilions. Education sites are not included in the list as none are considered to provide dedicated changing facilities for the benefit of community football.

Table 2.5: Summary of ancillary facility quality

Site ID	Site name	Management	Ancillary facility quality
9	Bells Close Recreation Ground	Council	Standard
11	Blundell Road Recreation Ground	Council	Poor
18	Chaul End Lane Open Space	Council	Poor
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	Council	Standard
24	Foxdell Recreation Ground	Council	Standard
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	Council	Poor
30	Kingsway Recreation Ground	Sports Club	Standard
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	Council	Standard
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	Council	Good
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	Council	Poor
36	Lewsey Park	Council	Poor
37	Lothair Road Recreation Ground	Council	Poor

Site ID	Site name	Management	Ancillary facility quality
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	Council	Poor
43	Luton Town FC (Kenilworth Road)	Sports Club	Good
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	Sports Club	Good
53	Raynham Way Recreation Ground	Council	Good
58	Stockwood Park	Council	Poor
59	Stockwood Park Athletics Centre	Council	Good
68	Wardown Park	Council	Good
74	Ely Way Open Space	Sports Club	Standard

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.
In the case of Alder Crescent Recreation, Bishopscote Recreational Ground[9] and Selsey Drive, each site has been excluded from Table 2.5 as they do not have any form of ancillary provision.

The LFFP for Luton identifies eight sites which require refurbishment or replacement to suitably accommodate high levels of affiliated football demand. These are Crawley Green Recreation Ground, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground, Leagrave Park, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Lewsey Park, Stockwood Park and Stopsley Common (Lothair Road). The sites outlined are serviced by dated poor quality ancillary provision that need modernising to improve the overall experience whilst visiting the site.

To provide further context, the ancillary provision provided at Leagrave Park is a 1970's building with four changing rooms of varying sizes and one communal shower space, making it unfit for cross gender use. Access to toilets is also an issue shared by users at this site. Icknield Way Recreation Ground has five poor quality changing rooms with no natural light, two separate rooms for showers and no accompanying kitchen. Lancaster Avenue features two changing rooms with one communal shower space. The site is accessed by Luton Town Ladies FC and Luton Town Ladies CC of which the former raise improper ancillary provision as the biggest issue it faces.

Lewsey Park features poor quality ancillary provision in the form of a 1970's building to service its heavily accessed five pitches of various scales. Crawley Green Recreation Ground is serviced by six changing rooms with internal showers and a kitchen. Consultation with Crawley Green FC raise issues with the amount of storage and suitable parking available at the site. Stockwood Park features poor quality changing provision accompanying the five adult football pitches.

Consultation with Luton Stallions FC, Someries Youth FC, Luton Celtic Youth FC, Luton Allstars FC, Stopsley United FC and Luton Sporting FC all raise frustrations with the lack of available toilets at several council sites across the Borough, something that is particularly an issue for girls' members.

61 FC has freehold ownership of its clubhouse which features two poor quality changing rooms. The home changing room requires a new internal roof as it leaks during winter, whilst the away changing is once again operational following work after a fire that took place in 2018.

Luton United FC is in the process of acquiring freehold ownership for the clubhouse accompanying Blundell Road Recreation Ground.

[9] See page 17 for detail regarding the future of the site.

The poor-quality provision features two changing rooms and toilets. Following the Club being granted ownership of provision it hopes to enhance the changing rooms, convert one set of toilets into a café and renovate the disabled toilet into referee changing. The Club also want a storage container on the back of the clubhouse as it currently stores equipment in the changing rooms.

Crawley Green FC access Crawley Green Recreation Ground which is accompanied by six changing rooms with internal showers. The Club has experienced issues with the boiler which has now been turned off permanently, the roller shutters preventing unauthorised access need replacing and the site has a general lack of storage, resulting in the Club reluctantly using changing rooms for storage. Parking is also an issue for the site.

St Joseph's FC state the changing rooms at Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) need enhancement following vandalism/damage. Stopsley United FC which access Raynham Way Recreation Ground for fixtures and are not granted any form of access to the on-site community centre, meaning parents and players cannot access any form of toilets or changing rooms at the site. The Club also presented a large building foundation at Luton Regional Recreation Ground with the potential of installing a form of new ancillary provision, something the Club is also in need of as it currently caters for 30 teams without access to a clubhouse.

Bedfordshire FA aims and objectives

In conjunction with the LFFP, Bedfordshire FA has outlined short-, medium- and long-term goals for football across the Borough of Luton.

In the short term, Bedfordshire FA has an aspiration that by September 2023 it can enhance the quality of pitches; improve the accompanying ancillary provision at council sites referring to both changing rooms and toilet quality as well as the external experience; develop hub sites to provide shared use grounds that feature accompanying tea's bars and refreshments; improve toilet availability at all sites with changing rooms and to provide Regional Feeder League facilities at a minimum of two sites. A goal of replacing all non-compliant goalposts on all football hub sites was also outlined and was conducted across the Borough during the winter of 2021.

For medium term goals, there is the aim to undertake continual maintenance and improvements of the facilities outlined in the short term and identify potential sites for further investment. Finally, a long term ambition for the Borough is to deliver a stadia 3G pitch that meets ground grading stipulations at both Step 5 and Step 6, something that is discussed further in the upcoming 3G section. Through outlining these short medium and long term goals, Bedfordshire FA hopes to improve the overall football experience within Luton through tackling a wide range of issues from toilet accessibility to a stadia 3G pitch capable of reaching Step 5 ground grading.

Security of tenure

Most teams in Luton are assigned pitches by the league in which they compete in. The tenure of these sites is secure as they shall remain accessible for use by the general public for the lifespan of the PPOSS. An example to this is 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.

Of education sites, ten are used for competitive football. In total, affiliated football use at education sites equates to 51 teams. In addition to this, many schools do not allow community access to their respective pitches at all, these are listed overleaf.

- Queen Elizabeth School
- Barnfield College
- Beechwood Primary School
- Bramingham Primary Academy
- Bushmead Primary School
- Chantry Primary Academy
- Dallow Primary School
- Downside Primary School
- Hillborough Junior School
- Icknield High School
- Icknield Primary School
- Leagrave Primary School
- Maidenhall Primary School
- Peaklea Primary School
- Pirton Hill Primary School
- Putteridge High School
- Putteridge Primary School
- Ramridge Primary School
- Sacred Heart Primary School
- Someries Junior School
- Southfield Primary School
- St Martin De Porres Primary School
- St Matthews Primary School
- Stopsley Community Primary School
- The Ferrars Academy
- The Meads Primary School
- Wigmore Primary School

In Luton, no schools are identified as having formal community use agreements for access to their respective playing fields.

Football pyramid demand

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. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirement for Step 1 clubs and H being the requirement for Step 6 clubs. Please refer to the FA website[10] for the full specifications for each.

In Luton, there is one club which compete in the NLS, that being Crawley Green (Step 5). In addition, 61 FC resemble the only Club competing within regional feeder league. Finally, Luton Town FC resemble the highest performing Club within the Borough which at the time of writing is currently competing within the Premier League (the highest tier of the English football pyramid).

Table 2.6: Non-league football teams in Luton:

Team	League	Level
Crawley Green FC	South Midlands Football League Premier Division	Step 5
61 FC	South Midlands Football League Division 2 (*Regional Feeder League*)	Regional Feeder League

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

[10] http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading

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 floodlit pitch with hardstanding areas for fans, turnstiles for fan entry and therefore all the clubs currently at this level in Luton would require a serious overhaul of their existing sites to meet the relevant criteria.

In the case of 61 FC, if promoted, the Club would have to relocate from the site it has played at since 1972 at Kingsway Beverley Road, as there would be the need to enclose the ground, something that would not be able to be achieved at the site given its layout.

As earlier mentioned, Bedfordshire FA aspires to see a further stadia site provided to Step 5 requirements in Luton to allow for progression of clubs such as 61 FC, but also others which operate just below the regional feeder league which may also want to improve on their performance standard incoming years. The current lack of a stadia facility offer (or potentially to accommodate one on existing sites) is restrictive to growth of performance football.

Women's National League System

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 2.7: 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.

In the case of Luton, Luton Town Ladies FC compete in tier five of the women's regional feeder league and therefore has basic facility requirements. However, any progression will put pressure on the Club to find an alternate ground, undertake ground improvements or to relocate entirely. Luton Borough Council and the FA is working towards delivering some regional feeder league compliant facilities along with a Step 5 compliant site.

2.3: Demand

Through the audit and assessment, 218 teams from 74 clubs are identified as playing in Luton. This consists of 52 adult men's, three adult women's, 94 youth boys', seven youth girls' and 62 mini mixed teams.

The North Analysis Area provides for the highest number of teams, with 85. The Analysis Area with the fewest number of teams is West, with 13 teams identified as operating within this area of Luton.

Table 2.8: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in Luton

Analysis area	Number of teams					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	6	8	8	4	1	**28**
East	4	20	13	13	9	**59**
North	19	28	13	17	8	**85**
South	18	7	1	5	3	**34**
West	8	3	0	0	2	**13**
Total	**55**	**66**	**35**	**39**	**23**	**218**

Mini youth 11v11 football is the most prominent format of play, whilst mini 5v5 is the least common.

Women's and girls' demand

There are 16 dedicated women/girls' teams across four clubs playing in Luton, representing just 7% of the total number of teams. These are provided at the following clubs:

- Luton Celtic Youth FC
- Luton Town Ladies FC
- Luton Town FC
- Stopsley United Youth FC

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 2022 UEFA Women's Euros scheduled to be held in the UK and England playing in Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, the legacy plan of the event is set to significantly develop women's and girls' football across the country. Bedfordshire County FA will be working to use this event as a catalyst for an increase in localised participation in Luton.

Exported demand/imported

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

In total, there are four clubs and 21 teams accessing provision outside of Luton for matchday purposes, those being Sacred Heart Youth FC, Luton Villa FC, Luton All Stars and Luton Celtic Youth FC.

The four clubs access provision provided at Offley Sports and Social Club (Hitchin), Creasey Park (Central Bedfordshire), Luton Road Recreation Ground (Central Bedfordshire), Dunstable Queensbury Academy (Central Bedfordshire) and Barton Rovers (Central Bedfordshire).

All four clubs express no specific desire to relocate back into Luton specifically due to the relatively small drive times from players homes.

Latent demand

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 2.9: Latent demand summary

Club	Need for more match pitches	Need for more/better training facilities	Need for better/more appropriate changing provision
2Touch FC		X	X
Athletico Luton FC	X	X	X
Crawley Green FC	X	X	
Luton All Stars	X		X
Luton Bulls FC	X	X	X
Luton Celtic Youth FC	X	X	X
Luton Nations			X
Luton Panthers FC	X	X	X
Luton Phoenix FC			X
Luton Sporting FC		X	X
Luton Stallions FC	X	X	X
Luton Town Ladies FC	X	X	X
Luton United FC		X	X
Newman United FC	X	X	
Real Luton FC		X	X
Sacred Heart Youth FC		X	X
St Joseph's FC		X	X
St Joseph's Youth FC		X	
Stopsley Sharks FC	X	X	X
Stopsley United FC		X	X
Sundon Athletic FC		X	
Think Sport Thunder FC	X	X	X
Warden FC			X

As can be seen by Table 2.9, the greatest issue identified is the lack of training facilities located within Luton, with 19 clubs stressing this as a major problem. Several clubs also made reference to the lack of pitches and poor ancillary provision impacting upon the possibility of expanding.

Unmet demand

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. No unmet demand was expressed by responsive clubs.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and by using population forecasts.
Participation increases

There are 20 clubs which report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. In total, these potential demand increases would lead to the creation of 55 teams (if aspirations are realised).

Table 2.10: Potential team increases identified by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions[11]
Athletico Luton FC	North	1x U13 boys 1x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	1
		1x U11 boys 1x U12 boys	Youth 9v9	1
Crawley Green FC	East	2 x U7 mixed 2x U8 mixed	Mini 5v5	2
		2 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	1
Luton All Stars FC	North	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
		1x U16 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Luton Bulls FC	North	1 x adult mens	Adult	0.5
		1 x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Luton Celtic Youth FC	South	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
Luton Nations FC	North	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
Luton Panthers FC	North	1 x adult men	Adult	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
		1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
Luton Sporting FC	Central	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U12 girls 1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	1
Luton Stallions FC	North	1 x U8 mixed 1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	1
Luton Town Ladies FC	North	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
Luton United FC	Central	1 x adult mens	Adult	0.5
		1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
Newman United FC	South	1 x adult men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x U14 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Real Luton FC	North	1 x U8 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
Smart	South	1x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5
St Joseph's Youth FC	Central	1 x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		1 x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	0.5

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

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions[11]
Stopsley Sharks FC	East	1 x U14 boys 1x U13 girls	Youth 11v11	1
		2 x U11 boys 1 x U11 girls	Youth 9v9	1.5
		2x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	1
Stopsley United FC	East	1 x U6 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
Sundon Park Rangers FC	North	1x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		2x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	1
		1x U12 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
		1x U13 boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Think Sport Thunder FC	North	1x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5
		2x U9 mixed	Mini 7v7	1
Warden AFC	North	1 x adult men's	Adult	0.5
		1 x U11 boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
		1x U7 mixed	Mini 5v5	0.5

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

Table 2.11: Potential increases by analysis area

Analysis area	Future demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals
Central	0.5	-	1	1	1.5	**4**
East	-	1	1.5	2	2.5	**7**
North	1.5	2.5	3	4	3	**14**
South	0.5	0.5	-	1	0.5	**2.5**
West	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Total	**2.5**	**4**	**5.5**	**8**	**7.5**	**27.5**

Population increases

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 2031 (in line with current Luton Local Plan timeline).

Table 2.12: Team generation rates (2031)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams[12]	Team Generation Rate (TGR)	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams (2031)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (16-45)	44,263	54	1:820	40,143	49	0
Senior Women (16-45)	39,828	3	1:13,276	34,392	3	0
Youth Boys (12-15)	8,982	68	1:132	9,608	72	4
Youth Girls (12-15)	8,221	9	1:913	8,997	9	0
Youth Boys (10-11)	3,203	38	1:84	2,718	32	0
Youth Girls (10-11)	3,121	4	1:780	2,882	4	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (8-9)	6,926	39	1:178	5,918	33	0
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-7)	7,064	24	1:294	5,495	18	0

As seen above, based on ONS projections, it is forecasted that there will be an increase in football demand equivalent to four junior boys' teams. When broken down by analysis area (to produce a more localised view on where growth will be established) this growth specifically equates to two junior boys' team, as its expected residual growth will adjoin pre-existing teams, as opposed to enough demand being generated to create new additional teams. This growth is anticipated to be in the North and East analysis areas. There are no expected increases in other age groups.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that this predicted level of growth is exclusively based on future population forecasts and does not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport.

Similarly, they cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focus towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus on developing female participation within Luton 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 be absorbed within the increases.

FA Wildcats centres

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 Luton, Wildcat centres are run by Luton United FC Crawley Green FC and Stopsley United FC.

[12] Age group team numbers differ from Table 2.7 as forecasts are based on age rather than playing format. U17 and U18 teams affiliate to their respective County FA as juniors, however, are generally considered to play on and require adult pitches and are considered by age boundaries to be in the adult age group

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 summary

On the balance that population forecasts anticipate the creation of only two junior boys' team, the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report shall only include future demand identified through participation increases due to the large increases expressed by clubs (and that the growth of two team will be captured within team aspirations)

In total 20 football clubs outline plans to increase the number of teams they currently provide over the lifespan of the PPOSS, which will contribute to an additional demand for facilities. As such, future demand equates to the growth of 55 teams.

The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development.

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 Luton:

Adult pitches		Youth pitches		Mini pitches	
Pitch quality	**Matches per week**	**Pitch quality**	**Matches per week**	**Pitch quality**	**Matches per week**
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

Table 2.13 applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play to determine a capacity rating as follows:

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

Education sites

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 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 Luton, one match equivalent session 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.

Informal use

Most 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 Lewsey Park, that there will be a higher level of demand on each pitch (from informal use) over and above that identified.

Peak time

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 Luton, the peak time for adult football is Saturday afternoon and for all other formats of football it is Saturday mornings.

Table 2.13: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size[13]	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity[14] (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
2	Alder Crescent Recreation Ground	-	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0	1	1	0	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
							9v9	1		0	1	1	0	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
3	Queen Elizabeth School	-Crawley Green Youth FC	East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	2	Standard	2	4	2	0	Capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							9v9	1		2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
							5v5	1		1	4	3	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
9	Bells Close Recreation Ground	-	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	11v11	1	Poor	0	1	1	0	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
10	Bishopscote Recreation Ground[15]	-Luton Allstars FC -Smart FC	Central	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	At capacity.
							9v9	2		0.5	2	1.5	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
11	Blundell Road Recreation Ground	-Luton United FC	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	1.5	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
							11v11	1		2	1	1	0	Overplayed by 1 MES.
							9v9	1		1	1	-	-	At capacity.
							7v7	1		1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							5v5	1		0.5	2	1.5	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
14	Cardinal Newman School	-Think Sport Thunder FC	North	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	At capacity.
							9v9	1		2.5	1	1.5	0	Overplayed by 1.5 MES.
							7v7	1		2	2	-	0	At capacity.
							5v5	2		3	4	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
15	Challney High School for Boys	-	West	Yes	School	Unsecure	7v7	3	Standard	3	12	9	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
16	Challney High School for Girls	-	West	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
18	Chaul End Lane Open Space		West	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	-	1	1	0	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	-Crawley Green FC -Crawley Green YFC	East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	2	Standard	1.5	4	2.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
							11v11	1		4	2	2	0	Overplayed by 2 MES.
							7v7	1		1.5	4	2.5	-	No actual spare capacity.
							5v5	2		2	8	6	-	No actual spare capacity.
22	Denbigh High School	-Luton Sporting Club FC	Central	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	At capacity.
23	Farley Junior School	-	South	Yes	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Standard	1	4	3	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							5v5	1		1	4	3	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

[13] Pitch sizes in brackets denotes overmarked pitches
[14] Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.
[15] See page 17 for detail regarding the future of the site.

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size[13]	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity[14] (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	-Catsbrook Wanderers FC -Luton Athletic FC -Luton Bulls FC -Luton Sporting Club FC -Real Luton FC	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	3	Standard	1	6	5	2	Actual spare capacity of 2 MES.
							11v11	1		2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 MES.
30	Kingsway Recreation Ground	-2touch Football Club -Brim & Crown Luton FC -61 FC	South	Yes	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	2	-	0	Pitch played at capacity.
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	-Luton Town Ladies FC	North	Yes	Council	Secure	11v11	1	Standard	2	2	-	0	Pitch played at capacity. Pitch rated as basic in Pitch Power report.
							9v9	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
							7v7	1		1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							5v5	1		0.5	2	0.5	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	-Accessed by 12 clubs and 29 teams	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Poor	7	3	4	0	Overplayed by 4 MES.
								1	Standard					
							7v7	1		3	4	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							5v5	1		0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	-Accessed by 13 clubs and 22 teams	North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	6	Poor	5.5	6	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
							11v11	1		3	1	2	0	Overplayed by 2 MES.
							7v7	1		1.5	2	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
35	Lealands High School	-Denbigh Veterans FC	North	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
							9v9	1		1	1	-	0	Pitch played at capacity through curricular demand.
36	Lewsey Park	-AC Cadoza FC -Club Lewsey FC -Kingsbury Luton FC -Luton Stallions FC -Luton Turk Rangers FC Sporting Lewsey Park FC	West	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	2	4	2	0	No actual spare capacity. Pitch rated as basic in Pitch Power report.
								2	Poor					
							11v11	1		2	1	1	0	Overplayed by 1 MES.
							5v5	1		0	2	2	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
37	Lothair Road Recreation Ground	-Luton Sporting Club FC -Stopsley Sharks FC	East	Yes	Council	Secure	11v11	3	Poor	3	3	-	0	Pitches played at capacity.
							9v9	3		2	3	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							7v7	2		1	4	3	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size[13]	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity[14] (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
		-Stopsley United FC -Stopsley United YFC					5v5	2		0	4	4	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	-AFC Awareness -Inspire Athletic FC -Luton Borough Dragons FC Stopsley United YFC	East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	3	Poor	1.5	3	1.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
							11v11	2		1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							9v9	3		2	3	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
40	Luton Sixth Form College	-Luton Sixth Form College FC -St Joseph's FC -St Joseph's YFC -Stopsley Park FC -Warden AFC	Central	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	2	Good	3.5	6	2.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
							9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Played at capacity.
47	Parklea Primary School	-Sundon Park Rangers FC	North	Yes	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Poor	1.5	4	2.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
							5v5	1		1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
53	Raynham Way Recreation Ground	-Stopsley United YFC	East	Yes	Council	Secure	7v7	1	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 MES
							5v5	1		4	2	2	0	Overplayed by 2 MES.
56	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	-St Joseph's YFC	Central	Yes	School	Unsecure	9v9	2	Poor	1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
							7v7	1		0.5	2	1.5	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
							5v5	1		0	2	2	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
58	Stockwood Park	-Accessed by 12 clubs and 15 teams	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	3	Standard	7.5	8	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
								2	Poor					
59	Stockwood Park Athletics Centre	-Luton Celtic YFC -YP Community First FC	South	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
62	Stopsley High School	-	East	Yes	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Pitch is played at capacity.
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	-	West	Yes	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	No actual spare capacity.
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	-	South	Yes	Council	Secure	9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Played at capacity
67	Warden Hill Infant School	-	North	Yes	School	Unsecure	5v5	2	Standard	1	8	7	0	No actual spare capacity due to unsecure tenure.

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size[13]	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity[14] (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
68	Wardown Park	-	Central	Yes	Council	Secure	9v9	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
							7v7	1	Standard	0	4	4	1	Un-used pitch, actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
75	Hillborough Junior School	-Luton Celtic YFC	South	Yes	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Standard	2.5	4	1.5	0	No actual spare capacity.
76	Selsey Drive	-	East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult	2	Poor	0	2	2	0	Actual spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
5	Barnfield College	-	Central	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
8	Beechwood Primary School	-	West	No	School	Unsecure	9v9	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
12	Bramingham Primary School	-	North	No	School	Unsecure	11v11	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
13	Bushmead Primary School	-	Central	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Standard	1	4	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							5v5	1		1	4	3	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
17	Chantry Primary Academy		West	No	School	Unsecure	5v5	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
21	Dallow Primary School		South	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Standard	1	8	7	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
26	Icknield High School		North	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	2	Standard	2	4	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							9v9	2		2	4	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
27	Icknield Primary School		North	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
34	Leagrave Primary School		West	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Standard	2	8	6	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
43	Luton Town FC (Kenilworth Road)		South	No	Sports Club	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	2	3	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	-Crawley Green FC -Luton Town Ladies FC	South	No	Sports Club	Secure	Adult	2	Good	1	6	5	-	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
45	Maidenhall Primary School		South	No	School	Unsecure	9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
48	Pirton Hill Primary School		West	No	School	Unsecure	9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							7v7	1		1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
50	Putteridge High School		East	No	School	Unsecure	Adult	1	Standard	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
51	Putteridge Primary School		East	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Standard	2	8	6	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
52	Ramridge Primary School		East	No	School	Unsecure	9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
55	Someries Junior School		East	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

Site ID	Site	Clubs accessing site	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch size[13]	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Pitch capacity[14] (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
57	St Martin De Porres Primary School		West	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							5v5	1		1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
61	Stopsley Community Primary School		East	No	School	Unsecure	5v5	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
64	The Ferrars Academy		West	No	School	Unsecure	9v9	1	Poor	1	1	-	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
69	Wigmore Primary School			No	School	Unsecure	5v5	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
73	Downside Primary School		South	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Standard	2	4	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
74	Ely Way Open Space		West	No	Sports Club	Unsecure	Adult	1	Good	1	3	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							11v11	1		1	4	3	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							7v7	2		2	12	10	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
77	The Meads Primary School		North	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
							5v5	1		1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
78	Sacred Heart Primary School		East	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
79	Southfield Primary School		West	No	School	Unsecure	7v7	2	Poor	2	4	2	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
80	St Matthews Primary School		Central	No	School	Unsecure	5v5	1	Poor	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

Spare capacity

To determine 'actual spare capacity', each site with 'potential capacity identified in Table 2.13 has been reviewed. A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting this criterion has consequently been discounted.

There may also be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for high level match play, such as at stadia sites like Luton Town FC (Kenilworth Road).

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 Luton. It totals five match equivalent sessions and is identified across eight pitches at four sites. This represents comparatively minimal levels.

Table 2.14: Summary of actual spare capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	Adult	2	0.5
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	Adult	3	2
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	5v5	1	0.5
68	Wardown Park	Central	9v9	1	1
			7v7	1	1

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

Table 2.15: Summary of actual spare capacity

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central	-	-	1	1	-
East	0.5	-	-	-	-
North	2	-	-	-	0.5
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**2.5**	**-**	**1**	**1**	**0.5**

In addition to the above, it is worthy of note that 38.5 match equivalent sessions of potential spare capacity at community use sites has been discounted due to either sites having unsecure tenure or poor pitch quality.

Overplay

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, 11 pitches across nine sites are identified as being overplayed. Total overplay equates to 15 match equivalent sessions per week. There is no overplay identified on adult pitches.

Table 2.16: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (sessions)
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	9v9	1	0.5
11	Blundell Road Recreation Ground	Central	11v11	1	1
14	Cardinal Newman School	North	9v9	1	1.5
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	11v11	1	2
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	11v11	1	0.5
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	Adult	2	4
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	11v11	1	2
36	Lewsey Park	West	11v11	1	1
53	Raynham Way Recreation Ground	East	7v7	1	0.5
			5v5	1	2

Table 2.17: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central	-	1	-	-	-
East	-	2	0.5	0.5	2
North	4	2.5	1.5	-	-
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	1	-	-	-
Total	**4**	**6.5**	**2**	**0.5**	**2**

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.

Total future demand in Luton accounts for participation increases. As a reminder, 20 clubs' report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide equating to a potential growth of 55 teams. TGRs attributing to the growth of two junior boys' teams have been discounted, therefore the combined future demand equates to 55 teams for all age brackets.

The table below highlights the position of adult pitch provision in Luton.

On a boroughwide basis, there is a current insufficient capacity of adult provision to accommodate for both existing and future demand. There are, however, small pockets of spare capacity in the East Analysis Area for both current and future demand.

Adult pitch analysis

Table 2.18: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[16]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	-	-	-	0.5	0.5
East	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
North	2	4	2	1.5	3.5
South	-	-	-	0.5	0.5
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**2.5**	**4**	**1.5**	**2.5**	**4**

Youth 11v11 pitch analysis

Table 2.19: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[17]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	-	1	**1**	-	**1**
East	-	2	**2**	1	**3**
North	-	2.5	**2.5**	2.5	**5**
South	-	-	-	0.5	**0.5**
West	-	1	**1**	-	**1**
Total	**-**	**6.5**	**6.5**	**4**	**10.5**

The current picture is that there is an insufficient supply of provision of youth 11v11 pitches in Luton to accommodate existing demand with only the South Analysis Area not showing overplay. This shortfall is exacerbated once future demand is considered and results in all five analysis areas showing overplay.

Youth 9v9 pitch analysis

Table 2.20: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[18]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	1	-	**1**	1	-
East	-	0.5	**0.5**	1.5	**2**
North	-	1.5	**1.5**	3	**4.5**
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**1**	**2**	**1**	**5.5**	**6.5**

[16] In match equivalent sessions
[17] In match equivalent sessions
[18] In match equivalent sessions

Overall, there is sufficient supply of youth 9v9 pitches in Luton to accommodate current and demand despite the North and East analysis areas showing overplay. When considering future demand, the overall provision is no longer played to capacity and overplay of 6.5 match equivalent sessions is present, despite spare capacity existing in the Central Analysis Area.

Mini 7v7 pitch analysis

Table 2.21: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[19]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	1	-	1	1	-
East	-	0.5	0.5	2	2.5
North	-	-	-	4	4
South	-	-	-	1	1
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**1**	**0.5**	**0.5**	**8**	**7.5**

The table above shows that there is a sufficient supply on mini 7v7 pitches in Luton to accommodate current and future levels of demand, excluding the East Analysis Area which currently has overplay of 0.5 MES. There is an overall shortfall of 7.5 MES caused by future demand of 8 MES.

Mini 5v5 pitch analysis

Table 2.22: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[20]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	-	-	-	1.5	1.5
East	-	2	2	2.5	4.5
North	0.5	-	0.5	3	2.5
South	-	-	-	0.5	0.5
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**0.5**	**2**	**1.5**	**7.5**	**9**

The table above shows that there is insufficient supply on mini 5v5 pitches in Luton to accommodate current levels of demand. Following future demand through club aspirations, shortfalls are exacerbated to nine MES.

2.6: Conclusion

Having considered supply and demand position of each format of football pitch it is evident that the overall position is broadly an insufficient supply of provision in the Borough.

Currently, all formats of play cannot be accommodated, except mini 7v7 teams where there is some spare capacity shown. When accounting for future demand shortfalls on all pitch types. Overall and taking all pitch formats into account, the future total is a shortfall of 33.5 MES as shown below. A shortfall is also identified for facilities capable of accommodating football within the National League pyramid, with the need in place to install a Step 5 compliant site within the Borough.

[19] In match equivalent sessions
[20] In match equivalent sessions

Table 2.23: Summary of supply and demand in Luton

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity[21]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	2.5	4	1.5	2.5	4
Youth 11v11	-	6.5	6.5	4	10.5
Youth 9v9	1	2	1	5.5	6.5
Mini 7v7	1	0.5	0.5	8	7.5
Mini 5v5	0.5	2	1.5	7.5	9
Total	5	15	10	27.5	37.5

Football – grass pitch summary

- The current supply of football provision is broadly insufficient in accommodating football demand on all pitch types other than mini 7v7 pitches where some spare capacity is identified.
- Future demand reduces spare capacity on mini 7v7 pitches and causes all pitch types to be overplayed by a combined figure of 37.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Grass football pitch supply:

- The audit identifies a total of 153 grass football pitches across 64 sites. Of these, 104 are available, at some level, for community use across 33 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites with the exception to Kenilworth Road (Luton Town FC), Luton Town (The Brache) and Ely Way Open Space all of which are managed by Luton Town FC with a license to operate under Luton Borough Council.

Grass football pitch quality:

- Of the 104 pitches which offer community use, two pitches are assessed as good quality, 37 as standard quality and 65 as poor quality. The identified good quality pitches are located at the well-maintained school grounds of Luton Sixth Form College.

Affiliated football demand:

- Through the audit and assessment, 218 teams from 74 clubs are identified as playing in Luton. This consists of 52 adult men's, three adult women's, 94 youth boys', 7 youth girls' and 62 mini mixed teams.
- Future demand equates to the growth of 55 teams, based on club aspirations. Team Generation Rates of one youth boys' team has been discounted.
- The PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for football arising from housing development.

Supply vs demand analysis conclusions:

- There is broadly a sufficient supply of provision in Luton to accommodate demand mini 7v7 pitch types.
- There are existing shortfalls on adult, youth 11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 5v5 pitches. This has been further emphasised by youth league members in additional youth 11v11 pitch requirements and the transition of youth teams moving from youth 9v9 to youth 11v11 pitch scales.
- Future demand reduces available capacity and creates shortfalls on all pitch types totalling 37.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- There is also a shortfall of step compliant facilities within Luton, with a Step 5 compliant site within the Borough required as to adequately cater for the progression of national league football.

[21] In match equivalent sessions

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[22]. 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 6: 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'[23], 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)[24] 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 PPOSS as 3G pitches can be and are used for other sports including rugby union, rugby league, lacrosse and American football, amongst others.

[22] Football Foundation | 3G Pitch Register
[23] https://www.world.rugby/handbook/regulations/reg-22/
[24] Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey

3.2: Current provision

A full size 3G pitch is considered by the FA to measure at least 100 x 64 metres (106 x 70 metres including run offs); however, for the purposes of this report, all pitches measuring over 100 x 60 metres (inclusive of run offs) are considered to be full size due to the amount of demand they can accommodate.

On the above basis, there are four full size 3G pitch provided in Luton. There are also 18 small sided pitches of varying scales located within the area, majority of which are located at education and commercially operated 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	Number of pitches	Floodlit?
Full size							
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	Yes	103m x 60m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	South	No	110m x 74m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	West	Yes	100m x 65m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	Yes	100m x 62m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
Small sided							
20	Dallow Learning Community Centre	South	Yes	35m x 16m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
22	Denbigh High School	Central	Yes	52m x 33.5m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	Yes	91m x 53m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
35	Lealands High School	North	Yes	55m x 30m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	South	No	36m x 30m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	2	Yes
49	Power League (Luton)	East	Yes	40m x 30m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	2	Yes
				30m x 20m		6	
66	Venue 360	South	Yes	36m x 18m	Medium Pile 3G (55mm-60mm)	1	Yes
				35m x 17m		3	

Of the 22 3G pitches across Luton, 19 are available for community use, with floodlights accompanying every pitch and no instances of schools having provision for curricular purposes only. The full size and two small sided pitches not available for community use are located at Luton Town FC (The Brache) which exist purely to serve Luton Town FC and both Crawley Green FC and Luton Town Ladies FC which both have formal links with the professional club.

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
Full size						
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	Yes	Full size	School	18:00-22:00 Monday to Friday. 09:00-22:00 weekends
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	South	No	Full size	Sports Club	No community use
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	West	Yes	Full size	School	17:30-22:00 Monday-Thursday. 17:30-19:30 Fridays. 08:30-17:00 on weekends.
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	Yes	Full size	School	17:30-22:00 Monday-Friday 08:30-18:00 on weekends.
Small sided						
20	Dallow Learning Community Centre	South	Yes	35m x 16m	Registered charity	No fixed opening hours
22	Denbigh High School	Central	Yes	52m x 33.5m	Outsourced to external company	18:00-21:00 Monday to Friday and 08:30 to 18:00 on weekends.
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	Yes	91m x 53m	Active Luton	06:00-22:00 Monday to Friday 08:00-17:00 weekends.
35	Lealands High School	North	Yes	55m x 30m	School	17:00-22:00 midweek and 09:00-22:00 on weekends.
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	South	No	36m x 30m	Sports Club	No community use
49	Power League (Luton)	East	Yes	40m x 30m 30m x 20m	Commercial	17:00-23:00 midweek and 09:00-23:00 on weekends.
66	Venue 360	South	Yes	36m x 18m 35m x 17m	Commercial	08:00-23:00 Monday to Sunday.

Future provision

Luton LFFP

The Luton LFFP identifies one full size 3G pitch project for the Borough. The project is for the Council and football partners to collectively work towards the development of a 3G stadia pitch (akin to the plans outlined in the football section of this report by Bedfordshire FA) to promote a platform for performance level football to thrive locally.

A site for such provision has not yet been identified, however three sites with capacity for such provision are Lewsey Park, Ely Way Open Space and Lothair Road Recreation Ground. This project may also feature as part of the on-going Stockwood Park Master Plan, with Bedfordshire FA identifying the site for the conversion of the adult football pitch to a stadia Step 5 3G site.

The LFFP analysis is less detailed than that of the PPOSS and therefore the broad geographical remit of the LFFP does not align to the specific analysis area breakdown used within the PPOSS.

Given that the LFFP is a live document informed by an up-to-date PPOSS, it may need to be re-assessed following the findings and recommendations of this study.

The validity of these projects will be assessed in the PPOSS Strategy & Action Plan with recommendations around portfolio inclusions or expulsions. This will include consideration for new aspirations which have come about following the plans completion. These are detailed below.

Luton Town FC

Luton Town FC is the most elite sporting club in Bedfordshire. It competes in the Premier League (the highest tier of English Football). Outside of its first team which, it operates an academy programme with the ambition of producing local players to become of a sufficient standard to represent its first team. This academy system, known as the Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP)[25] is a long term strategy with the aim of developing more and better home grown players. The EPPP works across three phases: Foundation (Under-9 to Under-11), Youth Development (U12 to U16) and Professional Development (U17 to U23).

Academies are independently audited and given a category status of one to four, with one being the most elite. Up to ten different factors will be considered in the grading, including productivity rates; training facilities; and coaching, education, and welfare provisions.

The higher a club's category the more funding will be available to it and the most contact hours it can have with players. At present, Luton Town ascertains a Category Three academy status. The definition of this by EPPP specifications is “This is a development environment where Academy Players are provided with professional coaching and development opportunities”.

The Club aspires to ascertain category two accreditation. The EPPP definition of a category two academy is “This is an elite development environment where Academy Players are typically recruited locally but gain access to additional coaching opportunities and education support”.

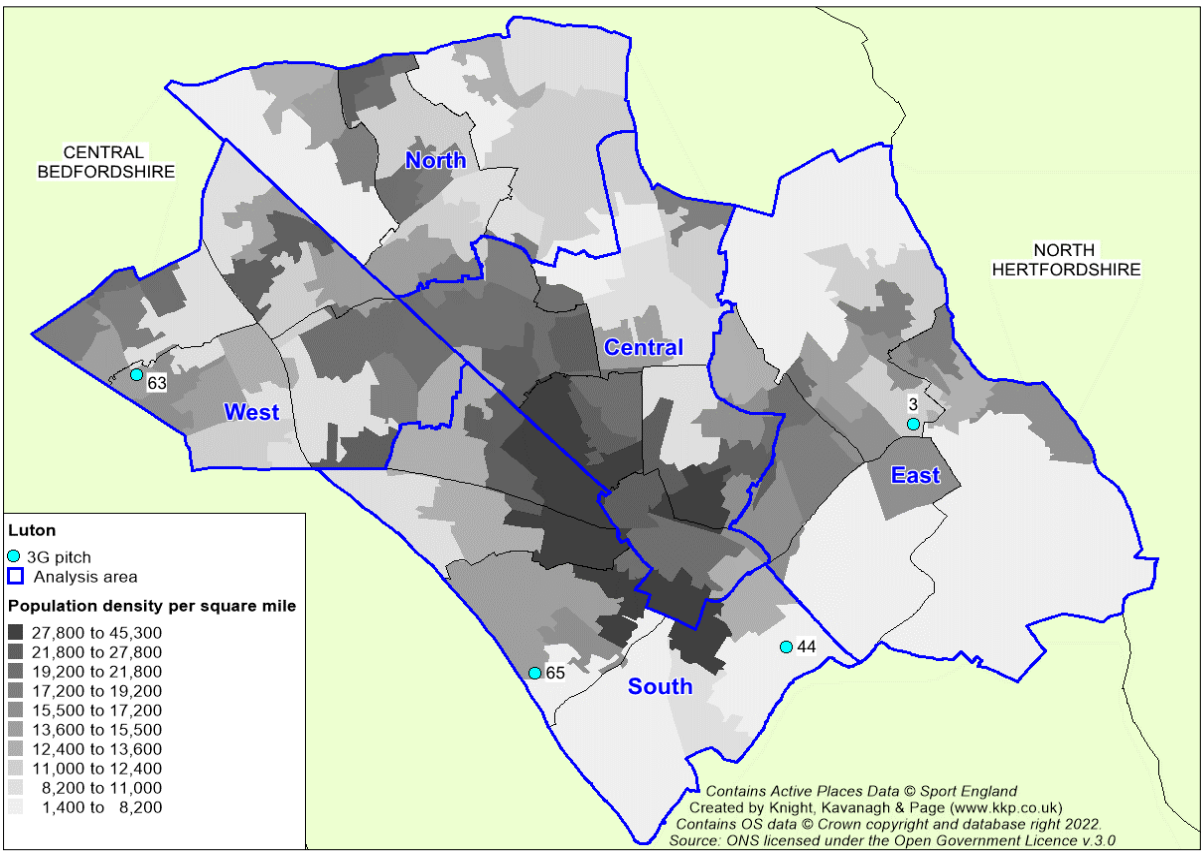
[25] https://www.premierleague.com/youth/EPPP

The benefits of category two range from increased contact hours with players, education opportunities and a more structured player pathway to performance level football. It will also be likely to require additional staff to meet the standards set out in the EPPP regulations due to increased requirements.

The Club does not meet the facility requirements to gain accreditation to category two. Its main issue is the need to develop a 60 x 40 m indoor 3G pitch (which can have a domed structured around it as opposed to a physical build). It has recently had issues in developing this with on land adjacent to its current training ground (The Brache) on Cutenhoe Road due to complications at a political level at LBC. The Club is hoping to revisit this in the future. It's noted that to meet regulations for category two, that the domed structured as to be located on exclusive training grounds of the Club, as such, a develop of this magnitude being delivered elsewhere in Luton would not be beneficial for the Club.

Figure 3.1 identifies all full size (11v11) 3G pitches servicing Luton. For a key to the map, see Table 3.2.

Figure 3.1: 3G pitches servicing Luton



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: http://3g.thefa.me.uk/.

Table 3.4: 3G pitch supply summary

Site ID	Site	Accreditation type	Accreditation expiry
3	Queen Elizabeth School	FA approved	31/05/22
20	Dallow Learning Community Centre	-	-
22	Denbigh High School	-	-
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	FA approved	31/05/23
35	Lealands High School	FA approved	31/05/25
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	FIFA approved	31/05/23
49	Power League (Luton)	-	-
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	FA approved	31/05/26
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	FA approved	31/05/26
66	Venue 360	-	-

Of the existing stock of pitches, six of the ten sites that provide provision are either FA or FIFA registered. In the case of Queen Elizabeth School, Lealands High School and Luton Town FC (The Brache), all three sites are scheduled to lose its accreditation as of June 2022. Both Luton Town FC (The Brache) and Lealands High School are awaiting the results of a pitch inspection as to regain its accreditation. Queen Elizabeth School however is exploring whether to try and re-gain its accreditation.

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 the case of Luton there are no WR compliant pitches within the Borough. However, in the upcoming rugby section Luton Town RFC refer to changes to supply that if conducted would see the installation of a WR compliant 3G pitch at its aspirational new site off Sundon Road near Lower Sundon (Central Bedfordshire). With the nearest available WR compliant 3G pitch a 6.6 mile drive away at Harpenden RFC which is fairly accessible for the Luton based clubs.

Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, 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 Luton have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) 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.

The pitches available at The Chalk Hills Academy and Stockwood Park Academy represent the only provision deemed as of a good quality, with both sites having had replacement surfaces provided in 2020. The two school both form part of the Schools Learning Trust (SLT), resulting in the installation and pitch replacements taking place simultaneously. Consultation with the lettings manager of both sites confirms a sinking fund is in place to replace the existing 3G's when necessary.

Provision provided at Queen Elizabeth School, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, the Brache (full size pitch) and Venue 360 is all standard quality, whilst Dallow Learning Community Centre, Denbigh High School, Lealands High School, the Brache (small sized provision), Power League (Luton), and Venue 360 all have poor quality pitches.

Consultations highlights that Denbigh High School has a sinking fund in place for eventual replacement of its pitch; whereas the Dallow Community Learning Centre is hoping to replace its provision in the next two years providing that funding can be secured.

Table 3.5: Age and quality of 3G pitches in Luton

Site ID	Site	Pitch type	Year installed or resurfaced	Quality
3	Queen Elizabeth School	Full size	2005/ 2017	Standard
20	Dallow Learning Community Centre	35m x 16m	2003	Poor
22	Denbigh High School	52m x 33.5m	2006	Poor
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	91m x 53m	2015	Standard
35	Lealands High School	55m x 30m	2008	Poor
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	Full size	2017	Standard
		36m x 30m	2000	Poor
49	Power League (Luton)	40m x 30m	2007	Poor
		30m x 20m		
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	Full size	2011/2020	Good
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	Full size	2011/ 2020	Good
66	Venue 360	36m x 18m	2000	Poor
		35m x 17m	2017	Standard

Ancillary facilities

The ancillary facilities provided at Denbigh High School feature two standard quality changing rooms that recently saw refurbishment to its boiler. Lea Manor Recreation Centre is serviced by a large, good quality leisure centre; however, many clubs do not have access to the changing rooms when using the 3G pitch. Whilst consulting with St Joseph's FC, which accesses the 3G pitch for a Saturday PM kick off, states the changing rooms need updating.

Chalk Hills Academy is serviced by four standard quality changing rooms with internal shower spaces that need updating. Similarly, Stockwood Park Academy also features four standard quality changing rooms, however, the showers do not work due to an issue with the water pressure.

Power League Luton is serviced by two standard quality changing rooms, of which, the women's showers are currently out of use. Finally, Venue 360 features two good quality changing rooms with no issues reported regarding the showers or water pressure.

With regard to ancillary provision accompanying Queen Elizabeth School, the changing rooms are not opened to community use to Crawley Green FC who access the site for playing purposes but are not granted access to the school itself. Dallow Learning Community Centre does not feature any dedicated changing rooms and instead only provides toilets.

The Brache features good quality ancillary provision which services Luton Town FC, Luton Town Ladies FC and Crawley Green FC. The changing rooms servicing the site were installed by Crawley Green FC as an act of good will following Luton Town FC allowing access to the site in order to reach Step 5 ground grading.

Finally, consultations with Lealands High School failed to take place but efforts to contact the site are continuing to take place.

3.3: Demand

The following table summarises the availability of all 3G pitches in Luton 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 3.6: Availability and capacity of full-sized provision summary:

Site ID	Site	Management	Total hours available during peak period	Comments
3	Queen Elizabeth School	School	3 hours on Fridays	Facility opens to the general public from 18:00- 22;00 on week days and 09:00-14:00 on weekends. Extensive football training usage at the site for Crawley Green FC who are a partnered Club for the site, as well as Luton Town Ladies.
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	Council	Site is at 80% capacity between the months of September and April.	Facility opens to the general public from 17:00 to 21:30 on weekdays and from 08:30 to 16:30 on Saturdays and 08:30 to 15:30 on Sundays. Site is accessed frequently by Luton Celtic Youth FC, Luton All Stars FC, Luton Stallions FC and and St Joseph's FC for both fixture and training purposes.

Site ID	Site	Management	Total hours available during peak period	Comments
44	Luton Town FC (The Brache)	Sports Club	*No community use - Capacity levels unknown*	Facility is used exclusively by Luton Town FC, Luton Town Ladies FC and Crawley Green FC.
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	School	One hour of availability from 21:00 to 22:00 on Tuesdays and six and half hours on Sundays	Facility opens to the general public from 17:00 to 22:00 Monday to Thursday and from 17:00 to 19:30 on Fridays. On weekends the site is open from 08:30 to 17:00. Site is accessed by Luton All Stars FC, Smart FC, Luton Tigers FC, AFC Sundon Park and Luton Stallions FC.
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	School	No availability during the week and some availability across the weekend.	Facility opens to the general public from 17:30 to 22:00 on weekdays and from 08:30 to 18:00 on weekends. Site is accessed by Luton Town FC and Luton Allstars FC.

In addition to the table above there are several small sided 3G pitches across Luton that accommodate training demand and recreational use that are operating broadly at capacity.

Provision found at Lea Manor Recreation Centre opens to the general public from 17:00-21:30 on weekdays, from 08:30 to 16:30 on Saturdays and 08:30- 15:30 on Sundays. The site is accessed frequently by Luton Celtic Youth FC, Luton All Stars FC, Luton Stallions FC and St Joseph's FC for both fixture and training purposes.

As can be seen in table 3.5, there is a total of three hours of availability on Fridays at Queen Elizabeth School, and one hour a Tuesday between 21:00 and 22:00 at the Chalk Hills Academy. With regard to weekend availability, the Chalk Hills Academy has six and a half hours of availability on Sundays.

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 floodlit facilities.

Of the 40 responsive football clubs, 18 report that they require additional training facilities and specifically mention demand for 3G pitches, which equates to 138 teams combined. Some teams currently access indoor sports halls, whilst others use the sand filled surface at Cardinal Newman Catholic School to enable all participants an ability to train. In some instances, clubs are forced to cancel training sessions purely due to the lack of facilities available within the area. Clubs that express a need for more 3G pitches are listed in the table below.

Table 3.7: Latent demand for 3G pitches

Club	Number of teams	Analysis area	Need for more/better training facilities
2Touch FC	1	South	✓
Athletico Luton FC	3	North	✓
Crawley Green FC	26	East	✓
Luton Bulls FC	1	North	✓
Luton Celtic Youth FC	15	South	✓
Luton Panthers FC	5	North	✓
Luton Sporting FC	8	North	✓
Luton Stallions FC	3	North	✓
Luton Town Ladies FC	10	North	✓
Luton United FC	10	Central	✓
Newman United FC	1	South	✓
Real Luton FC	1	North	✓
St Joseph's FC	3	North	✓
St Joseph's Youth FC	5	Central	✓
Stopsley Sharks FC	3	East	✓
Stopsley United FC	26	East	✓
Sundon Athletic FC	4	North	✓
Think Sport Thunder FC	13	North	✓
Total	**138 teams**		

Throughout the consultation process the point most stressed by football clubs across Luton is either the need for pitch enhancements or increasing the number of 3G facilities available within the Borough.

Furthermore, three clubs travel outside of the Borough to access 3G training facilities. These clubs and sites of use are listed below.

Table 3.8: Football clubs exporting 3G pitch usage outside of Luton

Site	Club
Bedfordshire FA (Dunstable)	61 FC
Bedfordshire FA (Dunstable)	Luton Old Boys FC
AFC Dunstable	Luton All Stars FC

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 floodlit 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.

Full size 3G pitches are 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 one full size 3G pitch for training.

Given the above, with 239 teams currently affiliating to Luton, there is a theoretical need for six full size 3G pitch equivalents (rounded down from 6.2) to accommodate all affiliated training demand.

As there are currently three full size pitches open to community use across the Borough, there is a theoretical need for an additional three full size pitches to accommodate football training demand. The 91m x 53m pitch provided at Lea Manor Recreation Centre, given its slightly below a full-size pitch, is not included in this calculation. It also does not include the full size pitch found at the Brache, given its restrictions for community use. When broken down by analysis area, this shortfall increases to 3.5 pitches when rounding to the nearest 0.25.

The table below considers the number of full size 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play. As can be seen, there are existing shortfalls of provision in three of the five analysis areas and clear pockets of need in the North, Analysis Area.

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

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Full size 3G requirement[26]	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Central	27	0.75	0	0.75
East	59	1.5	1	0.5
North	85	2.25	0	2.25
South	34	1	1	-
West	13	0.5	1	-
Total	**218**	**6**	**3**	**3.5**

There is a theoretical oversupply in both the South and West analysis areas. However, these accommodate demand from outside their respective catchment areas so should not be considered an actual oversupply of provision within their respective localities. This would only be the case if demand was adequately being met, in each catchment across the Borough.

It is also worth noting that despite a theoretical shortfall of two pitches in the North Analysis Area is identified, in reality the 91m x 53m 3G pitch found at Lea Manor Recreation Centre can accommodate up to youth 11v11 fixtures, meaning the total overall shortfall can be discounted to two pitches.

In addition to the 218 teams, there are a further 21 teams affiliated to Luton that access provision outside of the Borough. Including these teams shall exacerbate shortfalls by a further 0.5 3G pitches.

[26] Figure rounded up to the nearest whole number.

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 both participation increases identified by clubs.

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

Analysis area	Future number of teams[27]	Full size 3G requirement[28]	Current number of 3G pitches	Theoretical shortfall
Central	35	1	0	1
East	73	2	1	1
North	113	3	0	3
South	39	1	1	-
West	13	0.5	1	-
Total	**294**	**7.5**	**3**	**4.5**

Based on the above, the overall shortfall increases to 4.5 full size, floodlit 3G pitches, this is based on future demand aspirations identified by clubs (equating to 55 teams). Increases of facility need can be attributed to the North Analysis Area. It should be notes that when assessed by analysis area, the shortfalls total 5 full sized pitches.

Football match play demand

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches, providing that the pitch is FA approved, floodlit 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 full size 3G pitches to meet current and anticipated future football training demand based on the FA training model, in Luton. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required, with the most explicit need identified in the North Analysis Area.

[27] Future demand based on participation increases and TGRs as per the football section of the report.
[28] Figure rounded up to the nearest whole number.

3G summary

Supply:

- There are three full size 3G pitches open to community use in Luton. In addition to this there is the full-sized provision found at Luton Town FC (The Brache) which is not formerly open to community use, as well as Lea Manor Recreation Centre which features a 91m x 53m 3G pitch.
- There are also 18 small sided pitches.
- Full sized 3G pitches provided at Queen Elizabeth School, The Chalk Hills Academy and Stockwood Park Academy are open to community use, whilst Luton Town FC (The Brache) is only accessible to Luton Town FC, Luton Town Ladies FC and Crawley Green FC.
- Of the full sized pitches, Luton Town (The Brache), The Chalk Hills Academy and Stockwood Park Academy are all known to have sinking funds in place, whilst the position at Queen Elizabeth School is unknown.
- Pitches located at Queen Elizabeth School, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Lealands High School, The Chalk Hills Academy and The Stockwood Park Academy are all on the FA register for football match play and can therefore be used to accommodate competitive matches. In the case of the full-sized provision at Luton Town FC (The Brache), the pitch is FIFA approved making it an even higher quality surface. The pitches provided at Queen Elizabeth School, Lealands High School and Luton Town FC (The Brache) are scheduled to expire as of June 2022.
- There are no World Rugby Compliant 3G pitches in Luton, with Harpenden RFC being the only example of such provision that is accessed by a Luton based rugby Club (Stockwood Park RFC).

Quality:

- The pitches located at The Chalk Hills Academy and The Stockwood Park Academy are deemed of a good quality; with the Queen Elizabeth School, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Luton Town FC, Venue 360's smaller scaled surfaces and (The Brache) full sized 3G all considered to be standard. Finally, the Dallow Learning Community Centre, Denbigh High School, Lealands High School, Power League (Luton), Venue 360's larger pitches and the small sized provision provided at Luton Town FC (The Brache) are all assessed as of a poor quality.
- The ancillary provision provided at Denbigh High School, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Chalk Hills Academy, Stockwood Park Academy, Power League (Luton) and Venue 360 are all deemed as of a standard quality. In the case of Power League (Luton), there is the need for fixing the women's showers that are currently out of use, whilst the changing facilities at Lea Manor Recreation Centre are only available to certain users of the site.

Supply vs demand analysis:

- With 239 football teams currently affiliated to Luton, there is a need for six full size pitch equivalents to service current levels of demand. Future demand does not increase this shortfall once aggregated by analysis area.
- With three full size 3G pitches currently being available to the community within Luton, there is the need for a further 3.5 full size pitch equivalents to be built. This total excludes the 91m x 53m pitch at Lea Manor Recreation Centre as well as the full-sized pitch at Luton Town FC (The Brache) due to the lack of community use.
- When studying demand by analysis area, shortfalls are apparent in three of the five PPOSS analysis areas, with the biggest area of need being the North Analysis Area which has a current shortfall of 2.25 and future shortfall of three full size 3G pitches. Both the Central and East analysis areas have a future shortfall of 1 full size pitch equivalents. There is also a current oversupply of pitches identified in the South and West analysis areas.

PART 4: RUGBY UNION PITCHES

4.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the national governing body for rugby union. It is split into six areas across the Country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions, of which Luton falls into the midlands region.

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.

Consultation

There are two rugby union clubs based in Luton. Both clubs were responsive to consultation attempts, giving a response rate of 100%. Consultation was undertaken via the distribution of online surveys.

Table 4.1: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Luton RFC	Yes
Stockwood Park RFC	Yes

4.2: Supply

There is a total of 20 rugby union pitches identified within Luton across ten sites. Of these, 11 are available for community use across three sites. This figure consists of six senior pitches, one junior pitch and four mini pitches. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites.

Table 4.2: Supply of rugby union pitches by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of pitches	% of provision
Central	1	5%
East	3	15%
North	4	20%
South	12	60%
West	0	0%
Total	**20**	**100%**

Most provision is within the South, where a total of 12 pitches are identified (this includes pitches which are unavailable for community use). Comparatively, the West Analysis Area features no rugby provision.

A site-by-site breakdown of identified provision can be found in the table overleaf.

Table 4.3: Supply of rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community accessible?	No. of senior pitches	No. of junior pitches	No. of mini pitches
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	No	1	-	-
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic School (Luton)	North	No	2	-	-
26	Icknield High School	North	No	2	-	-
39	Luton RFC	South	Yes	2	1	2
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Central	No	1	-	-
50	Putteridge High School	East	No	1	-	-
58	Stockwood Park	South	Yes	2	-	-
60	Stockwood Park RFC	South	Yes	2	-	2
62	Stopsley High School	East	No	-	1	-
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	No	1	-	-

Traditionally, mini and junior rugby takes place on over marked senior pitches. This is something that takes place for junior teams across Luton as junior teams from Stockwood Park RFC access senior pitches for both training and competitive matches. However, in the case of mini teams, appropriate provision is provided at both club sites. The RFU stresses that junior and mini teams accessing senior provision should not be advocated and should be avoided, if possible, to minimise overplay and enable a truer pitch demand capacity to be drawn.

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please see the table below.

Table 4.4: Pitch dimensions

Age	Pitch type	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres)[29]
U7	Mini	20 x 12
U8	Mini	45 x 22
U9	Mini	60 x 30
U10	Mini	60 x 35
U11	Mini	60 x 43
U12	Mini	60 x 43
U13	Junior	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14 +	Senior	100 x 70 [30]

[29] Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.
[30] 94 x 68m are the minimum dimensions defined for an international pitch.

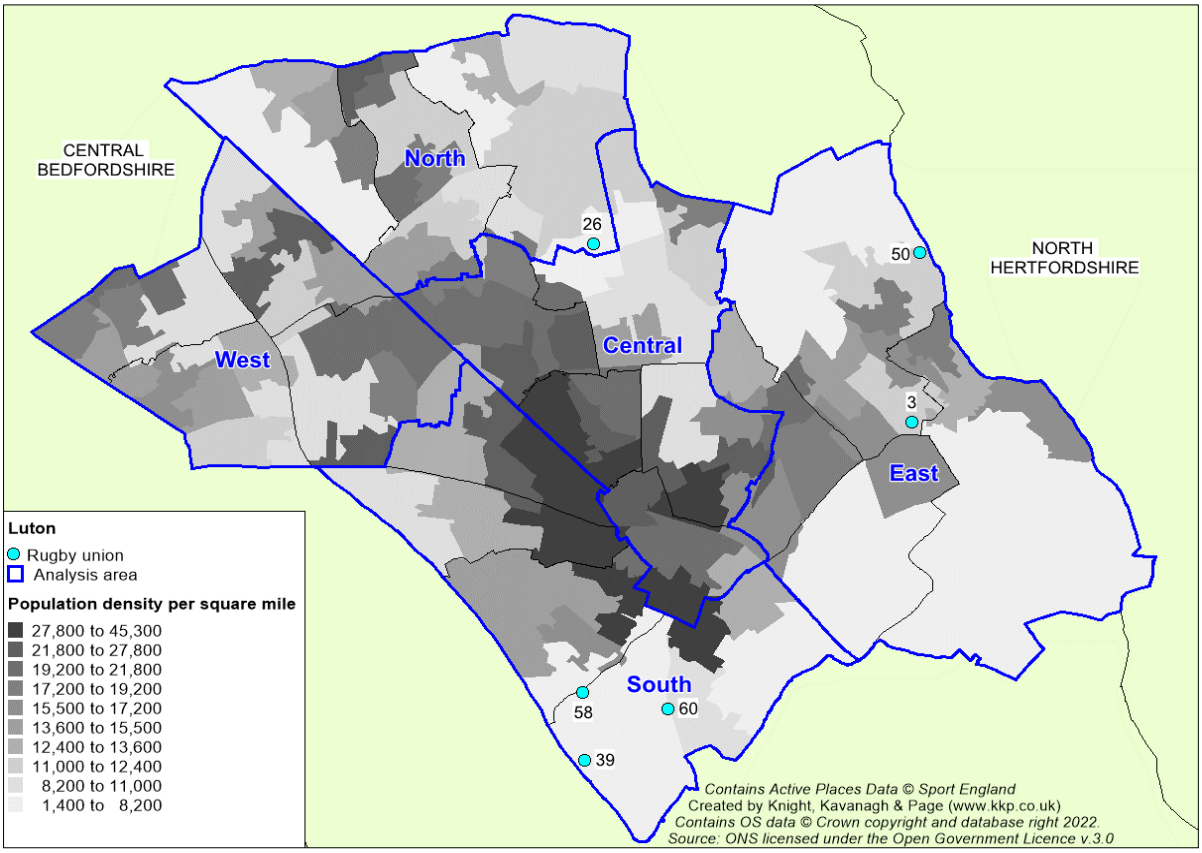
Changes to supply

Luton RFC has a proposed plan to relocate from its current site to build a brand-new facility off Sundon Road near Lower Sundon (Central Bedfordshire) The proposed development would see the current pitches and clubhouse converted into housing as to clear existing debts, fund the redevelopment of its new site and strengthen the long-term financial stability of the Club.

The new site proposes the installation of three senior pitches, two junior pitches, a single-storey clubhouse overlooking the site as well as a 160 space car park with 40 additional spaces available as overspill. Ambitions are for two of the senior pitches to be accompanied by floodlights and for at least one of the three senior pitches to be a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch as to better service training demand and generate revenue for the Club. This development has not yet gone through a formal planning stage and remains aspirational.

With regard to Stockwood Park RFC, an overarching master plan for the whole site is currently being drawn up by a specialist consultancy firm on behalf of LBC. The specific future facility mix remains unknown but it is known that rugby union remains at the heart of the development, and that the Club has a continued goal of increasing its provision.

Figure 4.1: Rugby union pitches (community use only)



Security of tenure

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 broad position is that all clubs have secure tenure positions, and this will remain the case over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

Table 4.5: Rugby union clubs security of tenure

Club	Tenure arrangement	Secure?
Luton RFC	Freehold ownership of site.	Yes
Stockwood Park RFC	Club has a 21-year lease agreement with Luton Borough Council for the pitches until 2028 and has a 99 year lease for its clubhouse, also from the Council.	Yes

Pitch quality

The quality of rugby pitches has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating 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 4.6: 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 4.7: 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

Table 4.8: 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, there are five good quality, six standard and nine poor quality pitches. When broken down by provision open to community use, there are six senior pitches, two of which are good quality and four are deemed standard, one good quality junior pitch and four mini pitches split evenly between a good and standard quality.

The remaining seven sites feature only poor quality pitches, these being; Queen Elizabeth School, Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Icknield High School, Luton Sixth Form College, Putteridge High School, Stopsley High School and the Stockwood Park Academy. All of these pitches receive limited maintenance generally consisting of regular grass cutting. There is on occasional ad-hoc programmes undertaken such as weed killing and fertilisation, but this is not undertaken with consistency to ascertain an M1 maintenance rating.

From a community club perspective, Luton RFC is serviced by good quality provision, whilst Stockwood Park RFC has standard quality playing provision across both its own pitches and the Stockwood Park community pitches.

During consultation Stockwood Park RFC referred to issues such as frequent dog walkers on site, pitch two being significantly smaller than RFU recommended scale and having to accommodate too many teams on too little training areas. Furthermore, the Club report that waterlogging is a constant issue that often results in training sessions being cancelled.

Comparatively, Luton Town RFC state it invests £15,000 into pitch maintenance which includes aerating provision twice a year as well as sand dressing, fertilising and weed killing all on an annual basis.

Please refer to Table 4.9 overleaf for a breakdown of pitch quality.

Table 4.9: Site quality ratings at community use available rugby union sites

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Number of grass pitches	Floodlit?	Pitch type	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
39	Luton RFC	Luton RFC	South	5	2 Senior	1 Senior	M2/D2	Good
						1 Senior 1 Junior 2 Mini	M2/D1	Good
58	Stockwood Park	Stockwood Park RFC	South	2	No	2 Senior	M1/D1	Standard
60	Stockwood Park RFC	Stockwood Park RFC	South	4	2 Senior	2 Senior 2 Mini	M1/D1	Standard
No community use								
3	Queen Elizabeth School	-	East	1	No	1 Senior	M0/D1	Poor
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic School (Luton)	-	North	2	No	2 Senior	M0/D1	Poor
26	Icknield High School	-	North	2	No	2 Senior	M0/D1	Poor
40	Luton Sixth Form College	-	Central	1	No	1 Senior	M0/D1	Poor
50	Putteridge High School	-	East	1	No	1 Senior	M0/D1	Poor
62	Stopsley High School	-	East	1	No	1 Junior	M0/D1	Poor
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	-	South	1	No	1 Senior	M0/D1	Poor

Ancillary facilities

The term ancillary facility relates to built facility infrastructure at sites. Typically, this includes (but is not limited too) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, carparking and toilet facilities. The table below summarises the position of each rugby club and highlights current issues and long-term requirements.

Table 4.10: Ancillary provision feedback

Club	Ancillary position
Luton RFC	Luton RFC has four changing rooms with communal showers provided to cater for all four teams accessing the building. It also has one referee's changing space and appropriate parking for all pitches. The club express no desires to make any improvements or adaptations to current provision.
Stockwood Park RFC	Stockwood Park RFC is looking to upgrade its current facilities as to better cater for women's and girls' demand as well as generally upgrading the changing facilities. Currently the Club can somewhat segregate its six changing rooms to cater for male and female members, but it is not a long-term solution and does not include the toilet facilities and is also done at the loss of one changing room (as to ensure safeguarding requirements are appropriately met). If developments were to take place it would involve externally developing the clubhouse as to create an additional space for female members. The Club also report the need to replace the felt roof that has been in place since 1979 as to convert to a tiled roof. Finally, ambitions are to improve the energy efficiency of the building, something it has conversed about with the RFU facilities department.

4.3: Demand

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

Competitive play

There are two rugby union clubs in Luton which in total generate demand equating to 31 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of four senior men's, one senior women's, two colt's team, nine junior boys, two junior girls' and 13 mini teams.

Both clubs within Luton contribute towards the identified junior demand, with Luton RFC having one colt's team, four junior boys' teams, and six mini teams. Comparatively, Stockwood Park RFC have one colt's team, five junior boys, two junior girls' teams and seven mixed teams. A table summarising club demand is overleaf.

Table 4.11: Demand summary

Club	Senior men's	Senior women's	Colt boys (U17/U18)	Colt girls (U17/U18)	Junior boys (U16-U13)	Junior girls (U16-U13)	Minis (U12-U6)
Luton RFC	1	-	1	-	4	-	6
Stockwood Park RFC	3	1	1	-	5	2	7
Total	**4**	**1**	**2**	**-**	**9**	**2**	**13**

Training demand

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

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

With regard to pitch allocation for training purposes, sessions are often held on an additional floodlit grass space rather than on the pitches provided, as to reduce demand on the available provision. This however does not take place at either of the clubs within Luton, thus increasing demand pressures on pitches at the relevant sites.

Stockwood Park RFC hold its training sessions across both of its floodlit pitches, as well as exporting demand outside of the Borough to the 3G pitch at Harpenden RFC (St Albans). Comparatively, Luton RFC utilises all its floodlit playing provision for training purposes and does not export any training demand to a second site.

Table 4.12: Training demand summary

Club	Midweek training requirements	Match equivalent sessions (MES)
Luton RFC	Senior teams train on the floodlit pitch from 19:00 to 21:00 midweek. The four junior teams train from 18:30 to 20:30 on the second floodlit training pitch. Mini training sessions take place on Sunday mornings spread across the two mini and one non floodlit pitch (when fixtures aren't scheduled).	**6 MES Total** 2 MES per week on first floodlit pitch 4 MES per week on second floodlit pitch
Stockwood Park RFC	Training takes place every Tuesday and Thursday between 18:30 and 21:00 across both floodlit pitches, as well as an additional session for junior members on Wednesdays from 18:00-19:30. Finally, junior members also access the World Rugby Compliant 3G at Harpenden Rugby Club for two hours every Tuesday and Thursday.	**6.75 MES Total** 6.75 MES at Stockwood Park RFC 2 MES at Harpenden RFC (discounted from total MES as on 3G)

World Rugby (WR) compliant pitches

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).

Across Luton there is no existing WR Regulation 22 3G pitch available for either of the two clubs to access. The nearest available WR compliant 3G a 6.6 mile drive located at Harpenden RFC; the provision area is fairly accessible for Luton based clubs.

Use of artificial pitches

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high-quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, 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 Stockwood Park RFC, the Club access the WR compliant 3G pitch provided at Harpenden RFC for winter training purposes. The Club hold training sessions at the site twice a week for two hours per session, however, consultation confirms that occasionally, slots cannot be secured as Harpenden has priority allocation for the site. Comparatively, Luton RFC do not access any 3G provision for training or match play purposes.

Touch rugby[31]

To actively encourage participation in 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 organisation can establish their own touch rugby sessions or can become hosts of touch union sessions.

Touch union are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are mixed in terms of gender, ability and age and is based on touch rugby being a social activity. Stockwood Park RFC hold weekly touch rugby sessions for junior, women's and male members and also host occasional tournaments. Comparatively, Luton RFC do not currently offer any touch rugby sessions.

Walking rugby

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 that 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 55s are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace. In the case of Stockwood Park RFC, the Club do not host walking rugby sessions.

Exported/imported demand

Exported demand refers to existing demand which is transferred outside of the study area; whilst imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities in Luton due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

[31] https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/ways-to-play/the-touch-union

Locally, Stockwood Park RFC import demand from outside of Luton, with the East Midlands U20's team, Bedfordshire County RFC and Bedfordshire developing player programme U14 to U16 teams all accessing the clubs home site. This demand is, however, fairly infrequent due to the nature of the RFU Counties programme and therefore demand has not been captured in the forthcoming analysis.

Comparatively, Stockwood Park RFC export training demand to Harpenden Ruby Club in order to access the clubs 3G pitch for training purposes, whilst Luton RFC do not export or import any demand from Luton.

Unmet/latent demand

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. There is no evidence to suggest that there is any latent demand for rugby union in Luton.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts.

Participation increases

Clubs were asked if they aspire to increase the current number of teams they provide. Luton RFC have desires to gain one senior mens team and two boys colts' teams. In comparison, Stockwood Park RFC state that this season the Club has been returning to normal following the impact of Covid. As of next season the Club hopes to gain an additional women's team, two mini teams and a junior team.

Population increases

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 (2031).

Table 4.13: Team generation rates (2031)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	42,884	4	1:10,721	42,884	4	0.0
Senior Women's (19-45)	38,606	1	1:38,606	38,606	1	0.0
Junior Boys (13-18)	8,713	11	1:792	8,713	11	0.0
Junior Girls (13-18)	7,975	2	1:3,988	7,975	2	0.0
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	19,872	13	1:1,529	19,872	13	0.0

Based on future projections, there is no forecasted growth of a team of any age range or gender within Luton. 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 towards 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 union 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.

Future demand summary

Future demand will be based on club aspirations which equates to one senior men's team, one senior women's team, two boys' colts' teams, one junior boys' team and two mini teams within Luton. As a reminder, population forecasts do not anticipate a rise in demand.

The Strategy & Action Plan Report will contain a housing growth scenario that will estimate the additional demand for rugby union arising from housing development.

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

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

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.

The peak period

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

Table 4.15: Capacity table for rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	No	**Unsecure**	1	1x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic School (Luton)	North	No	**Unsecure**	2	2x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	3	-	The school has two senior pitches that are not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
26	Icknield High School	North	No	**Unsecure**	2	2x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	3	-	The school has two senior pitches that are not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
39	Luton RFC	South	Yes	Secure	6	1x Senior	M2/D2	Good	Yes	1	0.5	3.25	1.75	The floodlit pitch is used for first team and colts' fixtures, as well as minimal training. Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.
						1x Senior	M2/D1		Yes	1	5.5	3	3.5	The senior and junior pitches are accessed by the four Luton RFC junior teams ranging from U16 to U13. Floodlit provision is also used for junior midweek training from 18:30 to 20:30 as well as senior and colts' midweek training from 19:00 to 21:00. Floodlit senior pitch is overplayed by 3.5 MES, whilst the junior pitch has actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES.
						1x Junior			No	1	0	3	2	
						2x Mini			No	1.5	1.5	3	-	Mini pitches are accessed by the six mini teams ranging from U7 to U12 within Luton RFC for match play purposes. Provision is also used for mini-Sunday morning training.
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Central	No	**Unsecure**	1	1x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
50	Putteridge High School	East	No	**Unsecure**	1	1x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
58	Stockwood Park	South	Yes	Secure	2	2x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	3	0	4	1	Site is accessed by Stockwood Park RFC for 3rd team and women's fixtures. Provision is also accessed by U15 and U16 boys' teams and both junior girls' teams in the Club. Actual spare capacity of 1 MES.

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
60	Stockwood Park RFC	South	Yes	**Secure**	4	2x Senior	M1/D1	Standard	2 Yes	3	6.75	4	5.75	Provision is accessed by Stockwood Park's first, second and colts' teams, as well as three of the junior boys' teams. Club training takes place across both pitches and equates to 6.75 MES.
						2x Mini				1.75	-	2	0.25	Mini pitches are accessed by the seven mini teams ranging from U6 to U12 within Stockwood Park RFC for match play purposes.
62	Stopsley High School	East	No	**Unsecure**	1	1x Junior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	No	**Unsecure**	1	1x Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	-	1	1.5	-	The school has one senior pitch that is not available for community use. Match equivalent sessions therefore account for school use only. Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.

Actual spare capacity

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.

Generally, pitches located at education and/or unsecure sites which are available for community use but are currently unused, are not considered to have actual spare capacity as security of use cannot be formally evidenced as guaranteed.

Table 4.16 outlines the actual spare capacity on one junior pitches within Luton. As can be seen there is spare capacity at one site which equates to 0.5 MES on Sundays. With regard to senior pitches there is actual spare capacity of 2 MES identified at Luton RFC and Stockwood Park.

Table 4.16: Actual spare capacity for Saturday and Sunday rugby

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	User	Spare capacity – Saturdays (MES)	Spare capacity – Sundays (MES)
39	Luton RFC	South	Luton RFC	1	0.5
58	Stockwood Park	South	Stockwood Park RFC	1	-
			Total	**2**	**0.5**

Overplay

Two sites and two pitches in Luton is identified as being overplayed. These are at Luton RFC, and Stockwood Park RFC.

Table 4.17: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	User	Overplay (MES)
39	Luton RFC	South	Luton RFC	3.5
60	Stockwood Park RFC	South	Stockwood Park RFC	5.75
			Total	**9.25**

In the case of Stockwood Park RFC, the two floodlit pitches result in overplay of 5.75 MES. This is caused by most of the clubs training taking place across the two pitches, whilst also being used for six fixtures each week. Comparatively, identified overplay at Luton RFC equates to 3.5 MES which is caused by the second floodlit pitch being used for junior training demand and the first team pitch experiences reduced demand as to preserve quality.

4.4: Supply and demand analysis

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

Future demand is based on future demand aspirations from both Luton RFC and Stockwood Park RFC which equates to one senior mens team from Luton RFC.

Table 4:18: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches (senior rugby – Saturday afternoons)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[32]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	-	-	-	-
East	-	-	-	-	-
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	2	9.25	**7.25**	0.5	**7.75**
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**2**	**9.25**	**7.25**	**0.5**	**7.75**

The table above shows that there is an insufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand, future demand is expected to slightly exacerbate existing shortfalls. In the main, shortfalls derive from midweek training on floodlit pitches and/or concentrated match play.

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches for Sunday rugby. Future demand is based on aspiration growth of one senior women's team, two boys' colts' teams, one junior boys' team and two mini teams.

Table 4:19: Summary of supply and demand balance on junior rugby union pitches (mini, junior– Sunday mornings)

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity[33]	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	-	-	-	-
East	-	-	-	-	-
North	-	-	-	-	-
South	0.5	-	**0.5**	2.5	**2**
West	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**0.5**	**-**	**0.5**	**2.5**	**2**

When looking at the supply verses demand for mini and junior rugby, there is currently sufficient supply of provision caused by 0.5 MES per week of actual spare capacity on a mini pitch at Luton RFC. Future demand removes this capacity and creates a shortfall of two MES per week.

[32] In match equivalent sessions
[33] In match equivalent sessions

4.5: Conclusions

Overall, based on the supply and demand analysis, it is evident that there is insufficient supply of senior pitches in Luton 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 concentrated match play on poor quality pitches. For mini and junior pitches there is currently 0.5 MES per week of actual spare capacity, which is removed once future demand is accounted for.

Rugby union summary

- There is currently insufficient level of senior rugby union provision in Luton to accommodate current and future demand.
- Junior and mini provision shows current spare capacity of 0.5 MES, however, shortfalls of two MES per week are shown once future demand is considered.

Pitch supply:

- There is a total of 20 rugby union pitches across 10 sites identified in Luton. Of these, 11 are available for community use across three sites.
- There are no WR compliant 3G pitches located within Luton, with the nearest provision of this type found 6.6 miles from Luton at Harpenden RUFC.

Pitch quality:

- In terms of quality, of community use pitches, there are five good quality, six standard quality and no poor quality provision. This is largely caused by none of the pitches located at education sites being open to community use, meaning that the accessible provision is all located at Club sites with dedicated maintenance teams.

Ancillary provision quality:

- Of the two clubs located within Luton, Stockwood Park RFC express intentions to develop the existing ancillary provision.
- The Club has a desire to upgrade its existing changing facilities as to better accommodate female members, install tiles to the currently felt roof of the clubhouse and improve energy efficiency of the building.
- Comparatively, Luton RFC made no reference to any intentions to upgrade existing ancillary provision.

Demand:

- There are two rugby union clubs in Luton which in total generate demand equating to 31 teams.
- The breakdown of the number of teams see's Luton host four senior men's teams, one senior women's team, two colts' teams, nine junior boys' teams, two junior girls' teams and 13 mini teams.
- Luton RFC plan on developing an additional senior men's team. In addition to this, Stockwood Park RFC express intentions to each gain a senior women's team, two boys' colts' teams, one junior boys' team and two mini teams.

Supply and demand analysis:

- There is an overall insufficient supply of provision to cater for both current and future demand.

PART 5: ARTIFICAL 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	**Essential** International Hockey - Training and matches	**Desirable** 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	**Essential** Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	**Desirable** All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	**Essential** All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	**Essential** None	**Desirable** 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[34], 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.

[34] Deliver - Developing Your Project | England Hockey

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 floodlighting. Training is generally midweek and also requires access to a pitch with floodlights.

Club consultation

There are three hockey clubs in Luton; Luton Town Hockey Club, Chiltern Hockey Club and Vauxhall Hockey Club. All three were consulted via online survey distribution to inform this section of the report.

Table 5.2: Summary of consultation

Club name	Responded?
Luton Town Hockey Club	Yes
Chiltern Hockey Club	Yes
Vauxhall Hockey Club	Yes

5.2: Supply

There are two full size hockey suitable artificial grass pitches in Luton located across as many sites. Both Challney High School for Girls and Luton Sixth Form College provide full size AGPs that are open to community use, however, only the provision provided at Challney High School for Girls is serviced by accompanying floodlights.

Table 5.3: Summary of full-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Quantity of provision	Size (metres)	Floodlit?
16	Challney High School for Girls	West	Yes	One pitch	100m x 60m	Yes
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Central	Yes	One pitch	97m x 57m	No

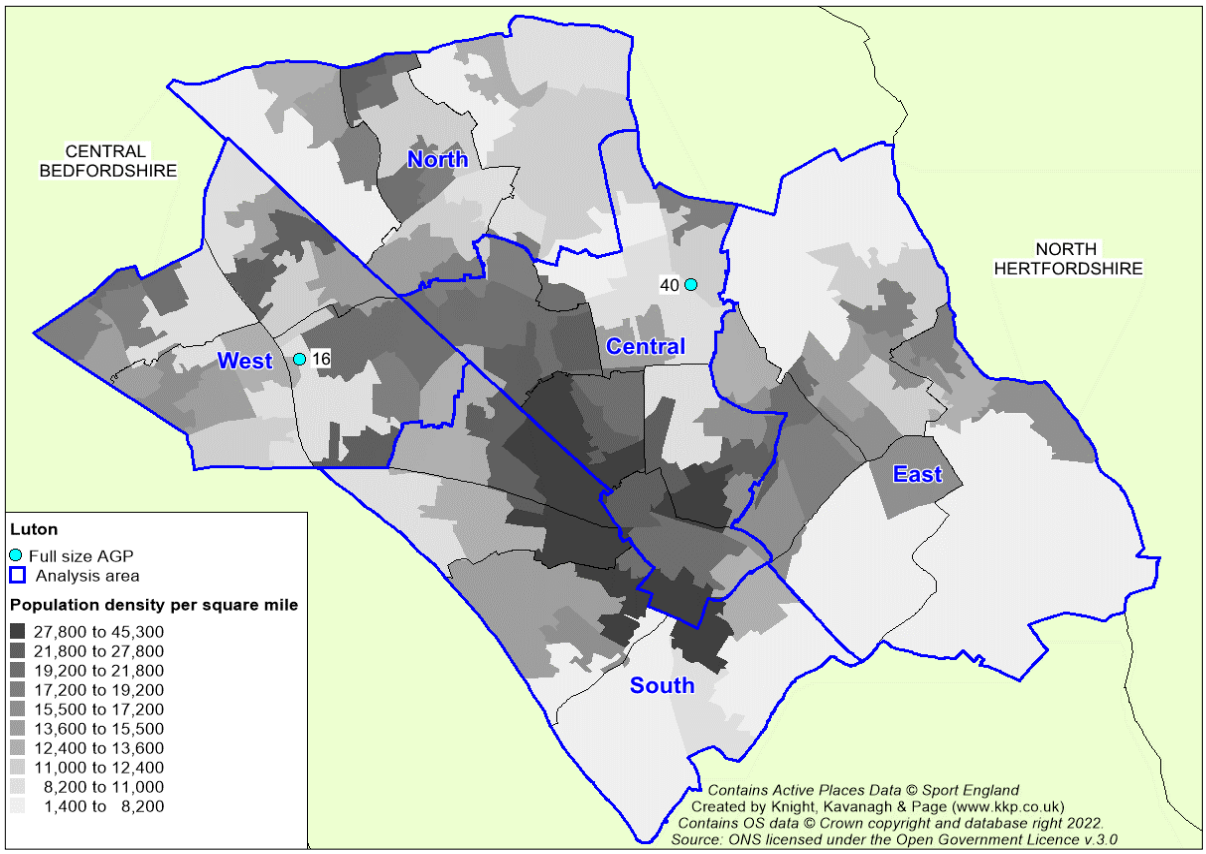
There are also three small-sided pitches identified across at Beechwood Primary School and Icknield High School, all of which are also open to community use. These are included in the table below.

Table 5.4: Summary of small-sided hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Quantity of provision	Size (metres)	Floodlit?
8	Beechwood Primary School	West	Yes	One pitch	40m x 20m	No
26	Icknield High School	North	Yes	Two pitches	43m x 33m	Yes

A map of hockey provision is provided in Figure 5.1

Figure 5.1: Location of full size AGPs



Management and availability

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 full availability of AGP provision which is available for community use. Luton Town HC and BeActive stress that the communication from Challney High School for Girls is poor with access to the site often a difficulty and the general communication with the Club a frustration.

Table 5.5: Management and availability

Site ID	Site name	Management	Availability	Total hours available in peak period
16	Challney High School for Girls	School	18:00-22:00 Midweek 09:00 – 18:00 Saturdays 09:00 – 18:00 Saturdays	34
40	Luton Sixth Form College	School	Site is opened to the general public on an ad-hoc basis and doesn't have set opening hours. Open from 10:30 till 16:00 Saturdays	12

In addition to the above, the two small sided AGPs provided at Icknield High School are open to the general public. A survey response from Luton Town HC state the Club formerly accessed the site for summer hockey purposes. As of 2022, the Club has also started using the small sided AGP at Icknield High School for its youth teams.

Security of tenure

Luton Town HC access Challney High School for Girls on a 12-month rental agreement, for which they pay the school £15,000. In return the Club receives a ten-hour allocation per week during the hockey season to the AGP for both training and matchday purposes.

Chiltern HC accesses Luton Sixth Form College on a 12-month rental agreement of £80 per fixture or £1500 per annum. Finally, Vauxhall HC also access Luton Sixth Form College on a 12-month rental agreement at the cost of £720 a year.

Therefore, all three clubs across Luton operate without any form of security of tenure.

Quality

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) 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 below summarises the quality of artificial grass pitches in Luton.

Table 5.6: Summary of quality

Site ID	Site name	Surface type	User	Quality rating	Built/ resurfaced
16	Challney High School for Girls	Sand dressed	Luton Town HC	Standard	2011
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Sand filled	Chiltern HC Vauxhall HC	Poor	2010

Provision provided at Challney High School for Girls is assessed as standard quality, whilst the pitch at Luton Sixth Form College as poor. Consultation with Luton Sixth Form College confirms the School is aware that the existing provision requires resurfacing in the next two years. Comparatively, Chiltern HC and Vauxhall HC describe the pitch quality provided at Challney High School for Girls as of an adequate quality.

Both clubs raise concerns with the medium to long term offer these pitches provide in relation to opportunities for match play. In both cases the surfaces are reaching a stage of being worn to a point in which they will be unfit for use in the near future. Based on consultation feedback, Luton Sixth Form College confirms not having a sinking fund in place, whilst the position at

Challney High School for Girls is unknown with the operator at the facility stating this is managed by the school rather than the lettings team.

Ancillary facilities

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

None of the three clubs operate with a dedicated clubhouse and instead access provision accompanying the education site, such as changing rooms, a classroom or in some instances a drama studio.

Luton Town HC report that Challney High School for Girls as a facility is of a poor quality, with the changing rooms and equipment servicing the site being described as poor. The Club raise frustrations with the lack of dedicated male and female, home and away and referee changing. Players travel three miles to Luton Town and Indians CC for post-match tea's.

In comparison, both Chiltern HC and Vauxhall HC, which both access Luton Sixth Form College, state the quality of the facility as a whole as being good, as are the changing facilities and car parking. Despite stating the quality of changing facilities being good, Vauxhall HC raise frustrations about the changing room allocation. Luton Sixth Form College provides three changing facilities for community use, two of which, are frequently taken by football users. This results in hockey users having to share one changing room which has led to clubs accessing the drama block for changing or in some instances the away team choosing to not access the provision entirely. Clubs are also made to access a classroom for after match teas or alternatively access the away teams' clubhouse when feasible.

5.3: Demand

Competitive play

There are three community-based hockey clubs in Luton. Luton Town HC is the largest of the three and has four senior male teams, two senior female teams and 75 junior members. Comparatively, Chiltern HC features only two senior female teams and one junior girl member whilst Vauxhall HC has just one male team and two junior boys' members.

Luton Town HC's mens first team compete in the East mens division two South West league, Vauxhall HC are in the East Leagues Division Three South West and finally, Chiltern HC compete in the Southwest Division Six League.

With regard to Back to Hockey and walking hockey sessions, none of the three clubs made any reference to delivering such England Hockey initiatives within its current operations. However, Chiltern HC aspires to introduce walking hockey this year.

Imported demand

Imported demand refers to teams which originate outside of Luton, accessing facilities within the area for their home fixtures and/or training needs, normally because their 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.

In the case of Luton there is no identified imported hockey demand from neighbouring authorities.

Exported demand

Vauxhall HC previously used the AGP at Hitchin Boys Grammar School (out of the Borough) during 2021 for both training and match play purposes. The Club formerly accessed the Brache but relocated following its conversion to a 3G pitch. However, it now accesses Challney High School for Girls and no longer exports demand.

Training demand

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

Chiltern HC delivers its training sessions at Challney High School for Girls from 20:15 to 21:30 every Wednesday. Vauxhall HC also access Challney High School for Girls for club training, which is held every Thursday from 19:30 to 21:00. Finally, Luton Town HC access Challney High School for Girls on Tuesday evenings from 19:00-21:30.

In the case of Chiltern HC and Luton Town HC both stress desires to increase its current midweek allocation for training purposes. The former is wanting an additional two hours of midweek access for senior first team and returning to sport age groups, whilst the latter stress the want for an additional two hours for midweek training.

Future demand

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.

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 Luton. However, the forthcoming Strategy & Action Plan will include the use of the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator which will forecast additional demand for hockey arising from new housing developments.

From a club perspective (the traditional 11 a side game), Luton Town HC states a future demand aspiration of one senior mens, two senior women's and eight junior teams. In contrast, Chiltern HC has ambitions to gain one senior women's team and finally, Vauxhall HC is currently consolidating but raised through consultation that long term there is the aim to gain an additional senior mens team and junior teams.

EH Player Pathway

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.

Development Centres (DCs) and Academy Centres (ACs)

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 Luton. The site nearest to the district is located at Bedford Hockey Centre, 20 miles north of Luton.

Peak time demand

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 floodlit 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.

Table 5.7: Supply 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
16	Challney High School for Girls	1	Luton Town HC	3 MES	Yes	Luton Town HC has three Saturday push backs at the site, starting from 10:30 and concluding at 15:30. Allocation is also available for a fourth push back from 15:30 to 17:00, something the Club does not always require. Club training equates to two and half hours of midweek use.
40	Luton Sixth Form College	1	Vauxhall HC Chiltern HC	3 MES	No	Pitch is used on Saturdays for fixtures from 10:30-15:30. Potential spare capacity is discounted due to a lack of floodlighting.

Luton Town HC has six senior teams, all of which, access provision at Challney High School for Girls on Saturdays. This demand equates to three matches taking place each weekend (based on teams playing on a home and away allocation). Based on this, existing demand can be met on site, with capacity for one additional fixture with a push back at 15:30.

Vauxhall HC and Chiltern HC share available provision at Luton Sixth Form College for matchday purposes. Chiltern HC has two match slots with the first being 10:30 to 12:30 and the second starting from 14:00 to 15:30. Vauxhall HC access the site from 12:30 to 14:00 meaning its fixture takes place in between the two allocated to Chiltern HC. Despite only three match sessions being used at the site, the lack of accompanying floodlights results in the pitch not being able to accommodate four match sessions like most sites. Therefore, no spare capacity is available.

Future demand expressed by Luton Town HC equates to a senior men's, senior ladies' and eight junior teams. If growth aspirations are achieved, the two senior teams would be able to be accommodated at the existing provision and would put the site at maximum capacity. With regard to junior demand, this would be accommodated by accessing the site on Sunday's and midweek, something the Club has expressed a desire to do so by stating the need for an additional three hours of access.

Chiltern HC express future demand for one additional senior women's team, something that can be accommodated at Luton Sixth Form College from a programming perspective. However, due to the quality concerns on the site, and the uncertainty regarding investment being directed into the pitch to rectify known issues, it is uncertain whether the site will be able to accommodate additional demand. Furthermore, the lack of floodlights deems the site unable to accommodate the usual four MES usually seen on an AGP. As a result, the Club shall have to export demand to sites outside of the Borough in order to achieve club growth ambitions.

5.5: Conclusion

With only two full size AGPs offering community use across all of Luton; Luton Town, Vauxhall and Chiltern Hockey clubs have no choice other than to use the existing available provision. Although this does currently accommodate demand, it is expected that over the lifespan of the PPOSS that these pitches may fall out of action for formal hockey demand as a result of poor surface quality which will not be sanctioned for use by local leagues. Neither provider is known to have a sinking fund in place to replace the carpet. To that end, whilst the current position is being met, the future position is a theoretical shortfall of both full size AGPs, leaving Luton with no facilities as to accommodate hockey. As such there is the need to explore alternative sites for installing hockey suitable provision, alongside looking to replace the existing hockey surfaces.

With nine teams currently accessing provision within Luton, there is the need for a minimum of two AGP's within the borough in order to accommodate match play demand. If future demand aspirations from all three clubs were to be achieved this would lead to a further five teams accessing provision on a Saturday to give a total of 14 teams within Luton. Spare capacity at Challney High School for Girls allows for the growth goals of Luton Town HC to be achieved, however the remaining three additional teams from Chiltern and Vauxhall HC can only be achieved by exporting demand outside of the borough.

Based on the outcome of the Assessment, it is determined that the existing stock of hockey suitable AGPs requires long term protection from development and improvement in quality to ensure that hockey can continue to be developed across the area.

Hockey summary

- **There is sufficient supply of hockey suitable pitches in Luton to accommodate current levels of peak time demand, however, both available pitches have quality issues are likely to fall out of use for competitive play in the near future.**
- **Future demand can only be accommodated with current provision if pitch replacements take place at Luton Sixth Form College and the potential installation of accompanying floodlights can be undertaken. Failing this, Chiltern HC shall be forced to export demand in order to achieve future growth ambitions.**

Pitch supply:

- There are two full size hockey suitable AGPs in Luton located across as many sites. There are also three smaller size pitches identified across Beechwood Primary School and Icknield High School.
- Both of the full size pitches within Luton are open to community use, however, opening hours at Luton Sixth Form College are affected by the lack of accompanying floodlights.

Pitch quality:

- Of all full-size hockey suitable pitches within Luton, one is deemed standard quality, whilst the other is poor.
- The two pitches within Luton represent the only suitable provision available to the general public and both are nearing the end of their life spans deeming them close to unfit for use.

Affiliated demand:

- There are three hockey clubs in Luton, Luton Town HC and Chiltern HC and Vauxhall HC.
- Luton Town HC operates six teams made up of four senior male teams and two senior ladies, as well as having 75 junior members.
- Chiltern HC operates two senior ladies teams and finally, Vauxhall HC has just the one male team.
- Future demand aspirations by Luton Town HC equates to one senior men's team, one senior ladies and eight junior teams. Chiltern HC express future demand of one additional senior women's team, and Vauxhall HC currently expressed no additional future demand.

Supply and demand analysis conclusions:

- Based on current levels of demand, there is a sufficient supply of provision to accommodate existing demand, however, both available pitches are likely to fall out of use for competitive play in coming years.
- Future demand can be accommodated with existing provision from a programming perspective but would be dependent upon the playing quality being deemed fit for play.

PART 6: CRICKET PITCHES

6.1: Introduction

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

For adult cricket in Luton 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. There is also a structured recreational senior Cricket offer in Luton which is played through two locally ran league set ups.

Consultation

In total, five affiliated cricket clubs are identified as playing within Luton, of which, all five responded to consultation requests, equating to an 100% response rate. Club responses are listed in the table below.

Table 6.1: Cricket club response rate

Club name	Club response?
Kashmir Cavaliers CC	Yes
Luton Caribbean CC	Yes
Lutonian CC	Yes
Luton Town and Indians CC	Yes
Luton Women's and Girls CC	Yes

In addition, there are 36 unaffiliated clubs accessing provision across Luton These clubs compete in both the 'Hatters' and 'Midweek' leagues with fixtures taking place across several council sites. Both face-to-face and virtual consultations with Cricket East have been held along with a virtual meeting with representatives of both leagues as to inform this section.

6.2: Supply

In total, there are 11 grass wicket squares across eight sites in Luton. In addition to this there are seven standalone non-turf pitches (NTPs) across as many sites, details of which shall be provided further in the report.

Grass pitches

There are seven sites in Luton which provide 10 natural turf (grass) cricket squares. Luton Regional Recreation Ground has three squares and Leagrave (Sundon Park) has two squares, all others have one square each. The site formerly provided three squares, however, Cricket East state that as of 2014 it was deemed unsafe due to its close proximity to the houses on Florence Avenue. Luton Borough Council state it is exploring the possibility of re-installing the third square at the site.

Of sites with natural turf pitches, all are available for community use, other than Stopsley High School which only services curricular use.

Table 6.2: Summary of grass wicket squares (all sites)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Community available?
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	1	Yes
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	1	Yes
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	1	Yes
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	2	Yes
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	3	Yes
42	Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	1	Yes
62	Stopsley High School	East	1	No
68	Wardown Park	Central	1	Yes

Table 6.3: Analysis area breakdown of sites

Analysis area	Number of cricket sites	Number of squares
Central	2	2
East	3	5
North	3	4
South	0	0
West	0	0
Total	**8**	**11**

The table above does not include provision which is disused. It is inclusive of all active sites including those which are unavailable for community use.

Non-turf pitches

There are 11 standalone non-turf pitches across nine sites in Luton. All sites other than Queen Elizabeth School and Cardinal Newman Catholic School contain one non-turf pitch, with the two outlined both providing two NTPs. Most standalone NTPs are non-community accessible, other than the wicket provided at Stockwood Park and Lewsey Park.

- Queen Elizabeth School
- Cardinal Newman Catholic School
- Icknield High School
- Lealands High School
- Lewsey Park
- Putteridge High School
- Stockwood Park
- The Chalk Hills Academy
- The Stockwood Park Academy

A 2018 Cricket East and LBC Report outlined Brantwood Park and Blundell Park as potential sites for the installation of NTPs, neither of which have taken place to date, with the outfield of Blundell Park deemed too small to warrant such provision.

There are also non-turf wickets accompanying natural turf cricket squares at five sites. These are:

- Crawley Green Recreation Ground
- Icknield Way Recreation Ground
- Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground
- Leagrave (Sundon Park)
- Wardown Park

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. Additionally, NTPs are frequently used for junior matches across the Country. In the case of Luton NTP's are frequently accessed for tapeball and general members of the public wanting to play cricket socially.

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 most instances, many 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.

Disused provision

There is no disused cricket provision identified in Luton. It is, however, noted that two natural turf squares were previously accommodated at Stockwood Park but have come out of use in recent times and replaced with a standalone NTP. Lothair Road Recreation Ground also formerly hosted one natural turf cricket square located on the land that has since been developed into Inspire: Luton Sports Village. Finally, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) has a third square that is no longer in use. The square was deemed unsafe in 2014 due to the close proximity of the houses on Florence Avenue. Luton Borough Council confirms it is looking to install a ball stopping net at the site as to enable the square to be re-introduced.

Future provision

There are no identified plans for new natural turf cricket squares to be provided in Luton. Notwithstanding this, potential plans remain for the development of an NTP at Brantwood Park as identified by ECB and LBC.

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

Figure 6.1: Location of cricket pitches within Luton

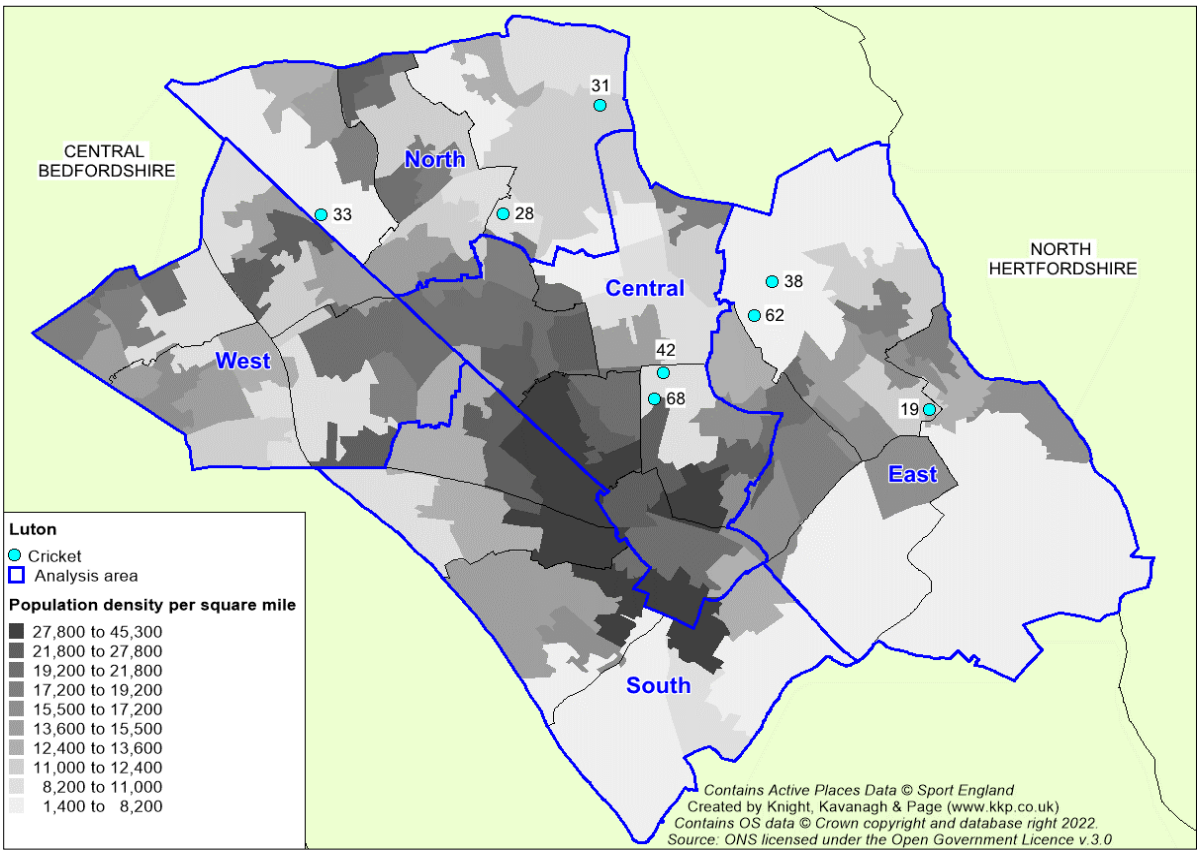


Table 6.4: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	No. of wickets	No. of NTPs
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	Yes	1	10	1
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	Yes	1	11	1
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	Yes	1	13	1
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	Yes	2	13	-
					10	-
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	Yes	3	10	-
					10	-
					9	-
42	Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	Yes	1	25	0
62	Stopsley High School	East	No	1	2	-
68	Wardown Park	Central	Yes	1	8	1

Security of tenure

The broad position is that most clubs have secure tenure at their respective grounds and will 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.

Provision located at Council sites is secure, and clubs accessing this provision are therefore considered to have secure tenure, as provision is expected to be retained over the lifespan of the PPOSS.

The one instance of unsecure tenure, is for Lutonian CC which access Caddington CC as an overspill site in Central Bedfordshire, with the Club accessing the site with no formal agreement.

Table 6.5: Summary of security of tenure for clubs

Club	Sites accessed	Agreement
Kashmir Cavaliers CC	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	No formal agreement in place.
Luton Caribbean CC	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	Annual lease agreement with Luton Borough Council.
Lutonian CC	Wardown Park	Club is in the process of getting a lease agreement with Luton Borough Council for the site.
	Caddington CC	No formal agreement in place.
Luton Town and Indians CC	Luton Town and Indians CC	Club have a 25-year lease with Luton Borough Council.
Luton Women's and Girls CC	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	Lease agreement with the Luton Borough Council. Detail regarding the funds involved or length of the lease not provided.

Pitch quality

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

The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares in Luton found one to be good quality, three to be standard quality and six assessed as poor quality. The site-by-site breakdown of this is shown in the following table.

Table 6.6: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Square quality	Outfield quality
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	Standard	Poor
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	Standard	Poor
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	Poor	Standard
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	Poor	Poor
			Poor	Standard
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	Poor	Good
			Poor	Good
			Poor	Good
42	Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	Good	Good
68	Wardown Park	Central	Standard	Good

Luton Town and Indians CC has a good quality square capable of accommodating 25 wickets. The Club confirm during consultation that its square and outfield are of an excellent quality but do describe slight slopes existing at both vertical ends of the wicket.

Wardown Park has a standard quality square, with maintenance responsibility of the site undertaken by Lutonians CC. The Club confirm needing a new grass cutter as its current mower is in very poor condition. It also states that despite spending lots of time and effort towards maintaining the square it does not offer a smooth consistent bounce.

Finally, in the case of the remaining council sites all squares provided have been assessed as of a poor quality. The ground staff working on the cricket provision confirm during non-technical site assessments that the squares are rolled once at the start of the season, and for the remainder of the year they are merely cut and lined.

This has resulted in issues such as un-even surfaces, frequent cracks and too much grass showing on wickets. Representatives of the 'Midweek' and 'Hatters' leagues state that the 2022 season has resulted in three injuries due to irregular bounce.

A prominent issue identified at Crawley Green Recreation Ground, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Leagrave (Sundon Park) and Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground is the historic burning in of football pitch lines resulting in the outfields having delves. This can cause a cricket ball to pop up dangerously whilst rolling across the outfield at speed. However, Bedfordshire FA confirm that pitches are no longer burnt in and that the delves seen are the lasting effect of this.

Luton Women's and Girls CC describe the quality of square and outfield at Lancaster Avenue as of a poor quality and not a good enough standard to develop cricketers. Luton Caribbean CC state the square and outfield is below average quality due to a lack of watering leading to an uneven bounce on the square, as well as uneven run-ups and a bumpy outfield.

A 2019 Cricket East facilities report illustrates that Wardown Park has root breakages at 75mm and 100mm depth. The report also identified a similar issue at Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground where a root break is identified at a 90mm and 110mm depth.

Issues such as these hinder the quality of playing provision, with a conclusion of more watering and rolling required in order to further improve its quality.

A more costly but effective method of addressing this would be to reduce the height of the squares to below the depth of the root breaks.

A further recommendation is to undertake a deep spiking programme of the playing provision across autumn and winter months. Cricket East confirms that funding for such maintenance has been secured for both Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground and Wardown Park and work began deep spiking both sites in 2020.

Increased irrigation through either a sprinkler or by hand during the cricket season is also effective as limited rainfall during summer months alone can result in low moisture soil thus causing irregular bounce. The implementation of rainwater harvesting tanks at council facilities could be an effective means of providing necessary irrigation to sites such as Luton Regional Recreation Ground where there is no accessible water supply.

Representatives of both the 'Midweek' and 'Hatters' leagues confirm having volunteers willing to undertake maintenance responsibility of the council sites across the Borough. With limited available spending from LBC towards further increasing the maintenance of provision, league volunteers could theoretically result in a greater investment of time towards the sites. Logistical considerations regarding this include access to the existing council mowers and rollers, as well as transporting such equipment across the several sites of Luton. If such barriers could be addressed, then a potential long-term solution to improving the quality of playing provision could be reached.

Cricket East confirm it is looking to begin this arrangement at Icknield Way Recreation Ground as a pilot site. Maintenance shall take place from representatives of both the 'Midweek' and 'Hatters' leagues alongside the work currently undertaken by LBC.

Of the NTPs in Luton, all provision at club sites are considered to be in an adequate and useable condition. There are, however, rips and moss identified on the NTPs servicing Wardown Park, Crawley Green Recreation Ground and Icknield Way Recreation Ground.

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 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 6.7: Quality ratings for community available ancillary provisions (site-by-site)

Site ID	Site	Club	Analysis area	Ancillary provision quality
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	Luton Caribbean CC	East	Standard
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	*Midweek and Hatters League*	North	Poor
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	Luton Women's and Girls CC	North	Standard
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	Kashmir Cavaliers CC	North	Poor
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	*Midweek and Hatters League*	East	Poor
42	Luton Town and Indians CC	Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	Good
68	Wardown Park	Lutonian CC	Central	Good

Of the five ECB affiliated clubs in Luton, four have access to ancillary provision. Kashmir Cavaliers CC confirm that Leagrave (Sundon Park) has no formal ancillary provision offering with the poor-quality clubhouse not open to the public. This leaves the Club with no access to showers or toilet facilities.

Icknield Way Recreation Ground has five poor quality changing rooms with no natural light, two separate rooms for showers and no social space. Luton Regional Recreation Ground has three small wooden clubhouses each with two changing rooms that were installed at the price of £165,000 per clubhouse.

Lancaster Avenue features two changing rooms with one communal shower space that is shared by Luton Women's and Girls CC in the summer and Luton Town Ladies FC in the winter. The cricket club describe the clubhouse, toilet facilities and changing rooms as of a poor quality, however, the football club suggest provision is adequate and raise frustrations with the condition the cricket club leave the building in.

Luton Town and Indians CC has a good quality pavilion with a two-storey large wooden building with an additional brick building attached. The Club confirm its changing rooms, toilets, social space and spectator viewing area are all of a good quality. Finally, Wardown Park hosts Lutonians CC which offers a standard quality wooden clubhouse with two changing rooms, an umpires changing space a kitchen and social space.

Finally, as a more general point considerations should also be made to improve the energy efficiency of the ancillary facilities within the Borough in compliance with Luton Borough Councils efforts to become a more environmentally friendly town.

Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In Luton only Luton Town and Indians CC and Wardown Park have fixed nets facilities. Cricket East state that the provision was installed at Wardown Park over Covid through ECB core city funding. Comparatively, Luton Town and Indians CC installed its provision in 2018 through contractors provided by Cricket East. The remaining sites across Luton do not feature any fixed practice nets.

The Masjid-e-Ali (as) Community Centre (MEA Centre) is a new indoor cricket facility located in the South Analysis Area. The site hosts a mosque at the front of the building with the back half providing a six-lane indoor cricket facility.

The facility now charges £20 an hour per cricket lane and can also be used for indoor cricket matches, volleyball and badminton, with opening hours running from 08:00 to 22:00 Monday to Sunday. The site is in need of installing changing rooms, a new entrance servicing the sports side of the building with an accompanying reception and a small café if possible.

Leagrave (Sundon Park) is in the process of having its un-used bowling green converted into an indoor seven lane metal structured warehouse. This project is being entirely funded by the ECB and is the first of its kind in England, with Luton and Bradford the two cities outlined for the development.

This will be a brand new design and one of two pilot sites nationally. It is hoped that the development will be completed and an operational model in place that will facilitate usage from the close season of 2023-24. There are a number of issues still to be resolved before the scheme can be formally approved for construction.

Both developments outlined above will help accommodate the large demand for winter nets and indoor cricket.

Of all seven community use sites across Luton providing grass wickets, five accommodate an accompanying NTP. Such provision can be found at Wardown Park, Crawley Green Recreation Ground, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) and Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground with the ECB core city funding also responsible for installing the NTPs outlined.

Luton Women's and Girls CC, Luton Caribbean CC and Luton Town and Indians CC all describe the need for additional training facilities, however, none of the three provide any further detail as to what it requires. Kashmir Cavaliers CC state it does not have demand for additional training facilities. Finally, Lutonians CC confirm since the installation of its two fixed practice lanes and an NTP, the site is well serviced for training facilities.

Regarding vandalism, Luton Caribbean CC have raised incidents such as its portable cage being broken and having to chain up its sight screens. Lutonians CC also state its covers have been slashed in the past, something that the Club had to financially address. Finally, Luton Women's and Girls CC also state it has suffered vandalism at its site, however, did not go into any further detail.

When asked if clubs access sites for winter nets, Luton Women's and Girls CC, Lutonians CC and Luton Town and Indians CC also confirm accessing sites for indoor training. Lutonians CC confirm accessing Luton 6th Form College and Denbigh High School, whilst Luton Town and Indians CC visit Barnfield College for winter nets. Luton Women's and Girls CC state it accesses local schools without specifying a site.

No other clubs highlighted issues or a need for new or additional training facilities.

6.3: Demand

There are five ECB affiliated clubs in Luton which collectively provide 34 teams. When broken down this equates to 17 senior men's, four senior women's, 10 junior boys and three junior girls. Two clubs are relatively large and consist of both senior and junior sections, those being Lutonian CC and Luton Town and Indians CC.

In addition to the above, Luton has a significant recreational offer largely delivered through the local 'Midweek' and 'Hatters' leagues. Known demand from these clubs equates to 22 clubs and 25 teams in the Midweek League, and 14 clubs creating 14 teams in the Hatters League. This demand is formalised, yet out of the administrative boundaries of Cricket East or other governing bodies. These leagues are run by local volunteers which work closely with LBC for yearly access to provision in the Borough.

Table 6.8: Summary of teams by club

Club	Analysis area	No. of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys' teams	Junior girls' teams
Kashmir Cavaliers CC	North	2			
Luton Caribbean CC	East	2		1	
Lutonian CC	Central	6		4	1
Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	7	1	5	-
Luton Women's and Girls CC	North	-	3	-	2

Club	Analysis area	No. of teams			
		Senior male	Senior female	Junior boys' teams	Junior girls' teams
Luton Hatters League	-	25			
Luton Midweek League	-	14			
Total		**56**	**4**	**10**	**3**

As seen in the table below, most teams are based in the Central Analysis Area (24 teams), whilst the North Analysis Area accommodates seven teams with the East Analysis Area accommodating only three teams. Both the South and West analysis areas have no formal demand identified with none of the five ECB affiliated clubs partnered to a site in either Analysis Area.
There are also a further 39 senior men's teams through the 'Midweek' and 'Hatters' leagues that access sites across Luton and therefore have not been assigned an analysis area.

Table 6.9: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive teams				
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior boys	Junior girls	Total
Central	13	1	9	1	**24**
East	2		1	-	**3**
North	2	3		2	**7**
South	-	-	-	-	-
West	-	-	-	-	-
Nomadic	39	-	-	-	-
Luton	**56**	**4**	**10**	**3**	**36**

Pitch allocation for both the Midweek and Hatters leagues are managed on a weekly basis by fixtures representative of both leagues with LBC allocating five sites for the Hatters League and six sites for the Midweek League each week. Both leagues access Crawley Green Recreation Ground, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) and Luton Regional Recreation Ground, with Wardown Park also accessed for the Midweek League.

The Midweek League holds fixtures every Tuesday and Thursday, whilst the Hatters League runs on Sundays, with teams playing an average of 12 games for the Hatters League, and 11 fixtures for the Midweek League.

Table 6.10: Summary of the Luton Midweek League demand

Club	No. of teams
	Senior male
Accident Specialists CC	1
AKCC CC	1
AKXI CC	1
Challney CC	1
Cornered Tigers CC	1
Haiders Tigers CC	1
Haidery CC	2
Kashmir Cavaliers CC	1
Kashmir Warriors CC	1
Kingsway CC	1
Lions CC	1

Club	No. of teams
	Senior male
Luton Cricketers	2
Luton Eagles	1
Luton Hatters CC	1
Luton Majestics CC	1
Luton Hawks	1
Luton Pakistanis CC	1
Luton Saracens CC	1
Luton United Stars CC	1
Pehlwan CC	1
Shaheen CC	1
United CC	2
Total	**25 teams**

Table 6.11: Summary of the Luton Hatters League demand

Club	No. of teams
	Senior male
Accident Specialists CC	1
Birch Link CC	1
Dhamol CC	1
G and A Luton Kashmiris CC	1
Hillborough CC	1
Kotli Panthers CC	1
Luton Stallions CC	1
Luton Strikers CC	1
Luton United CC	1
Major CC	1
Nasons CC	1
Pehlwan CC	1
Star CC	1
Warriors CC	1
Total	**14 teams**

Participation trends

Four clubs report that demand has increased in some form over the previous three years. Kashmir Cavaliers CC and Luton Caribbean CC confirm growth of a senior mens team, whilst Luton Women's and Girls CC and Luton Town and Indians CC outline gaining a senior women's team. Regarding junior boys, Luton Caribbean CC state it has gained a U15 team, whilst Luton Town and Indians CC has lost a U11 boys' team.

Cricket East also state that Guru-Nanak-Gurdhwara CC is soon to be a brand new club, with members based near Brantwood Park, and hoping to access Leagrave (Sundon Park) CC for fixtures as of the 2023 season.

Imported/exported demand

Exported demand takes place within Luton with Lutonians CC accessing Caddington CC (Central Bedfordshire) for two of its senior teams and its U13 and U15 boy's teams.

With Luton Town and Indians CC accommodating lots of demand and no second ground being available within Luton, the Club is also looking to source a secondary venue to access outside of the Borough to support its large demand. Cricket East also states that the perceived dangerous nature of the Council owned squares across Luton results in further junior demand being exported to Dunstable Town CC.

Consultation with Cricket East outlines that Dunstable Town CC (Central Bedfordshire) and Flitwick CC (Central Bedfordshire) both accommodate 25-30 members based in Luton. Eggington Foresters CC (Central Bedfordshire) was resurrected following the Club folding ten years ago. The Club now provides four senior mens teams, with a majority of its player base coming from Luton. Finally, Markyate CC (Hertfordshire) has three senior mens teams with almost all of its members based in Luton.

Therefore, between the four clubs there is a large amount of demand exported from Luton which can more easily be quantified with these figures.

Additional activity

The ECB is currently running several initiatives across the Country which results in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfields, making squares unusable during these periods. Details of these are featured 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 can deliver the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight. Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs.

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

- Increase cricket activity for 5–8-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.

Dynamos cricket

A key development area for the ECB in delivering on the outcomes of ‘Inspiring Generations’ will be the Dynamos programme for 8–11-year-olds, which originally aimed to launch in 2020. It plans on building on the significant growth of the All Stars and will develop the pathway to retain juniors who progress.

Where All Stars seeks to engage children in cricket activity and learning the skills, Dynamos seeks to engage children in learning how to play, introducing a modified 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 new short format competition which also aimed to launch in 2020 (pre-Covid-19). Table 6.12 details the participation figures identified.

Softball cricket

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

Table 6.12: Summary of All Stars, Dynamos and Softball cricket participation

Club	All Stars participation figures (2022)	Dynamos participation figures (2022)	Women's & girls' softball
Lutonian CC	15 participants	15 participants	-
Luton Town and Indians CC	30 participants	25 participants	-
Luton Women's and Girls CC	20 participants	24 participants	27 participants

There are three clubs currently delivering the All Stars and Dynamos sessions. The highest level of participation for both initiatives can be seen at Luton Town and Indians CC with a total of 30 participants for All Stars sessions and 25 people for Dynamos sessions. Luton Women's and Girls CC is the only club within Luton currently delivering women's and girls' softball sessions, which equates to 27 participants.

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. 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.

Chance to Shine cricket coaching delivery has taken place in 31 schools across Luton, as listed overleaf:

- Beech Hill Community Primary School
- Beechwood Primary School
- Bushmead Primary School
- Crawley Green Infant School
- Dallow Primary
- Denbigh Primary School
- Downside Primary School
- Farley Junior School
- Foxdell Junior School
- Icknield Primary School
- Maidenhall Primary School
- Norton Road Primary School
- Putteridge Primary School
- Ramridge Primary School
- River Bank Primary School
- Someries Junior School
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary
- St Margaret if Scotland Catholic Primary
- Stopsley Community Primary
- Sundon Park Junior School
- Surrey Street Primary
- The Linden Academy
- The Meads Primary School
- Warden Hill Junior School
- Waulud Primary School
- Wenlock C of E Junior School
- Whitefield Primary Academy
- Wigmore Primary School
- William Austin Infant School
- William Austin Junior School
- Woodlands Secondary School

Afghan Refugee Hubs

In 2022 Cricket East began delivering 'Afghan Refugee Hubs' sessions across Luton in support of newly arrived Afghan migrants. Sessions are delivered alongside Chance to Shine and Wicketz programmes, with the goal of using the power of Cricket to support refugees living in temporary accommodation, delivering workshops educating about British culture, dietary advice, the importance of women, and supporting the integration of migrants into new schools. One session saw former England Captain Alistair Cook visit Icknield Recreation Ground to run some batting and catching drills before delivering a speech to those in attendance.

Sites accessed for such sessions are Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Lea Manor Recreation Centre, Venue 360, the Stockwood Park Academy and Stockwood Park.

Super 1's

The Super 1's initiative looks to give young people with a disability aged 12-25 the chance to play regular, competitive cricket. By creating community cricket hubs, the programme offers coaching sessions and competitive games that look to give young people the chance to develop as individuals on and off the pitch.

Cricket East confirms that Super 1's sessions have began taking place in Luton.

Other usage

Cricket East state that Northamptonshire County CC has developed a sixth form programme, the 'Luton Steelbacks Cricket Academy.' Delivered by the Shared Learning Trust, and Northamptonshire County CC, the programme provides Year 11 students with elite level Cricket coaching along with a P.E BTEC course, giving students a Cricket focused academic learning experience.

The programme is delivered in Stockwood Park Academy and Chalk Hills Academy and hopes to educate students in sport, whilst providing elite level Cricket coaching with the aim of playing for Northamptonshire County CC.

Cricket East highlights that Luton Regional Recreation Ground accommodated the 2022 Jinnah Cup, a tournament celebrating Pakistan's Independence from the British Empire in 1947. The event see's clubs from several cities across the UK import demand with a short form cricket tournament on the 14th of August.

'*County Facilities Strategy (CFS)*

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

The CFS will be a 'long-term' plan with county boards ensuring the Strategy provides a ten-year view of facility needs. Like a PPS, the county cricket boards will establish key stakeholders (clubs, leagues, county sports partnerships, county pitch advisors & Sport England etc) within its locality to consult during the development of the Strategy.

Each county cricket board will utilise up to date PPS within its locality to support the development of the CFS, utilising the PPS findings as a 'high-quality' evidence base. The CFS will look at a range of facilities which support cricket across its region, with the ECB setting out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the CFS:

Types of facility

- "Traditional" outdoor facilities
  - Pitches and Outfields
  - Pavilions
  - Practice

- "Non-traditional" facilities
  - Multi Use Games Areas
  - Tapeball/softball spaces
  - Courts or cages

- Indoor facilities
  - Practice (multi use halls)
  - Performance (cricket specific)
  - Matchplay (6 or 8 a side)

Each CFS will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, particularly how each county cricket board will use the devolved budget within the County Grants Fund and prioritise larger scale strategic projects.
Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the CFS 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 development proposals that need to be judged against the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.'

Tapeball

Tapeball is an accessible form of cricket in which a cricket ball is supplemented for hardened tennis ball is wrapped in duct tape. This allows all batsmen to only require a bat, and no additional equipment such as pads, a helmet or gloves. It is played on NTPs, and MUGAs and offers an affordable accessible format of the game.

Tapeball occurs informally across Luton throughout the year, with all NTPs at council sites accessed. Cricket East outlined the potential of converting the six poor quality tennis courts at Luton Regional Recreation Ground into a tape ball arena, in which caged fences with a tightly woven netted roof would accommodate tapeball matches. It also highlighted the possibility of such provision being installed at Kingsway Recreation Ground with the masterplan for the site currently being discussed.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through club ambitions and using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate the additional demand for cricket arising from housing development plans within Luton.

Based on population projections to 2031 (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 2022 of 213,528 is projected to decrease to 204,718 by 2031. The table below shows the number of new teams generated by the new population and the requisite match equivalent sessions.

Table 6.13: Authority wide team generation rates

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population - rounded figure	Peak time for population	Average games for age group	Match equivalent session per season[35]
Men (18-55yrs)	**1:1012**	53.92	0	Saturday	0	0
Women (18-55yrs)	**1:12962**	3.85	0	Sunday	0	0
Boys (7-18yrs)	**1:1894**	9.64	0	Midweek	0	0
Girls (7-18yrs)	**1:5965**	2.89	0	Midweek	0	0

As can be seen by Table 6.13, the Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator does not anticipate any growth within Luton.

Two clubs in Luton have plans to increase the number of teams they currently provide. Details of this potential growth is listed in the table below which amounts to two senior women's and one junior boys' team. It should also be noted that Lutonians CC state it has a long-term goal of catering for a disabled team.

Table 6.14: Future demand expressed by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys	Junior girls
Luton Women's and Girls CC	Mid	-	2	-	-
Luton Caribbean CC	South	-	-	1	-
	Total	**-**	**2**	**1**	**-**

Latent demand

Latent demand refers to demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better-quality provision. Through consultation Lutonians CC confirm accessing Caddington Sports and Social Club within Central Bedfordshire for its Saturday 3rd team, Sunday 3rd team and U13 and U15 boy's teams.

Luton Women's and Girls CC also state it travels long distances for its away fixtures due to the limited number of women's and girls' teams, as well as a lack of council sites capable of accommodating appropriate changing facilities.

The remaining clubs made no reference to any latent demand.

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Luton is Saturday, although a many number of teams are also fielded on a Sunday including senior women's teams. As such, both require consideration.

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

For junior cricket, peak time is midweek albeit some Sunday cricket is also recorded.

Future demand summary

For Luton, it can be determined that future demand shall be determined by club ambitions, given the forecasted decline in population from 2022 to 2031. Therefore, future demand of two senior women's and one junior boys' team is used to inform the supply and demand analysis.

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

The number of matches played by each team has been derived from consultation with the clubs. Where 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 ten and 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play between four and eight matches per year depending on their age and level of competition.

The above is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

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

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

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

Typically, midweek cricket capacity is capped at 36 match equivalent sessions. This is based on one square accommodating up to six junior teams playing on a home and away basis of three nights a week, with remaining capacity utilised for senior training needs. However, in Luton, due to the midweek picture being a peak time for senior recreational cricket, a maximum capacity rating of 70 match equivalent has been set for one square.

This is calculated by combining the demand for junior play as well as that of midweek senior cricket played through the Hatters and Midweek Leagues.

Table 6.15: Capacity analysis of community available grass cricket squares

KKP Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club users	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Saturday)	Potential spare capacity for senior cricket? (Sunday)	Potential spare capacity for junior cricket? (Midweek)
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	East	Luton Caribbean CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	1	Standard	10	40	94	54	No	No	No
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	North	*Luton Midweek League* *Luton Hatters League*	1	Standard	11	44	53	9	No	No	No
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	Luton Women's and Girls CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	1	Poor	13	0	92	92	No	No	No
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	Kashmir Cavaliers CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	2	Poor	13	0	64	64	No	No	No
						10	0	64	64	No	No	No
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	*Luton Midweek League* *Luton Hatters League*	3	Poor	10	0	53	53	No	No	No
						10	0	53	53	No	No	No
						9	0	53	53	No	No	No
42	Luton Town and Indians CC	Central	Luton Town and Indians CC	1	Good	25	125	67	58	No	No	Yes
68	Wardown Park	Central	Lutonian CC *Luton Midweek League*	1	Standard	8	32	114	82	No	No	No

In the case of the Hatters League, it has been determined that each team within the League plays an average of 11 fixtures per season. Therefore, with 14 teams, the Hatters League has been attributed 154 fixtures. This total has then been divided by the eight squares accessed, meaning 19 sessions of play have been attributed for each square accessed.

Teams in the Midweek League play on average 12 matches per season. Therefore, with 25 teams in the League, it has been attributed 300 match equivalent sessions per season. This total has then been divided by the nine squares accessed, meaning 34 sessions of play have been attributed for each square accessed. The list of sites accessed for both the 'Hatters' and 'Midweek' leagues can be found on page 90 of the report.

Actual spare capacity

No sites in Luton have capacity during the peak time period for senior cricket (Saturdays) due to a mixture of sites being at capacity, which is the case for most affiliated clubs, and a broad supply level of poor quality provision which cannot be considered suitable for an increase in demand.

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 be able to be accommodated at peak time. Therefore, despite 58 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity being present at Luton Town and Indians CC, because the Club already hosts five midweek teams, it can only accommodate one additional midweek team, meaning six match equivalent sessions have been attributed.

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.

Six sites are identified as being overplayed in Luton. Details of each are in the table below.

Table 6.20: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Demand	Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)
19	Crawley Green Recreation Ground	Luton Caribbean CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	East	54
28	Icknield Way Recreation Ground	*Luton Midweek League* *Luton Hatters League*	North	9
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	Luton Women's and Girls CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	North	92
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	Kashmir Cavaliers CC *Luton Hatters League* *Luton Midweek League*	North	64 64
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	*Luton Midweek League* *Luton Hatters League*	East	53 53 53
68	Wardown Park	Lutonian CC *Luton Midweek League*	Central	82
			Total	**524**

Table 6.21: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (sessions per season)
Central	82
East	213
North	229
South	-
West	-
Luton	**524**

As can be seen there are severe levels of overplay identified. Overplay is caused by the quantity of poor quality squares, paired with a large quantity of demand across the Borough. Overplay is most severe in the North Analysis Area, with 229 match equivalent sessions identified

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 discussed, future demand shall be calculated using club ambitions. Therefore, future demand of two senior women's teams and one junior boys' team shall be used to inform the supply and demand analysis.

When applied by match equivalent sessions, this equates to 24 match equivalent sessions for Sunday demand and six match equivalent sessions for midweek demand.

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. This is calculated by using the average number of matches played per season by senior teams (12) multiplied by the number of additional teams that can be fielded at peak time (two teams per square that is available). The entirety of the spare capacity at each site is not used as this number of matches may not be able to be accommodated at peak time.

Table 6.22: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Saturday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	-	82	82	-	82
East	-	213	213	-	213
North	-	229	229	-	229
South	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
Luton	**0**	**524**	**524**	**-**	**524**

As seen in Table 6.22 above, there is current shortfall equating to 524 match equivalent sessions per season for senior cricket, with no actual spare capacity identified. Future demand through club ambitions did not result in the growth of any senior mens teams, meaning there is no change for the future picture. The highest shortfalls are in the North and East analysis areas.

Senior cricket supply and demand analysis (Sunday)

Table 6.23 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. Future demand through club ambitions of two senior women's teams equates to 24 match equivalent sessions, meaning the future picture exacerbates shortfalls to 548 match equivalent sessions.

Table 6.23: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Sunday)

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	-	82	82	-	82
East	-	213	213	-	213
North	-	229	229	24	253
South	-	-	0	-	0
West	-	-	0	-	0
Luton	**0**	**524**	**524**	**24**	**548**

There is current shortfall amounting to 524 match equivalent sessions per season, with no actual spare capacity identified. The highest shortfalls are in the North Analysis Area.

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 Dynamo's cricket.

Table 6.24: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Central	6	82	76	-	76
East	-	213	213	-	213
North	-	229	229	-	229
South	-	-	0	6	6
West	-	-	0	-	-
Luton	**6**	**524**	**518**	**6**	**524**

There is currently shortfall for midweek cricket amounting to 518 match equivalent sessions per season, with the only the Central Analysis Area showing actual spare capacity of six match equivalent sessions. When accommodating for future demand through club ambitions of one junior boys' team, existing shortfalls are exacerbated to 524 match equivalent sessions.

Conclusion

To conclude, the current and future position is that severe shortfalls are identified across the Borough, with six of the seven community accessible sites contributing to this. The one site not showing overplay, Luton Town and Indians CC, is also the only club within Luton with a long-term lease agreement in place and appropriate fencing for its provision.

Shortfalls are predominantly a consequence of poor quality provision in the Borough, combined with a high demand for the sport. The quantity of provision to meet current demand is broadly sufficient, with all peak time activity being accommodated, however, this is accommodated for on inadequate provision.

Luton is unique compared to surrounding local authorities with it accommodating a much more focused demand for South-Asian recreational cricket. However, because of this, with minimal clubs being asset owning or having permanent venues, the pressure on the Council to provide a suitable facility stock to accommodate this demand is high. As stated, it somewhat does this from a quantitative perspective, but not a qualitative perspective.

The proceeding Strategy & Action Plan will explore options to alleviate known shortfalls.

Cricket – supply and demand summary

- The current broad position in Luton is there is no actual spare capacity for peak time senior men's cricket.
- Overplay of 524 match equivalent sessions is present for Saturday demand. With no future demand through club ambitions or population forecasts identified, this figure remains unchanged going forwards.
- Sunday demand also displays overplay totalling 524 match equivalent sessions, which is worsened to 548 match equivalent sessions once future demand through Club ambitions of two senior womens teams is accounted for.
- Six sites and nine squares are overplayed, these being; Crawley Green Recreation Ground, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park), Luton Regional Recreation Ground and Wardown Park. Total overplay equates to 524 match equivalent sessions.

Cricket – supply summary

- In total, there are eight cricket sites in Luton hosting 11 grass squares.
- Of community accessible provision, there are seven cricket sites in Luton accommodating 10 grass squares. The only non-community accessible site is Stopsley High School which provides two grass wicket squares.
- There are a nine standalone NTPs within Luton all of which are located at education sites other than Stockwood Park and Lewsey Park.
- Of the five clubs accessing provision on a home and away basis within Luton, only Luton Town and Indians CC have a 25-year lease agreement with Luton Borough Council. The remaining four clubs have short term leases in place with Luton Borough Council.
- The 22 clubs within the Midweek League and the 14 clubs in the Hatters League exist with no security of tenure and are assigned sites on a weekly basis by a fixture secreatery for each league.
- The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares found one to be good quality, three to be standard quality and six to be poor quality.
- With the majority of provision in Luton deemed of a poor quality, there is the opportunity for representatives from the Midweek and Hatters league to work with Luton Borough Council to increase the amount of maintenance squares shall receive.
- Of the seven accessible sites in Luton, Icknield Way Recreation Ground, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) and Luton Regional Recreation Ground all feature poor quality ancillary facilities.
- Three clubs state the demand for additional training facilities, those being Luton Women's and Girls CC, Luton Caribbean CC and Luton Town and Indians CC.
- There are no disused cricket sites across Luton, however Stockwood Park formerly accomodated two cricket squares, Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) has a third square that has also come out of use and Lothair Road Rercreation Ground formerly hosted a square that has since been developed into Luton Sports Village.

Cricket – demand summary

- There are 41 clubs in Luton which collectively provide 56 senior men's, four senior women's, 10 junior boys teams and three junior girls team.
- Three clubs within Luton currently offer the All Stars and Dynamos program, whilst only Luton Women's and Girls CC offer softball sessions.
- Future demand for cricket is identified through Club ambitions which equates to two senior women's teams and one junior boys' team.
- Lutonians CC hosts the only example of exported demand within Luton whilst accessing Caddington CC for two of its senior teams and its U13 and U15 boys' teams.

PART 7: TENNIS COURTS

7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and club-based tennis locally across Luton. 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 Luton the LTA is working with the Council to improve access to provision in parks. More detailed discussion of the LTA's ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access are set out later in the report.

Consultation

There is one tennis clubs in Luton, that being attached within the Venue 360 located in the South Analysis Area. The Club was responsive to consultations with a face-to-face meeting and tour of the site having taken place to inform this section.

Table 7.1: Consultation responses

Club name	Analysis area	LTA registered	Club response?
Venue 360	South	No	Yes

7.2: Supply

There are 70 tennis courts identified in Luton across 20 sites. Of the courts, 41 are categorised as being available for community use at ten sites compared to 29 that are unavailable at 10 sites. Courts on sites that are available to the community include club, park and some school courts.

Please note that courts that are classified as being available for community use, provided that they are deemed to be easily accessible to the general population, either via pay and play or through a membership at a club (or a combination of both). All remaining courts identified as being unavailable are located at school sites or hotels.

The North Analysis Area contains the highest number of available courts (27), whereas the Central Analysis Area provides the fewest with seven courts.

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

Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use
Central	4	3
East	6	8
North	16	11
South	11	0
West	4	7
Luton	**41**	**29**

In addition to the above, there are five mini courts provided at St Matthews Primary School which are not community accessible.

Figure 7.1: Overview of tennis court locations

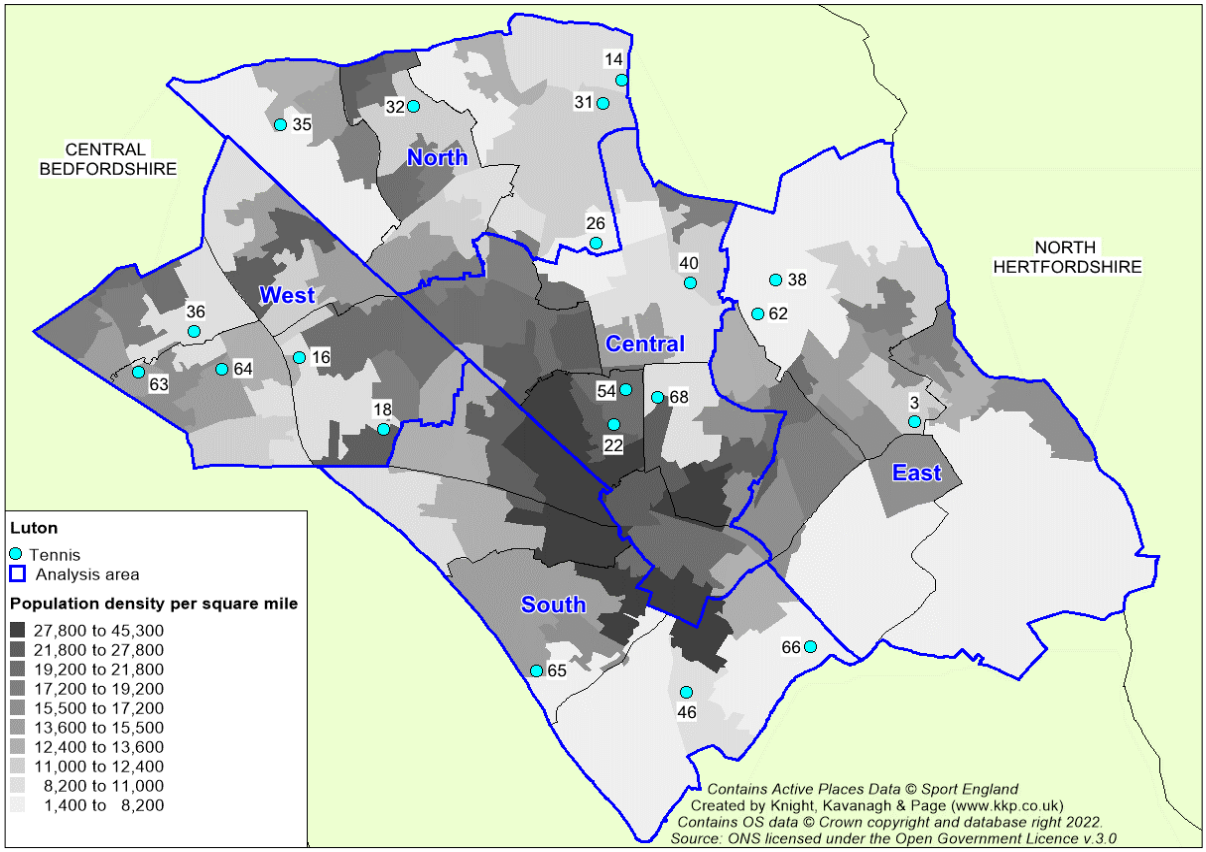


Figure 7.1 shows the location of the courts servicing Luton, regardless of community use. For a key to the map, see Table 7.3.

Disused provision

There are former tennis courts identified in the 2014 Playing Pitch Strategy which are now used for other sports, on both sports club and school or college sites. This is applicable to Barnfield South Academy which formerly had three tennis courts, however, the school has now closed, whilst Putteridge High School now has netball courts as opposed to tennis courts that were previously identified.

Challney High School for Boys formerly had five courts which have been re-surfaced and lined with football and cricket markings. Additionally, Venue 360 confirms losing two of its outdoor courts to small sided 3G pitches as of 2017. The LTA confirms that the site has a planning application for two of its outdoor courts to be converted into 3G pitches, which if completed would leave the facility with only two outdoor courts.

Finally, BeActive highlights that three courts provided at Co-Op Luton BC are outlined for residential development. During non-technical site assessments, the courts were in a disused condition with vegetative roots growing through its surface.

Future provision

Consultation with Venue 360, Luton Borough Council and BeActive resulted in no reference being made to provide any additional outdoor tennis provision.

Cricket East identifies the potential for developing a tapeball arena on the six poor quality courts installed at Luton Regional Recreation Ground. The courts are currently used informally for tapeball and it is an ambition for Cricket East to gain such provision within Luton.

Table 7.3: Tennis courts in Luton

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	Number of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic	North	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Standard
					4		Artificial turf	
18	Chaul End Lane Open Space	West	Council	Yes	1	Yes	Artificial turf	Standard
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	Council	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Poor
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	Council	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Good
36	Lewsey Park	West	Council	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Poor
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	Council	Yes	6	Yes	Macadam	Poor
46	Memorial Park	South	Council	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Standard
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Standard
66	Venue 360	South	Commercial	Yes	4	Yes	Artificial turf	Standard
68	Wardown Park	Central	Council	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Good
No community use								
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Standard
16	Challney High School for Girls	West	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Standard
22	Denbigh High School	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
26	Icknield High School	North	School	No	6	No	Artificial turf	Standard
35	Lealands High School	North	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Central	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Poor
54	River Bank Primary School	Central	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
62	Stopsley High School	East	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Poor
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	West	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Standard
64	The Ferrars Academy	West	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor

Management and security of tenure

The table below highlights the management of tennis courts within Luton. The majority are operated the Education sector, of which, 12 courts are available for community use.

Table 7.4: Tennis courts by management type

Community use?	Number of courts			
	Club	Council	Education	Other
Available	-	25	12	4
Unavailable	-	-	29	-
Total	**-**	**25**	**41**	**4**

A total of 25 courts are managed by the council all of which are available to the community. A further 41 courts are based at education sites, of which 12 courts across three sites are accessible to the community. A further four courts are located at a private site, that being Venue 360, a commercially ran facility. Finally, there are also a considerable number of courts at education sites that are not community accessible. This figure total 29 courts across 10 sites. Finally, Luton does not provide any club based tennis courts, with Venue 360 being the only club within the Borough and it is a commercially ran site.

Table 7.5: Club management/ownership breakdown

Site ID	Site name	Club	Management	Ownership
66	Venue 360	Venue 360 Club members	Venue 360	Venue 360

Court type

The most common outdoor tennis court surface in Luton is macadam with 55 courts across 17 sites identified. Of the remaining provision, an artificial surface is the most prominent with 15 artificial turf courts across four sites. Grass courts, whilst much sought after by players, are becoming increasingly rare across the Country, in part due to them requiring higher levels of maintenance and being able to accommodate less usage. They are generally reserved for summer use, with bad weather at other times of the year making them unusable. In the case of Luton, there are no grass tennis courts identified, not are there any clay courts.

The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment. This is also the case for artificial grass courts.

Consultation with the LTA suggests it is keen to invest into the provision located at Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground, however, this does not currently align with LBC priorities. It is also looking at improving the quality of courts provided at Lewsey Park, which it confirms will only be a re-paint of the courts rather than replacement surface, along with the installation of the LTA gate access booking system and enhancing the floodlights.

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 Luton, 14 of the 70 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 20% of the provision. As shown in Table 7.2, the courts with sports lighting are located at:

- Chaul End Lane Open Space (one court with sports lighting)
- Lewsey Park (three courts with sports lighting)
- Luton Regional Recreation Ground, (six courts with sports lighting)
- Venue 360 (four courts with sports lighting)

Of the courts accompanied with sports lighting, all 14 are available for community use. Access to courts with sports lighting is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for more usage of provision, which in turn can help accommodate more members. With Venue 360 providing four outdoor floodlit courts, all club members within Luton are serviced by sports lit tennis courts.

Over markings

Tennis courts, particularly within schools, are often over marked by netball, basketball and/or football courts. Courts which are over marked tend to receive higher 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.

Over marking of tennis courts is identified at 13 sites, as seen below. When broken down there are two community accessible sites and 11 education sites showing overmarking, with netball being the most common overmarked provision.

- Lea Manor Recreation Centre (community accessible)
- Luton Regional Recreation Centre (community accessible)
- Queen Elizabeth School (no community access)
- Cardinal Newman Catholic (no community access)
- Challney High School for Girls (no community access)
- Icknield High School (no community access)
- Lealands High School (no community access)
- Luton Sixth Form College (no community access)
- River Bank Primary School (no community access)
- Stopsley High School (no community access)
- The Chalk Hills Academy (no community access)
- The Ferrars Academy (no community access)
- The Stockwood Park Academy (no community access)

Quality

The quality of tennis courts has been informed through non-technical site assessments and consultation with providers to assign each court a rating of good, standard or poor. Key aspects informing the findings include surface quality, grip underfoot, line marking quality, evenness and evidence of inappropriate use (e.g. vandalism and/or littering).

The table below outlines the quality of courts which are both available for community use and unavailable for community use. In total, there are eight good quality (11% of all provision) courts, 35 standard quality (50%) and 27 poor quality court (39%).

Table 7.6: Quality of tennis courts

Community use?	Number of courts		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	8	20	13
Unavailable	0	15	14
Total	**8**	**35**	**27**

Table 7.7: Summary of quality by site (community use sites only)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of courts	Court type	Court quality
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic	North	4	Macadam	Standard
			4	Artificial turf	
18	Chaul End Lane Open Space	West	1	Artificial turf	Standard
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground	North	4	Macadam	Poor
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	4	Macadam	Good
36	Lewsey Park	West	3	Macadam	Poor
38	Luton Regional Recreation Ground	East	6	Macadam	Poor
46	Memorial Park	South	3	Macadam	Standard
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	4	Macadam	Standard
66	Venue 360	South	4	Artificial turf	Standard
68	Wardown Park	Central	4	Macadam	Good

The community available courts assessed as poor quality are located at the following park sites:

- Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground
- Lewsey Park
- Luton Regional Recreation Ground
- Co-Op Luton Bowls Club

Issues recorded during site assessments include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, worn line markings and loose gravel, with maintenance also considered to be basic and infrequent at most of the sites. This leads to further deterioration in quality.

All three sites containing poor quality courts are operated by the Council. Improving such courts is current a 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 up in a variety of ways to ensure greater use by local 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 of the residents in their area; ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access (further explained in the demand section).

Consultation with the LTA confirm having installed Gate Access and ClubSpark at Wardown Park and Memorial Park and are hoping to make such developments at Lewsey Park. It is also looking to resurface the courts at Wardown Park and Memorial Park in the near future.

Ancillary provision

Feedback from Venue 360 confirmed the quality of the ancillary provision which services its site.

Table 7.8: Ancillary quality breakdown

Club	Analysis area	Facility as a whole	Changing facilities	Car parking
Venue 360	South	Good	Standard	Good

Both non-technical site assessments and consultation with Venue 360 confirm being a good quality facility, with good quality parking. The sites changing facilities are of a standard quality with it outlined to be refurbished over the winter months of 2022.

For non-club courts, ancillary provision offering is limited. 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 realistically 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, which can then also provide a source of income.

7.3: Demand

Competitive tennis

There is one tennis club in Luton, that being Venue 360. Total tennis membership at the site is 40 adult members (30 male, 10 female) and 52 junior members. The site has club nights every Tuesday and Thursday in which its four outdoor courts and one of its indoor courts is reserved for club use. The sites remaining indoor tennis court is converted into a badminton court in order to offer another sport within the facility. The site also has a pay and play offering on the remaining days of the week, as well as a 15 week junior tennis programme that commenced on Saturday the 3rd of September.

Table 7.9: Summary of tennis club demand

Club	Analysis area	No. of members	
		Senior	Junior
Venue 360	South	40	52
Total	South	**40**	**52**

Latent/unmet demand

Latent demand for tennis nationally is reported to be high by the LTA, which has an insight tool that suggests that 18% of the five million players that pick up a racket each year would play more often if key barriers such as poor promotion of opportunities to get on court, unclear booking journeys (especially those that are 'offline') and low-quality facilities were addressed. As such, there is a potential opportunity in Luton for the 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[36] 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 3,459 people within Luton, or 1.62% of the population. The highest latent demand from one demographic is 'supportive single females' who resemble 441 people wanting to play tennis that currently are not. As a national comparison, the entirety of England has 987,239 wanting to participate in tennis.

Consultation feedback from Venue 360 in Luton did not highlight any apparent unmet or latent demand for tennis. The Club confirm not having any capacity issues at the site, with both its four outdoor courts and two indoor courts comfortably accommodating current demand.

Future demand

Consultation with Venue 360 state its membership figures have been in a steady state of decline over the last ten years. The site feel moving forwards memberships shall hopefully remain level with current figures, but it does not anticipate any levels of growth in the near future.

Informal tennis

It is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Luton 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.

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 Luton, both Wardown Park and Memorial Park provide such initiatives.

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.

36 https://segments.sportengland.org/results.aspx?query=Sports#sport=84&sportBox=1&sportPlay=want-to&focusType=LA&focusName=162&output=table&map=polygon&polygonType=OA&catchmentType=focus&querySource=Sports&queryType=CharPop

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.

Gate Access

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

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.

Consultation with the Tennis Manager at Venue 360 confirms the site has spoken with the LTA about the installation of ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access but decided not to install such provision.

LTA Big Tennis Weekend

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs and venues have the ability to 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 provides resources and support for clubs running what is one of the UK's biggest public tennis events. Venues are able to run additional events 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 a number of free coaching sessions, to encourage people to continue playing after the event. It is now

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 5 stages that give young players the chance to practice and develop at an appropriate level. The 5 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
Mini tennis courts can be found at St Matthews Primary School, which does not open its provision to community use.

Padel tennis

Padel is a form of tennis that is easy to play, fun and sociable. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities 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 paddle tennis players across Great Britain, with 107 courts provided at 52 clubs. This is predicted to grow substantially in future years.

There are currently no padel tennis courts in Luton. However, neighbouring district Dunstable Town Tennis Club confirm having the demand to warrant the installation of such provision and hope to provide a padel court in the future. The site is located 7.8 miles from Venue 360.

7.4: Supply and demand analysis

The LTA suggests that a non- sports lit hard court can accommodate 40 members whereas a hard court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members. Indoor courts can accommodate 200 members with air domed courts being able to host 100. Using these figures, the table below analyses whether or not courts currently in use by clubs are sufficient to meet current and future demand. It should be noted that the capacity system is more based on sustainability of clubs and their membership relative to their available court space. Being "overcapacity" might not necessarily translate to a lack of playing space at peak times for club members.

As a capacity analysis for Venue 360, the site currently has 92 members. With four floodlit courts able to host 240 members, this gives the site a current capacity balance of 148 members of spare capacity. With no future demand identified this figure remains unchanged for the future.

Based on the guidance, Venue360 does not have any capacity issues for both current and future demand. Furthermore, the site is serviced by an additional two indoor tennis courts, meaning it can comfortably accommodate its existing demand.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be determined that the current stock of supply of tennis courts can adequately accommodate the Club demand within the Borough. With the one tennis Club showing spare capacity for an additional 148 members, and a further 37 courts being accessible to the general public, it can be deemed that there is adequate quantity of provision.

Priority should be placed on improving the quality of non-club courts to an adequate standard for promoting and increasing informal play, particularly at publicly available sites accommodating multiple courts and adequate ancillary facilities. Linked to this, the utilisation of LTA schemes at suitable sites should also be considered, as should the establishment of the other various initiatives supported by the NGB.

Tennis – supply and demand summary

- There is one tennis club based within Luton, that being Venue 360.
- The site is operating within LTA recommended guidelines for both current and future demand
- The site confirm membership levels have declined over the last ten years and does not anticipate any growth in the near future.
- When pairing the findings from the supply and demand analysis for club courts with the number of community available park courts, it can be deemed that Luton is serviced by sufficient provision to accommodate both the current and future demand.
- When analysing the quality of community accessible courts, those of a good quality resemble only 11% of the provision, whilst 48% of courts are of a standard quality, leaving 41% of courts as of a poor quality.
- Priority should be placed on the resurfacing of provision at Lewsey Park as well as the installation of LTA initiatives such as ClubSpark, Gate Access and Rally.

Tennis – supply summary

- There are a total of 70 tennis courts identified in Luton across 29 sites, with 41 courts categorised as being available for community use at 10 sites.
- Most community accessible courts are operated by Luton Borough Council, 100% of which are available for community use.
- Most courts have a macadam surface, with 55 being of this type, with the remaining 15 courts being of an artificial surface. No grass or clay courts were identified.
- In total, 15 of the 70 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing 20% of the provision.
- Of the community available courts, eight are assessed as good quality, 20 as standard quality and 13 as poor quality. The 13 poor quality courts are located across three sites, all of which are operated by Luton Borough Council. These three sites are Lancaster Avenue Recreation Ground, Lewsey Park and Luton Regional Recreation Ground.
- The one Club within Luton describes its ancillary provision as a good quality facility on the whole, with standard changing facilities and good parking.
- Venue 360 confirm it scheduled to re-furbish its changing facilities over the Winter months of 2022.

Tennis – demand summary

- There is one tennis Club within Luton which caters for 40 senior members and 52 junior members. This does not include additional pay and play demand which is offered at the site.
- Consultation with Venue 360 confirm its membership figures have been steadily declining over the last ten years and does not anticipate any growth in the near future.
- Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in Luton 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. Following the installation of GateAccess entry to Lewsey Park, a better understanding to the amount of park use demand shall be more easily quantified.

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 one 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

Consultation with England Netball and BeActive has taken place as to inform this section. Clubs across Luton were also invited to provide feedback, of which two responded those being Celtic Cyclones and Dunstable Diamonds.

8.2: Supply

In total, there are 67 outdoor netball courts located across 32 sites in Luton. Of this total, 14 courts across four sites are open to community access, resembling 21% of all outdoor courts. Of the 67 courts across Luton, 53 (79%) are located at non-community accessible education sites (predominately primary schools).

Tables 8.2 and 8.3 overleaf outlines the total supply of provision within Luton, with these mapped in Figure 8.1.

As can be seen by Table 8.2, there are 22 community accessible courts within Luton across six sites. The North Analysis Area provides the most provision with 10 courts, whilst the Central Analysis Area provides the fewest accessible courts with two. The remaining provision not accessible to the community total 53 courts, with the West Analysis Area's providing the most courts at 18.

Consultation with Cardinal Newman Catholic School state its courts are open to community use in summer months and are charged £30 an hour midweek, £45 an hour on Saturdays and £55 an hour on Sundays.

England Netball confirm that the outdoor provision at Denbigh High School is open to community use. Consultation with the Stockwood Park Academy also states its outdoor courts are open to community use, despite not having accompanying floodlights.

Ownership/ management

The table below highlights the management of netball courts within Luton. All 67 courts are operated by the Education sector, of which, 14 courts are available for community use. There are no courts that are managed by the council.

Table 8.1: Netball courts by management type

Community use?	Number of courts			
	Club	Council	Education	Other
Available	-	-	14	
Unavailable	-	-	53	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**67**	

The out of hour use at Challney High School for Girls was formerly managed by Community Hire, however the school confirm that as of September 2022 the site is now managed by 'Vivify Venues'. BeActive state that whilst the site was under management of Community Hire it was looking to make its courts accessible to the public. Vivify Venues state the courts are not currently open to community use, however, it has yet to visit the site and shall discuss in person the possibility of making the provision accessible.

Table 8.2: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

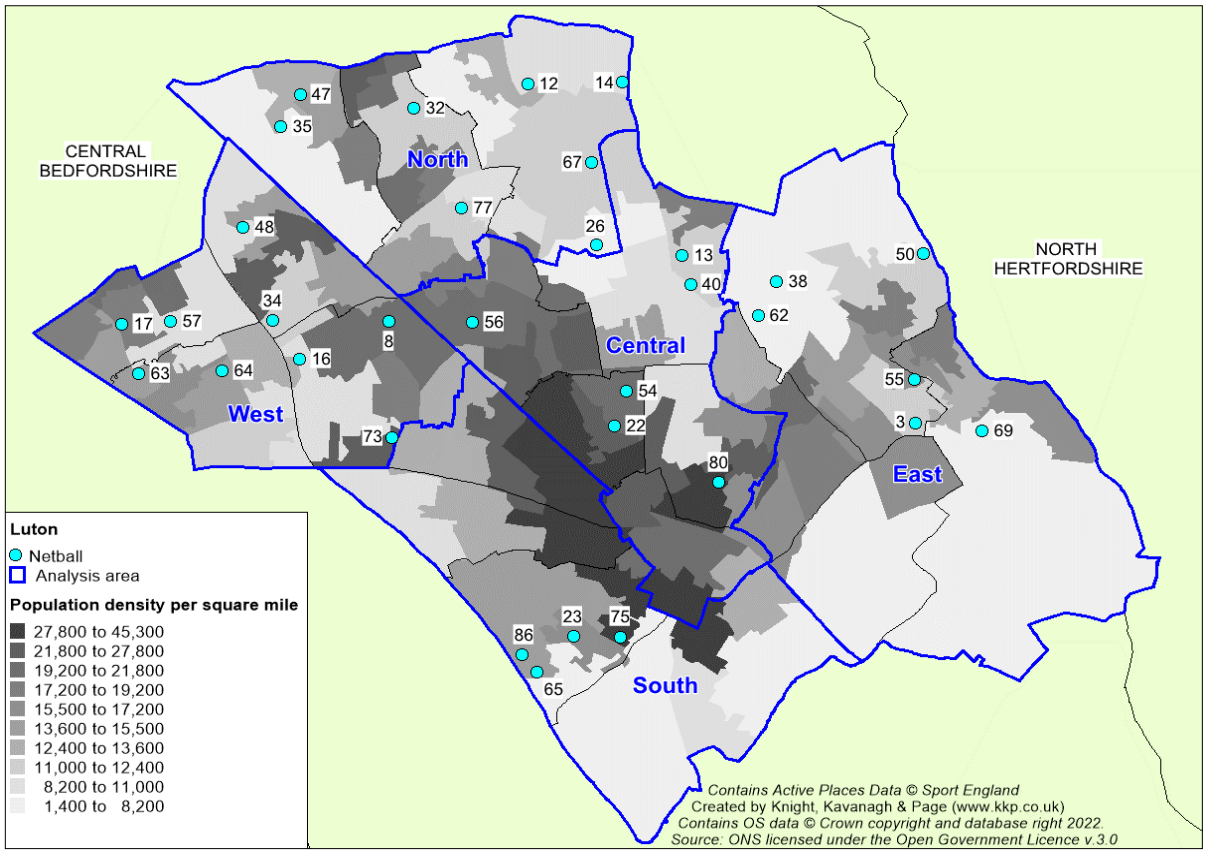
Analysis area	Number of courts available for community use	Number of courts unavailable for community use
Central	1	9
East	4	8
North	6	15
South	3	7
West	0	18
Luton	**14**	**57**

Table 8.3: Summary of supply

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	Number of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
3	Queen Elizabeth School	East	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Poor
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic	North	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Poor
					3		Artificial turf	
22	Denbigh High School	Central	School	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Poor
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	South	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Standard
No community use								
8	Beechwood Primary School	West	School	No	3	No	Artificial turf	Standard
12	Bramingham Primary School	North	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
13	Bushmead Primary School	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
16	Challney High School for Girls	West	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Standard
17	Chantry Primary Academy	West	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
23	Farley Junior School	South	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
26	Icknield High School	North	School	No	4	No	Artificial turf	Standard
32	Lea Manor Recreation Centre	North	Council	No	4	No	Macadam	Good
34	Leagrave Primary School	West	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
35	Lealands High School	North	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Good
40	Luton Sixth Form College	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
47	Parklea Primary School	North	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
48	Pirton Hill Primary School	West	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
50	Putteridge High School	East	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
54	River Bank Primary School	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
55	Someries Junior School	East	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
56	St Joseph's Catholic Primary	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
57	St Martin De Porres Primary	West	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
62	Stopsley High School	East	School	No	4	No	Macadam	Poor
63	The Chalk Hills Academy	West	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Standard
64	The Ferrars Academy	West	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	Number of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
67	Warden Hill Infant School	North	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
69	Wigmore Primary School	East	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
73	Downside Primary School	South	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
75	Hillborough Junior School	South	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
77	The Meads Primary School	North	School	No	2	No	Macadam	Poor
80	St Matthews Primary School	Central	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor
86	St Margaret Of Scotland Catholic Primary School	South	School	No	1	No	Macadam	Poor

Figure 8.1: Netball court locations



Disused provision

Luton Regional Recreation Ground also formerly hosted three concrete tennis courts with accompanying floodlights that are no longer operating. The provision is now just a concrete space and no longer services netball.

Future supply

Consultation with England Netball state that Queen Elizabeth School has an ambition of increasing the number of courts it provides. The development of the indoor cricket facility outlined at Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) could potentially be used for other sports such as Netball, as the facility will provide an indoor sports lit facility. The site is anticipated to open during Autumn 2023. There are no further known ambitions to any increase in supply for netball provision.

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. Other than the one court at Denbigh High School, all community accessible netball courts across Luton are overmarked with tennis markings and are used as multi use facilities to cater for several sports.

Surface type

Across Luton, of the 14 accessible courts, 11 have a macadam surface and three courts have an artificial turf surface. Of the non-community accessible provision, 43 courts have a macadam surface and seven have an artificial surface.

The estimated lifespan of a macadam court and an artificial court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

Sports lighting

Of all courts across Luton, it is only the provision located at Denbigh High School and Luton Regional Recreation Ground that are serviced by sports lights, meaning from a match perspective, there are only five suitable courts.

Quality

The quality of netball courts across Luton has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- Good
- Standard
- Poor

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.

As can be seen in the table below, most netball provision in Luton is poor quality. However, of the 14 accessible courts, none are good quality, three are of a standard quality and 11 courts are poor quality.

Consultation with Denbigh High School confirm its outdoor court was re-surfaced in 2021, however England Netball stress that the courts are of a poor quality, as such a poor quality rating has been determined.

England Netball confirms that the Luton and Dunstable District Netball League had to stop accessing Queen Elizabeth School as it had roots growing under the playing surface and the provision was too slippy. It also states that the prices charged at Stockwood Park Academy are too high for the Luton and Dunstable Netball League to consider it a viable site.

Table 8.4: Quality summary

Site ID	Site name	Number of courts	Sports lighting?	Quality
3	Queen Elizabeth School	4	No	Poor
14	Cardinal Newman Catholic	3	No	Poor
		3		
22	Denbigh High School	1	Yes	Poor
65	The Stockwood Park Academy	3	No	Standard

8.3: Demand

There are 12 clubs identified as being based in Luton, as can be seen in Table 8.1. Clubs within Luton compete in the Luton Dunstable District Netball League.

Table 8.5: Luton and Dunstable District Netball League Clubs:

- A Line
- Black Pearls
- Celtic Cyclones
- Chic
- Dunstable Diamonds
- Jeffers
- Luton Lightning
- Luton Tornadoes
- Red Devils
- Red Stripes
- Silsoe Sirens
- Westoning Hunters

Luton Dunstable District Netball League

The Luton Dunstable District Netball League was originally formed in 1956. It runs from September to June each year and provides clubs with both a league and cup knockout format. The League has three tiers to it, those being the Premier division, division one and division two. Both the Premier and Division one tiers host seven teams, with the number of teams in division two currently unknown.

Indoor fixtures over winter months are held at Queen Elizabeth School in the indoor sports hall, whilst the summer fixtures take place at Denbigh High School on its outdoor court.

Club consultation findings

Dunstable Diamonds NC has one senior team accommodating 14 senior members. The Club states that its members are solely focused on playing fixtures and do not have the demand to access provision for training purposes. The Club currently access Queen Elizabeth School on Sunday mornings for its fixtures.

It confirms it does aspire to further increase in membership figures and does not have a membership plan in place, and efforts to increase interest and a lack of volunteers are all issues it faces.

Celtic Cyclone's NC has one senior team accommodating 15 members. The Club access Queen Elizabeth School for two hours every Sunday morning for fixtures and accesses the Chiltern Academy for two hours for training sessions every Wednesday evening. The Club is charged £20 an hour for the outdoor courts at Queen Elizabeth School and £45 an hour to access the indoor provision at the Chiltern Academy.

It confirms that membership figures have declined recently due to a shortage of accessible courts, a lack of coaches, umpires and funding. It also raises frustrations with the fees charged for court access and frustrations regarding the communication from site providers such as late changes to court availability. The Club also state that the outdoor hoops provided at Queen Elizabeth School are often damaged, likely due to curricular use of the provision.

The Club does not have plans to increase in membership figures, nor does it have a written development plan. However, it does stress that Luton has demand for an increased number of outdoor floodlit netball courts, and that the Club has demand for a further one hour of both indoor and outdoor court access. It hopes that if such availability were to be granted and more floodlit courts were provided it could prioritise youth development and increase in number of teams. In the last five years the Club state there has been a decline in the number of available floodlit courts provided in Luton, and that many sites provide provision that needs repair.

England Netball stresses that the installation of sports lighting and granting of community use to the courts at Stopsley High School would be a priority given it is already accessed for indoor fixtures.

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 ten people.

In the case of Luton, a Play Netball league is delivered at Queen Elizabeth School on Wednesday evenings from 18:00-21:00. The sessions see four 36-minute fixtures across an evening, which are delivered for eight to 14 weeks dependant upon how many teams are in the league. Each team is charged £42.50 for one match each week, meaning a team of seven players pays £6.07 each for one fixture.

Walking Netball and Back to Netball

Walking Netball has evolved from a growing demand of walking sports e.g., 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. In Luton, walking netball sessions are delivered at Queen Elizabeth School from 18:30 – 19:30, with participation figures increasing to 20 people per session.

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. In Luton, Back to Netball sessions are delivered at Queen Elizabeth School from 19:30 – 20:30, with participation figures at 15 people per session.

Unmet/latent demand

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.

England Netball identify that there are large amounts of unmet demand in Luton to accommodate its recreational and participation programmes which it to the detriment to the residents of the region whom may want to participate in easier and more introductive sessions of the sport. The greatest frustration raised is regard to a lack of accessible facilities within the region, resulting in people not taking on the sport.

Furthermore, a representative of the Luton and Dunstable Netball League stresses that sourcing venues that have the capacity to accommodate teams, as well as accessing courts during exam season is a major issue.

Latent demand refers to clubs that state it would be able to field more teams if additional suitable provision were to be provided.

However, Celtic Cyclones NC did confirm if an increased number of available floodlit outdoor courts were to be provided, and the Club had an additional hour of indoor and outdoor court access, it would increase in number of teams. If such future demand ambitions were to be achieved, this would not impact the current supply and demand balance for netball within Luton.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool[37] enables analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 611 people within Luton or 1.92%. The highest latent demand from one demographic is 'supportive single females' who resemble 199 people wanting to play netball that currently are not. As a national comparison, 160,134 people across England or 1.27% are identified as wanting to participate in netball but 'are not currently doing so.'

Imported/exported demand

Imported demand is teams entering Luton to access facilities for netball, whilst exported demand is clubs choosing to access provision outside its region.

With fixtures for the Luton and Dunstable Netball League being held at Queen Elizabeth School, this leads to a lot of imported demand into Luton. Clubs across Central Bedfordshire such as Silsoe Sirens NC, Westoning Hunters NC and Dunstable Diamonds NC are all examples of imported demand into Luton. Comparatively, Luton Community Netball club chooses not to play in the Luton and Dunstable Netball League and exports demand into Hertfordshire in the Herts County Netball League. Luton Tornadoes NC also report having to export demand to Silsoe Community Sports Centre (Central Bedfordshire) when coming out of covid, due to the facilities in Luton being slow in re-opening its facilities for community use.

England Netball stresses that performance players within Luton export demand to Bedford due to the lack of facilities within the Borough.

Future demand

Neither of the two responsive clubs state any intentions to further increase in number of teams.

[37] https://segments.sportengland.org/results.aspx?query=Sports#output=table&map=polygon&polygonType=OA&catchmentType=focus&querySource=Sports&queryType=CharPop&sportBox=1&sport=73&sportPlay=want-to&focusType=LA&focusName=162

8.4: Supply and demand analysis

Given that there are limited accessible facilities and due to many in use courts having quality issues, it is determined that there is a shortfall of accessible netball provision in Luton. This is further evidenced by the high levels of unmet and latent demand identified.

Conclusion

Whilst there are 14 community accessible courts across Luton, there is only one court across the Borough that is serviced with sports lighting, that being the court located at Denbigh High School. With the identified high levels of unmet and latent demand identified along with England Netball and the Luton and Dunstable League confirming that a lack of good quality facilities is a major issue locally, there is a shortfall of match play appropriate netball provision within Luton.

Netball – supply and demand summary

- Given that there is only one accessible floodlit court, it is determined that there is a shortfall of netball provision in Luton.
- This is further evidence by the high levels of unmet and latent demand identified, with England Netball and the Luton and Dunstable league confirming that a lack of good quality facilities is a major issue locally.

Netball – Supply summary:

- In total, there are 71 outdoor netball courts located across 32 sites in Luton. Of this total provision, 14 courts across four sites are community accessible.
- Of the 14 available courts, zero are good quality, three are standard and 11 are poor quality.
- The floodlit provision located at Denbigh High School was re-surfaces as of 2021, however England Netball describe its quality as poor, whilst Celtic Cyclones state it is adequate.
- Consultation with England Netball, the Luton and Dunstable League and Celtic Cyclone NC stress the need for more accessible, floodlit outdoor Netball courts across Luton.

Netball – Demand summary:

- 12 clubs have been identified as playing in Luton all of which compete in the Luton Dunstable Netball League.
- England Netball, and the Luton Dunstable Netball League state that there is unmet demand for Netball within Luton, and that if more floodlit facilities were to be community accessible demand would noticeably increase.
- England Netball confirm that Luton Community Netball Club export demand into Hertfordshire, whilst several clubs such as Silsoe Sirens NC, Westoning Hunters NC and Dunstable Diamonds NC all import demand into Luton.
- Both responsive clubs state not having ambitions to further increase in number of teams provided, due to the lack of accessible floodlit courts. Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool outlines latent demand of 611 people wanting to play Netball within Luton.

PART 9: BOWLING GREENS

9.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in Luton 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 greens are another version of bowls provision accessed in England, governed separately by The British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA). However, 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 six bowls clubs identified as using outdoor bowling greens in Luton. Of these, five responded to consultation requests, equating to a response rate of 83%. Further consultation has been undertaken with Be Active to provide further insight into the landscape of the sport locally.

Table 9.1: Summary of consultation

Name of club	Analysis area	Responded?
Ashcroft B.C	East	Yes
Beech Hill B.C	South	No
Co-op Luton B.C	East	Yes
Lancaster Avenue B.C	North	Yes
Luton Town B.C	East	Yes
Luton West End B.C	South	Yes

9.2: Supply

There is a total of eight bowling greens identified in Luton across as many sites. The South Analysis Area provides the most bowling greens with three, whilst no bowling greens are identified in the West Analysis Area.

Table 9.2: Summary of the number of greens by Analysis area

Analysis area	Number of greens
Central	1
East	2
North	2
South	3
West	0
Luton	**8**

Figure 9.1 shows the location of all bowling greens currently servicing Luton. For a key to the map, see Table 9.1

Figure 9.1: Location of bowling greens in Luton

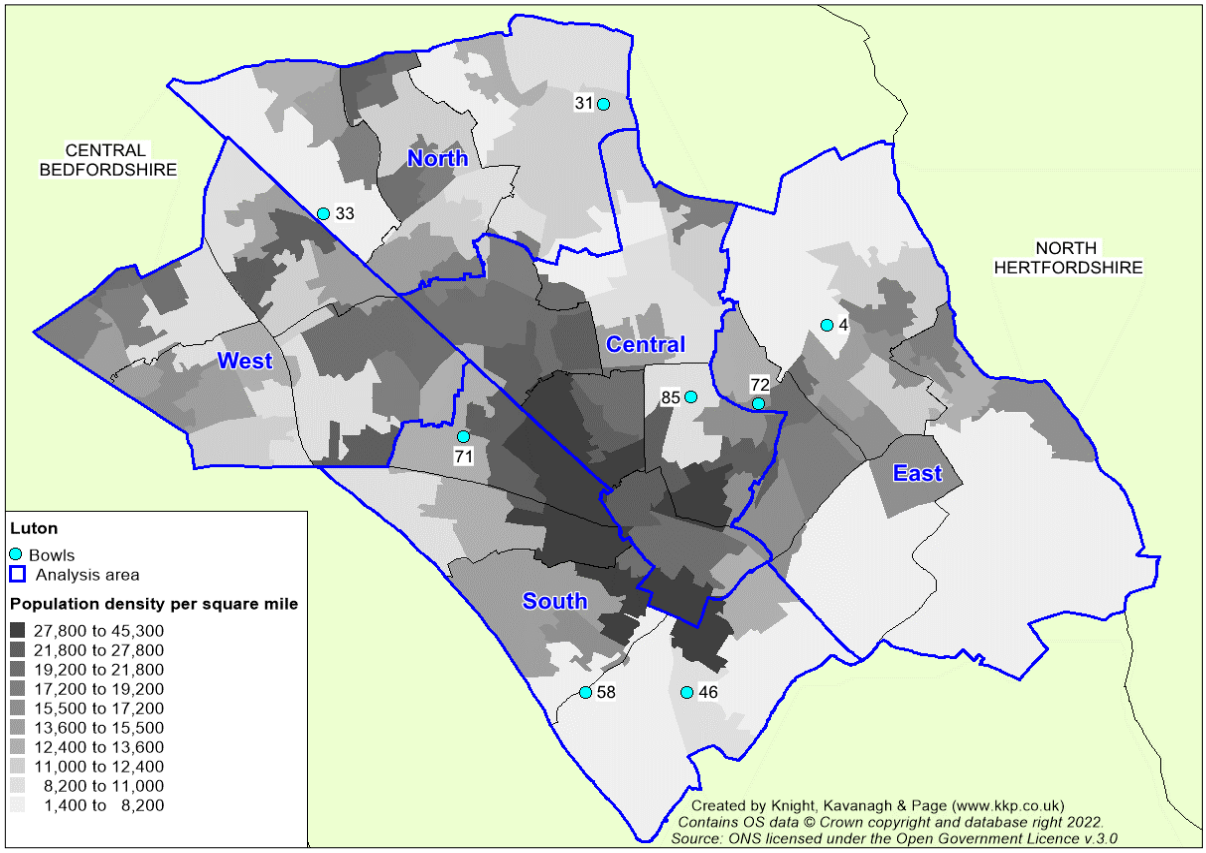


Table 9.3: location of all bowling greens

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of greens
4	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	East	1
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation	North	1
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	1
46	Memorial Park	South	1
58	Stockwood Park	South	1
71	Beech Hill Bowling Club	South	1
72	Co-Op Luton Bowls Club	East	1
85	Luton Town Bowls Club	Central	1

Disused / Loss of provision

Further to the active list of provision, four bowling greens have become disused since the 2014 PPS, most likely due to a lack of demand.

The first is at Kent Athletic Sports and Social Club, which as of the 2013 Luton PPS accommodated 28 members, giving it the lowest membership figure (where totals were known). The site also accommodated football, which has also become disused since the previous PPS.

Secondly, the bowling green provided at Wardown Park has also become disused since the previous PPS. The site formerly hosted Wardown Park Bowls Club which had 29 members, making it the second least frequently accessed site within Luton. Accompanying the green is standard quality.

Ely Way Open Space is the home of Luton Town Football Club's Community Foundation and accommodates a disused bowling green. Consultation with LBC outlines the potential of converting the site into a MUGA. The provision has old floodlights which could be brought back to life, with residents and light pollution not being an issue at the site. Bedfordshire FA raises the possibility of installing a PlayZone to the site, a new outdoor provision being piloted by the Football Foundation[38].

Finally, the un-accessed provision found at Leagrave (Sundon Park) is scheduled for an ECB conversion project to develop a new seven lane indoor cricket facility. This is to be entirely funded by the ECB and shall offer a metal structure to accommodate both practice lane cricket as well as indoor cricket.

Locations of clubs

The table below outlines which active clubs' access which greens in Luton. In the instances where there is no associated club, it is likely the green is still used for recreational bowls by local groups.

Table 9.4: Club playing locations

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number of greens	Club user
4	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	East	1	Ashcroft B.C
				Luton Town B.C
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation	North	1	Lancaster Avenue B.C
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	North	1	-
46	Memorial Park	South	1	Luton West End B.C
58	Stockwood Park	South	1	-
71	Beech Hill Bowling Club	South	1	Beech Hill B.C
72	Co-Op Luton Bowls Club	East	1	Co-Op Luton B.C
85	Luton Town Bowls Club	Central	1	-

The table below highlights the tenure position of clubs which were responsive to consultation. In the main, these clubs have secure tenure at their site, with most having lease arrangements in place with LBC, or from private landowners.

Table 9:5: Club tenure positions

Club	Ownership/management details
Ashcroft BC	The Club had a lease agreement with Luton Borough Council that expired as of the 31st of March 2022. The Club are now re-negotiating a new lease.
Beech Hill BC	*Unknown*
Co-op Luton BC	The Club has a lease agreement with Co-Op Food Manchester that is currently being re-negotiated.
Lancaster Avenue BC	The Club has a lease agreement with Luton Borough Council.

[38] https://footballfoundation.org.uk/playzones-programme

Club	Ownership/management details
Luton Town BC	The Club currently pay a rental fee to Luton Borough Council for its access at Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground. It is in talks with Luton Borough Council for leasehold arrangement to the Club with a stipulation that it must also accommodate Ashcroft BC.
Luton West End BC	The Club has a license agreement with Luton Borough Council that is scheduled to expire in 2027.

When reviewing the unresponsive Beech Hill BC, it can be expected that the Club has a lease agreement in place with LBC. In the case of Co-Op Luton BC, the Club's current position is in need of support, with detail provided overleaf.

Luton Town BC confirms the relocation to Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground due to it being unable to gain an extension to its former lease agreement from Luton Masonic Hall Company. The Club were offered a new lease at triple the price which the Club refused, meaning it began sharing the provision at Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground.

BeActive state Luton Borough Council is in conversations regarding a leasehold arrangement of the provision, of which the length is to be determined but shall be no more than 25 years, provided despite both clubs confirming wanting to remain separate.

Co-Op Luton BC

Consultation with BeActive and Luton BC raise concerns with the survival of Co-Op Luton BC's existing green. The Club has a short-term lease agreement in place with the Co-Op Manchester but this has since been allocated for residential development by Jarvis Homes. The site currently hosts Co-Op Luton BC, Luton Indoor BC, a social club, three disused tennis courts and parking. The two bowling clubs and social club all currently operate separately from one another.

With Co-Op Luton BC currently accommodating 60 people, the indoor bowls club hosting 300 members and the social club having 800 members, the relocation of the provision is essential, especially when considering the large membership figures identified.

BeActive confirms that the Co-Op Manchester is looking to keep the indoor and outdoor bowling greens but develop on the social club, with its members to be accommodated in the indoor bowls club. The indoor bowls Club is to outlined to reduce from eight to six rinks. Sport England, BeActive, England Indoor Bowls Association and Bowls England are working with the clubs to support this outcome.

Quality

The quality of bowling greens across Luton have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- Good
- Standard
- Poor

For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use.

Table 9.6: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site name	Club	Analysis area	Number of greens	Quality
4	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	Ashcroft BC Luton Town BC	East	1	Standard
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation	Lancaster Avenue BC	North	1	Good
33	Leagrave Park (Sundon Park)	-	North	1	Standard
46	Memorial Park	Luton West End BC	South	1	Good
58	Stockwood Park	-	South	1	Poor
71	Beech Hill Bowling Club	Beech Hill BC	South	1	Good
72	Co-Op Luton Bowls Club	Co-Op Luton BC	East	1	Good
85	Luton Town Bowls Club	-	Central	1	Standard

The overall stock of bowling green provision in Luton is good quality, with four greens (50% provision) assessed as such, three as standard quality (36%) and one poor quality green (14%) identified at Stockwood Park.

In the case of the standard quality provision, instances of highly worn patches and slight undulations were present. The provision at Stockwood Park is of a poor quality with no known demand having been identified on the site since the 2014 PPS.

Luton Town BC confirm the green provided at Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground is of a standard quality with issues identified including drainage problems and a slight gradient to the surface. The Club state it has maintenance responsibility of the site and confirm it was in a poor condition prior to Covid, however, the quality has since improved to standard.

Consultation with Ashcroft BC confirm the quality of its green has improved since prior to Covid and stress that in order to enable further developments to take place a new longer term lease agreement with LBC is required.

Luton West End BC confirm the result of the non-technical site assessment that its green is of a good quality, with the playing provision reportedly improving since pre-Covid. It does, however, state that drainage issues are present. The Club state it does not have the equipment nor the knowledge of undertaking maintenance of the site and is grateful for the work undertaken by LBC on its green.

Co-Op Luton BC also confirm the result of the non-technical site assessment that its green is of a good quality. It states that maintenance responsibility is undertaken by the Club, and it has no issues relating to surface drainage, with the evenness of the green deemed as standard quality.

Ancillary provision

The ancillary provision located at Lancaster Avenue Recreation is assessed as standard quality, with it sharing a brick building with Luton Town Ladies FC. The site has two changing rooms, a function space, disabled access and a kitchen for its members.

Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground offers a standard quality clubhouse with a kitchen, toilets and storage space. Luton Town BC describe that access to the site is currently dangerous with members having to take a narrow slip lane off the A505 dual carriageway.

Memorial Park has a standard quality small brick clubhouse for members of Luton West End BC. The site provides toilets, a kitchen a social space, equipment storage and disabled access. The Club state its changing rooms are of a standard quality, with its function space and toilets having been described as good.

Beech Hill BC provides a good quality ancillary provision with both a brick and separate wooden building provided at the site.

Co-Op Luton BC has a standard quality clubhouse in the form of a medium size wooden building. The Club state its changing rooms, clubhouse facilities, toilets and overall feel provided as of a standard quality.

All five responding clubs state that there has been no difference in the quality of ancillary provision provided since the previous year, with also none of the four clubs referring to any difficulties related to parking, nor have any incidents of vandalism taken place.

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, two clubs offer pay and play to residents, these are; Luton West End BC and Co-Op Luton BC. Luton West End BC charge a fee of £6.00 per session, whilst Co-Op Luton BC state it offers pay and play informally with an existing agreement being in place with club officials. 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.

Sports lighting

In Luton, none of the six bowling clubs have accompanying sports lighting on its greens. However, the disused green provided at Ely Way Open Space is accompanied by out of use sports lights, something that LBC hope could be reinstated if converted into a MUGA. The remaining unused bowling greens also do not have accompanying sports lighting.

None of the five responding clubs raised frustrations due to the lack of 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 rare across the Country, meaning the low level of sports lighting supply in Luton should not be of any particular concern.

9.3: Demand

Of the five responding clubs that have responded to consultation requests, the total membership equates to 172 members. This consists of 123 senior male, 49 senior female and zero juniors. The average membership of each club (based on details provided by responsive clubs) is 34 members. The highest membership figures seen are at Co-Op Luton BC with 60 members, whilst the lowest known figures are found at Lancaster Avenue BC with 30 individuals.

Of the five responsive clubs, only Co-Op Luton BC did not identify membership recruitment and retention as a problematic issue. Despite this, all five clubs confirm membership figures have remained stable in recent years.

Table 9.7: Summary of club membership

Site name	Club name	Analysis area	Members			Total
			Men	Women	Juniors	
Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	Ashcroft BC	East	14	4	0	51
	Luton Town BC		28	5	0	
Lancaster Avenue Recreation	Lancaster Avenue BC	North	18	12	0	30
Memorial Park	Luton West End BC	South	20	11	0	31
Beech Hill Bowling Club	Beech Hill BC	South	-	-	-	-
Co-Op Luton Bowls Club	Co-Op Luton BC	East	43	17	0	60
		Total	**123**	**49**	**0**	**172**

Latent demand

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowl but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 274 or 1.13% of people within Luton. As a national comparison, there are 87,008 or 1.15% of people across England wanting to participate in lawn bowls that are not currently doing so.

None of the five responsive clubs are reporting membership figures that lie above or below Bowls England recommended capacity guidelines, though Co-Op Luton Bowls Club is currently operating at the maximum recommended figures for one green. As such, no clubs report any latent or unmet demand, with all but Co-Op Luton Bowls Club actively trying to recruit new members. In the case of Co-Op Luton Bowls Club, it states it does not intend to further increase in members, due to the uncertainty of the future of its provision.

Future demand

For bowls it is more appropriate to consider population changes for persons aged 65 and over. Office of National Statistics population projections (2018-2031), identify that the number of persons aged 65 and over living in Luton is projected to rise from 26,620 in 2018 to 32,083 in 2031, representing an increase of 20.5%. Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, it can be said that demand for bowling greens in Luton is likely to increase slightly with additional pressure placed on the existing stock of provision.

Consultation identifies four clubs which aspire to increase its existing membership as shown in the table below.

Table 9.8: Future demand aspirations

Club	Site name	Analysis area	Future demand aspiration	Method to increase membership
Ashcroft BC	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	East	5 members	Bowls England Big Weekend, interest from the Commonwealth Games Bowls and an open day in 2023.

Club	Site name	Analysis area	Future demand aspiration	Method to increase membership
Luton Town BC			10 members	Delivering open evenings and coaching sessions.
Lancaster Avenue BC	Lancaster Avenue Recreation	North	5 members	Potential increase in demand due to bowling clubs in the local area closing.
Luton West End BC	Memorial Park	South	10 members	Increased advertising, offering open days and trials to new members.

Capacity of bowling greens is very much dependent on the league and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates.

All other time periods that are not used for league matches can be available for social bowing or, more often than not, used for practice by club members throughout the week. This demand is unquantifiable as participants can use the greens as often or as little as they deem necessary.

9.4: Supply and Demand analysis

The capacity of a bowling green is very much dependent on the leagues and the day that they operate. A green may have no spare capacity on an afternoon or evening when a popular league operates but may be unused for the rest of the week. However, in many cases, greens are used during the afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Bowls England 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 Luton are classified as follows:

Within capacity range	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
Outside capacity range	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green in Luton 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, which applies to Beech Hill BC.

Table 9.9: Bowling green supply vs demand analysis

Site ID	Site name	Club name	No. of greens	Analysis area	Total membership	Current capacity	Future capacity
4	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	Ashcroft BC	1	East	51	9	6
		Luton Town BC					
31	Lancaster Avenue Recreation	Lancaster Avenue BC	1	North	30	30	25
46	Memorial Park	Luton West End BC	1	South	31	29	19
72	Co-Op Luton Bowls Club	Co-Op Luton BC	1	East	60	0	0

The table above shows that of the five responsive clubs, all are operating within a "sustainable" capacity range. The capacity levels at Co-Op Luton BC are in line with Bowls England guidelines of 60 members, meaning any additional demand shall put the Club theoretically over capacity. However, it states it is not looking to further increase membership figures due to the uncertainty of its future.

In the remaining sites where demand figures are known, all three venues are operating within capacity guidelines, meaning none are at particular risk of closure, whilst Ashcroft Recreation Ground is also adequately accommodating two clubs.

Clubs with high memberships play both competitive matches and recreational matches throughout a full week to offer something for everyone within its respective membership bases, and to that end, peak time pressures are reduced for this reason.

When reviewing provision by analysis area, the East Analysis Area has two bowling greens, both of which are the two most heavily accessed within the Borough, yet neither is operating over capacity. The North Analysis Area provides two bowling greens, one of which is adequately accommodating Lancaster Avenue BC whilst the other is unused. The South Analysis Area has three bowling greens, with Luton West End BC operating within recommended guidelines for both current and future demand. Finally, both Stockwood Park and Luton Town BC have unused bowling greens with the former located in the South Analysis Area and the latter in the Central Analysis Area.

For the unresponsive Beech Hill BC, it is difficult to understand the full capacity landscape. However, it is likely that it shall not face substantive capacity challenges (with the core average membership of 34) and the most pressing point will be around clubs remaining sustainable and not folding in the future, leaving greens at risk of becoming unused.

9.5 Conclusion

All five analysis areas currently have a sufficient supply of used bowling greens. With the Borough being adequately catered for from a supply and demand analysis perspective, the priority focus is overseeing the relocation of Co-Op Luton BC from its existing site. With the Club resembling the largest within the Borough, where membership figures are known, the uncertainty of its future is of major concern and is the most important circumstance to manage for bowls across Luton.

For greens which are not actively used or are classified as being disused, these should not be classified as surplus to provision. Two greens meeting this criterion at Leagrave Park (Sundon Park) and Ely Way Open Space are already under consideration to be repurposed/lost which. The Strategy and Action Plan will scenario test the impact of this and the potential need to retain the remaining supply of greens.

Bowls – supply and demand summary

- There is a sufficient supply of bowling greens in Luton to accommodate current and future demand.
- None of the consulted clubs are operating below the level of membership required to ensure that the greens that they use are unsustainable.
- The developments taking place at Co-Op Luton BC along with Luton Indoor Bowling Club and its associated social club is the biggest concern for lawn bowls within Luton. With the site outlined for property development there is the need for relevant stakeholders such as Sport England, BeActive, England Indoor Bowls Association and Bowls England to look to retain the sporting provision, something that is currently taking place.

Bowls – supply summary

- There are eight bowling greens in Luton provided across as many sites.
- There and three disused bowling greens within Luton, those being Kent Athletic Sports and Social Club, Wardown Park and Ely Way Open Space. In addition to this there are a further three un-used greens across the Borough, located at Leagrave (Sundon Park), Stockwood Park and Luton Town Bowls Club.
- None of the greens are serviced by sports lighting, with none of the five responsive clubs stating ambitions to install such provision.
- Of the bowling greens in a useable condition, four are good quality, three are standard quality and one is of a poor quality.
- Ancillary provision at most clubs is standard with, three clubs describing the overall quality as adequate and Beech Hill BC resembling the only Club with good quality ancillary provision.

Bowls – demand summary

- There are six clubs using bowling greens in Luton: where membership is known it equates to 172 members.
- The average membership across all of the identified clubs is 34 members.
- With a predicted increase in persons aged 65 and over (to 2031), demand is likely to remain steady if not increase for greens over the coming years.
- Five clubs reports future demand to increase memberships, with methods of increasing numbers such as recruitment via coaching, localised advertisement, open days in line with Bowls England and inviting targeted groups for sessions.
- All clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated on the current level of provision and that no potential members are being turned away, suggesting that there is no latent or unmet demand.

PART 10: ATHLETICS

10.1: Introduction

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing.

Locally, the sport is governed through England Athletics, which is the development and membership body for athletics and running clubs in England. It has a National Head of Clubs and Participation as well as a team of five club support managers across the Country, with one of these covering activities in Luton as part of the Midland region.

Consultation

Luton Athletic Club and Stopsley Striders are the two formal athletics and running clubs. Both were consulted to inform this section, in addition to wider consultation with BeActive also took place as to inform the following section.

10.2: Supply

Consultation with England Athletics and BeActive reveals that, nationally, no new standard 400-metre athletics tracks are planned to be constructed. Focus is instead on the retention of the existing 400-metre facility provided at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre.

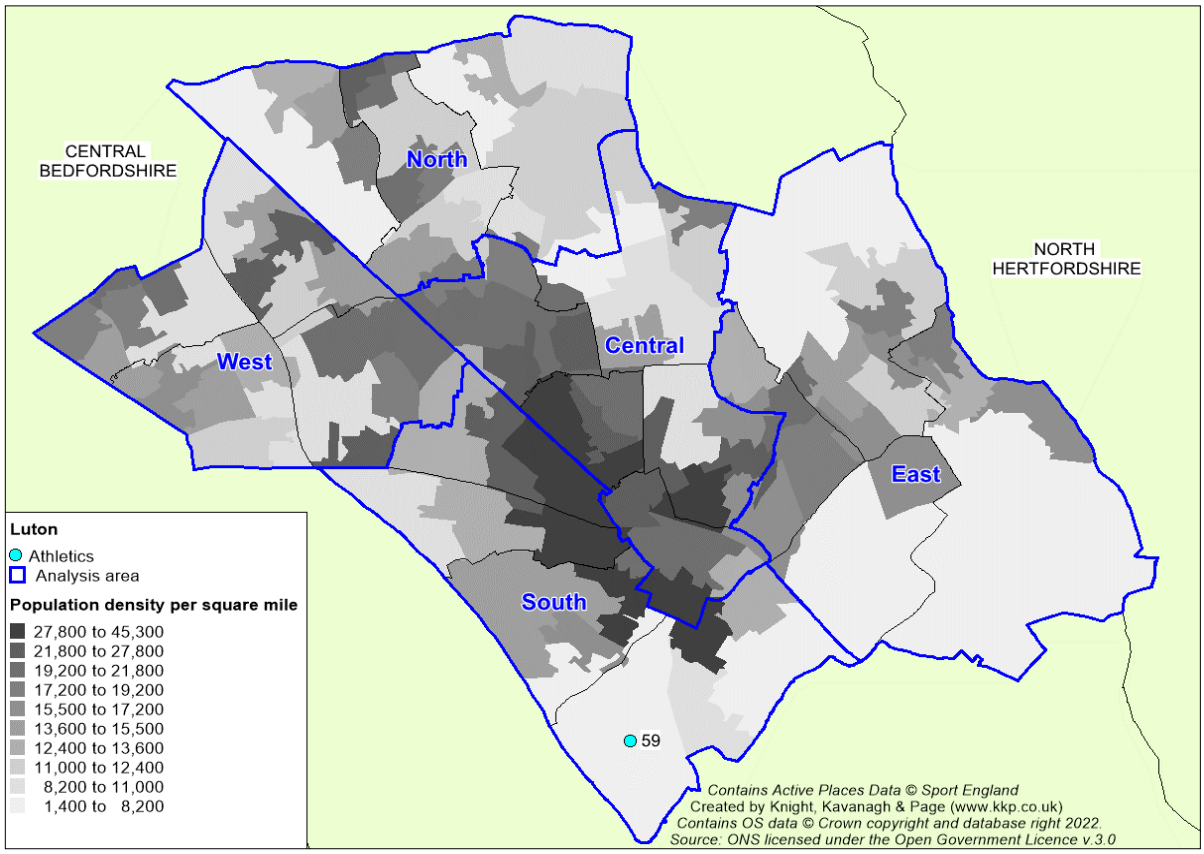
Stockwood Park Athletics Centre provides a fully sports lighting, community accessible eight lane, synthetic 400m track with an eight lane 110m straight. The site is found in the South Analysis Area.

Table 10.1: Summary of athletics tracks in Luton

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Length	Sports lit?	Community use?
59	Stockwood Park Athletics Centre	South	400 metres	Yes	Yes

Please see figure 10.1 for a map highlighting the location of the provision within Luton.

Figure 10.1: Location of athletics tracks in Luton



Management

The athletics provision located at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre is managed by Active Luton. Consultation with a representative of the site confirmed the facility is open to the general public from 09:00-14:00 before re-opening from 16:00-20:30 Monday to Thursday. On Fridays the site is open from 09:00 to 14:00, whilst the provision is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 09:00 to 13:00.

Quality

The track at the Stockwood Park Athletics Centre was built in 1965 and has since had its provision re-surfaced in 2010. Based on the non-technical audit, the synthetic track is assessed as standard quality, with some wear and tear issues noted on the surrounding edges of the provision.

Luton AC state the quality of the track has declined slightly in recent years, due to the grass alongside the track not being cut frequently enough. It also states the Club has had to de-weed the shot-put provision and that the track is in need of cleaning. Site representatives confirm that the facility is frequently jet washed, however, the Club feel more work should take place towards maintaining the track.

The final bend of the track between the 200m and 100m start point has a root encroachment from the nearby trees which has caused ripples on the surface, with lane eight the most affected.

Major concern has been raised by Luton AC regarding the potential development of a 3G pitch on the grass football pitch provided in the centre of the track. The Club confirm that the grass space is utilised for javelin, hammer throw and discus events, all of which, shall not be able to take place if a 3G pitch were to be developed on the site. It states that this shall no longer make the Club an 'athletics club' by not being able to accommodate all disciplines at its home venue.

England Athletics stresses that a step compliant 3G pitch conversion would also require three hard standing sides which would further worsen the tracks quality.

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 purse accreditation are not eligible to apply for a competition licence at any level.

In Luton, the track at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre is not currently accredited and is 'working towards' its TrackMark accreditation.

Ancillary facilities

Stockwood Park Athletics Centre is serviced good quality ancillary provision with a multi-functional social space, two male and one female changing spaces. The two male changing rooms share on communal shower space with a working boiler and no water pressure issues. Hot beverages and snacks are also accessible to members, as well as ample parking.

Alternative provision

Consultation with England Athletics confirms it is adopting a new approach to facility planning that can enable local councils to install new athletics provision at a much more affordable cost than a traditional 400m synthetic track.

The first of the three alternative designs is a 'compact track' featuring a 60m sprint straight with an accompanying jump lane and shot put space. This provision is the smallest of the three and is installed at sites with limited available land.

A 'mini track' features a 140m four lane oval track with a six lane 60m sprint, as well as accompanying shot put and jumping provision. An advantage to a mini track design is it leaves a large space in the centre of the oval track to be used for either various field events such as long jump/ triple jump, or alternatively it can be used for other sports such as football pitches or an outdoor gym. Mini track sites also feature a new design of shot-put practice areas, in which it flattens a natural slope and athletes throw into a hill allowing for the put to roll back to the participant thus reducing time spent retrieving the put after each throw.

Finally, an 'active track' is a synthetic loop with no fixed shape or distance (much like a formula 1 circuit), in which a track is drawn to fit its natural surroundings such as an existing park or school field. This is installed at sites where a 400m oval would not be feasible as it allows for adaptations to the shape in order to suit land in its current state.

These three designs present alternative approaches to athletics provision as to offer more affordable and feasible means of creating athletics tracks.

10.3: Demand

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are also considered, as are organised running events and various running initiatives, some of which are governed by England Athletics. It is also acknowledged that recreational running forms a large part of demand, although this is difficult to measure.

Luton Athletics Club

Luton AC is a formal athletics Club based at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre that caters for both track and field events. The Club access its provision every day of the week other than Friday from 17:00-21:00.

To access the facility members are offered a variety of price ranges, with an adult track only rate of £4.50 per session and a track and gym session priced at £6.10. Comparatively, junior members are charged £3.70 for a track and gym session, and £3.20 for a track only session.

Monthly adult track and gym membership fees can also be agreed at £17 a month or £14.50 for a track only membership. For juniors monthly track and gym membership fees are priced at £15.50, whilst track only memberships cost £13 a month.

Having formed in 1937, the Club currently has 138 senior members (73 male, 65 female) as well as 76 junior members. It states that membership figures have declined by roughly 25% since Covid-19 with a drop in senior members causing this fall off. However, now the Club is coming out of covid, it confirms junior membership has grown over 2022. It states that a waiting list not yet required, however, it is nearing capacity for younger members.

It confirms working with BeActive to enhance the throwing cage, however, further work is required to upgrade the throwing equipment, new rakes for the sand pits, high jump and pole vault bars, tape measures and starting blocks most of which are provided by the Club rather than the site operators. It also describes the need for new high jump and pole vault beds, with the latter in particular need of replacement as well as new steeplechase barriers.

Stopsley Striders

Stopsley Striders accesses Inspire: Luton Sports Village for one hour a week in its fitness studio as well as Stockwood Park Athletics Centre for outdoor sessions. Formed in 1982, the Club now hosts 189 senior members (92 male and 97 female) and no juniors. It confirms that membership figures have remained the same in recent years.

The Club raise no frustrations with the quality of provision provided at Inspire: Luton Sports Village or Stockwood Park Athletics Centre.

Luton Lions Running Club

Luton Lions Running Club is a local Club that partakes in road running sessions across the Borough of Luton. It has members run on behalf of the Club for distance events such as the London Marathon, with funds raised to go towards local charities within the community.

Run Together

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 the case of Luton, no Run Together sessions have been identified. 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.

Park Run

Park Run is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 768 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online in order to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Park Run events.

In Luton, one Park Run event is held each week, that being the Luton Wardown Park Run. The event has been held 313 times, with an average attendance of 264 runners per week.

Other running events

Another annual running event that takes place in neighbouring authority Luton is the Race for Life 5k, which is an event organised by Cancer Research UK. The event utilises Stockwood Park within Luton and takes place in June. The Race for Life is a series of runs across the Country that gives people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities the chance to come together to help beat cancer. There are more than 150 held across the UK.

The Love Luton RunFest provides a half marathon, 10k and 5k all setting off from Luton Town Centre. It is organised by 'Love Luton' and is held in 2022 on October 30th.

Couch to 5k

Couch to 5k is a national health initiative promoted by the National Health Service (NHS) to encourage absolute beginners get into running as part of establishing and maintaining and active and healthy lifestyle including regular exercise.

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, in order to create realistic expectations and a sense of achievability to encourage participants to stick with it. The end goal of the plan is for the participant to be able to run 5k.

Through the Couch to 5k plan the NHS particularly promotes the health benefits of running and regular exercise which underpin the initiative, such as improved heart and lung health, weight loss and possible increases in bone density which can help protect against bone diseases such as osteoporosis. This also includes mental benefits of running through goal setting and challenge setting, which can help boost confidence and self-belief. Furthermore, running regularly has been linked to combating depression.

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.

In Luton, Stopsley Striders running Club deliver Couch to 5k programmes.

Latent/unmet demand

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 4,194 people or 2.07% within Luton. As a national comparison there are 1,150,623 people or 2.04% of people across England wanting to participate in athletics.

No clubs express any latent or unmet demand. Of those consulted, all are open to welcoming new members, however, Luton AC states it is nearing the point in which it shall require a waiting list for junior members.

Future demand

All clubs consulted with express an aspiration to grow membership and will do their upmost to not turn demand away. Luton AC has ambitions to increase in membership figures by 100 seniors (50 male, 50 female) and a further 50 junior members. Comparatively, Stopsley Striders hopes to gain a further 10 male and 10 female members in the near future.

In addition, England Athletics also believes that demand is likely to increase in the future, particularly for initiatives such as Park Run, although again to what extent is difficult to quantify.

10.4: Supply and demand analysis

There is one dedicated athletics facility in Luton, that being Stockwood Park Athletics Centre which is under the management of Active Luton. As such, supply is sufficient, although quality improvements may be required in the near future to accommodate the regions demand.

Details regarding the future of the Stockwood Park Athletics Centre football pitch remain uncertain, with the potential development of a 3G pitch outlined by football partners. A feasibility study should take place to determine if alternative suitable sports lit throwing provision can be provided within the surrounding areas of the facility, thus enabling the 3G development. If an alternative throwing area were to be provided, England Athletics confirms it would need to be sports lit as to make it usable all year round.

Away from the Stockwood Park Athletics Centre track, priority should be placed on supporting activity being accommodated by running clubs in Luton and the events that are being held.

Athletics – supply and demand summary

- The supply of dedicated athletics facilities is sufficient to meet demand, although quality improvements may be required in the near future.
- The potential 3G development outlined on the football pitch at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre should only take place if alternative throwing provision can be found within the vicinity of the site.
- Priority should be placed on supporting activity being accommodated by the various running clubs in Luton and the events that are being held.

Athletics – supply summary

- There is one purpose-built athletics track in Luton, provided at Stockwood Park Athletics Centre.
- The venue provides a 400m track with eight lanes; it has a synthetic surface, is serviced by floodlighting and is available to the community.
- The track is standard quality having last been resurfaced in 2010.
- Luton Athletic Club state the grass edges of the site must be cut more frequently, as well as jet washing the track itself should take place more often.
- Luton Athletic Club also express the need to upgrade the throwing equipment, high jump and pole vault bars and starting blocks.
- It is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.

Athletics – demand summary

- Three clubs have been identified that have a current focus on athletics and/or running activity, those being Luton Athletic Club, Stopsley Striders and Luton Lions Running Club.
- None of the clubs consulted with have a waiting list in place and all clubs are open to gaining new members, however Luton Athletic Club state it is nearing capacity for junior members and may need a waiting list in the future.
- Stopsley Striders is the one Club within Luton delivering the Couch to 5K programme.
- A Park Run event is held each week at Wardown Park, with an average attendance of 264 runners per week.

PART 11: MULTI USE GAMES AREAS (with 3x3 Basketball)

Multi use games areas (MUGAs) are a reference to any sport or games areas which are often used for social and recreational sport in the community and are generally categorised into typologies, as seen in the table below. To qualify as a MUGA, a facility should be minimum of a five-a-side football pitch (two tennis courts) in size and be marked out for at least three sports.

An audit of basketball courts was also taken as part of this section to understand facilities to support outdoor basketball play, in line with the national increase of 3X3 basketball popularity.

Basketball England is the NGB for all formats of basketball in England. Outdoor basketball and in particular the small sided format 3X3 is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. Elite outdoor basketball often requires multi court venues to put on comprehensive tournaments, whilst the recreational side of the game requires a hoop, a ball, line markings and six players. Ball Out UK is the national organisation which organises the National 3x3 UK Tour. The organisation oversees a number of competitions run across the country, with the National 3x3 UK Tour acting as qualifying events for international competitions.

Table 11.1: Types of MUGAs

Type	Surface	Characteristics	Preferred sports
Type One	Open textured porous macadam	Used for ball rebound sports. Suitable for wheelchair sports.	Tennis and netball.
Type Two			
Type Three	Polymeric surface over macadam		
Type Four	Polymeric surface over macadam base	Due to their greater shock absorbency and lower surface friction, these areas are not recommended for tennis or netball.	Football, basketball and recreational activity
Type Five	Sand based or third generation turf (3G)	Shock pad and either heavily doused with water before play or filled or dressed with sand or rubber crumb	Formalised sports including hockey, football, American football, lacrosse and rugby.

Consultation

To inform this part of the report consultation was undertaken with Luton Borough Council

Supply

Across Luton there are a total of ten MUGA's, with the South Analysis Area providing the most provision with four, whilst the North Analysis Area has zero MUGA's identified.

Table 11.2: Summary of MUGAs and basketball courts in Luton

Analysis area	Number of MUGAs
Central	2
East	2
North	0
South	4
West	2
Luton	**10**

Table 11.3: Summary of provision

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Number of courts	Surface type	Sports lighting	Quality
MUGA						
4	Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground	East	1	Type One/Two	No	Standard
11	Blundell Road Recreation Ground	Central	1	Type One/Two	No	Good
20	Dallow Learning Community Centre	South	1	Type Five	Yes	Standard
30	Kingsway Recreation Ground	South	1	Type One/two	No	Standard
36	Lewsey Park	West	1	Type One/Two	No	Poor
68	Wardown Park	Central	1	Type One/Two	No	Poor
81	Brantwood Park	South	1	Type One/Two	No	Poor
82	People's Park	East	1	Type One/Two	No	Poor
83	Lewsey Green	West	1	Type One/Two	No	Poor
84	Manor Road Recreation Ground	South	1	Type One/Two	No	Good

Future developments

Local Football Facility Plans (LFFP)

Nine potential opportunities for MUGAs are identified within the Luton LFFP. In each case the rationale is based on the site being in an area with limited recreational provision with high local demand for informal football. The sites identified are:

- Blundell Park
- Chaul End Community Centre
- Dallow Learning Community
- Denbigh High School
- Ely Way
- Hockwell Ring Community Centre
- Kenilworth Road
- Lewsey Park
- Stopsley Inspire Sports Village

Informal players require facilities that are open and free to access as this enables play opportunities that are often spontaneous. In these circumstances MUGAs can be effective in areas of high urban population and limited green space. Such facilities can be modern, bright, creative and engaging. The facilities are often caged macadam courts with goals built in to the surrounding cage. MUGAs also have line markings for a number of sports such as football, basketball and netball and can often also have basketball nets built into the facility.

Basketball England

Basketball England Strategic Plan- Growing Basketball Together (2018-2024)

Basketball England's most recent strategic plan looks to grow basketball together by increasing participation in Primary Schools, developing a thriving Club network at a community level, whilst also supporting growth in College and University.

The plan outlines four strategic ambitions that Basketball England hopes to achieve by 2024, those being to retain and grow participation, enhance its infrastructure, develop a world class talent system and to be a high performing NGB. From a facilities perspective, the goal of enhancing its infrastructure is the most integral of the four goals.

Two relevant targets outlined in the report regarding outdoor facilities are as follows:

- To publish a 10-year facility plan for basketball, encompassing all major stakeholders with clear investment priorities and principles, that creates case studies and best practice models for indoor and outdoor facilities.
- To improve the data and digital tools for indoor and outdoor basketball facilities, by collating more information on court locations and providing improved information on where to play.

With the Growing Basketball Together (2018-2024) strategic plan, Basketball England outlines the many ways in which it hopes to develop the sport. As outdoor basketball provision is suitable to areas deprived of space or funding, the implementation and enhancement of such provision can support many people whilst offering very few barriers to participation.

Project Swish

In 2019, Basketball England created Project Swish in which a seven-stage step by step guide is outlined for any member of the public looking to develop an outdoor court renovation project. The steps outlined are as follows:

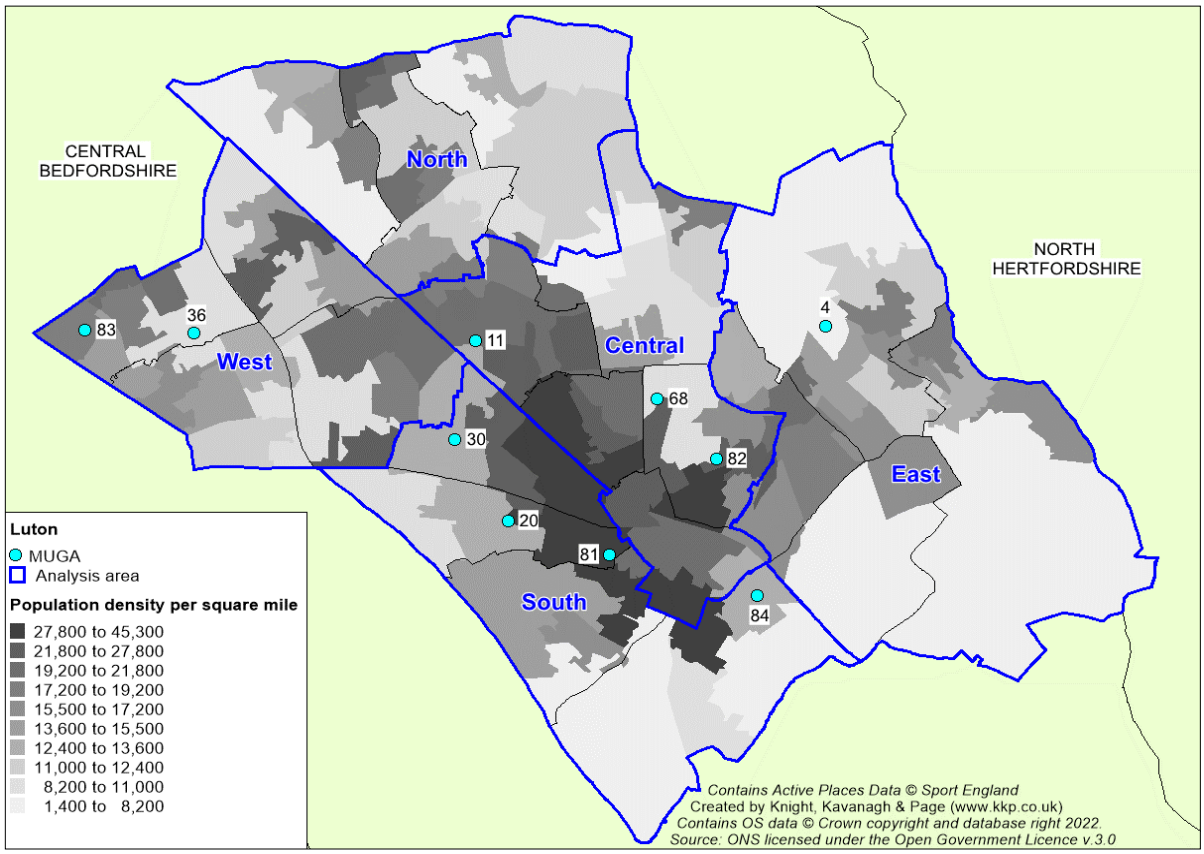
- **Identify a court**- Locate a poor quality MUGA/ basketball court in a location where demand warrants its enhancement.
- **Get Permission**- Contact the owner of the site such as the local council highlighting the interest to develop the provision.
- **Assess the court**- Undertake a site assessment, making a list of improvements such as surface replacements, line markings and backboards
- **Create a budget**- Budget how much investment shall be required to convert the space into a good quality MUGA/ basketball court.
- **Create a funding plan**- Make a list of potential funders, such as the local council, Basketball England, active partnerships, local businesses and crowdfunding.
- **Work starts**- Once funding has been secured, work alongside the site owner to appoint an outdoor sports contractor as to enhance the quality of playing provision.
- **Launch the court**- Once improvements have been made, launch the project as to try and maximise usage of the provision.

Basketball England state that the steps above outline how to enhance the quality of playing provision.

Management

All MUGAs and basketball courts across Luton are owned by Luton Borough Council and available as open access meaning they do not need to be booked. Anecdotal evidence suggests that they are well used in the summer months for activities such as informal football, however, can be prone to vandalism. During non-Technical site assessments, access to the MUGA at Ashcroft Road Recreation Ground was entirely blocked with temporary fencing meaning it could not be accessed. However, it appeared to be only a short-term issue, and can be assumed that access to the site is ordinarily open.

Figure 11.1: Location of MUGAs and basketball courts in Luton



For a key to Figure 11.1, please refer to Table 11.3.

Quality

The quality of MUGAs and basketball courts across Luton has been assessed via a site visits, undertaken in August 2022, using non-technical assessments to apply quality ratings as follows:

- Good
- Standard
- Poor

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

In total across Luton there are two MUGA's assessed as good quality, three assessed as standard quality and five accessed as poor quality.

Table 11.4: Summary of MUGA quality in Luton

Analysis area	Good	Standard	Poor
MUGA			
Central	1	-	1
East	-	1	1
North	-	-	0
South	1	2	1
West	-	-	2
Total	**2**	**3**	**5**

MUGAs are deemed to be poor quality if they have inadequate grip underfoot, loose gravel and evidence of litter, glass and moss with maintenance of such provision also considered to be basic and infrequent.

Sites such as People's Park and Lewsey Park lack the same level of fencing that is seen at Manor Road Recreation Ground, meaning the play area is not enclosed. In the case of Dallow Learning Community Centre, the site has a standard quality rating as it provides a fenced, floodlit play area with a 3G surface. However, given the playing provision is the same surface as when it was installed in 2003 the site has been deemed a standard quality.

Sports lighting

The presence of sports lighting is considered to encourage more demand as it enables evening use all year round. However, it is also acknowledged that it also encourages higher levels unofficial use resulting in increased anti-social behaviour, vandalism and littering.

In total one MUGA across Luton is accompanied by sports lights, that being the provision at Dallow Community Learning Centre.

Demand

Given that demand for MUGAs falls into informal use it is difficult to assess and quantity demand. It is likely that the courts are utilised by residents of the Borough, as well as others which live in close proximity to provision from outside of the Borough.

Ball Out UK is a 3x3 Basketball event held across the UK, with cities such as London, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle hosting such tournaments over 2021. It is deemed the number one urban team sport worldwide, whilst also being considered one of the fastest growing sports, the format is to be part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Ball Out UK reports that an ideal venue for tournaments is six half courts, or the equivalent of three full size courts, in addition access to toilets is also a requirement for tournaments. The official court size is 15 meters in width and 11 in length. The court markings for the key and three-point lines are the same as on a standard court. This size allows for a full size court to host two pitches, with run offs as the length of the court falls shorter than half of a standard court. During matches, three players can be on the court at one time for each team, whilst one substitute is permitted.

Ball Out UK reports that demand for outdoor basketball is extensive, with courts (including MUGAs with hoops) regularly in use throughout the summer months. The courts in parks are identified as being used by community groups as well as groups of individuals all year round for basketball use.

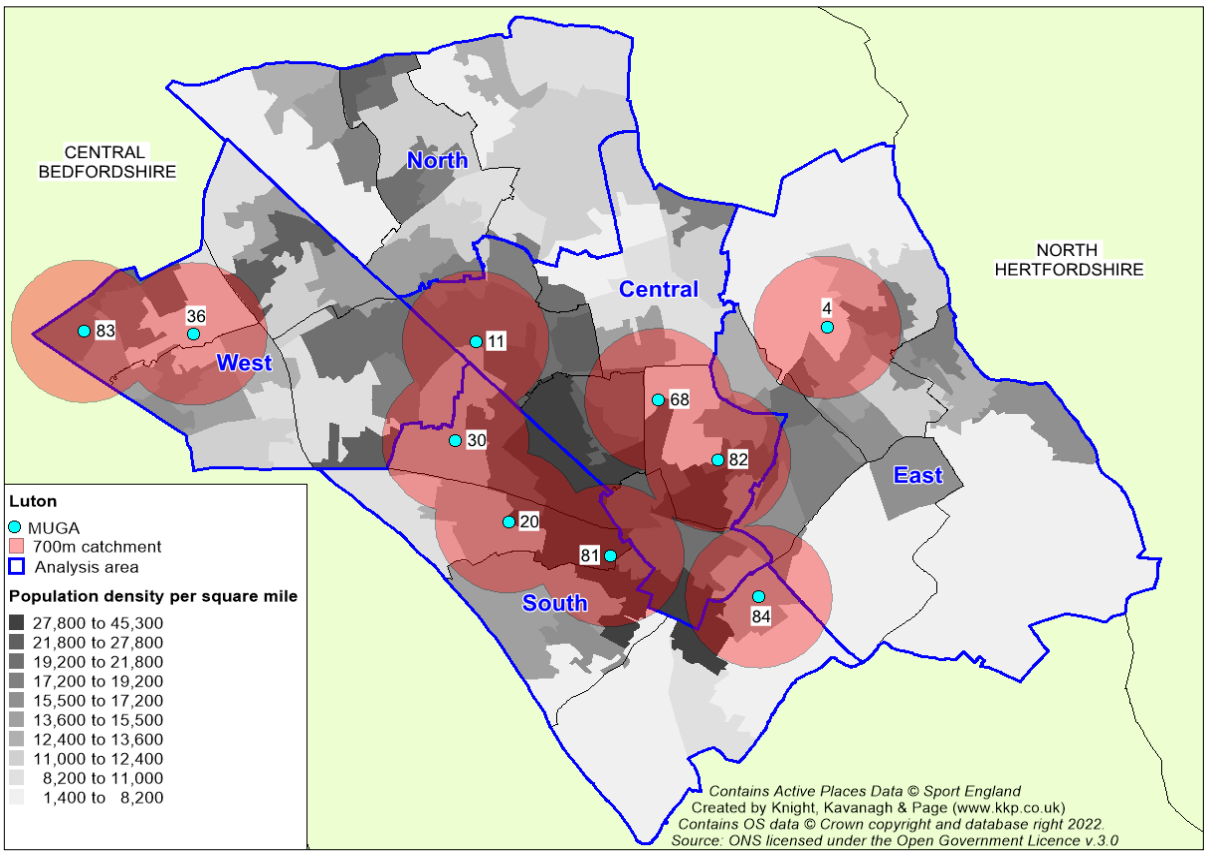
It identifies that as a company, that all MUGAs with hoops can be utilised for recreational outdoor basketball as a pathway to playing on a bigger scale at 3X3 events. Across Luton the majority of MUGAs have basketball hoops installed and therefore are suitable to support outdoor basketball demand, with further requirements for play being a ball and line markings.

Supply and demand analysis

In order to analyse the catchment for MUGA facilities in the Borough, a standards based approach has been taken from the Fields in Trust guidance[39], unlike all other sections of this report, which take a non-standards based approach. The catchment guidance for MUGAs is set at 700m walking distance.

Taking this into consideration a total of 97.9% of the Borough's population (or 209,021 people) has no MUGA facility within the 700m metre catchment. The map can be seen below in Figure 11.2.

Figure 11.2: Coverage of MUGAs across all analysis area



As seen in the map above, all five analysis areas have significant gaps in coverage of MUGAs. Analysis suggests that the South Analysis Area population has the highest population of people located within a 700m walk of a MUGA with 2,052 people, whilst the Central Analysis Area has only 433 people within such a catchment.

[39] https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf

Table 11.5: Summary of MUGA population coverage in Luton

Analysis area	MYE 2020	Population within 700m walk of a MUGA		Population not within 700m walk of a MUGA	
Central	50,476	433	0.9%	50,043	99.1%
East	36,914	436	1.2%	36,478	98.8%
North	38,186	913	2.4%	37,273	97.6%
South	48,649	2,052	4.2%	46,597	95.8%
West	39,303	673	1.7%	38,630	98.3%
Total	**213,528**	**4,507**	**2.1%**	**209,021**	**97.9%**

Conclusion

Luton provides ten MUGA's, half of which are assessed as of a poor due to having inadequate grip underfoot, loose gravel and evidence of litter, glass and moss with maintenance also considered to be basic and infrequent. Sites such as People's Park and Lewsey Park also suffer from the limited fencing provided.

The majority of Luton's population (97.9%) falls outside of the 700m walking distance catchment area of a MUGA. Therefore, it could be considered that there is an undersupply across the Borough with the Central Analysis Area the most heavily affected with 50,043 people living outside of the specified catchment area

In terms of basketball, consultation with Luton Borough Council highlights demand for outdoor basketball is extensive, with courts (including MUGAs with hoops) regularly in use throughout the summer months.

Of the ten MUGA's across Luton, nine can support outdoor basketball, with the provision located at Dallow Community Learning Centre being unable due to having a 3G surface. Of the courts that can support basketball, just over half (five or 55%) are assessed as poor quality.

Ball Out UK identify that an ideal facility for larger scale events includes the equivalent of six half courts (three full courts). Luton currently does not accommodate such provision; therefore development of such facility would help to support growth and development of outdoor basketball.

Considerations should be made by Luton Borough Council's park department, BeActive, Bedfordshire FA, the Football Foundation, Cricket East, England Netball and Basketball England to identify and develop sites for additional MUGA's to be installed within the Borough.

Summary

- **Location of MUGAs and the catchment in which they cover results in 209,021 of the Borough's population being outside of the 700m walking distance guidance.**
- **There is a potential opportunity to develop a dedicated outdoor basketball venue suitable to host larger scale 3X3 competitions.**
- There are 10 MUGAs identified in Luton across as many sites.
- In total, two courts (20%) are rated as good quality, three are rated as standard quality (30%) and five are rated as poor quality (50%).
- Of the 10 courts, nine are able to support Outdoor Basketball, due to six of these courts having a 3G surface. Of the 10 courts five (50%) are accessed as poor quality. Therefore, to support and engage more participation it is recommended to improve quality of courts.
- Out UK identify that an ideal facility for larger scale events includes the equivalent of six half courts (three full courts). As Luton does not have such provision, the development of such a facility would help support growth and development of outdoor basketball.
- Demand for outdoor basketball is extensive, with courts (including MUGAs with hoops) regularly in use throughout the summer months. The courts in parks are identified as being used by community groups as well as groups of individuals all year round for basketball use.
- A total of 97.9% of the Borough's population has no MUGA facility within the 700m metre catchment.

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.

Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021

Sport and physical activity has a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- Joining forces on five big issues
- Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

Recover and reinvent: Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

Connecting communities: Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

Positive experiences for children and young people: Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

Connecting with health and wellbeing: Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

Active environments: Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured through programmes funded, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, a set of key performance indicators will be developed. This hybrid approach will help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these policies are expected to be applied to the plan-making and decision-taking. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be found 'sound' on examination, local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities as part of assembling their evidence base for an emerging development plan.

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches,** with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses,** linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
  Support access to flexible indoor spaces, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision,** recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- **Support testing of technology and innovation,** building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of 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: National Game Strategy (2018-2021)

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in July 2018 which aims to inspire a life-long journey in football for all. To achieve this, the strategy will focus on five key aspects of the game:

- A high quality introduction to football
- Developing clubs and leagues
- Embrace all formats of football and engage all participants
- Recruit, develop and support the workforce
- Develop sustainable facilities

Through these five pillars, The FA's objectives are to:

- Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.
- Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%.
- Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%.
- Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players.

The sustainable football facilities should provide support to an agreed portfolio of priority projects that meet National Football Facility Strategy (NFFS) investment priorities.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2019-2024)

"Inspiring Generations" is the new ECB participation strategy which was announced in January 2019. It builds on the strong foundations laid by Cricket Unleashed and supports the growth of cricket in England and Wales between 2020 and 2024. At the heart of this strategy is a single unifying purpose, which gets to the core of what the game can do for society both on and off the field to ensure that cricket is in an even stronger position that it is in 2019.

Inspire Generations has six key priorities and activities including transforming women's and girls' cricket to increase the representation of women in every level of cricket by:

- Growing the base through participation and facilities investment.
- Growing the base through participation and facilities investment.
- Launching centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure.
- Investing in girls' county age group cricket.
- Delivering a girls' secondary school programme.

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 marker influences, work will continue on developing new ways to take 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

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be foun.
http:/www.englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2075&sectionTitle=Facilities+Strategy

Vision: For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

Mission: More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

1. **PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**

   - There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

2. **IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)**

   - The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

3. **DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.**

England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.
The intention is to:

- Be progressive.
- Offer opportunities to participate at national and international level.
- Work to raise the profile of the sport in support of recruitment and retention.
- Lead the sport.
- Support clubs and county associations.

Bowls England: Fit for the Future (2021-2026)

Bowls England's new 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 bjectives and what success looks like in 2026.The priorities that will get it a 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.

British Tennis Strategy 2019

The new LTA Strategy includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around the following vision and mission:

Vision: tennis opened up
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 from [1.9% (858.700)] of the population to [2.2% (1,000,000)] by 2023.
  - The number of children playing tennis from [x] to [y] by 2023 (to be finalised December 2018 on publication of Sport England's new Child Participation Survey).
- Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.

Strategies

1. Visibility -Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
2. Innovation - Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
3. Investment - Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play
4. Accessibility - Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone
5. Engagement - Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.
6. Performance - Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
7. Leadership - Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

England Netball

In November 2021 England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.

England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and take it to new heights for the decade ahead.

The 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:-

- accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,
- elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, England Netball, with its proud and unique female foundations, will remain dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority, working tirelessly to address the gender participation gap in sport that has widened since the global pandemic.

Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, the organisation pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation.

The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

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

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

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.

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”.