



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

## ASSESSMENT REPORT DECEMBER 2023

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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## GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ANOG	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide
BC	Bowls Club
BCGBA	British Crown Green Bowling Association
BE	Bowls England
BSUK	Baseball Softball United Kingdom
CC	Cricket Club
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ECB	England & Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GMA	Grounds Maintenance Association
HC	Hockey Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
NC	Netball Club
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGB(s)	National Governing Body (of sport)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RC	Racquets Club
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
SMBC	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
TC	Tennis Club
WCB	Warwickshire Cricket Board
U	Under

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.1: Introduction

Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) has been commissioned by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to undertake a Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS). This will provide the necessary robustness and direction to inform decisions affecting relevant provision within the local authority area.

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### ***Management arrangements***

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

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

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

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

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### ***Why the Strategy is being developed***

The PPOSS will replace the existing study for Solihull, which was originally completed in 2017, whilst also now covering a wider scope and additional sports. The lifespan of a PPOSS is three years, although this can be extended if it is kept regularly up to date.

The PPOSS will:

- ◀ Provide adequate planning guidance to assess development proposals affecting playing fields.
- ◀ Inform land use decisions in respect of future use of existing outdoor sports areas and playing pitches.
- ◀ Provide a strategic framework for the provision and management of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities.
- ◀ Identify the opportunities for and evidence via identification of need to support external funding bids and maximise support for outdoor sport and physical activity facilities and playing pitches.
- ◀ Provide the basis for ongoing monitoring, and review of the use, distribution, function, quality, and accessibility of outdoor sport, physical activity facility provision, and playing pitches, identifying if the quality needs are being met now and as the population grows.
- ◀ Maximise the contribution of sporting facilities to the legacy of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games to wider agendas, particularly the health agenda in support of the Council's responsibility for Public Health including reducing health inequalities, sustainable travel and economic priorities.
- ◀ Consideration given to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. and identify the issues clubs, teams and users face as a consequence.
- ◀ Identify any cross-boundary issues with other local authorities.

In addition, the production of the PPOSS will meet the following key performance indicators:

- ◀ To undertake an objective assessment of the number, type, quality and ownership of sports pitches, outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities across a range of sports including those which are currently disused or where use has lapsed.
- ◀ To provide a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future demand and needs for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities for different sports including consideration of the changing nature of different sports focusing on quantity, quality and accessibility issues, broken down into sub-areas.
- ◀ To provide information to assist asset management planning of council owned playing fields and outdoor sports facilities as well as associated buildings.
- ◀ To provide information to assist in decisions associated with the provision of public playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities including where, if a surplus of supply is identified, the opportunities for use by other sports as identified in the wider context of the study or for release of sites for other uses.
- ◀ To provide guidance and criteria on determining whether retaining a range of smaller sites is preferable to consolidation on larger sites.
- ◀ To provide information to underpin the protection, enhancement and quality improvement of the existing pitch and outdoor sport facility stock and ancillary facilities including site specific action plans.
- ◀ To map out a process for improvements in community access to educational and non-local authority pitches and outdoor sports facilities.
- ◀ To identify relevant quantity, quality and accessibility standards that pitches, outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities will be measured and improved against in the future.

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- ◀ To consider the revenue implications of maintaining playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities and establish a benchmark on revenue and expenditure in the context of budgetary constraints.
- ◀ To identify and develop specific action plans for sites which are to be improved from developer contributions.
- ◀ To identify areas of search for new playing pitch and outdoor sport provision where there is a need.
- ◀ To establish and review ownership of playing pitch and outdoor sport facility sites and the potential for transfer of ownership and/or management to user groups/ community organisations.
- ◀ To identify the extent of the pitch/facility use displaced from home authority area by club, location and sport (exported demand) and to identify why displaced pitch use takes place and any themes within the reasons for displacement by authority and sport.
- ◀ To consider with key stakeholders how these displacement issues and themes can be addressed together in the development of each strategy.
- ◀ To produce a chapter in the strategy that addresses the cross-border activity.

### ***Solihull Local Plan***

The PPOSS will inform local planning policy and the emerging Solihull Local Plan. The current iteration (2011-2028) was adopted in December 2013 and sets out how and where Solihull will develop in the future. It outlines challenges facing Solihull and how they will be addressed, the vision for the future of Solihull, the strategy for achieving the vision, and policies and proposals to enable the Borough to grow and develop. Sites for development are also identified. The Plan was informed by extensive involvement with a wide range of stakeholders and the community.

The Council is currently undertaking a Local Plan Review to enable longer term needs to be addressed and to keep it up to date. Once adopted, this plan will largely replace the existing Local Plan; the only exceptions are the site allocations from 2013 that remain to be brought forward.

In May 2021, the Council submitted the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State for it to be independently examined. The draft Local Plan is based on updated evidence and sets out the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for development in the Borough over the next 15 years. It contains strategic policies, development management policies, site allocations and a proposals map. An Examination in Public took place between September 2021 and February 2022 to assess whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements and if it is sound.

The Council has now accepted that the examination of the Local Plan should be paused to enable the finalised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to be published. This will enable the examination to take into account the significant changes to the NPPF, and it is anticipated that the Inspectors will set out how they intend to do this once it is published.

### ***National Planning Policy Framework***

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

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Section eight of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities, with Paragraph 102 stating that “planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”

Paragraph 103 sets three criterion that ensures existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

Paragraphs 105, 106, and 107 set the parameters for the designation of Local Green Space. Such spaces may include playing fields and outdoor sport facilities.

### ***Agreed scope***

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

- ◀ Athletics
- ◀ Bowls
- ◀ Cricket
- ◀ Football
- ◀ Hockey
- ◀ Netball
- ◀ Rugby league
- ◀ Rugby union
- ◀ Tennis

In addition, a bespoke 3G pitch section is included within this report, mainly focusing on football activity but also taking into account other sports that can use the surface type (e.g., rugby union and rugby league). Furthermore, other grass pitch sports are also included within the study where supply and/or demand is identified (e.g., baseball, softball and Gaelic football).

Sport England’s PPS guidance applies to football, both rugby codes, cricket and hockey as well as any other grass pitch sports identified for inclusion. The ANOG guidance applies to the remaining sports (as these are “non-pitch”).

### ***Study area***

The study area comprises of the full local authority area, with analysis areas (or sub areas) also used to allow for a more localised analysis in addition to the analysis for Solihull as a whole.

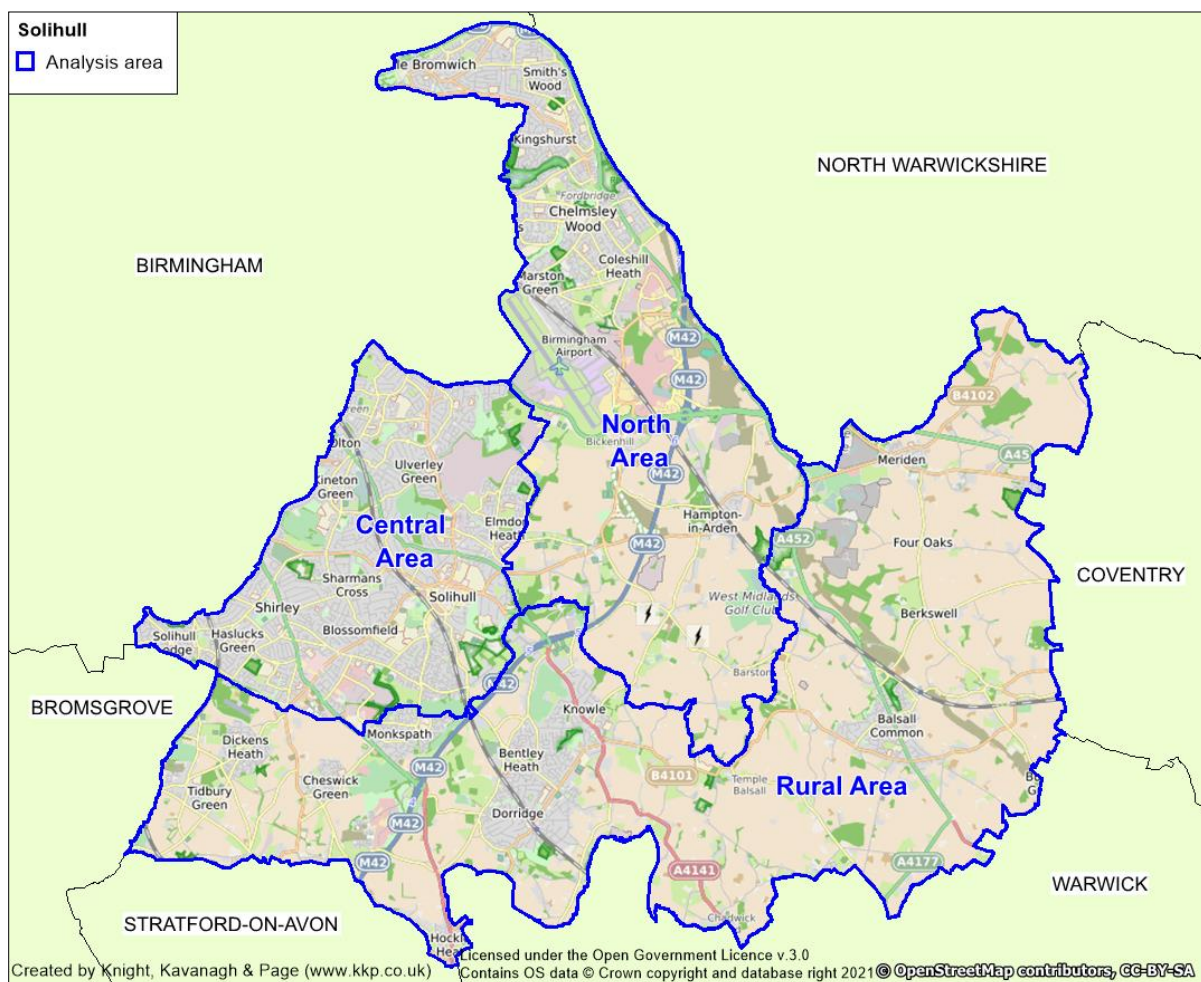
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The analysis areas are unchanged from the original study, allowing for simple data comparison. This entails splitting the Council’s administrative area into three neighbourhood areas, made up of the following wards:

- ◀ **North Area** – Bickenhill, Kingshurst and Fordbridge, Castle Bromwich, Chelmsley Wood, Smiths Wood.
- ◀ **Central Area** – Elmdon, Lyndon Olton, Silhill, St Alphege, Shirley East/West/South.
- ◀ **Rural Area** – Blythe, Dorridge and Hockley Heath, Knowle, Meriden.

For a map showing the analysis areas, please see below.

Figure 1.1: Map of Solihull



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



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## ***Gather supply information and views – an audit of provision***

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

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

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

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

## ***Quantity***

Where known, all outdoor sports facilities are included within the PPOSS, 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 this process by checking and updating this initial data as well as by supplying their own affiliation data.

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

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

## ***Accessibility***

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

- ◀ ***Community use*** - provision 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*** - provision that is 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.

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- ◀ **No community use** - provision which as a matter of policy or practice is not available for hire or used by teams playing in community leagues. This should include professional club sites along with some semi-professional club sites 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. Once these sites are disused for five or more years they will then be categorised as ‘lapsed sites’.

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

### *Quality*

The capacity of provision 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 provision affects the playing experience and people’s enjoyment of a sport. In extreme circumstances, it can result in a facility being unable to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times.

The quality of all provision identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed as part of a PPOSS, regardless of ownership, management 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 then used to help estimate the capacity (aligned to NGB guidance) to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

To ensure accurate findings, site assessments for each sport are carried out during the playing season for that sport. As such, the site assessments for sports played in the winter are conducted between November and February, whilst the sports played in the summer have assessments carried out between July and September.

In addition to undertaking non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the guidance and as determined by NGBs), users and providers have also been consulted on the quality. In some instances, the quality rating has been adjusted to reflect this (thus establishing an “agreed quality rating”).

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

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

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

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To that end, demand for provision in Solihull tends to fall within the following categories:

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

Current and future demand for provision is presented on a sport-by-sport basis within the relevant sections of this report. In addition, unmet, latent, imported and exported demand for provision is also identified within each section (unless no such demand has been identified). Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to provision; it is usually expressed, for example, when a team is in training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of provision, which in turn is hindering the growth of the competition.

In comparison, latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams (or members) that could be accommodated if access to a sufficient number of outdoor sports facilities (and ancillary provision) was available. Exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority area of choice.

A variety of consultation methods have been used to collate demand information. Firstly, face-to-face consultation (normally via video call) has been carried out with key clubs and leagues (as identified by the Council and NGBs) 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, telephone consultation or an online survey (converted to postal if required) has been utilised.

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

### ***Future demand***

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

Other information sources used to help identify future demand include:

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

All future demand projections across the PPOSS for Solihull cover the period up until 2037, in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan.

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## 1.3: Assess the supply and demand information and views (Stage C)

Supply and demand information gathered is used to assess the adequacy of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision in Solihull and to identify key issues, challenges and aspirations. This forms the basis of this report.

### *Understand the situation at individual sites*

Qualitative ratings are linked to a capacity rating derived from NGB guidance and tailored to suit a local area. For playing pitch sports, the quality and use of each pitch is assessed against recommended capacity to indicate how many match equivalent sessions provision could accommodate.

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

*Table 1.2: 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
Rugby league	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Junior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	60 per season
Hockey	One AGP	4 matches per day	4 matches per day	0 matches per day

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

### *Develop the current and future picture of provision*

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

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

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

Once current capacity has been determined, future capacity can also be calculated via incorporating the future demand that has been identified as well as unmet, latent and exported demand.

### ***Identify the key findings and issues***

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

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

### **1.4: Develop the strategy (Stage D)**

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

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

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

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## PART 2: FOOTBALL

### 2.1: Introduction

The organisation primarily responsible for the development of football in Solihull is Birmingham County FA. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees, coaches and delivering national football schemes.

Facility development for football is largely the responsibility of the Football Foundation (FF), which is a charity, linked to and funded by the Premier League, The FA and the Government (via Sport England), that helps communities improve their local football facilities through grant funding. It is committed to improving the experience of playing football for everyone involved in the game. The FF also acts on behalf of The FA as the strategic NGB for football in supporting development of a PPOSS.

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

Table 2.1: Football grass pitch playing formats and pitch sizes

Format/pitch type	Age range	Recommended pitch size (metres)
Adult	U17s+	100 x 64
Youth 11v11	U13s-U16s	91 x 55 (U15-16s) and 82 x 50 (U13s-U14s)
Youth 9v9	U11s-U12s	73 x 46
Mini 7v7	U9s-U10s	55 x 37
Mini 5v5	U7s-U8s	37 x 27

The playing season generally runs from September to May.

Part 3 of this report captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches), which is the preferred artificial surface type for football. There is a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, in addition to training needs, 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 which was completed in 2020. As part of this, an LFFP has been produced for every local authority across England, with each plan being unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation.

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 and the FF) to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next ten years.

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Each LFFP draws on the PPOSS findings (where present and current) regarding the formal and affiliated game as well as including strategic priorities for investment across small sided football (recreational/informal and indoor activity). The LFFP also incorporates consultation with groups outside of formal football, as well as under-represented communities. This includes those which may be key partners with regards to football for behavioural change and groups which may be key drivers of FA priorities around participation in the likes of women and girls' football, disability football and futsal.

The LFFP for Solihull was produced in 2018. As it is a 'live' document it should be updated following the completion of this study as an up-to-date supply and demand assessment may present findings and recommendations that need to be incorporated for investment purposes. LFFPs identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require potential funding through the FF.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to recognise that the 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 PPOSS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal. A LFFP does, however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans.

## **Consultation**

A total of 90 affiliated football clubs are based in Solihull, with 59 responding to consultation requests. This equates to a club response rate of 69% and a team response rate of 86%. Most clubs that have not responded are small clubs fielding just one or two teams.

Key clubs consulted as part of the study include:

- ◀ Arden Forest FC
- ◀ Coldland Colts FC
- ◀ Glades FC
- ◀ Kingshurst Pavilion Sports Club FC
- ◀ Knowle FC
- ◀ Leafield Athletic FC
- ◀ Marston Green Minor FC
- ◀ Olton Ravens FC
- ◀ Silhill FC
- ◀ Solihull FC
- ◀ Solihull Moors FC
- ◀ Solihull Sporting FC

It should be noted that in order to provide additional evidence, consultation has also been carried out with other key stakeholders for football in Solihull. This includes SMBC, Birmingham FC, local leagues and schools.

## **2.2: Supply**

The audit identifies a total of 211 pitches in Solihull across 81 sites. Of the pitches, 185 are available at some level for community use (although not necessarily used) across 69 sites. All unavailable pitches are located at education sites.

The table below shows the breakdown of the pitches which are available for community use. The Rural Analysis Area has the most (65), followed by the North Analysis Area (63 pitches). The Central Analysis Area has the fewest pitches (57).

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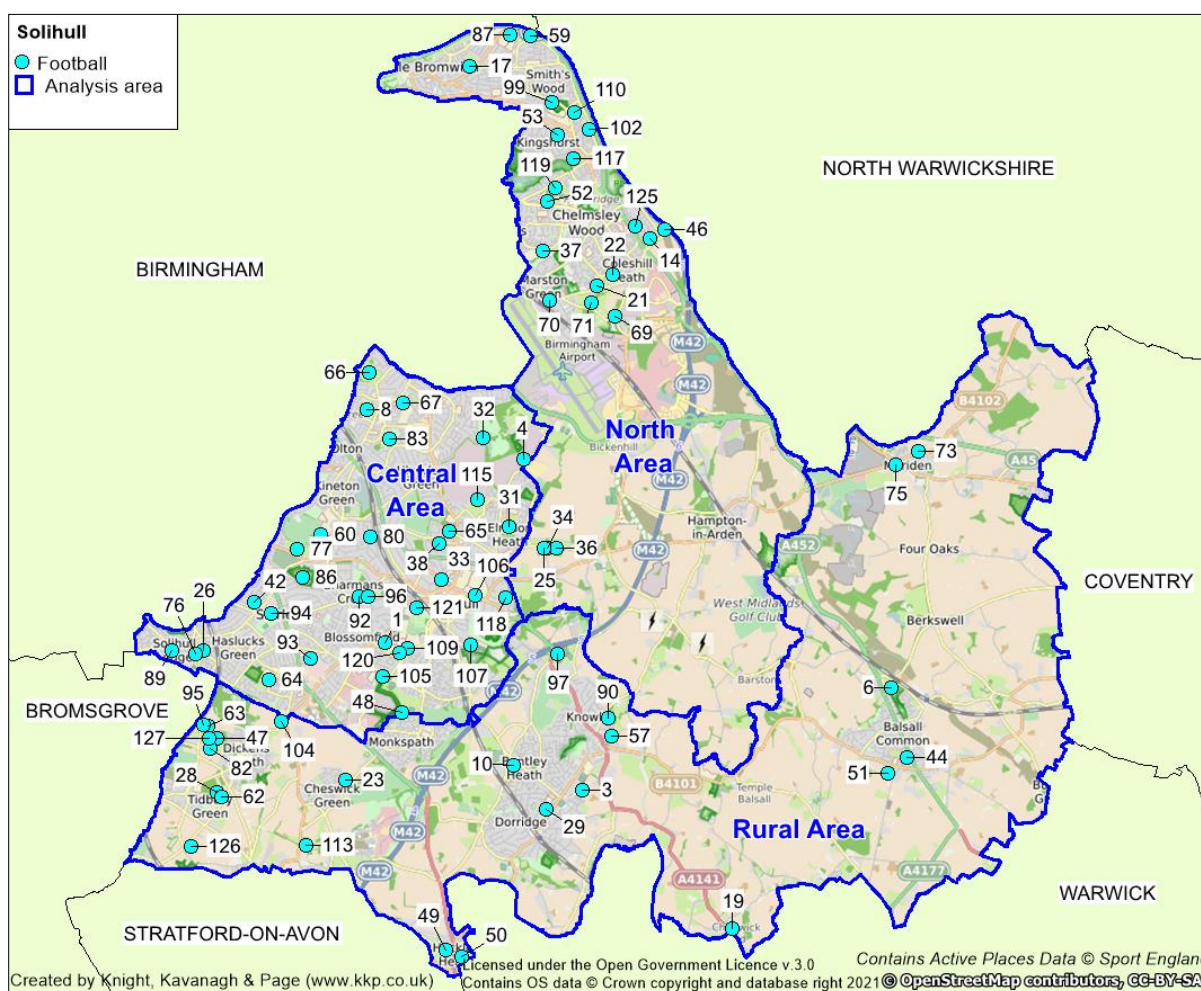
Table 2.2: Summary of grass football pitches available for community use

Analysis area	Pitch type					Total
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
Central	27	10	8	7	5	57
North	19	15	8	11	10	63
Rural	13	17	8	16	11	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>185</b>

As shown in the table above, a large number of adult pitches (59) are identified when compared to pitches of other sizes, which correlates with adult football being the most prominent in the Borough (see Table 2.13). By contrast, youth 9v9 pitches are the least represented (24 pitches), followed by mini 5v5 pitches (26).

The location of the pitches servicing Solihull can be seen in the figures below. For a key to the maps, see Table 2.20.

Figure 2.1: Location of football pitches in Solihull





# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Changes from the previous study

Since the previous PPS study, last updated in 2019, there has been an overall decrease in the total number of grass football pitches within Solihull, with this equating to a 12% reduction. Furthermore, the number available for community use has also declined, with 211 pitches previously available compared to 185 now. This also represents a 12% decrease.

Table 2.3: Pitch comparison of community available grass football pitches

PPOSS Year	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
2023 (current study)	59	42	24	34	26
2019 (previous study)	97	15	29	35	34
Change	-38	+27	-5	-1	-8

The above does not align with participation changes over the same time period, with the number of teams increasing significantly since 2019 (as shown in Table 2.15). Furthermore, there has been a large increase in the number of adult and mini teams, despite pitch reductions for these formats of play, and a decrease in youth 11v11 teams, despite an increase in the number of pitches.

The main reason for the reduction is that several sites now provide fewer pitches than they did previously, with examples including council sites such as at Bluebell Recreation Ground, Elmdon Heath Recreation Ground, Hillfield Park and Lynton Playing Fields. This is reportedly due to less demand existing, and the pitches that have been lost could be reinstated if required. This is due to a transfer of demand to other sites, rather than an overall reduction in demand given the recent growth in the number of teams playing in Solihull.

A full list of sites that now provide fewer pitches than identified in 2019 is provided in the following table.

Table 2.4: Summary of pitch reductions by site

Site ID	Site name	Comments	Number of pitches reduced by
14	Bluebell Recreation Ground	Provided three adult, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch in 2019 but now provides just three youth 11v11 pitches due to no demand existing for the other pitch types.	2
31	Elmdon Heath Recreation Ground	Provided five adult and two mini pitches but now provides only the adult pitches due to no demand existing for the other pitches.	2
37	Grace Academy Solihull	Previously provided two mini 5v5 pitches (in addition to adult and mini 7v7 provision) but now just has one (reason for change is unknown).	1
47	Highgate United Football Club	Provided three adult, one youth 11v11, two mini 7v7 and three mini 5v5 but not provides just two adult, one youth 11v11 and two mini 7v7 pitches due to changes to its team numbers and breakdown.	4
48	Hillfield Park	Supply has reduced from three adult pitches to one due to lack of demand.	2
66	Lyndon Playing Fields	Provided four adult pitches but now has just two due to lack of demand.	2

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Comments	Number of pitches reduced by
87	Park Hall Academy	Provided five pitches across adult and youth formats but now has just four adult pitches. The School reports that this is easier to manage.	1
94	Shirley Park	Provided two adult pitches but now has just one due to a lack of demand.	1
106	Solihull School	Provided two youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches but now has one adult pitch instead of the mini provision. The School reports that this better satisfies its own demand.	1
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	Supply has reduced from two adult pitches to one (reason for change is unknown).	1

The remaining reductions are due to school sites either no longer providing pitches or still providing them but no longer offering community use. In most instances, this relates to primary schools such as Balsall Common Primary School, Bentley Heath Primary School, Fordbridge Community Primary School, Our Lady of the Wayside School and St Andrew's Catholic School, St Margaret's Primary School. None of these have any historic community use recorded.

It is also the case at St Peter's Catholic School, where three pitches were previously in place. These have since been taken out of action, with the School reporting that it is in the process of carrying out work to improve the quality of the playing field area. The aspiration when this is complete is to provide two youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch (two adult and one youth 9v9 were previously provided).

### ***Disused provision***

There are three disused sites in Solihull that previously contained football pitches. Two of these, Babbs Mill Park and Meriden Park contain playing field land, which is no longer used for formal sport, although they are being used for other open space and recreational purposes.

In addition, Rowood Drive is currently subject to a planning aspiration that will result in the permanent loss of the site, with contributions towards improving facilities at Lode Heath School being put forward to offset this.

Table 2.5: Summary of disused pitches in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Comments
5	Babbs Mill Park	B37 6LN	North	Three adult pitches last marked out circa 2019.
74	Meriden Park	B37 7NZ	North	One adult pitch last marked out circa 2019.
-	Rowood Drive	B92 9NG	Central	Last used for mini football, circa 2011.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## **Future provision**

The emerging Local Plan proposes a number of new site allocations that could impact on grass football pitch provision. To inform requirements, the Solihull Playing Pitch Mitigation Strategy<sup>1</sup> was produced in 2020, outlining the sites impacted upon and potential options that could be delivered to ensure adherence to the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

Site Allocation 4: West of Dickens Heath entails the loss of football pitches at Highgate United Football Club, Wychall Wanderers Football Club and Old Yardleians Rugby Club (it does not impact on Leafield Athletic Football Club or Shirley Town Football Club). The Mitigation Strategy outlines that these sites could be mitigated together through a replacement hub site, with work now ongoing to deliver this. Another option being explored is to mitigate the football and rugby union elements separately.

Site Allocation 8: Hampton Road proposes the development of Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club), with a replacement site earmarked that is adjacent to the Grand Union Canal that would provide sufficient mitigation. It is also set out in the Mitigation Strategy that this could be tied into the development of Site allocation 9: South of Knowle due to the proximity of the sites; however, proposals in relation to Arden Academy Trust have since stalled.

Another development to be considered relates to The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, with Jaguar Land Rover looking to develop car parking on a section of the site. Work is ongoing to determine what facilities could be retained and appropriate mitigation for what is to be lost.

Site Allocation 20 falls within the same area as the above and could impact on Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club). If this occurs, the Mitigation Strategy outlines that the site should be dealt with separately due to the nature of the Club, the level it plays at and the facilities it requires.

Away from the Mitigation Strategy, a planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm for the development of pitches. This will include an additional Gaelic football pitch that is set out to be over marked by both football (two youth pitches) and rugby union, in addition to 3G pitch with sports lighting as well as a large clubhouse and secure car parking.

## **Management**

The majority of community available pitches in the Borough are managed by sports clubs, with this amounting to 89 pitches or 48% of all community accessible provision. This is unusual compared to the national picture, where most pitches tend to be operated by councils or schools. In Solihull, 44 community available pitches are managed by the Council and 50 are managed by education providers, whilst the remaining two are managed by commercial partners at Solihull Municipal Club and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.

Table 2.6: Management of community available pitches by pitch type

Pitch type	Council	Education	Sports club	Commercial
Adult	18	15	23	2
Youth 11v11	17	8	17	-
Youth 9v9	2	10	13	-
Mini 7v7	4	10	20	-
Mini 5v5	3	7	16	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup><https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review-Playing-Pitch-Mitigation-Strategy.pdf>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### ***Security of tenure***

A site is considered to have secure tenure if it has a long-term lease agreement in place or a guarantee exists that pitches will continue to be provided over the next three years. As such, all local authority sites in Solihull are considered to provide this as continued community use is ensured through an ongoing commitment to provide sports and leisure facilities.

In contrast, security of tenure is not offered by sites which face development pressures or where existing arrangements are coming to an end as there is no guarantee that they will continue to be accessible in the future. Based on this, most education sites are not deemed to provide secure use, unless a robust community use agreement is in place. This applies even to school sites which are currently well used such as Arden Academy, John Henry Newham Catholic College, Lode Heath School, Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst and Tudor Grange Academy Solihull as access can be terminated at any point beyond the term covered by existing rental agreements.

Most sites operated by sports clubs are considered to have security of tenure, either via freehold or a lease arrangement. However, in some instances, existing agreements are coming to an end, such as for Balsall & Berkswell Hornets FC, which has only eight years remaining on its lease from a private company.

Similarly, Marston Green Minor FC reports that it has only 17 years left on its lease agreement at Marston Green Football Club, whilst Wychall Wanderers Juniors FC reports that its lease has expired and that it is now operating on a rolling annual contract. This is linked to the aforementioned allocation of the Club's site.

Generally, in order to carry out site development and/or attract external funding, clubs and sites generally need long-term security of tenure, with arrangements of at least 25 years often required (unless recently entered into). As an example, this is a requirement for FF investment (freehold or a lease of 21+ years is needed for funding over £100,000).

Coldland Colts FC reports that its lease of Coldlands Park from the Council expires in 2032, although discussions are ongoing regarding extending it until 2100.

### ***Pitch quality***

The quality of football pitches across Solihull have been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA), PitchPower assessments (see further detail below) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

For the site assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

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 are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

The table below summarises the quality of community available pitches in Solihull. As seen, most pitches are assessed as standard, with 87 (47%) being rated as such. Of the remaining pitches, 66 (36%) community available pitches assessed as poor quality and 32 (17%) are assessed as good quality.

Table 2.7: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Pitch type	Good	Standard	Poor
Adult	13	25	21
Youth 11v11	6	17	19
Youth 9v9	4	16	4
Mini 7v7	5	18	11
Mini 5v5	4	11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>66</b>

Poor quality pitches are located across 33 sites and can be seen in Table 2.19. Many of these are operated by the councils and schools, whereby maintenance tends to be less dedicated than at sites managed by sports clubs. Furthermore, pitches at Barn Lane Recreation Ground, Bentley Heath Recreation Ground, Bluebell Recreation Ground, Elmdon Heath Recreation Ground, Elmdon Park, Heath Park, Highgate United Football Club, Holly Lane, Olton Jubilee Park, Palmers Rough Recreation Ground, Solihull Municipal Club and Wychall Wanderers Football Club have all been reported as suffering from drainage issues and waterlogging.

Knowle FC reports that the pitches at Bentley Heath Recreation are in poor condition due to a lack of maintenance and significant use of the site, whereas G & C FC states that it has had to cancel three games this season due to poor pitch conditions at Heath Park. These include broken goals, cut up grass and no pitch markings.

Phoenix Rangers FC reports that the pitches at Elmdon Heath Recreation Ground are poorly maintained with a lack of grass cutting and faint pitch markings. Similarly, CFA Solihull FC reports that the pitches at Bluebell Recreation Ground are not always marked out and that the grass is not cut as regularly as the Club would like.

Wychall Wanderers Juniors FC reports that its pitches are of poor quality due to the lack of drainage on site. It reflects that this is due to the vast amount of housing development in the area.

In contrast, good quality pitches can be found at 10 sites including sites such as Field Lane (Hampton Football Club), Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane) and Shirley Town Football Club and can be seen in Table 2.19.

Most of the good quality pitches have a rigorous maintenance programme in order to maintain high quality. As an example, Coldland Colts FC reports that it has a sophisticated regime in place at Coldlands Park as without it, the quality of the pitches would diminish due to considerable overplay at the site.

Similarly, Knowle FC reports that the pitches at Field Lane are significantly overused and that they struggle to cope in wet conditions, despite their good quality. A particular challenge exists to maintain a playable surface for the level at which its senior teams play.

Balsall & Berkswell Hornets FC has been granted planning permission to install an irrigation system to help overcome some drainage issues.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

### *Changes to the previous study*

For the last update of the previous PPS (2019), there were 163 standard quality pitches (78%) identified as well as 36 (18%) poor quality pitches and 10 good quality pitches (4%). As such, there has been a clear increase in the number of both good and poor quality pitches and a reduction in standard quality pitches. This means that there is no clear trend.

Table 2.8: Pitch quality comparison

PPOSS Year	Good	Standard	Poor
2023 (current study)	32	87	66
2019 (previous study)	10	163	36

### *Pitch improvement*

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

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

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments within the PPS guidance, instead being able to be undertaken within a 10-month period, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: September - October, November – March or April – June. Organisations must carry out two assessments a year, with at least one in the November – March window.

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

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

Table 2.9: Agreed equivalent PPOSS quality rating for PQS ratings.

PQS Rating	PPOSS quality rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

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In Solihull, 17 sites have received a PitchPower assessment and the findings of these in comparison to the PPOSS findings are shown in the table below. As evidenced, the findings align.

Table 2.10: Summary of PitchPower findings compared to PPOSS quality ratings

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PitchPower rating	PPOSS rating
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Adult	Basic	Standard
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Youth (11v11)	Good	Good
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Youth (11v11)	Good	Good
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Youth (9v9)	Good	Good
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Mini (5v5)	Poor	Poor
19	Chadwick End Football Pitch	Adult	Basic	Standard
22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
25	Coldlands Park	Youth (11v11)	Basic	Standard
25	Coldlands Park	Youth (9v9)	Poor	Poor
25	Coldlands Park	Mini (7v7)	Basic	Standard
25	Coldlands Park	Mini (5v5)	Basic	Standard
25	Coldlands Park	Mini (5v5)	Basic	Standard
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Adult	Poor	Poor
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Youth (11v11)	Basic	Standard
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Youth (9v9)	Poor	Poor
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Mini (5v5)	Basic	Standard
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	Adult	Good	Good
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	Adult	Good	Good
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	Youth (11v11)	Good	Good
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	Mini (7v7)	Good	Good
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	Adult	Good	Good
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	Youth (11v11)	Basic	Standard
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	Youth (9v9)	Basic	Standard
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	Mini (7v7)	Advanced	Good
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	Mini (5v5)	Good	Good
47	Highgate United Football Club	Youth (9v9)	Basic	Standard
47	Highgate United Football Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
47	Highgate United Football Club	Mini (7v7)	Basic	Standard
62	Leafield Athletic Football Club (Rumbush Lane)	Adult	Poor	Poor
62	Leafield Athletic Football Club (Rumbush Lane)	Youth (11v11)	Poor	Poor
69	Marston Green Football Club	Youth (11v11)	Poor	Poor
69	Marston Green Football Club	Youth (9v9)	Poor	Poor
69	Marston Green Football Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
69	Marston Green Football Club	Mini (5v5)	Poor	Poor
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Adult	Poor	Poor
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Adult	Good	Good
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Mini (5v5)	Good	Good
96	Silhill Football Club	Adult	Poor	Poor
96	Silhill Football Club	Adult	Basic	Standard

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	PitchPower rating	PPOSS rating
96	Silhill Football Club	Mini (5v5)	Poor	Poor
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Youth (11v11)	Basic	Standard
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Youth (11v11)	Poor	Poor
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Youth (11v11)	Poor	Poor
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Youth (9v9)	Basic	Standard
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Youth (9v9)	Basic	Standard
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
117	The Pavilions	Adult	Good	Good
117	The Pavilions	Youth (11v11)	Good	Good
117	The Pavilions	Mini (7v7)	Good	Good
117	The Pavilions	Mini (5v5)	Good	Good
117	The Pavilions	Mini (5v5)	Good	Good
118	Tippetts Field	Adult	Basic	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	Mini (5v5)	Poor	Poor
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Youth (11v11)	Poor	Poor
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Youth (9v9)	Basic	Standard
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Mini (7v7)	Poor	Poor

In addition to PitchPower, the FA has a general pitch improvement strategy, in partnership with the GMA. As part of this, it has a Pitch Advisory Service that can be utilised by 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 and practical solutions in a range of areas, with the simple aim of improving playing surfaces. This is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise local authority-maintained sites.

The FF and the FA also have a Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund that allows site operators to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Funding is awarded over a six-year period, with this including up to 100% of the total cost for years one and two and 66% of the cost from year three. Although a six-year fund, the grant terms and conditions cover a 10-year period to instil commitment from the recipients.

### **Over marked pitches**

Over marking of pitches can cause notable damage to the surface quality and lead to overuse beyond recommended capacity. In some cases, mini pitches may be marked onto senior pitches or mini matches may be played widthways across adult or youth pitches. This can lead to targeted areas of surface damage due to a large amount of play focused on high traffic areas, particularly the middle third of the pitch.

Over marking of pitches not only influences available capacity, but it may also cause logistical issues regarding kick off times; for example, when two teams of differing age formats are due to play at the same site at the same time.

The table below highlights all sites containing over marked pitches in Solihull.



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 2.11: Sites containing over marked pitches

Site ID	Site	Comments
25	Coldlands Park	Youth 11v11 pitch is overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Youth 11v11 pitches are overmarked with youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitches.
63	Leafield Athletic Football Club (Rumbush Lane)	One youth 11v11 pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch and a youth 9v9 pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 pitch.
69	Marston Green Football Club	Youth 11v11 pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.
117	The Pavilions	One youth 11v11 pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 pitch.
127	Wychall Wanderers Football Club	One adult pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.

### **Ancillary facilities**

In correlation with the process for pitch assessments, the quality of ancillary facilities servicing football sites across Solihull has been undertaken on the basis of identifying good, standard and poor quality provision. Ancillary facility ratings are primarily influenced by the type and quality of amenities available on a site, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, car parking and boundary fencing (see Appendix 2 for the assessment criteria).

With specific reference to clubhouses and changing facilities, the following sites in Solihull are considered to have poor quality provision:

- ◀ Castle Bromwich Playing Fields
- ◀ Coldlands Park
- ◀ Hockley Heath Recreation Ground
- ◀ Meriden Sports Park
- ◀ The Pavilions
- ◀ The Land Rover Sports & Social Club

Most of these sites are serviced by dated facilities that require improving or replacing as well as a degree of modernisation.

Hockley Heath Dynamos FC reports that the changing facilities at Hockley Heath Recreation Ground are currently out of use due to damage to the interior walls, resulting in players having to get changed in the car park. Similarly, Meriden Lions FC also report that the facilities at Meriden Sports Park are unusable due to a burst drainage pipe.

Olton Ravens FC reports that the clubhouse at The Land Rover Sports & Social Club is old-fashioned and is in need of a refurbishment, whereas Castle Bromwich Spitfires FC reports that the provision at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields is poor due to mould on the ceiling of the showers.

Similarly, Coldlands Colts FC notes that the changing facilities at Coldlands Park are also inadequate and need to be replaced over the coming years to satisfy the Club's demand.

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In addition, many sites are not currently serviced by any changing facilities or toilets, which can be problematic for all forms of play. This relates to the following:

- ◀ Barn Lane Recreation Ground
- ◀ Bentley Heath Recreation Ground
- ◀ Bluebell Recreation Ground
- ◀ Knowle C of E Primary School
- ◀ Marston Green Recreation Ground
- ◀ Lyndon Playing Fields
- ◀ Olton Jubilee Park
- ◀ Palmers Rough Recreation Ground
- ◀ Shirley Park

Furthermore, Leafield Athletic FC reports that the backroom in its clubhouse at Tythe Barn Lane needs insulation works to help bring it back into use. It is currently unused by the Club due to this.

Solihull Moors FC reports that it wants to develop a new club area at its site (Armco Arena).

Away from clubhouse provision, car parking is reported as being a particular issue at Balsall & Berkswell Hornets Football Club and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, with several clubs citing this as a problem at both sites.

Woodbourne Sports FC also reports a particular concern with its car parking access, stating that it is unable to organise multiple games on one day.

In August 2023, Hampton FC's clubhouse suffered a fire, destroying its kitchen, bar and changing facilities.

### ***Football pyramid demand***

The football pyramid is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It is known as the National League System and begins below the Football League (the National League) and comprises of six steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. These are then supported by regional feeder leagues, which were previously at Step 7 of the pyramid but are now not included.

The system has a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top. However, clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA; the higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Progress into the league above is not granted if ground 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.

The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they must achieve the appropriate grade by March 31<sup>st</sup> of their first season after promotion, which therefore allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard. This, however, does not apply to clubs seeking promotion to Step 6 (as they must meet requirements by the end of March in the season they wish to apply for promotion).

There are a total of two clubs which play within the National League System in Solihull, with a further two clubs playing in regional feeder leagues. This is summarised in the following table.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 2.12: Summary of teams playing within the football pyramid structure

Team	League	Level
Solihull Moors FC	National League	Step 1
Highgate United FC	Midland Football League- Premiership	Step 5
Hampton FC	Midlands Football League- Division 2	Regional feeder league
Knowle FC	Midlands Football League- Division 2	Regional feeder league

No current ground grading issues are identified, although it is important to note that the jump from a Regional Feeder League to Step 6 is significant and that as a minimum, sites require a sports-lit pitch with hardstanding areas for fans as well as turnstiles for entry.

## **Women's National League System**

There is also a Women's National League System, similar to the adult men's football pyramid, providing structure to the women's game. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6, with each tier requiring differing ground grading requirements. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels.

Although women's clubs are still required to meet ground requirements set out by the FA, these differ from the men's National League System. Ratings range from grade A to C, each with differing minimum requirements. Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Step 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, although not exactly the same.

In Solihull, four teams play within the Women's National League System, as seen in the table below.

Table 2.13: Summary of teams playing in the Women's National League System

Team	League	Level
Leafield Athletic Ladies FC	Women's National League Division One Midlands	Tier 4
Solihull Moors Foundation Women's FC	Women's National League Division One Midlands	Tier 4
Crusaders Women's FC	Women's Regional League Premier Division	Tier 5
Knowle Ladies FC	Women's Regional League Premier Division	Tier 5

Of the above, both Leafield Athletic Ladies FC and Solihull Moors Foundation Women's FC exports demand due to ground grading requirements (see exported demand section for further detail). The former uses provision in Birmingham, whilst the latter travels to Stratford-on-Avon.

## **2.3: Demand**

Through the audit and assessment, 531 teams from within 85 clubs are identified as playing within Solihull. This comprises of 119 adult men's, 11 adult women's, 179 youth boys' 21 youth girls' and 201 mini teams and is further summarised in the following table.

Table 2.14: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in Solihull

Analysis area	No. of teams playing				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central	52	14	15	32	20
North	50	57	35	46	44
Rural	28	43	36	31	28
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>92</b>

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The North Analysis Area has the highest number of teams with 227, whilst the Central Analysis Area has the fewest with 133 teams, although this is still a substantial number. There are more adult teams (130) when compared to other formats of play, with youth 9v9 teams being the least represented (86 teams).

### ***Participation trends (changes since the previous study)***

Across the clubs based in Solihull, there are currently 53 more teams currently affiliated when compared to the 2019 study, based on data collected in the 2018/2019 season. This equates to a growth of 26 adult teams and 50 mini teams, although there has been a reduction in youth demand.

Table 2.15: Demand comparison

<b>PPOSS Year</b>	<b>Adult</b>	<b>Youth 11v11</b>	<b>Youth 9v9</b>	<b>Mini 7v7</b>	<b>Mini 5v5</b>	<b>Total</b>
2023 (current study)	130	114	86	109	92	<b>531</b>
2019 (previous study)	104	135	88	78	73	<b>478</b>
Change	+26	-21	-2	+31	+19	<b>+53</b>

As set out previously, the above does not align with changes to pitch numbers over the same time period, with the number of pitches decreasing significantly since 2019 (as shown in Table 2.3). Furthermore, there has been a large increase in the number of adult and mini teams, despite pitch reductions for these formats of play, and a decrease in youth 11v11 teams, despite an increase in the number of pitches.

In terms of consultation, in correlation with the above, eight responding clubs report an increase in the number of their adult teams over the previous three seasons, whilst eight also report a growth in mini demand and 11 clubs report a growth in youth demand.

By contrast, two clubs (Solihull Moors FC and Woodbourne Sports Club FC) report overall decreases in their team numbers. Specifically, Solihull Moors FC states it has lost 12 adult teams, primarily due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

As mentioned previously, Leafield Athletic FC currently exports its women's team to Birmingham, accessing Sutton Coldfield Football Club. This is so that it can meet ground grading requirements for the level that it plays at. Similarly, Solihull Moors Foundation Women's FC uses Studley Sports Centre, in Stratford-on-Avon.

Craven Athletic FC reports that it exports one adult male team into Coventry to Massey Ferguson Sports Ground due to a lack of pitch capacity in Solihull.

In addition, Sheldon Royals FC is to move some of its demand from Grace Academy Solihull to King Edward Sheldon Heath School, in Birmingham. Arden Forest FC is to then begin utilising Grace Academy Solihull via the capacity that will be freed up.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Of the clubs that responded to consultation, 14 report levels of latent demand and provide reasoning. This represents a relatively high level and is summarised in the following table.

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Table 2.16: Summary of latent demand

Club	Comments
AFC Solihull	Could field an additional adult men's team if it had access to more pitches
Balsall & Berkswell Hornets	Could field additional teams across all its age groups if it had access to more pitches and capacity.
Chelmsley Town FC	The Club reports it is limited in the number of teams it can field due to pitches getting worn out quite quickly.
Kingshurst Pavilions Sports Club FC	Could field additional teams across all its age groups.
Knowle FC	The Club wishes to increase its demand but is limited by its pitches and their availability
MKC Academy FC	Could field an additional youth 11v11 team if it had access to more pitches
Olton Ravens FC	The Club reports wanting to increase demand but depends on pitch availability.
Pudding FC	Could field an additional senior men's team if it had access to more pitches
Silhill FC	Could field additional teams across all its age groups if had access to more pitches.
Sheldon Royals FC	Could field an additional youth 9v9 and youth 11v11 boys' teams if it had access to more pitches
Solihull Sporting FC	The Club does not have the capacity to increase demand on a Saturday.
Solihull Youth Academy FC	The Club wants to increase demand but does not have the capacity to do so on the pitches it currently has available.
Woodbourne Sports FC	The Club reports it cannot grow its adult section due to the lack of suitable pitches on site.
Wychall Wanderers Juniors FC	The Club reports it would like to increase demand but the lack of pitches is affecting its growth as well as recruiting enough coaches.

In addition to the above, eight of the responding clubs indicate that they could field more teams if given access to more or better ancillary provision. These are:

- ◀ Chelmsley Town FC
- ◀ Hockley Heath FC
- ◀ Kingshurst Pavilions Sports Club FC
- ◀ Knowle FC
- ◀ MKC Academy FC
- ◀ Olton Ravens FC
- ◀ Solihull Sporting FC
- ◀ Solihull Youth Academy FC

Some latent and unmet demand is also reported as a consequence of a lack of training capacity. This is further explored within Part 3 of this report.

Many providers of pitches also report high levels of unmet and latent demand in that they have waiting lists in place for access or because they are turning down usage enquiries due to a lack of capacity. Lighthall School, Lode Heath School, John Henry Newham Catholic College, Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst also report that their grass football pitches are operating at capacity for both internal and external use.

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### *Future demand*

Future demand can be defined in several ways, such as through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan document that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand for football that could come from housing development plans across the Borough.

### *Population growth*

Based on population projections to 2037 (in line with Solihull Local Plan Review), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from any growth. This is by using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, with team generation rates then established to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

In total, the calculator expects an additional 45 teams to be generated in Solihull through population growth alone.

Table 2.17: 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	Match equivalent session <sup>2</sup>
Adult Mens (18-45)	1:311	<b>10.17</b>	10	5
Adult Womens (18-45)	1:3,454	<b>0.94</b>	1	0.5
Youth Boys (12-17)	1:58	<b>8.72</b>	9	4.5
Youth Girls (12-17)	1:461	<b>1.02</b>	1	0.5
Youth Boys (10-11)	1:44	<b>6.33</b>	6	3
Youth Girls (10-11)	1:243	<b>1.02</b>	1	0.5
Mini Mixed (8-9)	1:53	<b>9.32</b>	9	4.5
Mini Mixed (6-7)	1:61	<b>7.86</b>	8	4

When used on analysis area basis, the growth is outlined in the table below. Each area has some form of projected increase, with the most found in the North Analysis Area.

Table 2.18: Future demand from population growth by analysis area in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	1	1	1	1	1	<b>5</b>
North	3	2.5	1.5	2	2	<b>11</b>
Rural	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	1	<b>6.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22.5</b>

### *Participation increases*

Based upon consultation respondents, 19 clubs' report aspirations to increase the number of teams that they provide. This equates to a predicted growth of 99 teams, broken down as 17 adult teams, 29 youth 11v11 teams, 24 youth 9v9 teams, 10 mini 7v7 teams and 19 mini 5v5 teams.

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

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 2.19: Future demand aspirations reported by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions
Arden Forest FC	North	2 x Men's	Adult	1
Arden Forest FC	North	2 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	1
Arden Forest FC	North	2 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	1
Arden Forest FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 7v7	1
Arden Forest FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Balsall & Berkswell Hornets FC	Rural	2 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	1
Castle Bromwich Spitfires FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	1 x Men's	Adult	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	1 x Women's	Adult	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	2 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	1
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	2 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	1
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	1 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	1 x Mini	Mini 7v7	0.5
Chelmsley Colts FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Coldland Colts FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Glades FC	North	1 x Men's	Adult	0.5
Glades FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Hockley Heath FC	Rural	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Kingshurst Pavilions Sports Club FC	North	1 x Women's	Adult	0.5
Kingshurst Pavilions Sports Club FC	North	1 x Mini	Mini 7v7	0.5
Kingshurst Pavilions Sports Club FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Knowle FC	North	1 x Women's	Adult	0.5
Knowle FC	North	1 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	0.5
Knowle FC	North	1 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	0.5
Knowle FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 7v7	1
Knowle FC	North	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Leaffield Athletic FC	Rural	1 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Leaffield Athletic FC	Rural	1 x Mini	Mini 7v7	0.5
Leaffield Athletic FC	Rural	1 x Mini	Mini 5v5	0.5
Leaffield Athletic Ladies FC	Rural	1 x Women's	Adult	0.5
Leaffield Athletic Ladies FC	Rural	2 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	1
Leaffield Athletic Ladies FC	Rural	2 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	1
Marston Green Minor FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Marston Green Minor FC	North	2 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	1
Marston Green Minor FC	North	1 x Mini	Mini 7v7	0.5
MKC Academy FC	North	1 x Men's	Adult	0.5
MKC Academy FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Meriden Lions FC	Rural	1 x Mini	Mini 5v5	0.5
Olton Ravens FC	Central	1 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Olton Ravens FC	Central	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Olton Ravens FC	Central	1 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	1
Olton Ravens FC	Central	2 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	1
Olton Ravens FC	Central	2 x Mini	Mini 7v7	1
Olton Ravens FC	Central	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Pudding FC	North	1 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	0.5

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Club	Analysis area	Future demand	Pitch size	Match equivalent sessions
Silhill FC	Central	1 x Mens	Adult	0.5
Silhill FC	Central	3 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	1.5
Silhill FC	Central	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Solihull FC	Rural	1 x Mens	Adult	0.5
Solihull FC	Rural	1 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Solihull FC	Rural	1 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	0.5
Solihull FC	Rural	1 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	0.5
Solihull Sporting FC	North	3 x Mens	Adult	1.5
Solihull Sporting FC	North	2 x Women's	Adult	1
Solihull Sporting FC	North	2 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	1
Solihull Sporting FC	North	4 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	2
Solihull Sporting FC	North	1 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Solihull Sporting FC	North	1 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	0.5
Solihull Sporting FC	North	1 x Mini	Mini 5v5	0.5
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	1 x Men's	Adult	0.5
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	1 x Youth boys	Youth 9v9	0.5
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	2 x Youth boys	Youth 11v11	1
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	1 x Youth girls	Youth 9v9	0.5
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	2 x Youth girls	Youth 11v11	1
Solihull Youth Academy	Central	2 x Mini	Mini 5v5	1
Woodbourne Sports FC	Rural	1 x Mini	Mini 5v5	0.5

The total future demand reported by clubs amounts to 49.5 match equivalent sessions per week, which is a significant total. This is broken down by analysis area and pitch type in the table below.

Table 2.20: Summary of future demand expressed by clubs in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Central	1	5	2.5	1	3	<b>12.5</b>
North	6.5	7.5	6	3.5	5.5	<b>29</b>
Rural	1	2	3.5	0.5	1	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>49.5</b>

### *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, it is considered unfeasible for all future demand to be factored in. This is because it is likely that club aspirations will absorb the future demand identified through population growth, rather than them being judged separately and therefore double counted. As such, only demand identified through population growth is taken forward, with club demand considered to be more theoretical and aspirational.

Notwithstanding the above, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain a scenario that will consider the impact if clubs aspirations are realised.



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## 2.4: Supply and demand 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 affects 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 current quality. Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity, the following ratings were used in Solihull:

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

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

### **Match equivalent sessions**

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

### **Education sites**

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches, the current usage of such sites needs 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 (as this can result in less grass pitch use).

In some cases, where there is no identified community use, there is little capacity to accommodate further play. Internal usage often exceeds recommended pitch capacity, which is further exacerbated by basic maintenance regimes that may not extend beyond grass cutting and line marking. As such, where not overplayed as a result of community use, many school sites are considered to have no spare capacity to accommodate further usage based on assumed curricular and extra-curricular activity.

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

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### **Informal use**

A number of football pitches in Solihull are on open access sites, especially those managed by the Council. This often results in informal use in the form of, for example, unorganised sport (including football) and exercise groups. However, such use is not recorded and is difficult to quantify. It is, thus, simply recommended that open access sites be protected via improved maintenance regimes and reduced capacity.

### **Peak time**

Spare capacity can only be considered as actual spare capacity if pitches are available at peak time. In Solihull, peak time is considered to be Sunday AM for all pitch types.

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

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

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

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

The way actual spare capacity is represented in Table 2.21 is as follows:

<b>Spare capacity in peak period (examples)</b>	<b>Explanation of spare capacity</b>
1	If the cell is highlighted in green with a number, it means that the pitches have actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	If the cell has a dash in it, this means that the pitch is unavailable at peak time. If it was available, actual spare capacity could exist.
0	If the cell has a 0 in it, this means that the pitch is played to capacity, either overall or during the peak period.
1	If the cell has a number in it but is not highlighted, it means the pitch has spare capacity in the peak period; however, this is discounted. This is most commonly due to unsecure tenure and/or poor pitch quality.

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Table 2.21: Grass football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Type of tenure	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Available for community use?	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity (match sessions)	Overused (+), At Capacity (/) or Potential to Accommodate additional play (-)	Spare capacity available in peak period (match sessions)	Comments
1	Alderbrook School	Central	B91 2SN	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	No	Standard	1	-	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use
1	Alderbrook School	Central	B91 2SN	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	No	Standard	1	-	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use
1	Alderbrook School	Central	B91 2SN	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	No	Standard	3	-	12	-	-	Unavailable for community use
3	Arden Academy Grass Pitches	Rural	B93 0PT	Unsecure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
3	Arden Academy Grass Pitches	Rural	B93 0PT	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
3	Arden Academy Grass Pitches	Rural	B93 0PT	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
4	Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club)	Central	B92 9EJ	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	CV7 7BN	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	CV7 7BN	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Good	2	3	8	5	2	Actual spare capacity
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	CV7 7BN	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Good	1	3.5	4	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	CV7 7BN	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	2	2.5	4	1.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	CV7 7BN	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
8	Barn Lane Recreation Ground	Central	B92 7NA	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	2	0.5	2	1.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
10	Bentley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B93 9BQ	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	2	1.5	2	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
10	Bentley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B93 9BQ	Secure	Council	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
14	Bluebell Recreation Ground	North	B37 6SS	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	3	2	3	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	B36 9EY	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	B36 9EY	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	2	1.5	4	2.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	B36 9EY	Secure	Council	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	B36 9EY	Secure	Council	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	2	4	2	1	Actual spare capacity
19	Chadwick End Football Pitch	Rural	B93 0BL	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	B37 7HW	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	B37 7HW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0.5	Actual spare capacity

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PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Type of tenure	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Available for community use?	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity (match sessions)	Overused (+), At Capacity (!) or Potential to Accommodate additional play (-)	Spare capacity available in peak period (match sessions)	Comments
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	B37 7HW	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	1.5	4	2.5	1	Actual spare capacity
22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	North	B37 7NS	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	4	2	2	0	Overplayed
22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	North	B37 7NS	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	North	B37 7NS	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
23	Cheswick Green Primary School	Rural	B90 4HG	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
25	Coldlands Park	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed
25	Coldlands Park	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0	Overplayed
25	Coldlands Park	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	2.5	4	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
25	Coldlands Park	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	2	2	8	6	2	Actual spare capacity
26	Colebrook Recreation Ground	Central	B90 1BF	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	2	1	1	0	Overplayed
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	B94 9NA	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0	Overplayed
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	2	1	4	3	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
29	Dorridge Primary School	Rural	B93 8EU	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	3	2	1	0	Overplayed
29	Dorridge Primary School	Rural	B93 8EU	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	-	Played to capacity
31	Elmdon Heath Recreation Ground	Central	B92 9JS	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	5	5	5	0	-	Played to capacity
32	Elmdon Park	Central	B92 9EY	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
33	Eversfield Preparatory School	Central	B91 1AT	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	No	Standard	1	-	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use
33	Eversfield Preparatory School	Central	B91 1AT	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Good	2	3.5	6	2.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Good	1	4	4	0	-	Played to capacity
34	Field Lane (Hampton Football Club)	North	B91 2RT	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Good	1	5	6	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	B91 2RX	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Good	1	3	3	0	-	Played to capacity
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	B91 2RX	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	3	2	1	0	Overplayed

**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Type of tenure	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Available for community use?	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity (match sessions)	Overused (+), At Capacity (/) or Potential to Accommodate additional play (-)	Spare capacity available in peak period (match sessions)	Comments
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	B91 2RX	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	-	Played to capacity
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	B91 2RX	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Good	1	2.5	6	3.5	1	Actual spare capacity
36	Glades Football Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	B91 2RX	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Good	1	2.5	6	3.5	1	Actual spare capacity
37	Grace Academy Solihull	North	B37 5JS	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	-	Played to capacity
37	Grace Academy Solihull	North	B37 5JS	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	-	Played to capacity
37	Grace Academy Solihull	North	B37 5JS	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	-	Played to capacity
38	Greswold Primary School	Central	B91 2AZ	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Poor	2	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
42	Haslucks Green Junior School	Central	B90 2EJ	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
42	Haslucks Green Junior School	Central	B90 2EJ	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
45	Heart of England School Pitches	Rural	CV7 7FW	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes- unused	Poor	1	1	1	0	-	Played to capacity
45	Heart of England School Pitches	Rural	CV7 7FW	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes- unused	Poor	1	1	1	0	-	Played to capacity
46	Heath Park	North	B37 6TB	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
47	Highgate United Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	2	2.5	4	1.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
47	Highgate United Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
47	Highgate United Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	0	4	4	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
47	Highgate United Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	1	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
48	Hillfield Park	Central	B90 4UJ	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
49	Hockley Heath Academy	Rural	B94 6RA	Secure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B94 6HH	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B94 6HH	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B94 6HH	Secure	Council	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B94 6HH	Secure	Council	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	2	4	2	0	Played to capacity at peak time
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	B94 6HH	Secure	Council	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity
51	Holly Lane	Rural	CV7 7EA	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes-unused	Poor	1	0	1	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	B37 5GA	Secure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Good	1	3	3	0	0	Played to capacity

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Type of tenure	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Available for community use?	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity (match sessions)	Overused (+), At Capacity (/) or Potential to Accommodate additional play (-)	Spare capacity available in peak period (match sessions)	Comments
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	B37 5GA	Secure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes	Good	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	B37 5GA	Secure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes	Good	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	B37 5GA	Secure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Good	1	6	6	0	0	Played to capacity
53	Kingshurst Primary School	North	B37 6BN	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
57	Knowle C of E Primary School	Rural	B93 0JE	Unsecure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	2	1	1	0	Overplayed
59	Lanchester Park	North	B36 9LP	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
60	Langley Primary School	Central	B92 7DJ	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
61	Langley School	Central	B92 7ER	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
61	Langley School	Central	B92 7ER	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
62	Leaffield Athletic Football Club (Rumbush Lane)	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
62	Leaffield Athletic Football Club (Rumbush Lane)	Rural	B94 5NA	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	3	1	2	0	Overplayed
63	Leaffield Athletic Football Club (Tythe Barn Lane)	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
63	Leaffield Athletic Football Club (Tythe Barn Lane)	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	2	3	8	5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
63	Leaffield Athletic Football Club (Tythe Barn Lane)	Rural	B90 1PH	Unsecure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	2.5	4	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
64	Light Hall School	Central	B90 2PZ	Unsecure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
65	Lode Heath School	Central	B91 2HW	Unsecure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
65	Lode Heath School	Central	B91 2HW	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
66	Lyndon Playing Fields	Central	B92 7QB	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	2	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity
67	Lyndon School	Central	B92 8EJ	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	No	Standard	1	-	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use
67	Lyndon School	Central	B92 8EJ	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	No	Standard	1	-	2	-	-	Unavailable for community use
67	Lyndon School	Central	B92 8EJ	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
67	Lyndon School	Central	B92 8EJ	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	No	Standard	3	-	12	-	-	Unavailable for community use
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	B37 7EX	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	2	1	1	0	Overplayed
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	B37 7EX	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	B37 7EX	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	1	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	B37 7EX	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	2.5	2	0.5	0	Overplayed
70	Marston Green Junior School	North	B37 7BA	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	2	-	8	-	-	Unavailable for community use

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Type of tenure	Management	Pitch type	Pitch size	Available for community use?	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity (match sessions)	Overused (+), At Capacity (/) or Potential to Accommodate additional play (-)	Spare capacity available in peak period (match sessions)	Comments
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	B37 7ER	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	B37 7ER	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	2	0.5	4	3.5	2	Actual spare capacity
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	B37 7ER	Secure	Council	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	B37 7ER	Secure	Council	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	2.5	4	1.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
73	Meriden C of E Primary School	Rural	CV7 7LW	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	CV7 7SP	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	3	2	1	0	Overplayed
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	CV7 7SP	Secure	Council	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity
76	Mill Lodge Primary School	Central	B90 1BT	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	B90 3PE	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0	Overplayed
80	Oak Cottage Primary School	Central	B91 1DY	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Good	1	-	6	-	-	Unavailable for community use
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	B90 1PW	Unsecure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes-unused	Standard	1	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
83	Olton Jubilee Park	Central	B92 8QE	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes-unused	Poor	1	0	1	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
86	Palmers Rough Recreation Ground	Central	B90 3LW	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
86	Palmers Rough Recreation Ground	Central	B90 3LW	Secure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes-unused	Poor	1	0	1	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
87	Park Hall Academy	North	B36 9HF	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Good	4	12	12	0	0	Played to capacity
89	Peterbrook Primary School	Central	B90 1HR	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Rural	B93 0NX	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Good	1	4	3	1	0	Overplayed
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Rural	B93 0NX	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Good	1	2.5	6	3.5	1	Actual spare capacity
92	Sharman's Cross Junior School	Central	B91 1PH	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
92	Sharman's Cross Junior School	Central	B91 1PH	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes-unused	Poor	2	1	4	3	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
93	Shirley Heath Junior School	Central	B90 3DS	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes-unused	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
94	Shirley Park	Central	B90 3GF	Secure	Council	Adult	-	Yes-unused	Poor	1	0	1	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
95	Shirley Town Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Good	1	1	3	2	1	Actual spare capacity
96	Silhill Football Club	Central	B91 1RQ	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
96	Silhill Football Club	Central	B91 1RQ	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	2.5	1	1.5	0	Overplayed
96	Silhill Football Club	Central	B91 1RQ	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	0	2	2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B93 9LW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	6.5	2	4.5	0	Overplayed
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B93 9LW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	2	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity

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97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B93 9LW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B93 9LW	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	2	2.5	4	1.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B93 9LW	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	2	5.5	4	1.5	0	Overplayed
99	Smith's Wood Playing Field	North	B36 0UG	Unsecure	Council	Adult	-	Yes-unused	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
99	Smith's Wood Playing Field	North	B36 0UG	Unsecure	Council	Youth	11v11	Yes- unused	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
102	Solihull College (Woodlands Campus)	North	B36 0NF	Unsecure	College	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	1	1	0	0	Played to capacity
104	Tanworth Lane Sports Ground	Central	B90 4BY	Secure	Private	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
104	Tanworth Lane Sports Ground	Central	B90 4BY	Secure	Private	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity
104	Tanworth Lane Sports Ground	Central	B90 4BY	Secure	Private	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	1	4	3	1	Actual spare capacity
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	B91 3LE	Secure	Commercial	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	1	0.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
106	Solihull School	Central	B91 3DJ	Unsecure	School	Adult	-	Yes- unused	Good	1	3	3	0	0	Played to capacity
106	Solihull School	Central	B91 3DJ	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes- unused	Good	2	8	8	0	0	Played to capacity
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	Central	B91 3WR	Unsecure	College	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
109	St Augustine's Primary School	Central	B91 3NZ	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	1	4	3	2	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
110	St John The Baptist Catholic Primary School	North	B36 0QE	Unsecure	School	Mini	7v7	No	Standard	1	-	4	-	-	Unavailable for community use
113	St Patrick's CE Academy	Rural	B94 6DE	Unsecure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	1	2	1	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	B92 9LN	Unsecure	Industry Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	2	3	2	1	0	Overplayed
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	B92 9LN	Unsecure	Industry Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Standard	1	1.5	2	0.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	B92 9LN	Unsecure	Industry Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	2	2	0	0	Played to capacity
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	B92 9LN	Unsecure	Industry Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	2	4.5	8	3.5	0	Played to capacity at peak time
117	The Pavilions	North	B37 6BU	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Good	1	2	3	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
117	The Pavilions	North	B37 6BU	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Good	1	5	2	3	0	Overplayed
117	The Pavilions	North	B37 6BU	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Good	1	1.5	6	4.5	1	Actual spare capacity
117	The Pavilions	North	B37 6BU	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Good	2	0.5	12	11.5	2	Actual spare capacity
118	Tippetts Field	Central	B91 2PF	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity
118	Tippetts Field	Central	B91 2PF	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	0	2	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	North	B37 6NU	Secure	School	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	2	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity



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119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	North	B37 6NU	Secure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	North	B37 6NU	Secure	School	Mini	5v5	Yes	Standard	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	B91 3PD	Secure	School	Adult	-	Yes-unused	Good	1	3	3	0	0	Played to capacity
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	B91 3PD	Secure	School	Youth	11v11	Yes-unused	Good	1	4	4	0	0	Played to capacity
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	B91 3PD	Secure	School	Mini	7v7	Yes-unused	Good	1	6	6	0	0	Played to capacity
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	Central	B91 1NB	Secure	Commercial	Adult	-	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
125	Windy Arbour Primary School	North	B37 6RN	Unsecure	School	Youth	9v9	Yes-unused	Standard	1	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	B94 5LW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	11v11	Yes	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	0	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	B94 5LW	Secure	Sports Club	Youth	9v9	Yes	Standard	1	1	2	1	0	Played to capacity at peak time
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	B94 5LW	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	7v7	Yes	Poor	1	1	2	3	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	B94 5LW	Secure	Sports Club	Mini	5v5	Yes	Poor	1	0	2	4	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality
127	Wychall Wanderers Football Club	Rural	B90 1PH	Secure	Sports Club	Adult	-	Yes	Poor	2	3.5	2	1.5	0	Overplayed

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Actual spare capacity

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch type across Solihull. It totals 29.5 match equivalent sessions and is identified across 28 pitches at 17 sites.

Table 2.22: Actual (peak time) spare capacity site by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	Youth (11v11)	2	2
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
19	Chadwick End Football Pitch	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	1
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	Mini (5v5)	1	1
25	Coldlands Park	North	Mini (5v5)	2	2
26	Colebrook Recreation Ground	Central	Adult	1	1
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	Mini (5v5)	1	1
36	Glades Football (Lugtrout Lane)	North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
36	Glades Football (Lugtrout Lane)	North	Mini (5v5)	1	1
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Adult	1	1
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	1
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Youth (9v9)	1	1
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Mini (5v5)	1	1
66	Lyndon Playing Fields	Central	Adult	2	2
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	Youth (11v11)	1	2
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	Mini (7v7)	1	1
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Rural	Mini (5v5)	1	1
95	Shirley Town Football Club	Rural	Adult	1	1
104	Tanworth Lane Sports Ground	Central	Youth (9v9)	1	1
104	Tanworth Lane Sports Ground	Central	Mini (7v7)	1	1
117	The Pavilions	North	Mini (7v7)	1	1
117	The Pavilions	North	Mini (5v5)	1	2
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Adult	1	1
<b>Total</b>					<b>29.5</b>

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Actual spare capacity is broken down by analysis area and pitch type in the table below. As seen, most actual spare capacity is located on mini 5v5 pitches and in the North Analysis Area. However, each pitch type and each analysis area has some level identified.

Table 2.23: Actual spare capacity summary

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central	4	-	1	1	-
North	-	2	0.5	4	6
Rural	2	4	1	1	3
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

### Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it can sustain (based on its quality rating), which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of pitches. In Solihull, 24 pitches across 17 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 27 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 2.24: Overplay site-by-site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
21	Chelmsley Town Football Club	North	Adult	1	0.5
22	Chelmsley Onward Squash Club	North	Adult	1	2
25	Coldlands Park	North	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
25	Coldlands Park	North	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	Adult	1	1
28	Dickens Heath Sports Club	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5
29	Dorridge Primary School	Rural	Mini (7v7)	1	1
36	Glades Football (Lugtrout Lane)	North	Youth (11v11)	1	1
57	Knowle C of E Primary School	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	1
62	Leafield Athletic FC (Rumbush Lane)	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	2
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	Youth (11v11)	1	1
69	Marston Green Football Club	North	Mini (5v5)	1	0.5
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	Adult	1	1
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Adult	1	0.5
90	Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club)	Rural	Adult	1	1
96	Silhill Football Club	Central	Adult	1	1.5
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	Youth (11v11)	1	4.5
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	Mini (5v5)	2	1.5
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	Adult	2	1
117	The Pavilions	North	Youth (11v11)	1	3
127	Wychall Wanderers Football Club	Rural	Adult	2	1.5

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
<b>Total</b>					<b>27</b>

Overplay is broken down by analysis area and pitch type in the following table. The highest level of overplay is identified on youth 11v11 pitches (13.5 match equivalent sessions) and adult pitches (10 match equivalent sessions) and in the Rural Analysis Area (14 match equivalent sessions).

Table 2.25: Overplay summary

Analysis area	Overplay (match sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Central	3	-	-	-	-
North	2.5	5.5	0.5	-	0.5
Rural	4.5	8	-	1	1.5
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

## 2.5: Conclusion

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

In order to give an accurate representation of future demand, only future growth from population increases has been considered in the supply and demand analysis below. This, however, cannot be accredited to individual analysis areas and as a result has been accredited to the overall capacity for each pitch type within Solihull.

### **Adult pitch capacity**

The table above shows that there is a current shortfall of adult pitch capacity amounting to four match equivalent sessions per week. The shortfalls are evident in the North and Rural analysis areas, whilst there is some spare pitch capacity in the Central Analysis Area.

When considering future demand from population growth, the overall shortfall increases to 9.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Spare capacity in the Central Analysis Area is eliminated, whilst shortfalls in the North and Rural analysis areas increase.

Table 2.26: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	4	3	1	1	0
North	-	2.5	2.5	3	5.5
Rural	2	4.5	2.5	1.5	4
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

### ***Youth 11v11 pitch capacity***

There is a current shortfall of youth 11v11 pitch capacity amounting to 7.5 match equivalent sessions. The shortfalls are evident in the North and Rural analysis areas, with the Central Analysis Area played to capacity.

When factoring in future demand, the overall shortfall increases to 12.5 match equivalent sessions per week and a shortfall exists in each analysis area.

Table 2.27: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	-	0	1	1
North	2	5.5	3.5	2.5	6
Rural	4	8	4	1.5	5.5
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12.5</b>

### ***Youth 9v9 pitch capacity***

Overall, the current picture shows that there is spare capacity on youth 9v9 pitches amounting to 2 match equivalent sessions per week. Spare capacity is evident in the Central and Rural analysis areas, with the North Analysis Area played to capacity.

When factoring in future demand, a shortfall is established amounting to 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is due solely to demand in the North Analysis Area.

Table 2.28: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	1	-	1	1	0
North	0.5	0.5	0	1.5	1.5
Rural	1	-	1	1	0
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>

### ***Mini 7v7 pitch capacity***

Mini 7v7 pitches have overall spare capacity across all analysis areas amounting to five match equivalent sessions per week.

When considering future demand, spare capacity reduces but still remains with this equating to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. However, a shortfall is created in the Rural Analysis Area.

Table 2.29: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	1	-	1	1	0
North	4	-	4	2	2
Rural	1	1	0	1.5	1.5
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## *Mini 5v5 pitch capacity*

Similar to mini 7v7 pitches, mini 5v5 provision has spare capacity amounting to seven match equivalent sessions.

As for future demand, spare capacity reduces but some still remains with this equating to three match equivalent sessions per week. However, a shortfall is created in the Central Analysis Area.

Table 2.30: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	-	0	1	1
North	6	0.5	5.5	2	3.5
Rural	3	1.5	1.5	1	0.5
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

## *Overall supply and demand*

Using the supply and demand tables above, the table below summarises the overall Solihull supply and demand balance by pitch type.

Table 2.31: Summary of supply and demand

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions per week				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult	6	10	4	5.5	9.5
Youth 11v11	6	13.5	7.5	5	12.5
Youth 9v9	2.5	0.5	2	3.5	1.5
Mini 7v7	6	1	5	4.5	0.5
Mini 5v5	9	2	7	4	3

It is determined that there is currently a shortfall of adult and youth 11v11 pitch capacity, with spare capacity on youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches. When factoring in future demand, shortfalls worsen on adult and youth 11v11 pitches and are created on youth 9v9 pitches. Spare capacity still remains on the mini pitches despite being reduced.

## *Changes since the previous study*

When compared to the findings of the last update, there is now a larger shortfall of youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches, whilst a shortfall of adult pitches has been created. Spare capacity still remains on the mini pitches, despite it being reduced.

When comparing future demand, shortfalls are larger on adult pitches, but smaller on youth 11v11 and 9v9 pitches. Spare capacity still exists on mini 7v7 provision, but is smaller than the 2019 study, whilst there is greater actual spare capacity on mini 5v5 pitches. However, a direct comparison for future demand should not be drawn as growth from both population increases and club aspirations were previously considered, whereas due to a change in methodology only population growth is now factored in at this stage.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 2.36: Supply and demand comparison to previous PPS update (2019)

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
	2019 current total	2023 current total	2019 future total	2023 future total
Adult	0.5	4	7	9.5
Youth 11v11	7	7.5	17	12.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	2	5.5	1.5
Mini 7v7	6	5	3	0.5
Mini 5v5	2.5	7	1.5	3

### Football – supply and demand summary

- Actual spare capacity totals 29.5 match equivalent sessions per week across 28 pitches, whereas 24 pitches across 17 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 27 match equivalent sessions per week.
- There is a current shortfall of adult and youth 11v11 pitch capacity, with overall spare capacity identified on youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches.
- When factoring in future demand, shortfalls worsen on adult and youth 11v11 pitches and are created on youth 9v9 pitches. Although, the spare capacity on the mini pitches remain despite being reduced.

### Football – supply summary

- The audit identifies a total of 211 grass football pitches within Solihull across 81 sites, with 185 pitches available, at some level, for community use across 69 sites.
- There are three disused sites that previously accommodated grass football pitches but are no longer marked out (Babbs Mill Park, Meriden Park and Rowood Drive).
- The Solihull Mitigation Strategy outlines sites potentially impacted upon by development allocations, with this relating particularly to Highgate United Football Club, Wychall Wanderers Football Club, Old Yardleians Rugby Club, Robin's Nest (Knowle Football Club) and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club.
- Most community available pitches across Solihull are managed by sports clubs (89 pitches), followed by pitches at education sites (50) and at Council sites (44).
- Of the pitches that are available for community use, 32 are assessed as good quality, 87 as standard quality and 66 as poor quality.
- Castle Bromwich Playing Fields, Coldlands Park, Meriden Sports Park, The Pavilions and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club are serviced by poor quality ancillary provision, whilst nine sites are without appropriate facilities.
- Two clubs play within the men's National League System and four clubs play within the Women's National League System; these have to adhere to ground grading requirements.

### Football – demand summary

- There are 531 teams from within 85 clubs are identified as currently playing within Solihull, with this equating to 119 adult men's, 11 adult women's, 179 youth boys, 21 youth girls and 201 mini (mixed) teams.
- There has been a large increase in demand since 2019, with 53 additional teams now identified.
- Leafield Athletic Ladies FC, Solihull Moors Foundation FC and Craven Athletic FC all export demand outside of Solihull.
- A total of 14 clubs identify latent and/or unmet in that they express they could field more teams if they had more capacity.
- Future demand from population growth projects an increase of 45 teams, whilst a total of 19 clubs quantify growth aspirations, with this amounting to 99 teams.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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

#### 3.1: Introduction

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

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

Competitive rugby league play and contact practice is permitted to take place on 3G pitches which are deemed by the Rugby Football League (RFL) to meet its Performance Standard. Pitches fall under two categories; community club pitches which require retesting every two years and elite stadia pitches which require an annual retest. Much of the criteria within the RFL performance standard test also forms part of the World Rugby test, meaning World Rugby certified 3G pitches are considered by the RFL to be able to meet rugby league requirements, subject to passing an additional RFL performance standard test.

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

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

#### 3.2: Supply

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

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

Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPOSS for any new 3G artificial grass pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions.



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Based on the above specification, there are six full size 3G pitches in Solihull across six sites. All the pitches, five are sports lit (the one at Páirc na hÉireann is not) and they are all available for community use, as summarised in the following table.

Table 3.1: Summary of full size 3G pitches in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)	FA registered?
4	Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club)	B92 9EJ	Central	Yes	Yes	100 x 70	Yes
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	B37 5GA	North	Yes	Yes	106 x 71	Yes
85	Páirc na hÉireann	B92 0DB	Central	Yes	No	120 x 70	No
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	B37 7NU	North	Yes	Yes	106 x 71	Yes
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	Yes	Yes	106 x 71	Yes
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	B91 1NB	Central	Yes	Yes	100 x 60	No

Of the pitches, four are located in the Central Analysis Area and two in the North Analysis Area. No pitches are provided in the Rural Analysis Area.

Table 3.2: Summary of the number of full size 3G pitches by analysis area

Analysis area	Full size pitches available for community use
Central	4
North	2
Rural	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

As well as the full size pitches, there are also two smaller sized 3G pitches across two sites in Solihull. Both of these are available for community use but are not serviced by sports lighting.

Table 3.3: Additional supply of 3G provision

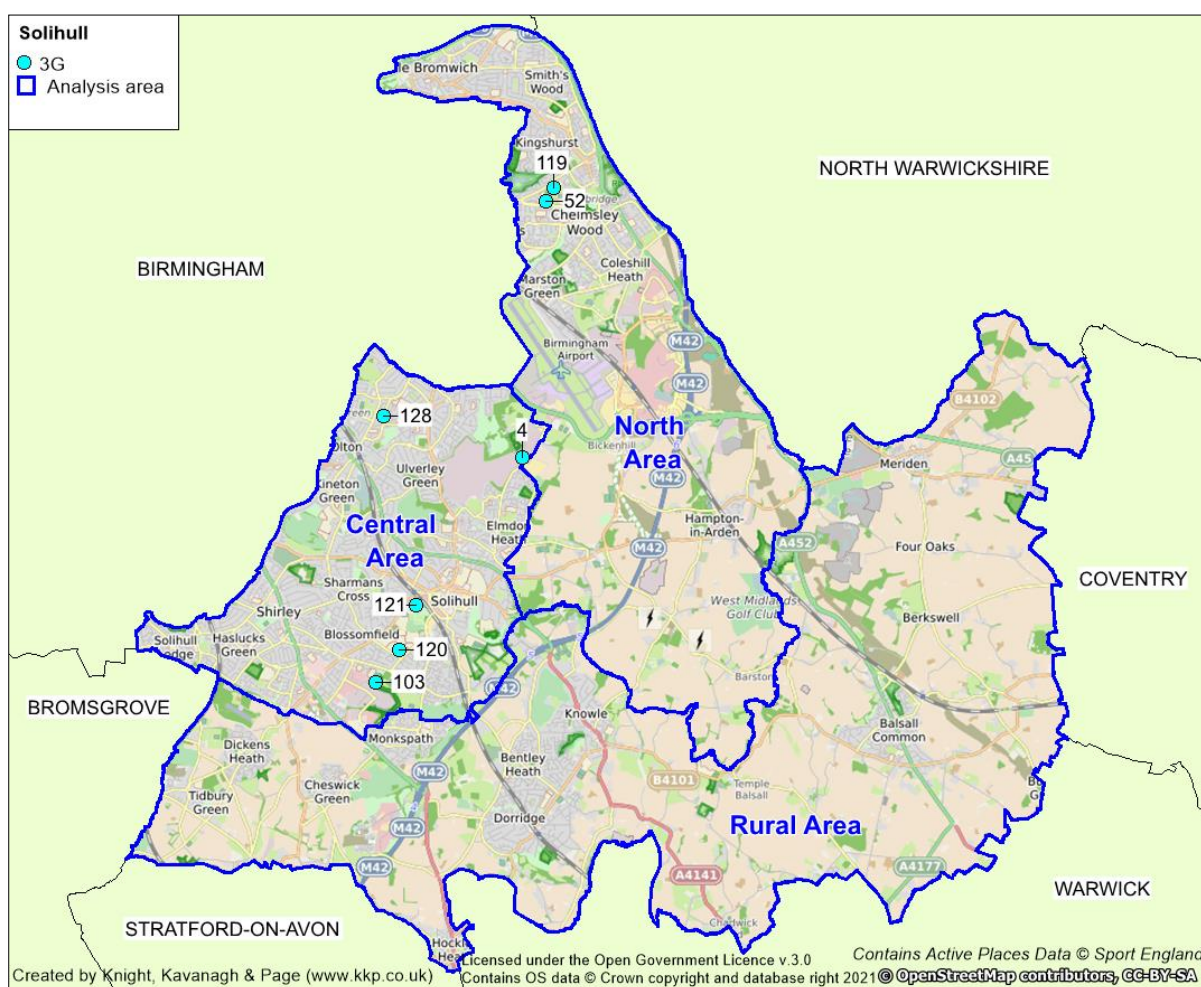
Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)
103	Solihull Football Centre	B91 3LD	Central	Yes	No	38 x 31
128	Olton Primary School	B92 7QF	Central	Yes	No	37 x 27

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Whilst not large enough to accommodate adult match play, smaller sized provision can be used to accommodate youth and mini matches, in addition to training demand, providing that they are on the FA Pitch Register, of an adequate size and with appropriate run-off areas. The FA's recommended pitch size for youth football varies from 91 x 55 metres to 73 x 46 metres depending on age, whilst it is 55 x 37 metres for mini 7v7 play and 37 x 27 metres for mini 5v5 play.

Figure 3.1 below identifies the location of all 3G pitches in Solihull, regardless of size.

Figure 3.1: Location of 3G AGPs in Solihull



## **Changes since the previous study**

Compared to the previous study, which was last updated in 2019, there has been an increase of two full size 3G pitches and one smaller sized 3G pitch in Solihull. This is due to developments at Tudor Grange Academy Solihull, Páirc na hÉireann and Olton Primary School.

## **Future provision**

The Solihull Mitigation Strategy identifies that new full size 3G pitches could be provided as part of mitigation packages for several sites subject to allocation in the Local Plan Review. Specifically, it references that provision could be suitable as part of the relocation of Wychall Wanderers FC, Highgate United FC and Old Yardleians RUFC, whilst a full size 3G pitch is also proposed as part of the relocation of Knowle FC.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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As mentioned in Part 2 of this report, Site Allocation 20 in the emerging Local Plan could impact on Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club). If this occurs, any mitigation will need to ensure that a full size 3G pitch is re-provided.

Away from the Mitigation Strategy, an emerging feasibility study in relation to North Solihull Sports Centre identifies that the site is suitable for the creation of a full size 3G pitch as part of a wider development. This would be in replacement of the sand-based pitch which is not required for hockey.

A planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm for the development of sports pitches, with this including plans for a 3G pitch with sports lighting. The site is primarily for Gaelic football currently (although over marked rugby union and football pitches are also proposed). The planning application indicates that the intention is to be for football use only, although an exact programme of use is unclear at this moment in time.

Langley School, St Peter's Catholic School and Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst all have aspirations for the development of 3G pitches. For the latter, this is in addition to its existing pitch as its current provision is operating at capacity. It states that it is regularly having to turn away clubs due to this.

Coldlands Colts FC reports that it is in discussions with the Council regarding a proposal for two 3G pitches at Coldlands Park to replace two of its grass pitches. A new pavilion and additional car parking is also being proposed.

Silhillians Sports Club has aspiration to develop a full size 3G pitch at its site (in addition to refurbishing its sand-based pitch). It identifies that the pitch could be used to transfer demand away from the grass football and rugby union pitches.

Consultation with Langley Primary School has found that it has aspiration for a full size 3G pitch and has partnership funding in place. Similarly, the Football Foundation and Birmingham FA report that Lode Heath School has also ambitions to install a full size 3G pitch.

### ***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 3G Pitch Register, which can be found at: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>.

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

To remain accredited, pitches must be re-assessed every three years to ensure that quality has not deteriorated beyond acceptable levels, although this is required annually for clubs using 3G pitches within the football pyramid (steps 1-6).

In Solihull, the full size 3G pitches at Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club), John Henry Newham Catholic College, Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst and Tudor Grange Academy Solihull are all FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive matches. The full size pitches at Páirc na hÉireann and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre are not on the register.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

The smaller sized pitch at Olton Primary School is also FA approved. It is large enough for mini 5v5 play.

Table 3.4: Summary of pitches on the FA register

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Size (metres)	Registered?	Certification expiry
4	Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club)	Central	100 x 70	Yes	31/05/2023
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	106 x 71	Yes	31/05/2026
85	Páirc na hÉireann	Central	120 x 70	No	-
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	North	106 x 71	Yes	31/05/2025
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	106 x 71	Yes	31/05/2026
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	Central	100 x 60	No	-
103	Solihull Football Centre	Central	38 x 31	No	-
128	Olton Primary School	Central	37 x 27	Yes	31/05/2026

### **World Rugby compliant pitches**

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

The specification 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.

In Solihull, there are no World Rugby compliant pitches. However, future proposals/aspirations highlighted above for Old Yardleians RUFC and at Silhillians Sports Club would need to be compliant if they came to fruition.

### **Management**

For the full size provision, the pitches at John Henry Newham Catholic College, Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst and Tudor Grange Academy Solihull are managed internally by the schools themselves.

The pitch at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre is managed by Everyone Active on behalf of the Council and the pitch at Armco Arena is managed by Solihull Moors FC. The pitch at Páirc na hÉireann is managed by the GAA.

Of the smaller sized pitches, the pitch at Olton Primary School is managed by the School and the pitch at Solihull Football Centre is managed by a commercial operator.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Availability (opening hours)

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). Using this, the opening hours at each site with a full size pitch is summarised in the table below, based on there being a potential of 18 hours of peak time availability during midweek and 16 hours at weekend.

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

Table 3.5: Summary of full size 3G pitch opening hours in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Availability (opening hours)	Midweek opening hours in the peak period (hours)	Weekend opening hours in the peak period (hours)
4	Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club)	Central	Everyday until 23:00	18	16
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	Monday-Friday 18:00 to 21:00 Saturday-Sunday 09:00 to 18:00	14	16
85	Páirc na hÉireann	Central	All day everyday, although this is limited by the lack of sports lighting.	18	16
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	North	Monday-Friday 16:00 to 21:00 Saturday-Sunday 09:00 to 18:00	18	16
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	Monday-Friday 18:00 to 22:00 Saturday-Sunday 09:00-15:30	13	12.5
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	Central	Monday, Wednesday and Friday 06:00 to 21:00 Tuesday and Thursday 07:00 to 21:00 Saturday 08:00 to 19:00 Sunday 08:00 to 16:00	18	16

As seen, each pitch has relatively extensive opening hours, with the pitches at Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club), Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre open throughout the peak periods. However, it should be noted that even though the pitch at the Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club) is considered to be open throughout each day, there is minimal availability for external users due to the provision being heavily used by Solihull Moors FC and its Foundation.

Similarly, although the pitch at Páirc na hÉireann is theoretically open throughout the peak period, its actual availability is limited due to the lack of sports lighting. This especially limits demand in the winter and during midweek evenings.

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Both of the smaller size pitches, at Solihull Football Centre and Olton Primary School are also fully open during the peak period.

## **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.

In Solihull, the full size pitches at Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club), Páirc na hÉireann, Tudor Grange Academy Solihull and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre are all assessed as good quality. These have all been installed or refurbished in recent years and therefore have no significant issues.

The remaining pitches have been assessed as standard quality. They are all within their recommended lifespans.

Table 3.6: Age and quality of full size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site	Year installed/ resurfaced	Quality
4	Armco Arena	2019	Good
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	2016	Standard
85	Páirc na hÉireann	2022	Good
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	2015	Standard
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	2022	Good
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	2022	Good

The smaller size pitch at Solihull Football Centre is assessed as standard quality having been installed in 2017, whilst the pitch at Olton Primary School pitch was installed in 2022 and is assessed as good quality.

## **Ancillary facilities**

All 3G provision is accompanied by ancillary facilities that are considered adequate with no significant issues identified with regard to the provision, although as many pitches are located at school sites, changing rooms are generally not dedicated to the supply. Nevertheless, this is not considered to be a major issue given that most use is for training and recreational football, with users therefore tending to show up ready to play.

### **3.3: Demand**

Despite extensive opening hours, 3G pitches in Solihull are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months when grass pitches cannot be used for training or recreational demand (due to a lack of sports lighting). This applies not only to midweek capacity but also to weekend capacity on account of the four of the five full size being FIFA/FA approved to host competitive matches. In total, 132 affiliated teams are registered as using the provision for regular match play, which is a large number.

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Currently, it is considered that most of the community-based activity on 3G pitches is football related, with no usage from other sports identified through consultation, other than by Gaelic football, which is the primary sport at Páirc na hÉireann. Most of the capacity is being taken up by football clubs for training and match play purposes, although there is also a strong presence of recreational football activity taking place (e.g., via unaffiliated groups).

Tudor Grange Academy Solihull states that its 3G is fully booked and has no capacity to take on additional users, resulting in it regularly having to turn away demand. Silhill FC and Solihull Youth Academy FC are the anchor clubs attached to the site, with most of the training and competitive demand taken up by them, particularly during the week.

Similarly, Tudor Grange Kingshurst, Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and John Henry Newman College also all note issues with capacity, although each of these pitches do have some remaining availability on Saturday and Sunday afternoons for match play. Weekday evening sessions are fully booked all year round, meaning that sports clubs and other user groups are again having to be turned down on a regular basis.

The pitch at Armco Arena (Solihull Moors Football Club) is commonly used by football teams for training activity, particularly by Solihull Moors Foundation FC and Solihull Moors FC given that they operate the site. These collectively provide 47 teams and this takes up the majority of availability leaving little capacity outside of this.

Demand is further detailed in the table below on a site-by-site basis, with current usage compared against peak time availability for each full size pitch. For this, the hours of availability have been multiplied by four for midweek capacity based on most pitches being divided into quarters for training demand, with capacity then considered to exist if at least a quarter of a pitch is currently unused for at least a one-hour slot. Weekend availability is unaltered as full pitch hire is more likely to be required i.e., for adult and youth 11v11 match play.

Table 3.7: Summary of full size 3G pitch demand site-by-site

Site ID	Site name	Midweek peak period (hours)	Midweek usage (hours)	Weekend peak period (hours)	Weekend usage (hours)	Comments
4	Armco Arena	72	72	16	16	Reported to be operating at capacity
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	72	72	16	6	Used to capacity on weekdays, but eight slots remain at weekend.
85	Páirc na hÉireann	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Usage unknown but predominately used by Gaelic football demand.
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	72	72	16	8	Used to capacity on weekdays, but eight slots remain at weekends.
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	56	56	12.5	12.5	Used to capacity both midweek and weekends.
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	72	72	16	10	Used to capacity during midweek, but 10 slots remain at weekends.

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### ***Unmet/latent demand***

Significant unmet demand for 3G provision is expressed in Solihull, with 24 responding football clubs stating that additional pitches or additional pitch capacity is required to meet training requirements. Collectively, these clubs provide over 100 teams, which is a considerable number. Many also use 3G pitches outside of Solihull (see exported demand section).

The clubs are as follows:

- ◀ Arden Forest FC (43 teams)
- ◀ Coldlands Colts FC (17 teams)
- ◀ Glades FC (15 teams)
- ◀ Inter Football FC (one team)
- ◀ Knowle FC (31 teams)
- ◀ Leafield Athletic Ladies FC (10 teams)
- ◀ Meriden Lions FC (four teams)
- ◀ Olton Ravens FC (20 teams)
- ◀ Silhill FC (23 teams)
- ◀ Solihull Sporting FC (16 teams)
- ◀ St John's Rangers FC (one team)
- ◀ Wychall Wanderers FC (six teams)
- ◀ Chelmsley Town FC (five teams)
- ◀ Digby Hotel FC (one team)
- ◀ Hockley Heath FC (eight teams)
- ◀ Kingshurst Pavilion Sportsclub FC (18 teams)
- ◀ Leafield Athletic FC (22 teams)
- ◀ Marston Green Minor FC (13 teams)
- ◀ MKC Academy FC (one team)
- ◀ Pudding FC (one team)
- ◀ Solihull FC (41 teams)
- ◀ Solihull Moors FC (39 teams)
- ◀ Solihull Youth Academy (13 teams)
- ◀ Woodbourne Sports FC (seven teams)

In total, 22 of the 24 clubs explicitly state a need for access to 3G pitches, with the majority either currently using a mixture of grass, sand-based or 3G pitches but with insufficient access or access at less than ideal times. In addition, some clubs' report that access to existing sites is not ideal due to a lack of capacity, leading to teams having to train on undesirable days and/or at undesirable times.

Across the 22 clubs stating a specific need for access to 3G provision, it is calculated that 38 teams from within them currently do not use the surface type at all, whereas the remainder do so but not in preferred circumstances.

For rugby union, Silhillians RUFC reports that access to a 3G pitch specific for rugby union would help to alleviate grass pitch overuse. This is linked to aspirations to develop a 3G at Silhillians Sports Club.



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### ***Exported/imported demand***

As indicated above, several football clubs currently export some training demand outside of Solihull, primarily due to a lack of capacity on the 3G pitches within the Borough. The following sites are reportedly accessed:

- ◀ Archbishop Ilsey Catholic Technology College and Sixth Form Centre (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Fox Hollies Leisure Centre (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Goals Birmingham Star City (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Goals Sheldon (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Goals Yardley (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Gospel Oak Secondary School (in Sandwell)
- ◀ Henley-in-Arden Sports Centre – Wasps Rugby Club (in Stratford-upon-Avon)
- ◀ Hodgehill College (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Pack Meadow- Coleshill Town Football Club (in North Warwickshire)
- ◀ Powerleague Yardley (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Small Heath Wellbeing Centre (in Birmingham)
- ◀ Woodrush Sports Centre (in Birmingham)

No 3G demand is identified as being imported.

### ***Future demand***

As set out in Part 2 of this report, there is an anticipated increase of 45 football teams by 2037 based on population projections (in line with Solihull Local Plan Review). If this growth was realised, and if all additional teams wanted to train on 3G provision, it will increase the number of 3G pitches required. This will be factored into the supply and demand analysis below. Significant future demand is also identified via club consultation (99 teams), although this is discounted at this stage as it is considered to be more aspirational.

Old Yardleians RUFC and Silhillians RUFC also expresses future demand aspirations. If these were to be serviced by a 3G pitch in the future, this would increase their demand for the provision. Similarly, without access to 3G pitches, any growth will increase their needs.

## **3.4: Supply and demand analysis**

### ***Football***

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

### ***Training demand***

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at sports lit facilities, with 3G provision preferred by the FA and most clubs. The FA's long-term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a sports lit 3G surface, together with priority access for every England Accredited Club through a partnership agreement.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Based on the above, the FA has established a model to calculate the required number of pitches to meet demand, with one full size pitch being required to service every 38 teams within a local authority. This is based on peak time access being Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings (Mondays and Fridays are discounted as it is considered that teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match, and it also allows for other forms of access such as for commercial leagues and recreational play).

For the model, in addition to the full size pitches being included, the smaller size pitch at Solihull Football Centre has also been incorporated as it can and does accommodate training demand (the pitch at Olton Primary School is not included due to a lack of sports lighting). However, due to its size, it is only considered to contribute the equivalent of quarter of a full size pitch (0.25 pitches).

Conversely, the full size pitch at Páirc na hÉireann is discounted from calculations due to no sports lighting being provided and given that the majority of usage likely comes via Gaelic football demand (although usage data is unavailable).

Based on 531 teams currently playing on football pitches in Solihull, there is a theoretical need for 14 full size 3G pitches (rounded up from 13.96). As there are currently 5.25 full size 3G pitch equivalents provided, this means there is a potential need for 8.75 additional full size 3G pitches to meet all current training demand.

Table 3.8: Current demand for 3G pitches in Solihull (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>3</sup>	Current number of full size 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
531	14	5.25	8.75

When considering future demand for an additional 45 teams (based on population growth identified in Part 2 of this report), there is potential demand for 15 full size pitches overall (rounded down from 15.15), which means a theoretical future shortfall of 9.75 pitches.

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

Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>4</sup>	Current number of full size 3G pitch equivalents	Future shortfall
576	15	5.25	9.75

Alternatively, the table below considers the number of 3G pitches required on the assumption that every team is to train within the respective analysis area that they play in (although it is noted that some teams may play outside of their preferred area due to a lack of pitch availability). This not only identifies where the potential need may exist across Solihull, but it can also be used to guide which areas should be targeted for new provision.

<sup>3</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

<sup>4</sup> Rounded to the nearest 0.25

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 3.10: Current demand for 3G pitches by analysis area for training demand

Analysis area	Current demand	Current 3G requirement <sup>5</sup>	Current number of full size 3G pitch equivalents	Current shortfall
Central	133	4	3.25	0.75
North	232	6	2	4
Rural	166	4	-	4
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5.25</b>	<b>8.75</b>

This shows that the current shortfall of 8.75 full size 3G pitches equates to a shortfall of 0.75 pitches in the Central Analysis Area and four pitches in both the North and Rural analysis areas.

When factoring in future demand by analysis area, there is an increased need in the North and Rural analysis areas, with the shortfall increasing from four pitches to five in each.

Table 3.11: Future demand for 3G pitches by analysis area for training demand

Analysis area	Future demand	Future 3G requirement <sup>6</sup>	Current number of full size 3G pitch equivalents	Future shortfall
Central	143	4	3.25	0.75
North	254	7	2	5
Rural	179	5	-	5
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5.25</b>	<b>10.75</b>

Overall, the future number of 3G pitches required within the sub area modelling is higher than the broader analysis of provision across Solihull. This is due to how the figures are rounded. Despite this, it is known that clubs will travel to neighbouring analysis areas to access provision if required, especially if pitches are strategically located in close proximity, meaning that the wider analysis is a more accurate tool for determining overall need. The analysis area approach is, however, beneficial in determining where new pitches should be located to overcome the shortfalls.

### *The role of sand/water-based pitches*

The above section assumes that all football teams should train on 3G pitches. However, in practice, there is a national need for a proportion of football training demand to be retained on hockey suitable AGPs in order to maintain the financial and commercial sustainability of such provision.

In Solihull, this is especially the case on the full size pitches at North Solihull Sports Centre and Lode Heath School, where football demand is somewhat high and where there are no major pressures for more hockey access. However, in contrast, the full size pitches at the remaining hockey sites are extremely well used for hockey, and the transfer of supplementary football usage may aid capacity issues.

<sup>5</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

<sup>6</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

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The table below summarises the level of football use (including all elements i.e., from formal training activity to recreational demand) each full size hockey suitable pitch currently receives compared to hockey usage and against peak time availability. This can be used to identify which pitches rely more heavily on such activity and therefore could be more likely to become unsustainable without it.

Table 3.12: Summary of football usage of full size hockey suitable pitches

Site ID	Site	No. of pitches	Availability in the peak period (hours)	% of hockey usage	% of football usage	Hockey club users
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	1	34	100%	-	Hampton-in-Arden HC
65	Lode Heath School	1	30	20%	80%	Olton & West Warwickshire HC
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	1	34	-	100%	-
91	Saint Martin's School	1	34	90%	10%	Solihull Blossomfield HC
97	Silhillians Sports Club	1	34	70%	30%	Old Silhillians HC
106	Solihull School	2	34	80%	20%	Olton & West Warwickshire HC Old Silhillians HC Solihull Blossomfield HC
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	1	34	100%	-	Olton & West Warwickshire HC

For further information, please see Part 7: Hockey.

### *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, sports lit and available for community use during the peak period.

In Solihull, four of the six full size 3G pitches are FA approved to host competitive matches and 132 affiliated teams are registered as using the provision for regular match play. Whilst this is a large number when accounting for how many pitches are provided, there may be opportunities to increase it further, particularly if testing could be carried out at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.

Moreover, as the number of 3G pitches increases in line with meeting training demand shortfalls, so should the number of teams utilising the provision for matches, which in turn should further relieve grass pitches of use. As such, whilst the number of 3G pitches needed for matches will never outweigh the number of 3G pitches needed for training (as they would not be sustainable without midweek usage), maximising the pitches that are in place and that are proposed should be fully supported.

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

### ***Rugby union***

For rugby union, there is evidence to warrant the creation of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitches given the grass pitch shortfalls evident in Part 5 of this report, both overall and at sites such as Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club, Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club, Camp Hill Rugby Club, Old Edwardian Sports Club, Old Yardleians Rugby Club and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club. However, other solutions to alleviate these deficits may also be possible. As such, the role of 3Gs in reducing the identified deficits will be further explored in the proceeding Strategy document alongside consideration of other means.

### ***Other sports***

No demand for access to 3G provision has been identified from any other sports in Solihull, other than via Gaelic football at Páirc na hÉireann, which is the primary sport at the site. This suggests that no other demand currently requires consideration.

### **3.5: Conclusion**

There is a clear shortfall of 3G pitches in Solihull to meet requirements, as evidenced through the significant levels of unmet demand identified, particularly in respect of football. As there are no other means of alleviating these shortfalls, as can be the case with grass pitches (e.g., through improving quality), new provision is required. The strategy document that will follow on from this report will identify areas and sites that should be prioritised.

For rugby union, the creation of suitable 3G pitches may provide a solution to the identified overplay of grass pitches, although this needs to be considered against grass pitch solutions to fully determine requirements. This will also be explored in the subsequent Strategy document.

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### **3G – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is a clear shortfall of 3G provision to meet requirements, as evidenced through the significant levels of unmet demand identified, particularly in respect of football.
- ◀ The FA training model suggest a current shortfall of 8.75 full size pitches, increasing to 9.75 when factoring in future demand.
- ◀ For rugby union, the creation of suitable 3G pitches may provide a solution to the identified overplay of grass pitches, although this needs to be considered against grass pitch solutions.
- ◀ No demand for access to 3G provision has been identified from any other sports, other than for Gaelic football at Páirc na hÉireann, suggesting that no other demand currently requires consideration.

### **3G – supply summary**

- ◀ In total, there are six full size and two smaller size 3G pitches identified in Solihull, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ Five of the full size pitches are serviced by sports lighting (the pitch at Páirc na hÉireann is not) although neither of the smaller sized pitches are.
- ◀ The Solihull Mitigation Strategy identifies that new full size 3G pitches could be provided as part of the relocation of Wychall Wanderers FC, Highgate United FC and Old Yardleians RUFC as well as the relocation of Knowle FC.
- ◀ An emerging feasibility study in relation to North Solihull Sports Centre identifies that it is suitable for the creation of a full size 3G pitch.
- ◀ A planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm for the development of sports pitches, with this including a 3G pitch with sports lighting.
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst has an aspiration for the development of an additional 3G pitch, whilst Lode Heath School, Langley School, St Peters Catholic School, Coldland Colts FC (two pitches), Silhillians Sports Club and Langley Primary School also have aspirations.
- ◀ Four of the six full size 3G pitches are either FA or FIFA certified, in addition to the smaller size pitch at Olton Primary School.
- ◀ No pitches are World Rugby compliant.
- ◀ For the full size 3G pitches, four are assessed as good quality and two as standard quality, whilst one smaller size pitch is good and one is standard.

### **3G – demand summary**

- ◀ The 3G pitches currently servicing Solihull are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months.
- ◀ This applies not only to midweek training capacity but also to weekend capacity, with 132 affiliated football teams currently registered as using the provision for regular match play.
- ◀ The majority of demand received currently comes via football, although Gaelic football is the predominant user at Páirc na hÉireann.
- ◀ Significant unmet demand is expressed in Solihull, with 24 responding football clubs as well as Silhillians RUFC stating that additional pitches are required.
- ◀ Several football clubs also currently export some training demand outside of Solihull, primarily due to a lack of capacity on the 3G pitches within the Borough.
- ◀ If future demand predications are realised, this will further increase 3G requirements for both football and rugby union.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 4: CRICKET

### 4.1: Introduction

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

For adult cricket in Solihull there are three main offerings; Saturday, Sunday and midweek cricket (including strong recreational demand across the Borough). The youth league structure tends to be club-based matches which are played mid-week, although some matches are also played on Sundays. The playing season runs from April-September.

#### **Country Facilities Strategy**

Warwickshire Cricket is currently undertaking a County Facilities Strategy, with one to be produced by each individual county cricket board across the Country, unique to its geographical area as well as being diverse in its representation. These will be seen as long-term plans and involve engagement with key stakeholders, including clubs, leagues, active partnerships, county pitch advisors and Sport England.

To inform the strategies, the ECB has set out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the strategies:

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

The strategies will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, with the decision-making process clearly explained before a list of priority projects is produced. To inform this process, each strategy will utilise PPOSS findings, where in place, as a 'high quality' evidence base.

#### **Consultation**

There are 18 affiliated cricket clubs identified as playing within Solihull. Of these, 16 responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 88%.

Table 4.1: List of affiliated clubs with analysis area

Club	Analysis area	Responded
Berkswell CC	Rural	Yes
Castle Bromwich CC	North	Yes
Catherine de Barnes CC	North	Yes
Dorridge CC	Rural	Yes
Earlwood CC	Rural	Yes
Hampton & Solihull CC	Central	Yes
Hampton-in-Arden CC	North	Yes
Knowle & Dorridge CC	Rural	Yes
Knowle Village CC	Rural	Yes
Marston Green CC	North	No

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Club	Analysis area	Responded
Moseley CC	Central	Yes
Old Edwardians CC	Central	No
Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Central	Yes
Solihull Blossomfield CC	Central	Yes
Solihull Municipal CC	Central	Yes
Solihull Superkings CC	Central	Yes
Solihull United CC	Central	Yes
Woodbourne CC	Rural	Yes

The unresponsive clubs are Marston Green CC and Old Edwardians CC. However, Warwickshire Cricket also supplied its own consultation findings with clubs and leagues from its emerging County Facilities Strategy to provide context for these as well as providing further detail regarding clubs that did respond.

## 4.2: Supply

There are 26 grass wicket squares in Solihull across 21 sites. Of these, 22 are available for community use across 20 sites. The four unavailable squares are all located at Solihull School.

Of the community available square, the Central and Rural analysis areas both accommodate nine grass wicket squares each, whereas the North Analysis Area provides four. This is further summarised in the table below.

Table 4.2: Summary of grass wicket squares available for community use

Analysis area	Squares available for community use
Central	9
North	4
Rural	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

### *Changes from the previous study*

The previous study identified a total of 27 grass cricket squares of which 23 were available for community use. The number of unavailable squares has remained the same, but the available squares has decreased by one. Despite this, there has been an increase in the squares in the Central Analysis Area, from eight to nine.

The reduction in squares is due to some sites becoming disused. This is further outlined in the disused provision section below.

### **Non-turf pitches**

In addition to the grass wicket supply, there are 21 non-turf pitches (NTPs) across Solihull. Of these, nine accompany grass wicket squares and the remaining 12 are standalone wickets.

Of the 21 NTPs, eight are considered unavailable for community use. The majority of these are standalone and are all located at educational sites. There is, however, some form of community available provision located in each of the three analysis areas.

The NTPs are summarised in the table overleaf.



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Table 4.3: Summary of NTPs in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of NTPs	Position
33	Eversfield Preparatory School	Central	No	1	Standalone
45	Heart of England School Pitches	Rural	No	1	Standalone
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	1	Square
61	Langley School	Central	Yes	1	Standalone
64	Light Hall School	Central	Yes	1	Standalone
65	Lode Heath School	Central	Yes	1	Standalone
67	Lyndon School	Central	No	1	Standalone
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	Yes	1	Standalone
87	Park Hall Academy	North	Yes	1	Standalone
99	Smith's Wood Playing Fields	North	Yes	1	Standalone
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	Yes	1	Square
106	Solihull School	Central	No	2	Square
106	Solihull School	Central	No	1	Square
106	Solihull School	Central	No	1	Square
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	Central	No	1	Standalone
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	Yes	1	Square
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Yes	1	Square
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	Yes	1	Square
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	Yes	1	Standalone
124	Widney Junior School	Central	Yes	1	Standalone

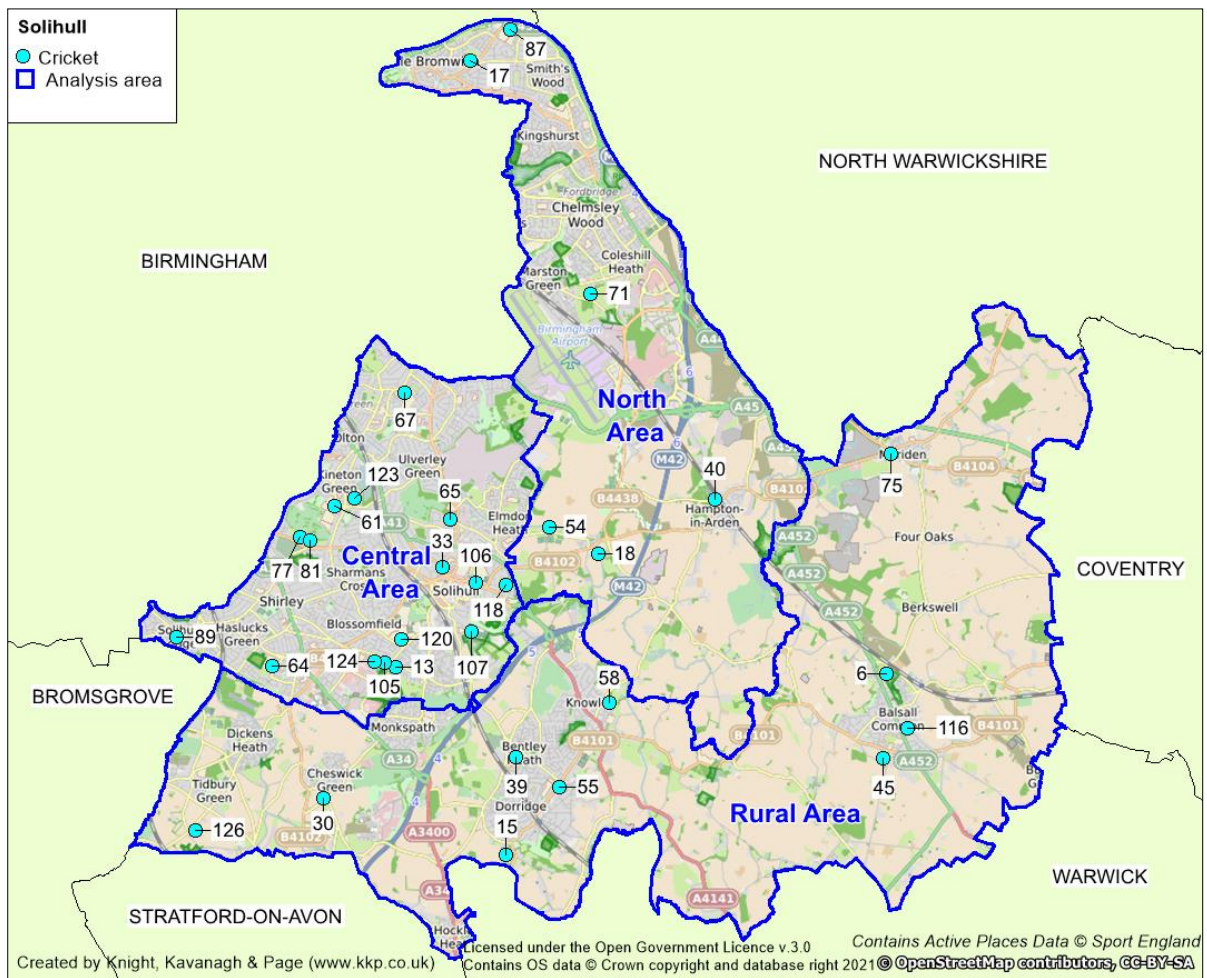
NTPs, particularly when located at club sites, can aid with training and practice and can help reduce overplay on grass wickets when used for matches. The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play. Additionally, NTPs are frequently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

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 land. In many instances, schools do not have the resource or expertise to prepare natural turf wickets so NTPs provide a resource to ensure cricket can remain a key element of curricular sport.

For the location of all grass wicket and NTP cricket provision, see Figure 4.1 below. For a key to the map, refer to Table 4.4.

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Figure 4.1: Location of cricket squares within Solihull



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 4.4: Key to map of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	User/s	No. of wickets	
							Grass	Non-turf
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	CV7 7BN	Rural	Yes	1	Berkswell CC	4	-
13	Blossomfield Club	B91 3JY	Central	Yes	1	Solihull Blossomfield CC	13	-
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	B93 8QA	Rural	Yes	1	Dorridge CC	10	-
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	B36 9EY	North	Yes	1	Castle Bromwich CC	14	-
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	B91 2TJ	North	Yes	1	Catherine-de-Barnes CC LL Cricket League	8	-
30	Earlwood Cricket Club	B94 6EE	Rural	Yes	1	Earlwood CC	12	-
33	Eversfield Preparatory School	B91 1AT	Central	No	1	-	-	1
39	Grove Lane	B94 6AR	Rural	Yes	1	Dorridge CC	8	-
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	B92 0DQ	North	Yes	1	Hampton-in-Arden CC Sheldon Marlborough CC	6	-
45	Heart of England School Pitches	CV7 7FW	Rural	No	1	-	-	1
54	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)	B91 2RX	North	Yes	1	Knowle & Dorridge CC	12	-
55	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)	B93 8ET	Rural	Yes	1	Knowle & Dorridge CC	18	-
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	B93 0NX	Rural	Yes	1	Knowle Village CC	13	1
61	Langley School	B92 7ER	Central	Yes	1	Hampton & Solihull CC Olton & West Warwickshire CC	-	1
64	Light Hall School	B90 2PZ	Central	Yes	1	-	-	1
65	Lode Heath School	B91 2HW	Central	Yes	1	-	-	1
67	Lyndon School	B92 8EJ	Central	No	1	-	-	1

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	User/s	No. of wickets	
							Grass	Non-turf
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	B37 7ER	North	Yes	1	Marston Green CC	16	-
75	Meriden Sports Park	CV7 7SF	Rural	Yes	1	Earlswood CC	-	1
77	Moseley Cricket Club	B90 3PE	Central	Yes	1	Moseley CC	20	-
77	Moseley Cricket Club	B90 3PE	Central	Yes	1	Moseley CC	18	-
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	B90 3PE	Central	Yes	1	Old Edwardians CC Solihull United CC LL Cricket League	10	-
87	Park Hall Academy	B36 9HF	North	Yes	1	-	-	1
89	Smith's Wood Academy	B36 0UE	North	Yes	1	-	-	1
105	Solihull Municipal Club	B91 3LE	Central	Yes	1	Solihull Municipal CC	12	1
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	No	1	-	9	2
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	No	1	-	9	1
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	No	1	-	8	-
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	No	1	-	4	1
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	B91 3WR	Central	No	1	-	-	1
116	The Lant Playing Field	CV7 7GE	Rural	Yes	1	Berkswell CC	10	1
118	Tippetts Field	B91 2PF	Central	Yes	1	Hampton & Solihull CC	14	1
118	Tippetts Field	B91 2PF	Central	Yes	1	Hampton & Solihull CC	2	-
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	Yes	1	Olton & West Warwickshire CC Solihull Superkings CC Solihull United CC	8	1
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	Yes	1	Olton & West Warwickshire CC Solihull Superkings CC Solihull United CC	-	1
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	B91 1DA	Central	Yes	1	Olton & West Warwickshire CC	14	-

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares	User/s	No. of wickets	
							Grass	Non-turf
124	Widney Junior School	B91 3LQ	Central	Yes	1	Solihull Municipal CC	-	1
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	B94 5LW	Rural	Yes	1	Woodbourne CC	8	-

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### ***Disused provision***

There are three disused cricket squares identified across Solihull, with these located at Dickens Heath Sports Club, Silhillians Sports Club and Land Rover Sports & Social Club.

Dickens Heath Sports Club previously accommodated a grass wicket square with 10 wickets that was last active circa 2019. The square is no longer maintained but the site is still used for football.

Silhillians Sports Club previously accommodated a four wicket grass square; however, upon non-technical assessments, the provision seems not to have been actively maintained or used for an extended period of time.

Land Rover Sports & Social Club previously provided a grass wicket square but now hosts only football and rugby union in terms of playing pitch sports. There is an ongoing development proposal at the site, Jaguar Land Rover looking to develop car parking on a section of the land. Work is ongoing to determine what facilities could be retained and appropriate off-site mitigation for what is to be lost.

### ***Future provision***

The emerging Solihull Local Plan proposes a number of new site allocations that could impact on cricket provision. To inform requirements, the Solihull Playing Pitch Mitigation Strategy<sup>7</sup> was produced in 2020, outlining the sites impacted upon and potential options that could be delivered to ensure adherence to the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

As part of the Mitigation Strategy, it is proposed that hub sites will be created across Solihull, with some identifying a clear need for the inclusion of cricket provision. This particularly relates to the Balsall Common area, although this is more of a long-term plan to accommodate increased demand from proposed housing growth. No mitigation sites are within the area.

Also as part of the Mitigation Strategy is Rowood Drive, which is currently a disused site that formerly provided football pitches. Work is currently ongoing in regards to a potential mitigation package at Lode Heath School, and a recommendation is in place for this to include a replacement NTP and refurbished practice nets at the site (in addition to other sporting requirements). Solihull Municipal CC has been identified as a potential user of the provision.

Site Allocation 8: Hampton Road proposes the development of Robin's Nest, where Knowle Village CC is located. However, consultation with Savills revealed that the proposal for 150 dwellings will result in the loss of the Knowle FC site, whereas the Knowle Village CC site will be retained. The Club is reportedly unwilling to be part of any relocation, meaning no mitigation is required. As a result, it is imperative that the proposed housing development does not prejudice the use of the site, particularly in terms of ball-strike issues which is becoming a frequent planning concern for cricket nationally.

Away from the Mitigation Strategy, Dorridge CC reports that it is in the process of developing a second grass wicket square at Broadacre to field all its teams at one site. This is currently being constructed and it is thought that it will be ready for play ahead of the 2024 season, albeit with limited use, and fully available for the 2025 season.

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<sup>7</sup><https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review-Playing-Pitch-Mitigation-Strategy.pdf>

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

A planning application has been submitted (PL/2016/00863/MAOOT) for the provision of one cricket square at Blythe Valley Business Park. However, it is currently proposed that the square will be without ancillary provision due to it being located on greenbelt land.

### **Management and security of tenure**

The majority of clubs in Solihull have security of tenure at their primary venue, mainly via long-term arrangements. The table below identifies tenure arrangements for all the affiliated clubs.

Table 4.5: Summary of security of tenure for Solihull cricket clubs

Site ID	Site	Club	Arrangement	Tenure
13	Blossomfield Club	Solihull Blossomfield CC	Club owns the freehold	Secure
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Dorridge CC	Leased from John Woolman on a 25 year agreement.	Secure
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	Castle Bromwich CC	Leased from the Council on a rolling 10-year agreement	Secure
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	Catherine de Barnes CC	Leased on a rolling yearly agreement.	<b>Unsecure</b>
30	Earlswood Cricket Club	Earlswood CC	Club owns the freehold	Secure
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	Hampton-in-Arden CC	The Club owns the freehold	Secure
54	Knowle & Dorridge CC (Station Road)	Knowle & Dorridge CC	Long term lease from the Knowle & Dorridge Sports Club Limited until 2036.	Secure
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Knowle Village CC	The Club owns the freehold	Secure
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	Marston Green CC	Leased from the Council	Secure
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Moseley CC	The Club owns the freehold	Secure
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Old Edwardians CC	The Club owns the freehold	Secure
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Solihull United CC	Rented from Old Edwardians CC	<b>Unsecure</b>
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Solihull Municipal CC	Club owns the freehold	Secure
116	The Lant Playing Field	Berkswell CC	Rented from The Lant Charitable Trust via the Sports Association	Secure
118	Tippetts Field	Hampton & Solihull CC	Club owns the freehold	Secure
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Club owns the freehold	Secure
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Solihull Superkings CC	Rented from West Warwickshire Sports Complex on a seasonal basis	<b>Unsecure</b>
127	Woodbourne Sports Club	Woodbourne CC	Leased on a 25 year agreement with the option to extend	Secure

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Of concern are the agreements in place for Solihull Superkings CC and Solihull United CC, which both rent their provision on only a seasonal basis, with the former using West Warwickshire Sports Complex and the latter using Old Edwardians Sports Club.

In addition, despite Catherine de Barnes CC leasing its ground, this is done on a yearly basis meaning its tenure is also considered to be unsecure. The Club reports that discussions are ongoing to extend the length of its arrangement to a 15-year lease in order to invest in the facilities. Lease agreements nearing expiry can be problematic for clubs as most funding bodies require lease agreements of over 25 years in order for applicants to be successful.

Many clubs in Solihull also access secondary venues, most commonly through short-term rental agreements where tenure is inevitably less secure. That being said, no clubs report an issue with this as they do not always want to be tied into longer term arrangements when their requirements may not always necessitate access to these sites.

The following table identifies clubs that use secondary venues and the sites accessed. Some use several secondary venues. As an example, Earlswood CC accesses up to four additional sites.

Table 4.6: Summary of secondary venues

Club	Site/s accessed
Berkswell CC	Berkswell & Balsall Football Club; University of Warwick
Dorridge CC	Grove Lane
Earlswood CC	Henley-in-Arden CC; Warwick County Council Staff Cricket Club; Meriden Sports Park; Slaughters Cricket Club
Hampton & Solihull CC	Langley School
Knowle & Dorridge CC	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)
Knowle Village CC	Widney Junior School
Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull; Langley School
Solihull Blossomfield CC	Birmingham Sports & Social Club
Solihull Municipal CC	Widney Junior School
Solihull Superkings CC	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull
Solihull United CC	Coombs Wood Cricket Club

Olton & West Warwickshire CC reports that it has a lease arrangement in place at Tudor Grange Academy Solihull, with eight years remaining on the 25-year lease. It would ideally like to lengthen this arrangement to ensure greater security of tenure.

Knowle & Dorridge CC has issues regarding the long-term lease at its second site at Lugtrout Lane. It is owned by Red Star Complex Limited, and the company is only willing to grant the club a six-month licence, with it also reportedly doubling the fee for usage over the last five years. The Club believes that the long term goal for the company is to sell the land to developers and it is therefore looking for a second ground elsewhere. Without a long term agreement, the Club is unable to invest in the facilities and access grant funding, which in turn is preventing it from expanding its junior and women and girls' sections.

Some of the above sites are outside Solihull. See exported demand section for further information.



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## 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 on a scale of good, standard and poor. For the full assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2.

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 audit of community available grass wicket squares in Solihull found 14 to be good quality and eight to be standard quality (none are assessed as poor quality).

Table 4.7: Summary of quality of grass wicket squares

Good	Standard	Poor
14	8	0

This is summarised site-by-site in the following table.

Table 4.8: Quality ratings community available grass wickets (site by site)

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	No. of squares	Square quality
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	1	Standard
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	1	Good
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Rural	1	Good
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	1	Good
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	North	1	Good
30	Earlwood Cricket Club	Rural	1	Good
39	Grove Lane	Rural	1	Good
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	1	Standard
54	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	1	Good
55	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)	Rural	1	Good
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Rural	1	Good
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	1	Standard
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	1	Good
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	1	Standard
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	1	Standard
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	1	Good
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	1	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	Central	1	Good
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	1	Standard
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	1	Good
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	1	Standard

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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As illustrated, the good quality squares are located at:

- ◀ Blossomfield Club
- ◀ Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)
- ◀ Castle Bromwich Playing Fields
- ◀ Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club
- ◀ Earlswood Cricket Club
- ◀ Grove Lane
- ◀ Knowle and Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)
- ◀ Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)
- ◀ Knowle Village Cricket Club
- ◀ Moseley Cricket Club
- ◀ Solihull Municipal Club
- ◀ Tippetts Field
- ◀ West Warwickshire Sports Complex

Castle Bromwich CC reports that the square at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields has improved in its quality recently due to significant investment by the Club. Similarly, Earlswood CC reports that its square and outfield are kept in good condition by its ground staff.

Solihull Municipal CC reports its quality has improved due to improved work on the ground by the Club. However, it does report some vandalism on the benches surrounding the square. In addition, the Club reports that the NTP it accesses at Widney Junior School needs attention to the drainage to avoid cancelled games.

Hampton & Solihull CC reports that it has spent a significant sum of money to improve the outfield at Tippetts Field whilst continuing to use professional ground staff. It states that quality has improved since last season due to this.

Despite the remaining eight squares being assessed as standard quality, they still present some issues. As an example, Berkswell CC reports that the drainage is poor at The Lant Playing Field and needs to be resolved. It cites that this has caused some cancellation of matches this season.

Solihull Blossomfield CC reports the square at Blossomfield Club has worsened in quality since last season due to the rising costs of maintaining the square and the outfield. Moreover, there is poor drainage on the site which has resulted in cancellation of matches. The Club states that the money it would spend on improving the ground is being spent elsewhere due to the need of hiring grounds for its 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> teams.

Woodbourne CC reports that its square has also diminished in quality since last season and state that this is due to the lack of groundwork, as well as football teams playing more on the outfield. This is in relation to provision at Woodbourne Sports Club.

Olton & West Warwickshire CC reports that access to a secondary ground at Tudor Grange Academy Solihull is satisfactory but that it does not receive the level of attention the Club expects, with the outfield maintenance not being regular. In addition, it states that its other secondary facility at Langley School is of poor quality.

To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets standards, which are benchmarked by the Ground Maintenance Association (GMA).

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Clubs can contact the WCB to arrange for a pitch advisor to complete three different reports that vary in cost. A fully comprehensive report includes soil testing and guidance on machinery and corrective procedures, a mini report includes guidance on machinery and corrective procedures and a verbal report is a spoken version of a mini report.

Table 4.9: Performance Quality Standard ratings

Quality rating	Details
Premier (High)	Where the surface is intended for Premier League play, with those within the top quartile capable of holding minor county and 1st class one day matches. May include some of the better schools and university pitches
Club (Standard)	A Club pitch suitable for league, school and junior cricket
Basic	An acceptable level suitable for recreational cricket and where the surface is designed and maintained within tight financial limitations such as local authorities
Unsuitable	This is where the surface is deemed unfit or unsafe for play

### *Non-turf wickets*

NTP provision is generally of a good or standard quality rating, with very few issues reported. However, as stated above, Olton and West Warwickshire CC report the NTP at Langley School is of poor quality.

### *Changes from the previous study*

Generally, since the previous study, the overall quality of community available grass cricket squares has seemingly improved, with the number of good quality squares increasing from 10 to 13. The number of standard quality squares has decreased, but only due to the increase in good quality squares.

### *Ball strike*

Where there is either new cricket provision being put in place, or more commonly where there is a development which may prejudice the use of an existing cricket facility, there is a requirement for a full ball strike risk assessment to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place as part of the development. As such, the ECB recommends that the affected or at risk clubs and organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken. Further information can be provided by the ECB.

### *Ancillary facilities*

Most community available grass wicket squares in Solihull are serviced by pavilions although quality varies. The provision servicing 13 squares is assessed as good quality, with seven squares serviced by standard quality provision and two by poor quality provision. This is summarised site-by-site below.

Table 4.10: Quality ratings for ancillary facilities servicing community available squares

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Available for community use?	No. of squares	Ancillary facility quality
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	Yes	1	Standard
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	Yes	1	Good
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Rural	Yes	1	Good
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	Yes	1	Poor

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Available for community use?	No. of squares	Ancillary facility quality
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	North	Yes	1	Standard
30	Earlswood Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	1	Standard
39	Grove Lane	Rural	Yes	1	Standard
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	Yes	1	Standard
54	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	Yes	1	Good
55	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)	Rural	Yes	1	Good
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	1	Good
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	Yes	1	Standard
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Yes	2	Good
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	Yes	1	Poor
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	Yes	1	Good
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	Yes	1	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Yes	1	Good
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	Yes	1	Good
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	Yes	1	Good
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	Yes	1	Good

The facilities at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields and Old Edwardians Sports Club are classified as poor quality. At Castle Bromwich Playing Fields, the provision is assessed this way due to being too small to accommodate all demand. In addition, the Club reports that the site has recently experienced cutting of the ropes around the square and damage to the sightscreens.

Through the Facilities Strategy, Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club reported that it has plans to renovate its clubhouse once the issues with the lease arrangement are sorted.

Elsewhere, through consultation, Marston Green CC reports that it has aspirations to modernise its facilities to ensure they are more user friendly to satisfy the needs of the Club. The provision at Marston Green Recreation Ground is currently assessed as standard.

Despite the facilities at Blossomfield Club being assessed as good quality, the Club reports that its clubhouse was vandalised this season.

Away from the clubhouse provision, from the responding clubs, none report any further issues with their ancillary facilities. This includes car parking, whereby all consultees state that they are satisfied with the existing arrangements.

## **Training facilities**

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. Clubs access both indoor and outdoor provision before the season commences, whilst during the season, outdoor training provision supplies the majority of use.

In Solihull, table below summarises the sites that currently contain fixed practice nets. In total, there are 12 sites supplying 31 bays.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 4.11: Summary of practice nets in Solihull

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Available for community use?	No. of nets/bays
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	Yes	2
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Rural	Yes	2
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	Yes	2
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	North	Yes	1
30	Earlwood Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	2
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	Yes	2
55	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)	Rural	Yes	2
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	2
61	Langley School	Central	Yes	2
70	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	Yes	2
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Yes	5
87	Park Hall Academy	North	Yes	3
106	Solihull School	Central	No	6
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	Yes	2
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	Yes	2

Notwithstanding the above, the non-technical site assessment found that the nets at Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane) as being disused.

Additionally, Hampton & Solihull and Woodbourne cricket clubs reportedly want practice nets at their respective sites, with this relating to Tippetts Field for the former and Woodbourne Sports Club for the latter.

All remaining responsive clubs report that they are satisfied with their current practice provision, although several report a need for access or improved access to indoor facilities for winter training purposes. Whilst this falls outside the remit of this study, it is something that should be considered moving forward, with many clubs reporting that they do not have access to sports halls or must access them at undesirable times. This is generally due to year-round block bookings being given priority.

### 4.3: Demand

There are 18 clubs in Solihull, which collectively provide 211 teams. This equates to 70 senior men's, 13 senior women's and 128 junior teams (including 24 dedicated junior girls' teams).

As seen in the table below, most teams are based in the Rural Analysis Area (108 teams) based on several large clubs such as Berkswell, Dorridge, Earlwood and Knowle & Dorridge cricket clubs. The fewest number of teams are found in the North Analysis Area (22 teams).

Table 4.12: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior teams
Central	36	5	40
North	9	1	12
Rural	25	7	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>128</b>

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Club makeup is mixed. Most, such as Berkswell, Castle Bromwich, Dorridge, Earlswood, Knowle & Dorridge and Moseley cricket clubs, are large and provide a significant number of teams within several formats. However, some are small and run only one or two teams, including Old Edwardians and Woodbourne cricket clubs. This is summarised club-by-club in the following table.

Table 4.13: Current summary of teams by club and a comparison to the previous study

Name of club	Analysis area	No. of teams				Total	Team % change from previous study
		Men's	Women's	Boys	Girls		
Berkswell CC	Rural	4	2	9	2	17	6%
Castle Bromwich CC	North	3	1	5	1	10	233%
Catherine de Barnes CC	North	2	-	-	-	2	-
Dorridge CC	Rural	4	2	19	3	28	75%
Earlswood CC	Rural	5	2	8	3	18	6%
Hampton & Solihull CC	Central	4	1	5	-	10	23%
Hampton-in-Arden CC	North	1	-	2	-	3	200%
Knowle & Dorridge CC	Rural	5	1	20	7	33	94%
Knowle Village CC	Rural	4	-	2	-	6	14%
Marston Green CC	North	3	-	4	-	7	40%
Moseley CC	Central	4	1	7	8	20	43%
Old Edwardians CC	Central	2	-	-	-	2	66%
Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Central	6	-	9	-	15	25%
Solihull Blossomfield CC	Central	5	1	5	-	11	8%
Solihull Municipal CC	Central	5	-	6	-	11	38%
Solihull Superkings CC	Central	5	1	1	-	7	100%
Solihull United CC	Central	5	1	-	-	6	100%
Woodbourne CC	Rural	3	-	2	-	5	66%
<b>Total</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>27%</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### *Changes from the previous study*

As seen in Table 4.13 above, there has been strong growth at most clubs since the previous study, including significant increases for clubs such as Castle Bromwich, Hampton-in-Arden and Knowle & Dorridge cricket clubs. This equates to an overall increase in demand of 27%, with the number of teams growing from 166 to 211. This includes a particular increase in women and girls' activity.

Notwithstanding the above, since the previous study, Heart of England CC have folded due to issues with renting facilities within the Borough. The majority of its teams moved to Standard CC in Coventry. In addition, Hockley Heath CC and Tanworth & Camp Hill CC previously fielded demand within the Borough, but now play entirely outside of Solihull (see exported demand section below).

Conversely, Solihull Superkings CC and Solihull United CC have recently been established and add to demand in the Borough.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

From consultation, Berkswell CC reports that it struggles to gain access to its second ground at Balsall & Berkswell Football Club when it would like due to the football season overlapping the start and end of the cricket season. It states that it would ideally like a permanent second ground in and around the Balsall Common area. It is said that this would allow the Club to field additional teams.

Similarly, Knowle & Dorridge CC reports that it could field more teams within its women's and girls' sections if it was able to obtain a long term lease agreement at Lugtrout Lane and enhance the ancillary facilities at the site.

Solihull Blossomfield CC reports that it could field a women's team and several junior teams if an additional square was made available at Blossomfield Club or elsewhere within the Borough. It reports having enquired about numerous sites but that no capacity exists when required.

### ***Imported demand***

A significant level of demand is likely being imported into Solihull, primarily from Birmingham due to its proximity, the popularity of cricket in the City and because of considerable shortfalls existing (as identified in the emerging Birmingham PPOSS). The level of this is also likely to continue growing over coming years due to future demand aspirations and increasing pressures on the current supply of pitches.

University of Birmingham imports some of its senior men's teams into the Borough from Birmingham, with matches taking place at Moseley Cricket Club.

Sheldon Marlborough CC imports its third Saturday team to Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club, despite being predominately based in Birmingham. This is due to the location of the site and available capacity.

Bharat Parivar CC imports some senior demand into the Borough and plays at Tippetts Field. This is due to the club not having a permanent facility and rents numerous sites in and around the Birmingham and Solihull area.

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## ***Exported demand***

Six clubs otherwise based in Solihull currently export some demand outside the Borough to be able to field all of their teams. These are:

- ◀ Berkswell CC
- ◀ Earlswood CC
- ◀ Hockley Heath CC
- ◀ Solihull Blossomfield CC
- ◀ Solihull United CC
- ◀ Tanworth & Camp Hill CC

Of these, Earlswood, Berkswell, Solihull Blossomfield and Solihull United cricket clubs use secondary venues outside of Solihull, whilst Tanworth & Camp Hill CC and Hockley Heath CC export all demand. The latter uses Bournville Cricket Club, in Birmingham.

In the previous study, Tanworth & Camp Hill CC used Dickens Heath Sports Club but since the wicket is now disused, the Club fields all its demand in Stratford-upon-Avon at its own venue (Tanworth & Camp Hill Cricket Club). Through consultation, the Club reports that it is happy with this arrangement and therefore has no immediate plans to return to the Borough.

Earlswood CC uses three secondary venues outside of the Borough to cater for its teams due to the size of the Club as its home venue is operating at full capacity. This involves displacement to Henley-in-Arden Cricket Club in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick County Staff Cricket Club in Warwick and Slaughters Cricket Club in the Cotswolds.

Berkswell CC reports that two of its senior men's teams are exported outside of the Borough to the University of Warwick when it is unable to access its second ground whilst the football season is running.

Solihull Blossomfield CC exports its men's 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> teams to Birmingham Sports & Social Club in Birmingham due to a lack of capacity at Blossomfield Club on Saturdays.

Solihull United CC reports that four of its senior men's teams play at Coombs Wood Cricket Club in Dudley. The Club state that this is due to a lack of facilities within the area.

## ***Additional activity***

The ECB is currently running a number of initiatives across the Country which results in additional cricket demand and use of cricket facilities. Whilst these do not generally utilise grass wickets, they can impact upon availability when sessions are being held due to use of cricket outfield, making squares unusable for matches during these periods. This can mean no availability on one or two nights a week.

### ***All Stars Cricket***

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine, clubs in Solihull can register to become an ECB All Stars cricket centre. Once registered, they 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.



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The programme has the following aims:

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

In Solihull, 15 clubs currently deliver All Stars activity (see Table 4.14 for the clubs).

## *Dynamos cricket*

Dynamos provides the next step for all those graduating from All Stars cricket, thus developing a pathway to retain juniors who progress, as well as being an introduction for all 8-11 year olds new to the sport. 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 transition through to hardball cricket.

In Solihull, 13 clubs currently take part in the Dynamos initiative (see Table 4.14 for the clubs).

## *Softball cricket*

Softball cricket is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase participation in cricket. The aim 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 running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats.

Eight clubs field women's softball demand in Solihull.

The below table summarises which clubs host softball, All Stars and Dynamos activity.

Table 4.14: Solihull clubs involved in ECB initiatives

Club name	All Stars	Women/Girls	Dynamos
Berkswell CC	Yes	No	No
Castle Bromwich CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Catherine de Barnes CC	No	No	No
Dorridge CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Earlwood CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hampton & Solihull CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hampton-in-Arden CC	Yes	No	Yes
Knowle & Dorridge CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Knowle Village CC	Yes	No	Yes
Marston Green CC	No	No	No
Moseley CC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Old Edwardians CC	No	No	No
Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Yes	Yes	No
Solihull Blossomfield CC	Yes	Yes	No
Solihull Municipal CC	Yes	No	Yes
Solihull Superkings CC	Yes	No	Yes
Solihull United CC	Yes	No	Yes
Woodbourne CC	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>15/18 (83%)</b>	<b>8/18 (44%)</b>	<b>13/18 (72%)</b>

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Across the Borough the following clubs offer all three cricket initiatives: Castle Bromwich CC, Hampton & Solihull CC, Earlswood CC, Knowle & Dorridge CC, Moseley and Solihull Municipal CC.

In addition, the following clubs all specifically state aspirations through consultation to develop or further develop both women/girls and junior demand. This could be via new or increased future involvement in the initiatives. They are as follows:

- ◀ Berkswell CC
- ◀ Castle Bromwich CC
- ◀ Dorridge CC
- ◀ Hampton & Solihull CC
- ◀ Knowle & Dorridge CC
- ◀ Moseley CC
- ◀ Olton and West Warwickshire CC
- ◀ Solihull Superkings CC
- ◀ Solihull United CC

### *Last Man Stands*

Last Man Stands (LMS) was founded in 2005, in London. The social outdoor eight-a-side T20 cricket game is played midweek, lasts approximately two hours and is generally played on NTPs. All eight wickets are required to bowl a team out so when the seventh wicket falls, the 'Last Man Stands' on his own. This shorter format of the game has encouraged more people to participate in the sport and is increasing in popularity.

LMS does not currently operate in Solihull. However, it does in the neighbouring authority of Birmingham, with three separate midweek leagues located at Aston Park Pavilion & Pitches, Hamstead Site and Holders Lane Complex. The former two have eight teams in their leagues whereas the latter has ten teams. It is likely that some Solihull demand is being accommodated within these.

### *Complete Cricket*

Complete Cricket is a coaching company in the Midlands which delivers an extensive range of high-quality cricket coaching programmes for individuals, schools, clubs, university and county boards. It has a large presence within Solihull utilising both indoor and outdoor venues. These are as follows:

- ◀ Alderbrook School (indoor)
- ◀ Arden Academy (indoor)
- ◀ Blossomfield Club LTD (outdoor)
- ◀ Broadacre- Dorridge CC (outdoor)
- ◀ Earlswood Cricket Club (outdoor)
- ◀ Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club- Lugtrout Lane (outdoor)
- ◀ Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club- Station Road (outdoor)
- ◀ Lode Heath School (indoor)
- ◀ Solihull College (indoor)
- ◀ Solihull School (indoor)
- ◀ The Lant Playing Field (outdoor)
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Solihull (indoor)

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## *Local League Cricket League (LL Cricket League)*

The LL Cricket League is a substantial Sunday and midweek league that covers a large part of the Midlands and hosts competitions for 40, 30 and 20 over cricket. There are currently four clubs competing within it, with the majority of these unattached to clubs albeit some teams are entered from those with affiliations. The table identifies the grounds that are used in Solihull to host LL Cricket League matches.

Table 4.15: Summary of demand from the LL Cricket League

Site ID	Site name	Number of teams using the site	Match equivalent sessions a season
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	1	16
18	Catherine-de-Barnes Cricket Club	1	16
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	1	16
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	1	16

It is estimated that each team plays approximately 16 matches a season based upon league requirements, in addition to a number of sub leagues and T20 competitions.

## *Arden Sunday Cricket League*

The Arden Sunday League is a thriving friendly league based mainly around the Birmingham and Solihull boundary area, although some demand also comes from Warwick and Coventry.

The League has recently gone through a transitional period which saw a significant growth from 32 teams across four divisions in 2016 to 53 teams currently. It has a total of six divisions and services teams that are unattached to clubs as well as club-based teams. Each team fielded must provide its own home ground, with fixtures played on a home and away basis.

## *Disability cricket*

Two cricket hubs have been set up in Solihull to offer free disability cricket sessions, with these taking place at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields and Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club. Sessions take place at both venues for an hour on Friday evenings.

Linked to the above, WCB reports that it has allocated money to refurbish the changing rooms at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields to make it more disability friendly.

In addition, Warwickshire County Cricket Club runs its own disability team, with matches taking place at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields. It is estimated the team plays approximately eight matches per season, taking place on Sundays.

## **Unaffiliated demand**

In addition to the affiliated cricket clubs in Solihull, a number of unaffiliated teams play in the Borough. These generally take part in friendly or social matches or compete in shorter forms of the game.

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Those unearthed/recorded as part of this audit are listed below, together with the home grounds they most commonly use:

- ◀ Coftonians CC (nomadic)
- ◀ Shirley CC (Moseley Cricket Club)
- ◀ Warwickshire Imps CC (nomadic)
- ◀ Warwickshire Pilgrims CC (nomadic)
- ◀ Wavis CC (Solihull Municipal Club)

## **Future demand**

Future demand can be defined in several ways, such as through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan document that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand for cricket that could come from housing development plans across the Borough.

### *Population forecasts*

For population projections, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass wicket cricket squares that will arise from forecasted growth. This uses the current population within each relevant age group together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates that are applied to future population projections.

Using the above, it is predicted in Solihull that there will be a growth of six senior men's, one senior women's, nine boys and two girls' teams to 2037 – the date selected to align the PPOSS with the Council's emerging Local Plan. This is shown in the table below.

Table 4.16: Future demand via population growth (2037)

Age group	Team generation rate (TGR)	Number of new teams generated by the new population	Number of new teams generated by the new population <sup>8</sup>
Men (18-55yrs)	<b>1:691</b>	5.98	<b>6</b>
Women (18-55yrs)	<b>1:3877</b>	1.11	<b>1</b>
Boys (7-18yrs)	<b>1:171</b>	8.90	<b>9</b>
Girls (7-18yrs)	<b>1:681</b>	2.05	<b>2</b>

When used on analysis area basis, the growth is outlined in the table below. Each area has some form of projected increase, with the most found in the Rural Analysis Area.

Table 4.17: Future demand from population growth by analysis area in match equivalent sessions

Analysis area	Men	Women	Junior boys'	Junior girls'	Total
Central	3	-	3	1	<b>7</b>
North	1	-	1	-	<b>2</b>
Rural	2	1	5	1	<b>9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>

<sup>8</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

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

In addition, the ECB's media rights deal includes a continuation of its relationship with Sky Sports, up to 2028. This now extends beyond broadcasting and is a partnership which will secure significant investment and a commitment to increase participation and drive engagement. This could therefore boost demand to levels in excess of those anticipated through the PPOSS, meaning the impact should be reviewed over coming years.

Furthermore, the demand identified is based solely upon current levels of formal demand from community-based cricket clubs and does not capture informal or recreational activity.

### *Participation increases*

Of the clubs in Solihull, 11 indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation in the future. This amounts to a total predicted growth of 30 teams; nine senior men's, seven senior women's and 14 junior teams.

Table 4.18: Future demand expressed by clubs

Club	Analysis area	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior
Castle Bromwich CC	North	1	-	2
Dorridge CC	Rural	1	1	-
Hampton & Solihull CC	Central	-	1	2
Knowle & Dorridge CC	Rural	-	1	-
Knowle Village CC	Rural	-	-	1
Moseley CC	Central	-	1	-
Olton & West Warwickshire CC	Central	-	1	3
Solihull Blossomfield CC	Central	1	-	2
Solihull Municipal CC	Central	-	-	2
Solihull Superkings CC	Central	4	-	1
Solihull United CC	Central	2	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>

This is summarised by analysis area below. The largest proportion of future demand is expressed in the Central Analysis Area.

Table 4.19: Summary of future demand aspirations by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of competitive teams		
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior
Central	7	5	11
North	1	-	2
Rural	1	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## *Future demand summary*

In the supply and demand analysis at the end of this section of the report, it is considered unfeasible for all future demand to be factored in. This is because it is likely that club aspirations will absorb the future demand identified through population growth, rather than them being judged separately and therefore double counted. As such, only demand identified through population growth is taken forward, with club demand considered to be more theoretical and aspirational.

Notwithstanding the above, the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document will contain a scenario that will consider the impact if clubs aspirations are realised.

## **4.4: Supply and demand 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 the level of play was not made clear through the consultation process, 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:

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

Please note that non-turf wickets have been discounted from the table overleaf. No non-turf wicket squares are recorded as accommodating more than 60 matches per season; therefore, all non-turf wickets are considered to have spare capacity. This generally translates to actual spare capacity for junior cricket as peak time is midweek, whereby non-turf wickets are more commonly used and where matches can be played on a variety of days. However, this is not the case where midweek demand is particularly high, with capacity still limited due to general site usage.

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 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.

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## **Peak time demand**

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for senior cricket in Solihull is Saturday, although a good proportion of teams are also fielded on a Sunday, including senior women's teams, as well as midweek in shorter formats of the game. In addition, peak time is midweek for junior cricket, albeit that some Sunday cricket is also recorded.

Based on the above, capacity across Saturday's, Sunday's and midweek requires consideration, which the following analysis looks to provide. This involves factoring in the overall capacity level at each site and current usage levels across each relevant period.

## **Education usage**

Whilst only few available squares based at schools currently have any recorded community use, it must be recognised that the majority do cater for curricular and extra-curricular, especially at those with a relatively strong cricket programme, such as at Tudor Grange Academy Solihull, where internal usage leaves little capacity remaining for any external access, with this demand therefore built into the below analysis.

## **Spare capacity**

The table below explains the difference between the potential spare capacity referenced in Table 4.21 and the actual spare capacity identified in the final three columns (Saturday, Sunday and midweek).

Table 4.20: Spare capacity examples

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

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Table 4.21: Capacity analysis of cricket squares in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Available for community use?	Security of tenure	Formal 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)
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	Yes	<b>Unsecure</b>	Berkswell CC	1	Standard	4	16	40	24	No	No	No
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	Yes	Secure	Solihull Blossomfield CC	1	Good	13	65	98	33	No	No	No
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Rural	Yes	Secure	Dorridge CC	1	Good	10	50	85	35	No	No	No
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	Yes	Secure	Castle Bromwich CC LL Cricket League	1	Good	14	70	81	11	No	Yes	No
18	Catherine de Barnes Cricket Club	North	Yes	<b>Unsecure</b>	Catherine-de-Barnes CC LL Cricket League	1	Good	8	40	40	-	No	Yes	Yes
30	Earlswood Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	Secure	Earlswood CC	1	Good	12	60	68	8	No	No	No
39	Grove Lane	Rural	Yes	Secure	Dorridge CC	1	Good	8	40	70	30	No	No	No
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	Yes	Secure	Hampton-in-Arden CC Sheldon Marlborough CC	1	Standard	6	24	59	35	No	No	No
54	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)	North	Yes	Secure	Knowle & Dorridge CC	1	Good	12	60	29	31	No	Yes	No
55	Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club (Station Road)	Rural	Yes	Secure	Knowle & Dorridge CC	1	Good	18	90	60	30	No	No	No
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	Rural	Yes	Secure	Knowle Village CC	1	Good	13	65	41	24	No	Yes	Yes
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	Yes	Secure	Marston Green CC	1	Standard	16	64	68	4	No	No	No
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Yes	Secure	Moseley CC	1	Good	20	100	70	30	No	Yes	Yes
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Yes	Secure	Moseley CC	1	Standard	18	72	95	23	No	No	No
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	Yes	Secure	Old Edwardians CC Solihull United CC LL Cricket League	1	Standard	10	40	64	24	No	No	No
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	Yes	Secure	Solihull Municipal CC	1	Good	12	60	80	20	No	Yes	No
106	Solihull School	Central	No	<b>Unsecure</b>	-	1	Good	9	45	-	-	No	No	No
106	Solihull School	Central	No	<b>Unsecure</b>	-	1	Good	9	45	-	-	No	No	No
106	Solihull School	Central	No	<b>Unsecure</b>	-	1	Good	8	40	-	-	No	No	No
106	Solihull School	Central	No	<b>Unsecure</b>	-	1	Good	4	20	-	-	No	No	No
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	Yes	Secure	Berkswell CC	1	Standard	10	40	65	25	No	No	No
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Yes	Secure	Hampton & Solihull CC	1	Good	14	70	65	5	No	Yes	Yes
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Yes	Secure	Hampton & Solihull CC	1	Good	2	10	10	0	Yes	Yes	Yes
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	Yes	Secure	Olton & West Warwickshire CC Solihull Superkings CC Solihull United CC	1	Standard	8	32	32	0	No	No	No
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	Yes	Secure	Olton & West Warwickshire CC Solihull Superkings CC	1	Good	14	70	98	28	No	No	No
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	Yes	Secure	Woodbourne CC	1	Standard	8	32	18	14	No	Yes	Yes



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### ***Actual spare capacity***

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

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

### ***Saturday cricket spare capacity***

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

Notwithstanding the above, there may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as actual spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site. As such, no sites that are over, at, or close to capacity are considered to have actual spare capacity (at least 12 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity are required for an additional senior team to be accommodated) and neither are sites with unsecure tenure as future usage cannot be guaranteed.

In Solihull, although some spare capacity is identified at some sites, no provision is considered to have actual spare capacity for an increase in Saturday cricket. This is because all squares are used to capacity at this time, either because two teams are already assigned to them as a home venue or because the level of spare capacity is insufficient to accommodate an additional team without overplay being created.

### ***Sunday cricket spare capacity***

Similar to Saturday cricket, a square on a Sunday is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is not already used by two teams at this time, has secure tenure and is not over, at, or close to capacity. Taking this into consideration, there are four squares across the same number of sites in Solihull that have potential capacity to accommodate further demand, as shown in the following table.

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Table 4.22: Summary of actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by site

Site ID	Site name	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Comments
54	Knowle and Dorridge Cricket Club (Lugtrout Lane)	31	Used by one Sunday team; spare capacity for one additional team
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	24	Unused on a Sunday
77	Moseley Cricket Club	30	Unused on a Sunday
126	Woodbourne Sport Club	14	Unused on a Sunday

In total, actual spare capacity equates to 99 match equivalent sessions per season. This is predominantly found in the Rural Analysis Area with 38 match equivalent sessions identified. The North Analysis Area has 31 match equivalent sessions identified and the Central Analysis Area has 30.

Table 4.23: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Sunday) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)
Central	30
North	31
Rural	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>

### **Midweek cricket spare capacity**

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

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

Taking this into consideration, there are three squares across three sites in Solihull have potential capacity to accommodate further demand during midweek.

Table 4.24: Summary of actual spare capacity for midweek (junior) cricket

Site ID	Site name	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Comments
58	Knowle Village Cricket Club	24	Used by two midweek teams; spare capacity exists for an additional four teams
77	Moseley Cricket Club	30	Used by one midweek team; spare capacity exists for an additional five teams
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	14	Used by two midweek teams; spare capacity exists for an additional four teams

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A total of 68 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity is identified for midweek cricket, with most existing in the Rural Analysis Area (38 match equivalent sessions). In comparison, the North Analysis Area has no actual spare capacity for midweek cricket

Table 4.25: Actual spare capacity for senior cricket (Midweek) by analysis area

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)
Central	30
North	-
Rural	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>

### Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain based on the number of wickets provided and the quality of the square. Although it is possible to sustain certain, minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a reduction in play is recommended on overplayed squares to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

In Solihull, 13 sites are overplayed by a total of 300 match equivalent sessions per season, as summarised below.

Table 4.26: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Overplay (Matches per season)
6	Balsall & Berkswell Football Club	Rural	24
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	33
15	Broadacre (Dorridge Cricket Club)	Rural	35
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	North	11
30	Earlwood Cricket Club	Rural	8
39	Grove Lane	Rural	30
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	35
71	Marston Green Recreation Ground	North	4
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	23
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	24
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	20
116	The Lant Playing Field	Rural	25
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	28
<b>Total</b>			<b>300</b>

The overplay is predominately found in the Central Analysis Area, with this amounting to 128 match equivalent sessions, followed by the Rural Analysis Area with 120 match equivalent sessions. The least overplay is identified is in the North Analysis Area (50 match equivalent sessions).

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Table 4.27: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions a season)
Central	128
North	50
Rural	122
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

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

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 (using population forecasts). Match equivalent sessions for future demand are calculated using the average number of matches played per season (12 matches for senior Saturday teams, six matches for Sunday teams and four matches for junior teams).

The table below looks at the supply and demand balance during the peak period for senior men's cricket (Saturday).

Table 4.28: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Saturday)

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per season				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	-	128	128	36	164
North	-	50	50	12	62
Rural	-	122	152	24	176
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>372</b>

As seen in the table above, there is a current shortfall for Saturday cricket in Solihull amounting to 300 match equivalent sessions. A shortfall also exists in each analysis area, with no actual spare capacity existing.

When future demand is accounted for, the overall shortfall increases by 72 match equivalent sessions a season (six senior men's teams) to total 372 match equivalent sessions per season.

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

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

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 Sunday teams (six) 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.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 4.29: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior cricket (Sunday)

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per season				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	12	128	116	-	116
North	6	50	44	-	44
Rural	24	122	98	6	104
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>264</b>

There is an overall shortfall amounting to 258 match equivalent sessions for Sunday cricket, with a deficit existing in each analysis area.

When future demand is accounted for, the overall shortfall increases to 264 match equivalent sessions, with this growth attributed solely to the Rural Analysis Area.

### ***Junior cricket supply and demand analysis (midweek)***

For the junior supply and demand analysis, actual spare capacity equates to the total spare capacity at each available site or, if it is lower, the total number of additional junior teams that could be fielded on each available square (on the assumption that one square can accommodate six midweek teams), multiplied by four (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 4.30: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per season				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	20	128	108	16	124
North	-	50	50	4	54
Rural	32	122	90	24	114
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>264</b>

There is an overall shortfall amounting to 248 match equivalent sessions for midweek cricket, with a deficit again displayed in each analysis area. Further demand also results in a growth in the shortfall across the analysis areas, with this equating to an overall deficit of 264 match equivalent sessions.

Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that for midweek cricket there is a stock of NTPs that can be used to accommodate some of the excess demand via the transfer of play and greater utilisation.

## **4.5: Conclusion**

Overall, there is currently an insufficient supply of cricket squares in Solihull to cater for all forms of cricket (Saturday, Sunday and midweek) and the shortfalls are relatively significant. When considering future demand, the deficits also worsen for all cricket formats.

The table below summarises this further.

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Table 4.31: Capacity balance of grass cricket squares across Solihull

Playing format	Match equivalent sessions per season				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Saturday	-	300	300	72	372
Sunday	42	300	258	6	264
Midweek	52	300	248	44	292

### *Changes from the previous study*

Although it is difficult to make a direct comparison to the previous study as the supply and demand analysis for cricket has changed and become more detailed, it should be acknowledged that shortfalls have broadly increased. This is based on an increase in demand resulting in significantly more overplay and less actual spare capacity.

The table below compares the findings based on current demand (future demand was calculated differently and therefore cannot be compared). It shows an increased shortfall of 217 match equivalent sessions for Saturday cricket and 245 match equivalent sessions for Sunday cricket (a midweek analysis was not previously provided).

Table 4.32: Supply and demand comparison to previous PPS update (2019)

Study	Match equivalent sessions per season			
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Difference
<b>Saturday cricket</b>				
2019 findings	20	113	93	217
2023 findings	-	300	300	
<b>Sunday cricket</b>				
2019 findings	100	113	13	245
2023 findings	42	300	258	

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

- ◀ No actual spare capacity is identified at peak time for senior men’s cricket (Saturday), whereas 99 match equivalent sessions exist on a Sunday and 68 match equivalent sessions exist midweek.
- ◀ In total, 13 sites are overplayed by a total of 300 match equivalent sessions a season, which is significant.
- ◀ Overall, there is currently an insufficient supply of cricket squares in Solihull to cater for all forms of cricket (Saturday, Sunday and midweek).

### **Cricket – supply summary**

- ◀ In total, there are 26 grass wicket cricket squares in Solihull provided across 21 sites, of which 22 squares are available for community use across 20 sites (Solihull School is unavailable).
- ◀ There are also a total of 23 NTPs across Solihull, with 11 accompanying grass wickets squares and the remaining 12 being standalone.
- ◀ There are also three sites that are either active sites which have previously accommodated cricket provision, or which are completely disused cricket sites (Dickens Heath Sports Club, Silhillians Sports Club and Land Rover Sports & Social Club).
- ◀ The Solihull Mitigation Strategy outlines a potential need for cricket provision to be included within the creation of hub sites across the Borough, whilst an aspiration exists to also improve the facilities at Lode Heath School.
- ◀ Dorridge CC reports that it is in the process of developing a second grass wicket square at Broadacre to field all of its teams at one site.
- ◀ Security of tenure concerns exist for Solihull Superkings, Solihull United and Catherine de Barnes cricket clubs.
- ◀ The audit of community available grass wicket squares in Solihull found 14 to be good quality and eight to be standard quality (none are assessed as poor quality).
- ◀ Two sites are categorised as having poor quality ancillary provision, with these being Castle Bromwich Playing Fields and Old Edwardians Sports Club.
- ◀ There are 12 supplying 31 practice net bays, whilst Hampton & Solihull and Woodbourne cricket clubs reportedly want provision at their sites (Tippetts Field and Woodbourne Sports Club).

### **Cricket – demand summary**

- ◀ There are 18 clubs playing in Solihull which collectively provide 211 teams, equating to 70 senior men’s, 13 senior women’s and 128 junior teams.
- ◀ There has been a large increase in demand over recent years with some clubs seeing significant participation increases.
- ◀ Berkswell CC, Knowle & Dorridge CC and Solihull Blossomfield CC all report latent/unmet demand.
- ◀ University of Birmingham and Sheldon Marlborough CC import some demand into Solihull, whereas Berkswell, Earlswood, Hockley Heath, Solihull Blossomfield, Solihull United and Tanworth & Camp Hill export demand outside of the Borough.
- ◀ Two disability cricket hubs are operating at Castle Bromwich Playing Fields and Knowle and Dorridge Cricket Club, with sessions at both venues taking place on Friday evenings.
- ◀ A total of 15 clubs undertake All Stars cricket, whilst 13 undertake Dynamo’s and eight have women’s softball demand.
- ◀ There are also substantial levels of additional demand for cricket, including Complete Cricket, LL Cricket League and Arden Sunday League.
- ◀ Future demand from population forecasts equates to the predicted growth of six senior men’s, one senior women’s, nine junior boys’ and one junior girls teams (up to 2037), whereas 11 clubs indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation amounting to a total predicted growth of 30 teams.

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## PART 5: RUGBY UNION

### 5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. As part of this, Club Developers and a team of community rugby coaches deliver core programmes for clubs across Solihull.

The RFU governs a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-a-side, 10-a-side, 7-a-side and Tag rugby as well as the O2 Touch programme. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

The rugby union season generally runs from September to May.

### Consultation

A total of seven rugby union clubs are identified as playing within Solihull. Of these, all clubs responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 100%.

Table 5.1: Summary of rugby club consultation

Club	Responded?
Berkswell & Balsall RUFC	Yes
Birmingham Civil Service RUFC	Yes
Birmingham Exiles RUFC	Yes
Camp Hill RUFC	Yes
Edwardian RUFC	Yes
Old Yardleians RUFC	Yes
Silhillians RUFC	Yes

Please note that Berkswell & Balsall RUFC technically plays in Warwick. However, it is included within this study as it originates from Solihull, caters for Solihull-based demand and is still located in close proximity to the Borough.

### 5.2: Supply

Within Solihull, there are 43 grass rugby union pitches identified across 19 sites, with 41 pitches available for community use across 17 sites. The pitches that are unavailable for community use are provided at Alderbrook School and Solihull Sixth Form College (both education sites).

Of the pitches available for community use, 30 are senior pitches and 11 are age grade pitches. As shown in the table below, the majority are identified within the Rural Analysis Area (20 pitches), whereas the North Analysis Area has the fewest (six pitches).



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Table 5.2: Summary of grass rugby union pitches available for community use

Analysis area	No. of senior pitches	No. of age grade pitches	Total
Central	12	3	15
North	5	1	6
Rural	13	7	20
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>41</b>

The audit generally only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. That being said, it should also be noted that included within the supply figures are five unposted pitches at Silhillians Sports Club and two unposted pitches at Berkswell & Balsall Common Rugby Club. This is because these are capable of accommodating significant demand, particularly from age grade mixed (mini) teams. However, it should be noted that such provision will not be eligible to received funding from the RFU at present.

For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please see the table below.

Table 5.3: Rugby union pitch dimensions

Age	Playing format	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>9</sup>
U7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
U8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22
U9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
U10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
U11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U12	Age grade mixed	60 x 43
U13	Age grade boys/girls	90 x 60 (60 x 43 for girls)
U14	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U15	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U16	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U17	Age grade boys/girls	100 x 70
U18	Colts	100 x 70
Senior	Senior	100 x 70

The figure below identifies all grass rugby union pitches currently servicing Solihull. For a key to the map, see Table 5.8 and Table 5.9.

<sup>9</sup> Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five-metres each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

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Figure 5.1: Location of rugby union pitches within Solihull



## Changes from the previous study

There are 11 fewer pitches identified compared to the previous study, which was last updated in 2019. This is because of fewer pitches being marked out at schools as no clubs have lost pitches.

## Disused provision

Two disused rugby union pitches are identified at Sharman's Cross, with these previously accessed by Birmingham & Solihull RUFC (which now plays in Stratford-on-Avon). These are further discussed in the section below.

## Future provision

The emerging Solihull Local Plan proposes new site allocations that could impact on grass rugby union pitch provision. To inform requirements, the Solihull Mitigation Strategy<sup>10</sup> was produced in 2020, outlining the sites impacted upon and potential options that could be delivered to ensure adherence to the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

<sup>10</sup><https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/Solihull-Local-Plan-Review-Playing-Pitch-Mitigation-Strategy.pdf>

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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Site Allocation 4: West of Dickens Heath entails the loss of pitches at Old Yardleians Rugby Club. The Mitigation Strategy outlines that these could be mitigated together with the loss of football pitches at Highgate United Football Club and Wychall Wanderers Football Club, with work now ongoing to deliver this. However, another option being explored is to mitigate the rugby union element separately.

Another development to be considered relates to The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, with Jaguar Land Rover looking to develop car parking on a section of the site. Work is ongoing to determine what facilities could be retained and appropriate off-site mitigation for what is to be lost. One senior rugby union pitch is currently provided at the venue.

Potentially linked to the above, a planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm for the development of pitches. This will include an additional Gaelic football pitch that is set out to be over marked by both rugby union and football, in addition to a full size 3G pitch with sports lighting as well as a large clubhouse and secure car parking. Discussions have been had in regards to Birmingham Civil Service RUFC relocating to the site from The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, although this is at the early stages.

Also as part of the Mitigation Strategy is Rowood Drive, which is currently a disused site that formerly provided football pitches. Work is currently ongoing in regards to a potential mitigation package at Lode Heath School, and a recommendation is in place for this to include an improved senior rugby union pitch and the potential installation of sports lighting.

Site Allocation 18: Sharman's Cross proposes the development of the disused rugby union pitches at the site. The Mitigation Strategy outlines that this could be mitigated together with requirements at The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, although this may not now be possible with Jaguar Land Rover exploring its own dedicated proposals. This would mean that the site would have to be mitigated separately or re-instated (for rugby union and/or other pitch sports).

It is also set out in the Mitigation Strategy that this could be tied into the development of Site allocation 9: South of Knowle due to the proximity of the sites; however, proposals in relation to Arden Academy Trust have since stalled.

Away from the Mitigation Strategy and as mentioned in Part 3 of this report, there are aspirations for the creation of a 3G pitch at Silhillians Sports Club which would be World Rugby compliant for use by Silhillians RUFC. The Club is looking into the feasibility of this and how it could be funded.

### ***Security of tenure***

Tenure of club sites in Solihull is generally secure. A site is thought to have secure tenure if a club has either freehold or a long-term lease agreement in place, whilst council sites are also considered to be secure as part of a long-term commitment to provide leisure facilities.

Berkswell & Balsall RUFC owns the freehold of its site, as does Birmingham Exiles RUFC. Likewise, Camp Hill RUFC has freehold of its main venue, whilst renting pitches at the adjacent Shirley Park from the Council. All three are therefore considered to have security of tenure.

Edwardian RUFC's home ground is owned by the Old Edwardians Association and the Club is in partnership with Old Edwardians CC. Its current lease is part of a 30-year agreement and has 25 years remaining.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Silhillians RUFC's home ground is owned by the Old Silhillians Association, with this encompassing the rugby clubs as well as Old Silhillians HC, Old Silhillians Rifle Club, Silhillians Squash & Racketball Club and Solihull FC. The Club currently pays annual rent for the use and maintenance of the pitches and ancillary facilities.

In contrast, Birmingham Civil Service RUFC is deemed to have unsecure tenure as it rents its facilities at The Land Rover Sports & Social Club on an annual basis. This is a particular issue given the development plans at the site and any mitigation should look to provide increased security of tenure to the Club.

Similarly, Old Yardleians RUFC is without security of tenure due to the allocation of its site. It has approximately 12 years remaining on its lease agreement; however, this includes a break clause whereby the landowner (Horne Estates) can evict the Club with 12 months' notice.

Table 5.4: Summary of tenure for rugby union clubs in Solihull

Club	Site/s used	Agreement	Tenure
Berkswell & Balsall RUFC	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Freehold	Secure
Birmingham Civil Service RUFC	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Rental	<b>Unsecure</b>
Birmingham Exiles RUFC	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	Freehold	Secure
Camp Hill RUFC	Camp Hill Rugby Club / Shirley Park	Freehold / rental	Secure
Edwardian RUFC	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Leased (25 years)	Secure
Old Yardleians RUFC	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Leased (12 years)	<b>Unsecure</b>
Silhillians RUFC	Silhillians Sports Club	Freehold	Secure

### ***Pitch quality***

The quality of rugby pitches across Solihull have 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 on a scale of good, standard and poor.

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

Table 5.5: Definition of maintenance categories

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

For drainage, a rating of D0, D1, D2 or D3 is assigned to each pitch. This is based on whether or not drainage is adequate and considers the presence of an operational system. The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

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Table 5.6: Definition of drainage categories

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

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

Table 5.7: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

The above was calculated for each pitch within Solihull following site assessments, with findings then checked and challenged against user consultation and NGB assessments/knowledge. This has then allowed an 'agreed quality rating' to be established.

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

Of pitches that are available for community use, 12 are assessed as good quality, 25 as standard and four as poor quality. The unavailable pitches at Alderbrook School are assessed as poor quality, whereas the pitch at Solihull Sixth Form College is assessed as standard quality.

A pitch-by-pitch breakdown can be seen in the tables below. Club and school based pitches have been separated for ease of reference.

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Table 5.8: Site quality ratings (club pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Tenure	Management	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Posted?	Sports lit?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	CV8 1NQ	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D1	Good
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	CV8 1NQ	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	2	Senior	Yes	No	M2/D1	Good
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	CV8 1NQ	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	2	Age grade	No	No	M2/D1	Good
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	B92 9ED	North	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M1/D2	Standard
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	B92 9ED	North	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D2	Standard
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	B92 9ED	North	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Age grade	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	B90 2DH	Central	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D1	Good
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	B90 2DH	Central	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	B90 3PE	Central	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D2	Good
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	B90 3PE	Central	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D1	Good
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	B90 1PW	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	3	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
94	Shirley Park	B90 3GF	Central	Secure	Council	Yes	1	Age grade	Yes	Yes	M1/D1	Standard
94	Shirley Park	B90 3GF	Central	Secure	Council	Yes	1	Age grade	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
97	Silhillians Sports Club	B39 9LW	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D2	Good
97	Silhillians Sports Club	B39 9LW	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	Yes	M2/D1	Good
97	Silhillians Sports Club	B39 9LW	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	2	Senior	Yes	No	M2/D1	Good
97	Silhillians Sports Club	B39 9LW	Rural	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	5	Age grade	No	No	M1/D1	Standard
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	B92 9LN	Central	Secure	Sports Club	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D0	Poor

Table 5.9: Site quality ratings (school pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Tenure	Management	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Posted?	Sports lit?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating
1	Alderbrook School	B91 1SN	Central	Unsecure	School	No	1	Age grade	Yes	No	M1/D0	Poor
3	Arden Academy Grass Pitches	B93 0PT	Rural	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	2	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
37	Grace Academy Solihull	B37 5JS	North	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
45	Heart of England School	CV7 7FW	Rural	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M0/D1	Poor
64	Lighthall School	B90 2PZ	Central	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Age grade	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
65	Lode Heath School	B91 2HW	Central	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D0	Poor
87	Park Hall Academy	B36 9HF	North	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
99	Smith's Wood Playing Fields	B36 0UE	North	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D0	Poor
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	5	Senior	Yes	No	M2/D1	Good
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	B91 3WR	Central	Unsecure	College	No	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	Unsecure	School	Yes-unused	1	Senior	Yes	No	M1/D1	Standard

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As seen above, Berkswell & Balsall, Camp Hill, Edwardian and Silhillians rugby clubs all provide at least one good quality pitch. Maintenance on these pitches is to a higher level, whilst a drainage system is also installed in some instances.

Edwardian RUFC reports that its first team pitch at Old Edwardian Sports Club has county standard lighting and receives a high level of maintenance as well as a piped drainage system. However, its second pitch has only natural drainage but is still maintained to a high level, hence its good quality. Nevertheless, the Club reports plans to install a system on the pitch in the future.

Drainage issues are evident at Silhillians Sports Club, despite the senior pitches being assessed as good quality. The pitches are fertilised, re-seeded and aerated between April and August every year.

Birmingham Exiles RUFC reports that all its pitches receive a basic level of maintenance, but that it invested in drainage a few years ago. Its pitches are assessed as standard quality.

The poor quality pitches are provided at Alderbrook School, Heart of England School, Lode Heath School and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, predominately due to a lack of maintenance and poor drainage. This is a particular issue at the latter site as it is used for club rugby (by Birmingham Civil Service RUFC).

### *Performance Quality Standards (PQS)*

The RFU is currently working with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) to carry out detailed site assessments at rugby union sites across the Country and there are ongoing internal discussions at the RFU on how best these will be implemented within PPOSS work moving forward.

In Solihull, the pitches servicing Camp Hill RUFC at its own site and at Shirley Park have undergone an assessment, with one pitch identified as being “advanced” and three identified as being “basic”. This confirms with the findings of this report, with one pitch assessed as good and three as standard.

### *Changes since the previous study*

There are more good quality pitches identified in Solihull compared to the previous study, primarily due to improvements at Old Edwardians Sports Club. All remaining pitches remain relatively unaltered.

### **Ancillary facilities**

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

In Solihull, all clubs have access to some form of ancillary provision at their respective home grounds, but their quality varies. The table below identifies the findings for the sites that are actively utilised by clubs across the Borough, with three serviced by standard quality facilities and four by poor quality ancillary facilities.

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Table 5.10: Summary of ancillary provision quality

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club user	Ancillary facility quality
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	Berkswell & Balsall RUFC	Poor
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	North	Birmingham Exiles RUFC	Standard
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	Central	Camp Hill RUFC	Poor
81	Old Edwardian Sports Club	Central	Edwardian RUFC	Poor
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	Old Yardleians RUFC	Standard
94	Shirley Park	Central	Camp Hill RUFC	N/A <sup>11</sup>
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	Silhillians RUFC	Standard
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	Birmingham Civil Service RUFC	Poor

The poor quality facilities are identified at Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club, Camp Hill Rugby Club, Old Edwardian Sports Club and The Land Rover Sports & Social Club. For the former, Berkswell & Balsall RUFC has acquired additional land and has aspiration to extend its clubhouse as the facility is looking tired and in need of refurbishment. It is in the process of sourcing funding to carry out the required work.

The clubhouse servicing Birmingham Civil Service RUFC at The Land Rover Sports & Social Club also requires modernisation, with this currently uncertain due to the development proposals at the site.

There is a lack of car parking at Camp Hill Rugby Club and Shirley Park, which is a particular issue on match days. Additionally, the clubhouse facilities are dated and in need of refurbishment.

At Old Edwardians Sports Club, the facilities are in poor condition, particularly the female changing rooms.

Silhillians RUFC shares its ancillary facilities with Old Silhillians HC and reports that the facilities are of a standard quality. The provision satisfies the demand of the Club and has the correct number of changing rooms; however, there can be capacity pressures if multiple teams are playing at the same time. Car parking can also be problematic if hockey fixtures are played at the same time.

### 5.3: Demand

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

For competitive play, demand is split between adult rugby, age grade boys/girls' rugby (previously junior) and age grade mixed rugby (previously mini). Age grade runs from U13 to U18 level, whilst age grade mixed is for U7 to U12 level. In addition, new girls' age bands have been established, with the new age bands being at U12, U14, U16 and U18 level.

<sup>11</sup> Facilities at Camp Hill Rugby Club service the site.



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

### Competitive play

There are seven rugby clubs considered to be based in Solihull, collectively providing a total of 91 teams. As a breakdown, this consists of 14 senior men's, four senior women's, 39 junior boys', three junior girls' and 31 mini teams.

Most clubs are relatively large and provide several senior and age grade teams. Demand for each club is summarised in the following table.

Table 5.11: Summary of demand

Club	Analysis area	No. of rugby union teams				
		Senior (19+)		Age grade boys/girls (13-18)		Age grade mixed (6-12)
		M	F	M	F	Mixed
Berkswell & Balsall RUFC	Rural	2	-	6	-	6
Birmingham Civil Service RUFC	Central	-	-	-	-	-
Birmingham Exiles RUFC	North	2	1	6	1	5
Camp Hill RUFC	Central	3	2	7	-	6
Edwardian RUFC	Central	2	-	6	-	3
Old Yardleians RUFC	Rural	3	-	7	2	5
Silhillians RUFC	Rural	2	1	7	-	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>

Birmingham Civil Service RUFC previously had two senior teams but will now not be fielding any formally, instead focusing on social, touch and walking rugby as well as junior and female recruitment. The RFU reports that the lack of certainty over its home ground has had a big impact on the Club and its demand.

The two age grade girls' teams at Old Yardleians RUFC are part of a cluster that forms an entity known as Solihull Vixens. This is formed between Old Yardleians, Camp Hill, Edwardian and Birmingham Exiles rugby clubs as well as Woodrush RUFC, which is based in Birmingham. The teams are affiliated to Old Yardleians RUFC but represent all five clubs and operate on a rotational basis (switching between clubs every month).

Of the club-based demand, the Rural Analysis Area caters for the largest number of teams (47), whereas the North Analysis Area caters for the fewest (15 teams).

Table 5.12: Summary of demand by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of teams playing				
	Men's	Women's	Boys'	Girls'	Mini
Central	5	2	13	-	9
North	2	1	6	1	5
Rural	7	1	20	2	17
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### *Touch*

Touch (also known as Touch Football or Touch Rugby) is a variant of rugby organised and administered globally by the Federation of International Touch and nationally by the England Touch Association, which affiliates to the RFU and in some areas assists in the delivery of the RFU O2 Touch Programme.

Touch is essentially a variation of rugby league with the tackling of opposing players replaced by a touch. It is able to be played on natural turf and 3G pitches, with the field of play measuring 70 metres in length from score line to score line (excluding touchdown areas of an additional 5 metres at each end) and 50 metres in width (excluding the interchange areas). On field teams are made up of six players each, with up to eight substitutes permitted per team. Touch also allows for mixed sex participation at all levels and offers mixed, men's or women's playing formats, with on field male/female ratios applicable to teams in mixed competitions. Matches are generally made up of two 20-minute halves.

Camp Hill and Silhillians rugby union clubs report fielding a touch rugby team which compete in friendly tournaments and matches on an ad-hoc basis.

### *Tag*

Try Tag Rugby runs mixed, men's and women's leagues and events in the sport of Tag Rugby throughout the UK. Tag Rugby is a minimal contact version of rugby, generally played in the 7-a-side format.

Berkswell & Balsall RUFC reports fielding a women's tag rugby team, which plays matches on an ad-hoc basis.

### *Walking rugby*

Silhillians RUFC reports fielding a walking rugby team which plays friendly matches when they are able to be scheduled.

### *Participation trends (changes since the previous study)*

Participation in Solihull has seemingly increased substantially since previous data was collected in 2019. In total, 23 additional teams are now registered across the clubs, with a particular increase at age grade boys' level. Overall, there has been a growth of 19 age grade boys/girls and one age grade mixed team.

Despite the above, Birmingham Civil Service, Birmingham Exiles and Silhillians rugby clubs all report a decrease in the number of their senior teams over recent years. Specifically, Birmingham Exiles RUFC reports that the Club is only just starting to recover from demand lost during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### ***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 sports lighting.

In Solihull, Berkswell & Balsall RUFC accesses all three of its pitches for training demand as well as unmarked grass areas on site which can lit by mobile lighting, if required. One of its pitches has permanent sports lighting and this is the pitch predominately used.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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When it fielded teams, Birmingham Civil Service RUFC accessed its match pitch or nearby land at The Land Rover Sports & Social Club for training demand, despite the pitches not being serviced by sports lighting. However, as previously mentioned, it is not current undertaking any formal activity.

Camp Hill RUFC has access to two sports-lit pitches (one at its main site and one at Shirley Park). It generally utilises the pitch at Shirley Park for training activity in order to protect the senior pitch at the main site for match play.

Edwardian RUFC accesses its first team pitch for all training demand due to this providing county standard lighting and more enhanced drainage than the second pitch (which is also sports-lit). The Club reports that it would ideally like to provide improved lighting and quality on the second pitch so that demand can be spread out more evenly.

Silhillians RUFC uses two of its senior pitches for most of its training demand, with both of these serviced by sports lighting. However, it also has access to a separate training area that it utilises mobile lighting for, although the Club reports that this land often has significant quality issues as it is also used for mini match play.

Birmingham Exiles RUFC accesses its sports-lit pitch for all training demand, whilst Old Yardleians RUFC also uses just one pitch. This is not fully sports-lit but is serviced by a sufficient level of lighting to make activity possible.

### *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, with ad hoc use of 3G pitches for fixtures in the case of unsuitable pitches due to waterlogging or frost.

There are currently no World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Solihull, although as set out previously this report, Silhillians RUFC has plans for development, whilst provision could also be provided to mitigate the loss of the existing Old Yardleians Rugby Club site. Further detail can be found in Part 3.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

There is no known exported or imported rugby union demand in Solihull although, as mentioned previously, Berkswell & Balsall RUFC is technically located outside of the Borough.

### ***Unmet/latent demand***

Edwardian RUFC and Silhillians RUFC both report latent demand in that they could field more teams if it had access to increased provision. The latter links this to its need for a 3G pitch for training activity.

### ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined in several ways, such as through participation increases and by using population forecasts. In addition, the Strategy & Action Plan document that follows this report will contain housing growth scenarios that will estimate additional demand for football that could come from housing development plans across the Borough.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Population growth

Based on population projections to 2037 (in line with Solihull Local Plan Review), Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass rugby union pitches that will arise from any growth. This is by using the current and future populations in each of the relevant age groups together with the current team numbers, with team generation rates then established to understand how many new teams could be created.

As seen in the table below, predicted future growth from population increases amounts to one senior men's, three age grade boys and three age grade mixed teams. This equates to 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week of demand on full size senior pitches.

Table 5.13: Borough-wide team generation rates

Age group	Team generation rate	Number of new teams generated	Number of new teams generated - rounded figure	Match equivalent sessions <sup>12</sup>
Men (19-45yrs)	1:2,347	<b>1.20</b>	1	0.5
Women (19-45yrs)	1:8,550	<b>0.34</b>	0	0
Boys (13-18yrs)	1:221	<b>3.34</b>	3	1.5
Girls (13-18yrs)	1:2,640	<b>0.26</b>	0	0
Mixed (7-12yrs)	1:566	<b>2.65</b>	3	1.5

As these figures cannot be accredited to any one analysis area, they are added to the overall supply and demand analysis at the end of this section.

## Participation growth

Five clubs that responded to consultation report growth aspirations. In addition, the RFU identifies future demand for some clubs based on its own targets and what it believes to be realistic, especially in regard to women's and girls' participation (it identifies that it will support and encourage this growth, even if clubs do not currently see it as a priority). This is linked to a current drive to increase female demand and due to the upcoming 2025 Rugby World Cup.

Overall, future demand identified by the clubs equates to a growth of three senior men's, six senior women's, two age grade boys, five age grade girls and two age grade mixed teams.

<sup>12</sup> Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis; therefore, one team accounts to 0.5 match equivalent sessions on their relevant pitch type.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 5.14: Summary of future club aspirational demand for Solihull

Club	Analysis area	Future team aspirations	Match equivalent sessions on a senior pitch
Berkswell & Balsall RUFC	Rural	1 x senior women's 1 x age grade girls	1
Birmingham Exiles RUFC	North	1 x senior men's 1 x senior women's 1 x age grade boys 1 x age grade girls 1 x age grade mixed	2.25
Camp Hill RUFC	Central	1 x senior women's 1 x age grade girls	1
Edwardian RUFC	Central	1 x senior men's 2 x senior women's 1 x age grade boys 1 x age grade girls 1 x age grade mixed	2.75
Silhillians RUFC	Rural	1 x senior men's 1 x senior women's 1 x age grade girls	1.5

It should be noted that the future demand identified by the clubs and the RFU will not be brought through to the overall supply and demand analysis at the end of this report as this is deemed to be aspirational than what is projected through population growth (and also ensures that increases are not double counted). It will instead be run as a scenario in the proceeding Strategy document.

### ***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 considered to be Saturday PM as all senior teams play at this time. Peak time for mini and junior rugby is Sunday AM.

### **5.4: Supply and demand 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 union pitches, the following assumptions are applied to the site-by-site and pitch-by-pitch analysis:

- ❖ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ❖ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches, unless it is known that dedicated smaller pitches are instead used.
- ❖ From U13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch, whilst age grade mixed teams use half a senior pitch.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

- ◀ For senior and age grade boys/girls' 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 playing across only 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.
- ◀ Internal use of school pitches is added to current play where community usage is also received, as determined on a site-by-site basis depending on levels of activity.

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

Table 5.15: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

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

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

To determine 'actual spare capacity', each site with 'potential capacity' 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 against the site. For example, a site may be managed to operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

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

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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The way the above is represented in the Table 5.16 is as follows:

Spare capacity in peak period (examples)	Explanation of spare capacity
1	If the cell is highlighted in green with a number, it means that the pitch/es has actual spare capacity at peak time.
-	If the cell has a dash in it, it means the pitch is played to capacity during the peak period.
1	If the cell has a number in it but is not highlighted, it means the pitch has spare capacity at peak period; however, this is discounted. This could be due to unsecure tenure, poor pitch quality, the pitch not being available for community use, or the pitch already being played to capacity or being overplayed (outside of peak time).

**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
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Table 5.16: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Solihull (club pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating	Site capacity (match sessions per week)	Current play (match sessions per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Capacity rating	Actual spare capacity	Comments
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	CV8 1NQ	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good	3	1	1	1	0	No actual spare capacity at peak time
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	CV8 1NQ	Yes	1	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	2	1.5	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	CV8 1NQ	Yes	1	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	2.5	1.5	1	0	Overplayed by one match equivalent sessions
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	CV8 1NQ	Yes	2	Age grade (unposted)	No	M2/D1	Good	6	2	2	2	-	Unposted pitches so therefore cannot provide actual spare capacity.
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	North	B92 9ED	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M1/D2	Standard	2.5	1	5	3.5	0	Overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions.
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	North	B92 9ED	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D2	Standard	2.5	2	-	0.5	0	No actual spare capacity at peak time
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	North	B92 9ED	Yes	1	Age grade	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2.25	-	0.25	0	Overplayed by 0.25 match equivalent sessions.
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	Central	B90 2DH	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good	2.5	1.5	1.5	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	Central	B90 2DH	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	-	0	0	Played to capacity.
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	B90 3PE	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D2	Good	3.25	2	4	2.75	0	Overplayed by 2.75 match equivalent sessions
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	B90 3PE	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Standard	2.5	2.75	0.5	0.75	0	Overplayed by 0.75 match equivalent sessions
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	B90 1PW	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	5	5	0	Overplayed by 5 match equivalent sessions
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	B90 1PW	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2.5	-	0.5	0	Overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	B90 1PW	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2.75	-	0.75	0	Overplayed by 0.75 match equivalent sessions
94	Shirley Park	Central	B90 3GF	Yes	1	Age grade	Yes	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	2	2	0	Overplayed by 2 match equivalent sessions
94	Shirley Park	Central	B90 3GF	Yes	1	Age grade	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	2	-	0	0	Played to capacity.
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B39 9LW	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D2	Good	3.25	1	2.5	0.25	0	Overplayed by 0.25 match equivalent sessions
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B39 9LW	Yes	1	Senior	Yes	M2/D1	Good	3.25	2	2.5	1.25	0	Overplayed by 1.25 match equivalent sessions
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B39 9LW	Yes	1	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	1.5	-	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B39 9LW	Yes	1	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	1.5	-	1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	B39 9LW	Yes	5	Age grade (unposted)	No	M1/D1	Standard	10	3	2	5	-	Unposted pitches so therefore cannot provide actual spare capacity.
115	The Land Rover Sports & Social Club	Central	B92 9LN	Yes	1	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	-	1 <sup>13</sup>	0.5	0.5	Potential spare capacity discounted due to poor quality and unsecure tenure.

<sup>13</sup> Demand identified via what Birmingham Civil Service RUFC reports that it will now be focusing on following the disbandment of its competitive teams.



**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
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Table 5.17: Capacity table for rugby pitches in Solihull (school pitches)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Postcode	Community use?	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting?	Non-technical assessment score	Quality rating	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Capacity rating	Actual spare capacity	Comments
1	Alderbrook School	Central	B91 1SN	No	1	Junior	No	M1/D0	Poor	-	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use.
3	Arden Academy Grass Pitches	Rural	B93 0PT	Yes-unused	2	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	4	2	-	2	2	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
37	Grace Academy Solihull	North	B37 5JS	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	1	-	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
45	Heart of England School	Rural	CV7 7FW	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M0/D1	Poor	1.5	1	-	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure and poor pitch quality.
64	Lighthall School	Central	B90 2PZ	Yes-unused	1	Junior	No	M2/D1	Good	3	1	-	2	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
65	Lode Heath School	Central	B91 2HW	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	1	-	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure and poor pitch quality
87	Park Hall Academy	North	B36 9HF	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M2/D1	Good	2.5	1	-	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure
99	Smith's Wood Playing Fields	North	B36 0UE	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1/D0	Poor	1.5	1	-	0.5	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure and poor pitch quality
106	Solihull School	Central	B91 3DJ	Yes-unused	5	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	10	10	-	0	5	Played to capacity through heavy internal usage.
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	Central	B91 3WR	No	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	-	-	-	-	-	Unavailable for community use
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	Central	B91 3PD	Yes-unused	1	Senior	No	M1/D1	Standard	2	1	-	1	1	Actual spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## **Actual spare capacity**

Of all the community available pitches in Solihull, only two are considered to have actual spare capacity at peak time for an increase in senior rugby. This is due to other pitches either being used to capacity at peak time, not having secure tenure, not being community available, not being serviced by posts, or being poor quality (or because of a combination of these factors).

The actual spare capacity identified is at Silhillians Sports Club and relates to two of its senior pitches (the other two are overplayed). This means all actual spare capacity is located in the Rural Analysis Area. It equates to one match equivalent session.

## **Overplay**

There are 13 senior pitches across eight sites in Solihull that are overplayed by a total of 19 match equivalent sessions per week. This is summarised by site in the table below.

Table 5.18: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of overplayed pitches	Overplay (match sessions per week)
11	Berkswell & Balsall Rugby Club	Rural	2	1.5
12	Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club	North	2	3.75
16	Camp Hill Rugby Club	Central	1	0.5
81	Old Edwardians Sports Club	Central	2	3.5
82	Old Yardleians Rugby Club	Rural	3	6.25
94	Shirley Park	Central	1	2
97	Silhillians Sports Club	Rural	2	1.5
<b>Total</b>				<b>19</b>

The majority of overplay is evident in the Rural Analysis Area (9.75 match equivalent sessions per week), although some is found in each analysis area.

Table 5.19: Summary of overplay by analysis area

Analysis area	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)
Central	6
North	3.75
Rural	9.25
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>19</b>

## **5.5: Conclusion**

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall supply and demand balance (actual spare capacity against overplay) in each of the analysis areas based on match equivalent sessions per week. Future demand is based on anticipated growth from population increases.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 5.20: Summary of supply and demand analysis on rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Overplay (match equivalent sessions)	Current supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)
Central	-	6	6
North	-	3.75	3.75
Rural	1	9.25	8.25
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>

There is a current shortfall of 18 match equivalent sessions per week in Solihull, which is a substantial amount. Furthermore, each analysis area has an identified shortfall, with this being highest in the Rural Analysis Area (8.25 match equivalent sessions).

The shortfalls are further exacerbated when factoring in future demand, resulting in a future shortfall of 21.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Table 5.21: Future supply and demand balance of rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Match equivalent sessions per week		
	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Central	6	1.25	7.25
North	3.75	1.25	5
Rural	8.25	1	9.25
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>

### *Changes since the previous study*

When compared to the findings of the last update of the previous study, there is now a larger shortfall of rugby union pitches. The overall shortfall has increased from 10.5 match equivalent sessions to 18, which is a testament to the growth in demand that has been experienced since 2019.

Table 5.22: Supply and demand comparison to previous PPS (2019)

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
	2019 current total	2023 current total	2019 future total	2023 future total
Rugby union	10.5	18	16	21.5

### **Rugby union – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Only two pitches are considered to have actual spare capacity at peak time for an increase in senior rugby, with this totalling one match equivalent session per week.
- ◀ There are 13 senior pitches across eight sites that are overplayed by a total of 19 match equivalent sessions per week.
- ◀ There is a current capacity shortfall of 18 match equivalent sessions per week on rugby union pitches, increasing to 21.5 when accounting for future demand.

### **Rugby union - supply summary**

- ◀ There are 41 grass rugby union pitches identified across 19 sites, of which 39 pitches are available for community use across 17 sites.
- ◀ The emerging Solihull Local Plan proposes new site allocations that could impact on grass rugby union pitch provision and Site Allocation 4 entails the loss of pitches at Old Yardleians Rugby Club.
- ◀ Another development to be considered relates to The Land Rover Sports & Social Club, with Jaguar Land Rover looking to develop car parking on a section of the site.
- ◀ A planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm which includes the creation of a senior rugby union pitch (over marked by Gaelic football and football), with discussions taking place for the relocation of Birmingham Civil Service RUFC from The Land Rover Sports & Social Club.
- ◀ Two disused rugby union pitches are identified at Sharman's Cross and this is also subject to an allocation in the emerging Local Plan (Site Allocation 18).
- ◀ Tenure is unsecure for Birmingham Civil Service and Old Yardleians rugby clubs due to the abovementioned developments.
- ◀ Of pitches which are available for community use, there are 10 assessed as good quality, 25 as standard and four as poor.
- ◀ The ancillary facilities servicing Birmingham Civil Service, Berkswell & Balsall and Edwardian and Camp Hill rugby clubs are considered to be poor quality.

### **Rugby union - demand summary**

- ◀ There are seven rugby clubs considered to be based in Solihull providing a total of 91 teams (14 senior men's, four senior women's, 39 age grade boys', three age grade girls' and 31 age grade mixed teams).
- ◀ Birmingham Civil Service RUFC previous had two senior teams but will now not be fielding any formally, instead focusing on social, touch and walking rugby as well as junior and female recruitment. The RFU reports that the lack of certainty over its home ground has had a big impact on the Club and its demand.
- ◀ Demand has increased significantly over recent years, with overall team numbers increasing from 68 to 91.
- ◀ All six clubs currently use match pitches to accommodate training demand.
- ◀ Edwardian and Silhillians rugby clubs both report latent demand in that they would field more teams if they had access to increased pitch capacity.
- ◀ Five clubs (Berkswell & Balsall, Birmingham Exiles, Camp Hill, Edwardian and Silhillians rugby clubs) report future aspirations for additional teams, whilst population projections predict a growth of one senior men's, three age grade boys' and three age grade mixed teams.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### **PART 6: RUGBY LEAGUE**

#### **6.1: Introduction**

The Rugby Football League (RFL) is the governing body for rugby league in England. It administers the England national rugby league team, the Challenge Cup, Super League and the championships which form the professional and semi-professional structure of the game in the UK.

Most community club rugby league is played throughout the summer season (from February to October). However, rugby league is considered as a winter season sport within schools, colleges and universities and therefore pitch provision for matches and training is also required throughout the winter months.

Senior rugby league is played on a field measuring 100 x 68 metres. The preferred pitch size for U7s, U8s and U9s is 60 x 40 metres, whereas for U10s and U11s it is 80 x 30 metres, with U12s and above generally playing on senior pitches. Teams from U7s to U11s are known as primary teams, with teams from U12s to U18s known as junior teams.

#### **6.2: Supply**

There are no dedicated rugby league pitches in Solihull, as per the previous study.

#### **6.3: Demand**

No current demand has been identified for rugby league in Solihull itself. In effect, any residual need is unlikely to be sufficient for a club to be created, with individuals instead likely to travel to form part of Birmingham Bulldogs RLFC or to Erdington Griffins Juniors RLFC for junior demand (both are based in Birmingham).

Birmingham Bulldogs RLFC accesses Avery Fields (Sports & Events), primarily utilising the full size 3G pitch on site. The Club fields a solitary senior men's team, although it also organises training sessions for junior players.

Erdington Griffins Juniors RLFC does not have access to a dedicated rugby league pitch, with its demand instead taking place on a grass rugby union pitch at Spring Lane Playing Fields, where training and competitive fixtures take place. The Club fields four junior teams.

#### **6.4: Supply and demand analysis / conclusion**

As not enough demand is identified within Solihull to warrant creation of a team there is no current requirement to provide rugby league pitches within the Borough. If any demand does exist, if not already, it should be signposted to neighbouring clubs.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### **Rugby league – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ As not enough demand is identified within Solihull to warrant creation of a team there is no current requirement to provide rugby league pitches within the Borough.
- ◀ Current demand can be met outside of Solihull providing demand is signposted to relevant clubs (e.g., in Birmingham).

### **Rugby league – supply summary**

- ◀ There are no rugby league pitches in Solihull.
- ◀ Provision is provided in the neighbouring authority of Birmingham (through Birmingham Bulldogs RLFC and Erdington Griffins Juniors RLFC)

### **Rugby league – demand summary**

- ◀ No demand has been identified for rugby league in Solihull.
- ◀ In Birmingham, Birmingham Bulldogs RLFC fields a solitary senior team, although it also has a junior section that take part in regular training sessions, whereas Erdington Griffins RLFC fields four junior teams.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 7: HOCKEY

### 7.1: Introduction

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

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on sand filled, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on 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 7.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

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

In addition to the above pitch types, England Hockey reports it is currently trialling a different multi-sport surface in order to better accommodate lower levels of hockey demand and other sports such as netball and tennis. The surface type, known as Gen 2<sup>14</sup>, is a versatile sand-dress synthetic surface with a compatible shock pad that ensures that sports do not need to compromise on the playing experience. The concept is designed to provide facilities, including schools, with a dynamic surface which reduces the amount of space required and can be utilised to full potential.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.englishockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=2596&sectionTitle=Gen+2+Playing+Surface>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

For senior teams, a full size pitch for 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. England Hockey preference is for four metre side and five metre end run offs, with a preferred overall area of 101.4 x 63 metres.

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on one day (peak time) provided the pitch has sports lighting. Training is generally midweek and also requires access to a pitch with lights. The playing season runs from September-May.

## Consultation

A total of four hockey clubs are identified as playing within Solihull. Of these, three responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 75% as seen below.

Table 7.2: Summary of hockey club consultation

Club	Responded?
Hampton-in-Arden HC	No
Old Silhillians HC	Yes
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Yes
Solihull Blossomfield HC	Yes

## 7.2: Supply

There are eight full size hockey suitable AGPs in Solihull across seven sites (two are provided at Solihull School). Each of these has a sand-based surface, is available for community use and is serviced by sports lighting.

Table 7.3: Full size hockey suitable pitches in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	No of pitches	Community use?	Sports lighting	Size (metres)
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	B92 0DQ	North	1	Yes	Yes	98 x 63
65	Lode Heath School	B91 2HW	Central	1	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	B37 5LA	North	1	Yes	Yes	102 x 63
91	Saint Martin's School	B91 3EN	Central	1	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
97	Silhillians Sports Club	B93 9LW	Rural	1	Yes	Yes	100 x 60
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	2	Yes	Yes	98 x 60
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	B91 1DA	Central	1	Yes	Yes	100 x 60

Five pitches are provided in the Central Analysis Area, two in the North Analysis Area and one in the Rural Analysis Area.



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

### *Smaller size provision*

In addition to the full size AGPs, there are also four smaller size hockey suitable pitches in Solihull, as summarised below. Only the pitch at Grace Academy is unavailable for community use, whereas the only non-sports lit pitch is located at Arden Academy.

Table 7.4: Smaller size AGPs in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lighting?	Size (metres)
2	Arden Academy	B93 0PT	Rural	Yes	No	85 x 50
37	Grace Academy	B37 5JS	North	No	Yes	83 x 53
64	Light Hall School	B90 2PZ	Central	Yes	Yes	85 x 55
98	Smith's Wood Academy	B36 0UE	North	Yes	Yes	75 x 52

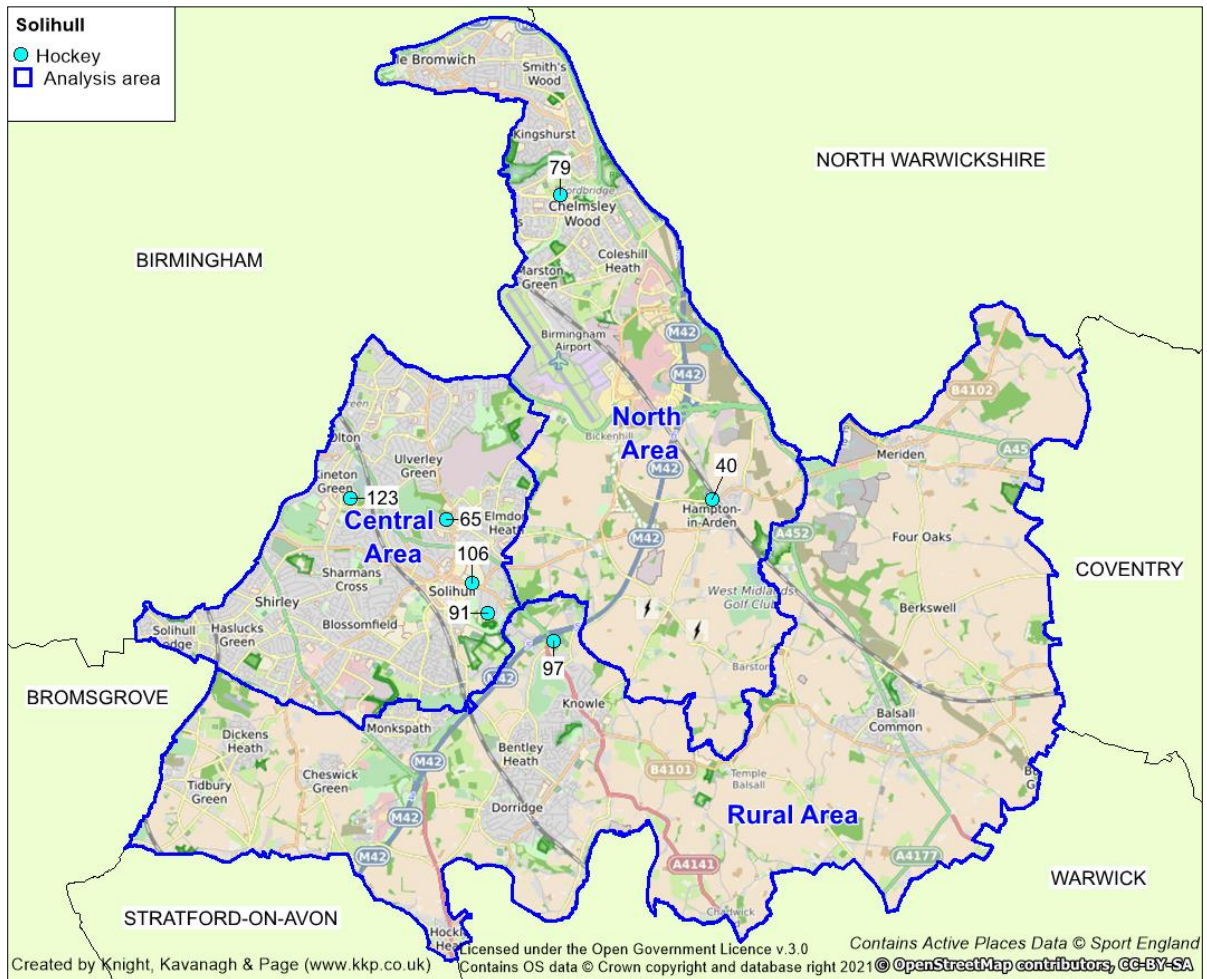
Nationally, most smaller size pitches are considered too small to accommodate any purposeful hockey demand, although some larger ones are utilised for training demand and junior play. However, in Solihull, none of the smaller size pitches are considered suitable as they are either too small, unavailable for community use, or without sports lighting. Based on this, the stock is discounted from this point forward as the pitches are not relevant from a hockey perspective.

Notwithstanding the above, in addition to being used for curricular and extra-curricular activities, the smaller sized pitches are still capable of servicing a community need for other sports and for recreational demand and therefore require continued consideration in this regard. The pitches at Arden Academy and Lighthall School are used for training activity by football clubs.

For the location of the full size AGPs, please see Figure 7.1 below.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Figure 7.1: Location of hockey suitable AGPs in Solihull



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## ***Future developments***

An emerging feasibility study in relation to North Solihull Sports Centre suggests that the full size pitch at the site is not required for hockey. In addition, it states that the site is suitable for the creation of a full size 3G pitch in its place as part of the wider development. The appropriateness of this should be informed by this PPOSS.

Old Silhillians HC reports that plans are in place to refurbish the pitch at Old Silhillians Sports Club, with aspirations also existing for the creation of a second full size pitch at the site. In addition, it cites a proposal to convert its patio area into a small multi-use games area in order to accommodate walking hockey sessions and some tennis activity. The Club plans to provide roofing on this in order to protect its surface.

Olton & West Warwickshire HC also has aspirations to resurface the pitch at West Warwickshire Sports Complex as the last refurbishment took place in 2007. The large capital cost required is said to be the barrier preventing it from commencing works.

## ***Management***

Four of the full size pitches (those at Lode Heath School, Saint Martin's School and Solihull School) are managed internally. The pitches at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club, Silhillians Sports Club and West Warwickshire Sports Complex are managed by the clubs themselves, whereas the remaining pitch at North Solihull Sports Centre is managed by Everyone Active on behalf of the Council.

## ***Security of tenure***

The table below summarises the Solihull-based pitches used by each club. As mentioned previously, the pitch at North Solihull Sports Centre is not currently used for hockey.

Table 7.5 Summary of venues used by hockey clubs

<b>Club</b>	<b>Site/s used</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Tenure</b>
Hampton-in-Arden HC	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	Primary venue	Secure
Old Silhillians HC	Silhillians Sports Club	Primary venue	Secure
Old Silhillians HC	Solihull School	Secondary venue	Unsecure
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Primary venue	Secure
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Solihull School	Secondary/overspill venue	Unsecure
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Lode Heath School	Secondary/overspill venue	Unsecure
Solihull Blossomfield HC	Saint Martin's School	Primary venue	Unsecure
Solihull Blossomfield HC	Solihull School	Secondary venue	Unsecure

Given that four of the pitches are located at school sites, security of tenure can be an issue for users, with no guarantee that they will be available in the long-term unless a formal community use agreement is in place. This is an issue, to some extent, for each of Old Silhillians HC, Olton & West Warwickshire HC and Solihull Blossomfield HC.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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Old Silhillians HC leases its pitch at Silhillians Sports Club off the Old Silhillians Association and the Club is in partnership with Silhillians RUFC, Old Silhillians Rifle Club, Silhillians Squash and Racketball Club and Solihull FC. It then utilises Solihull School as a secondary venue via a rental agreement.

Olton & West Warwickshire HC leases the pitch at West Warwickshire Sports Complex from the Association. The pitches at Lode Heath and Solihull School are then hired out on a seasonal basis as secondary venues, without any guarantee that longer term access will be allowed.

Solihull Blossomfield HC hires the pitches at Saint Martin's and Solihull School, as and when required. The Club reports no issues with this arrangement, although it does not provide security of tenure.

Hampton-in-Arden HC forms part of the entity that owns the freehold at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club and therefore has security of tenure.

### **Availability**

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours per week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). In Solihull, most of the full size pitches have relatively good availability during the peak period, with only Lode Heath School slightly restricted as midweek usage is not enable until 18:00.

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

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 7.6: Availability of full-size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Hockey club users	Availability	Midweek availability in the peak period	Weekend availability in the peak period
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	1	Hampton-in-Arden HC	Monday to Friday 08:00 to 23:00 Saturday to Sunday 08:00 to 23:00	18/18	16/16
65	Lode Heath School	1	Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Monday to Friday 18:00 to 22:00 Saturday/Sunday 08:00 to 22:00	13/18	16/16
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	1	-	Monday to Friday 06:30 to 22:00 Saturday to Sunday 08:00 to 19:00	18/18	16/16
91	Saint Martin's School	1	Solihull Blossomfield HC	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 21:00 Saturday to Sunday 09:00 to 17:00	18/18	16/16
97	Silhillians Sports Club	1	Old Silhillians HC	Monday to Friday 09:00 to 22:00 Saturday 09:00 to 21:30 Sunday 09:00- 20:00	18/18	16/16
106	Solihull School	2	Old Silhillians HC Olton & West Warwickshire HC Solihull Blossomfield HC	Monday to Friday 17:00 to 21:00 Saturday/ Sunday 09:00 to 17:00	18/18	16/16
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	1	Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Monday to Friday 09:00 to 22:00 Saturday to Sunday 09:00 to 22:00.	18/18	16/16

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Quality

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

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

The following table indicates when each of the full-size pitches were installed or last resurfaced within Solihull, together with an agreed quality rating.

Table 7.7: Age and quality of full size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site	No. of pitches	Year installed/ resurfaced	Quality
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	1	2005	Poor
65	Lode Heath School	1	2005	Poor
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	1	2008	Poor
91	Saint Martin's School	1	2009	Poor
97	Silhillians Sports Club	1	2009	Poor
106	Solihull School	1	2018	Good
106	Solihull School	1	2018	Good
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	1	2007	Poor

As seen, six of the eight pitches are assessed as poor quality, with these located at:

- ◀ Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club
- ◀ Lode Heath School
- ◀ North Solihull Sports Centre
- ◀ Saint Martin's School
- ◀ Silhillians Sports Club
- ◀ West Warwickshire Sports Complex

Common issues at these sites include signs of wear and tear, worn line markings, poor grip underfoot and unsafe fencing. Five of the pitches are in current use for club hockey and are therefore of particular concern, with imminent resurfacing required to ensure that the demand can continue to be accommodated.

In contrast, the pitches at Solihull School are both assessed as good quality following recent refurbishment. Where pitches are assessed as good or standard, sinking funds should still be put into place (where not already provided) to ensure that refurbishment can go ahead if and when required.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## *Ancillary provision*

None of the responding hockey clubs in Solihull report issues with the ancillary provision servicing the pitches that they access. Therefore, ancillary facilities at all sites are considered to be either adequate or good quality.

## **7.3: Demand**

There are currently four hockey clubs (Hampton-in-Arden HC, Old Silhillians HC, Olton & West Warwickshire HC and Solihull Blossomfield HC) playing in Solihull. In total, these provide 21 men's teams, 19 women's teams and 23 junior teams as well as five other team variations (including veteran and mixed teams). This is summarised in the table below.

Table 7.8: Summary of club demand

Name of club	No. of competitive teams			
	Senior men	Senior women	Juniors	Others
Hampton-in-Arden HC	5	3	1	1
Old Silhillians HC	6	5	17	1
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	8	8	2	1
Solihull Blossomfield HC	3	3	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>

In terms of membership, each club is relatively large, with 986 members across the clubs collectively. Old Silhillians HC has the highest membership (476 members), whilst Solihull Blossomfield HC has the lowest (127 members).

Table 7.9: Summary of club membership

Name of club	Senior men (17-55)	Senior women (17-55)	Junior boys (14-16)	Junior girls (14-16)	Junior boys (11-13)	Junior girls (11-13)	Mini mixed (5-10)	Total
Hampton-in-Arden HC	58	25	15	13	15	12	11	149
Old Silhillians HC	100	76	46	34	35	53	132	476
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	103	89	8	19	5	8	2	234
Solihull Blossomfield HC	35	40	8	8	8	8	20	127
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>986</b>

Each club and their demand are further summarised below.

### *Hampton-in-Arden HC*

The Club fields five men's, three women's, one junior and one masters' team. The Club is based at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club with all training and matches taking place on site.

### *Old Silhillians HC*

Fielding six men's, five women's and 17 junior teams and one masters team, the Club is based at Silhillians Sports Club for the majority of its demand. However, it also uses Solihull School as an overspill venue to cater for its midweek senior training and some match play demand.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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## *Olton & West Warwickshire HC*

The Club fields eight men's, eight women's, two junior teams and one mixed team. It is based at West Warwickshire Sports Complex with the majority of training and matches taking place on site. It also uses Solihull School as an overspill venue.

## *Solihull Blossomfield HC*

Consisting of three men's, three women's, three junior and two veteran teams, the Club mainly utilises the pitch at Saint Martin's School for its games and most of its training demand, whilst accessing Solihull School for some overspill activity. It is based at Blossomfield Club where there are no hockey pitches on site.

### ***Participation trends (changes since the previous study)***

Since the 2019 study, there has been a small reduction of two men's senior teams, although there has been an increase in the number of senior women's teams with three more now recorded. There has also been an increase of five junior teams.

### ***Additional demand***

In addition to club-based hockey activity, there are also various initiatives for hockey which are promoted by EH, as detailed below. These can add to the demand in a local authority and also necessitate the need for further pitch capacity.

#### *Hockey Heroes*

Hockey Heroes is a six-week hockey programme aimed at beginners (children aged five to eight) that not only focuses on helping children develop some physical hockey skills such as dribbling, passing and goal scoring, but also places as much emphasis on character development including teamwork, communication, perseverance, and respect.

There are currently no Hockey Heroes courses operating in Solihull.

#### *Back to Hockey*

Back to Hockey sessions are fun, social, and informal and are aimed at people who either have not played for a number of years or that are looking to play for the first time. They are generally hosted by clubs, with EH providing guidance on how to deliver the programme.

Benefits of clubs being involved in Back to Hockey include:

- ◀ More members
- ◀ More casual players
- ◀ Additional income
- ◀ Extra publicity
- ◀ New volunteers

In Solihull, Old Silhillians HC runs Back to Hockey sessions every Tuesday evening between 19:00 and 20:00 and utilises the pitch at Solihull School for this.



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## ***Walking hockey***

Increasing in popularity, walking hockey is perfect for players looking for a less physically demanding version of the game but still enjoy showing their skills and being involved in the team and social aspect.

There are currently no walking hockey sessions operating in Solihull.

## ***Imported/exported demand***

There is no known displaced demand from Solihull into other neighbouring areas and as such all Solihull-based demand is catered for within the Borough. Similarly, no demand is recorded as being imported.

## ***Future demand***

Growing participation is a key aim within EH's Strategic Plan and key drivers include working with clubs, universities, schools and regional and local leagues as well as developing opportunities for over 40s and delivering a quality programme of competition. Overall, it has an aim to double participation over the next ten years, meaning it does not consider team generation rates to provide an accurate representation of potential growth.

In relation to club aspirations in Solihull, Old Silhillians HC, Olton & West Warwickshire HC and Solihull Blossomfield HC all report future demand. This is summarised in the table below.

Table 7.10: Summary of future demand expressed by clubs

<b>Club</b>	<b>Future senior men's demand (teams)</b>	<b>Future senior women's demand (teams)</b>	<b>Future junior demand (teams)</b>
Old Silhillians HC	3	1	-
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	2	-	3
Solihull Blossomfield HC	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>

Old Silhillians HC reports that it intends to field three additional senior teams (two men's and one women's) and one veteran master's team. It reports that capacity exists at Silhillians Sports Club for this to be accommodated.

Olton & West Warwickshire HC reports future demand for two additional senior men's teams as well as three junior teams. However, it states that it would need more hours at Solihull School and Lode Heath to accommodate this as there is a lack of capacity on the pitch at West Warwickshire Sports Complex.

Solihull Blossomfield HC intends to grow by two additional senior teams (one men's and one women's) as well as two additional junior teams. It reports that capacity exists at Saint Martin's School for this to be accommodated.

As Hampton-in-Arden HC were unresponsive, future demand is unknown.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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## ***Latent/unmet demand***

As referenced above, Olton & West Warwickshire HC has future demand aspirations, but the Club does not think that this can be accommodated without increased pitch capacity at Solihull School and/or Lode Heath School. This therefore represents latent demand.

No other clubs identify any unmet or latent demand.

## ***Peak time demand***

For matches, most senior hockey activity in Solihull takes place on a Saturday, whereas most junior activity occurs on a Sunday. For training, peak time is midweek evenings, although preference is generally given for Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays due to clubs wanting to avoid training in close proximity to weekend matches.

## ***Usage***

The table below shows all available sites with full size hockey suitable AGP and the summary of use at each site against the peak period (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00). This not only includes hockey usage, but also other forms of demand, most notably relating to football training. This applies especially to the pitches located at education sites, therefore limiting the capacity for hockey club users.

In summary, many pitches do not have capacity to accommodate additional hockey usage, particularly on Saturdays for matches and on some midweek evenings when demand is at its highest. This is especially the case at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club, Silhillians Sports Club and West Warwickshire Sports Complex.

Furthermore, the only pitch that does have substantial spare capacity remaining is at North Solihull Sports Centre, where quality deters usage. That being said, some capacity also exists at Solihull School, Lode Heath School and Saint Martin's School.

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PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT**

Table 7.11: Usage of full size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Availability in the peak period (hours)	% of hockey usage	% of other usage (e.g., football)	Hockey club users	Training capacity comments (mid-week)	Match capacity comments (weekend)	Capacity summary
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	1	34	100%	-	Hampton-in-Arden HC	Used as the main training site for Hampton-in-Arden HC, with all capacity taken up by this.	Used to match capacity by Hampton-in-Arden HC.	No spare capacity remains.
65	Lode Heath School	1	29	20%	80%	Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Used for some midweek training by Olton & West Warwickshire HC, but the majority of activity is taken up by football and is used to capacity.	Used by Olton & West Warwickshire HC occasionally but the majority of usage is received by football. Spare capacity exists on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.	No spare capacity for midweek training but does exist for weekend match play (two matches on Saturdays and three on Sundays).
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	1	34	-	100%	-	Limited existing usage due to quality issues, with only minimal football activity taking place.	Limited existing usage due to quality issues, with only minimal football activity taking place.	Spare capacity for significant hockey demand (each midweek evening and for four matches on both Saturdays and Sundays); however, quality improvements are required to accommodate this.
91	Saint Martin's School	1	34	90%	10%	Solihull Blossomfield HC	Used as the main training venue by Solihull Blossomfield HC for midweek training, although spare capacity exists on most evenings. Some football usage received by West Midlands Police FC.	Used to capacity on Saturdays by Solihull Blossomfield HC (six teams). Spare capacity exists on Sundays.	Spare capacity for both midweek training (each evening) and Sunday match play (three matches). No capacity exists on Saturdays.
97	Silhillians Sports Club	1	34	70%	30%	Old Silhillians HC	Accommodates most of the training demand by Old Silhillians HC and some football usage received by Solihull FC.	Used as the main match venue by Old Silhillians HC, with no spare capacity remaining.	No spare capacity remains.
106	Solihull School	2	34	80%	20%	Old Silhillians HC Olton & West Warwickshire HC Solihull Blossomfield HC	Used to accommodate most of the training demand from Solihull Blossomfield HC and some overspill activity from Old Silhillians HC and Olton & West Warwickshire HC. Some tennis and touch rugby activity is also received but this is minimal.	Used by Solihull Blossomfield HC and Olton & West Warwickshire HC as an overspill venue, with spare capacity remaining on Saturday afternoons and Sundays.	Spare capacity for both midweek training (each evening) and weekend match play (two matches on Saturdays and Sundays).
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	1	34	100%	-	Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Used as the main training site by Olton & West Warwickshire HC and no spare capacity remains.	Used to capacity by Olton & West Warwickshire HC as their primary venue on a Saturday for the majority of the club's demand.	At capacity for midweek training but some spare capacity for match play on Sunday afternoons (two matches). None exists on Saturdays.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## 7.4: Supply and demand analysis

### *Match play analysis*

It is suggested that a full size, sports-lit hockey pitch is able to accommodate four match equivalent sessions on one day. With teams playing on a home and away basis, this means that one AGP is able to cater for eight 'home' teams at peak time (as one team equates to 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week).

Using the above calculations, on the basis that there are currently eight full size AGPs in Solihull, this provides a theoretical opportunity to accommodate up to 64 hockey teams across the Borough. However, quality issues mean that some of the provision cannot be used, whilst limited availability at some sites reduces the overall capacity further. The table below therefore further explores the level of capacity actually provided, firstly for senior hockey (i.e., on a Saturday).

Table 7.12: Summary of hockey pitch capacity for match play

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Number of teams		Comments
				Potential capacity	Actual capacity	
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	North	1	8	8	Full availability
65	Lode Heath School	Central	1	8	6	Availability reduced to football usage received
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	North	1	8	0	Poor quality and currently unused
91	Saint Martin's School	Central	1	8	8	Full availability
97	Silihillians Sports Club	Rural	1	8	8	Full availability
106	Solihull School	Central	2	16	16	Full availability
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Central	1	8	8	Full availability
<b>Total</b>				<b>64</b>	<b>54</b>	-

As seen, it is determined that the current provision can accommodate up to 54 senior teams on a Saturday, with this equating to 27 match equivalent sessions per week. With 40 senior teams currently provided, this suggests that supply is sufficient to meet demand, with ample spare capacity remaining for growth and an increase in usage.

For junior hockey matches, the need for pitches is generally less than it is for senior hockey. This is because younger age groups can play on half a pitch (meaning two fixtures can take place at one time) and because there are fewer junior teams in Solihull than there are senior teams. As such, provision adequate to accommodate senior demand is also likely to be adequate to accommodate junior demand, although the same capacity pressures are likely to apply where existing usage is significant.

### *Training analysis*

In terms of capacity for training, most AGPs in Solihull have high levels of existing usage, with spare capacity for growth minimal. This is exacerbated by additional usage from other sports, most predominately football, which further reduces availability for hockey clubs at desired times. The table below summarises the existing position for clubs at the sites they currently access.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 7.13: Hockey pitch training capacity by club

Club	Site/s used	Capacity summary
Hampton-in-Arden HC	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	No remaining spare capacity
Old Silhillians HC	Silhillians Sports Club	No remaining spare capacity
	Solihull School	Spare capacity exists
Olton & West Warwickshire HC	Lode Heath School	No remaining spare capacity
	Solihull School	Spare capacity exists
	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	No remaining spare capacity
Solihull Blossomfield HC	Saint Martin's School	Spare capacity exists
	Solihull School	Spare capacity exists

As seen, capacity issues are present for three of the four hockey clubs, with this particularly pressing for Hampton-in-Arden HC given that it currently only uses one venue (which is at capacity).

In addition, whilst theoretical spare capacity exists for Old Silhillians, Olton & West Warwickshire and Solihull Blossomfield hockey clubs, it must be noted that all three are competing for capacity at the same venue (Solihull School). Whilst the site has capacity for an increase in usage, this does not mean it could accommodate increases from all three clubs, which links to the latent demand expressed by Olton & West Warwickshire HC as it states that it cannot grow due to existing midweek capacity issues. It also uses Lode Heath School and West Warwickshire Sports Complex; however, both are currently fully used Monday-Friday.

### 7.5: Conclusion

Overall, there is currently a sufficient supply of hockey suitable AGPs in Solihull, although capacity pressures do exist, especially for training demand. There is also a clear need to secure tenure at several venues and to improve quality given that many pitches have reached the end of their lifespan and are assessed as poor quality.

Priority should be placed first and foremost on protecting and improving the pitches that are currently in use to ensure that the situation does not worsen. Attempts should also be made for this to be ensured through development management e.g., by having permitted development rights removed (meaning planning permission would be required for a surface change).

In addition, there is a need to address the capacity issues that are present. This can be achieved through a variety of methods, all of which will be explored in the proceeding Strategy & Action Plan document.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### **Hockey – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ It is determined that supply is sufficient to meet match play demand, with spare capacity remaining for growth and an increase in usage.
- ◀ In terms of training, capacity issues are identified for three of the four hockey clubs.
- ◀ Overall, there is currently a sufficient supply of hockey suitable pitches, although action is required to relieve the capacity pressures that exist, predominately in regards to training.

### **Hockey – supply summary**

- ◀ There are eight full size hockey suitable AGPs in Solihull located across seven sites (Solihull School provides two pitches).
- ◀ Each pitch is available for community use and serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ In addition to the full size AGPs, there are also four smaller size hockey suitable pitches located across the Borough, although none are suitable for purposeful hockey demand.
- ◀ Four of the full size AGPs are owned and managed by schools, three by sports clubs and the remaining pitch at North Solihull Sports Centre is managed by Everyone Active, on behalf of the Council.
- ◀ Security of tenure is limited, especially at schools with clubs accessing the pitches through short-term arrangements only.
- ◀ Most pitches offer full availability during the peak period, with the only exception being at Lode Heath School where midweek hours are somewhat restricted.
- ◀ Of the full size pitches, six are assessed as poor quality and the remaining two pitches are assessed as good, both located at Solihull School.
- ◀ Old Silhillians HC cites aspirations for the development of a second full size pitch at Silhillians Sports Club.

### **Hockey – demand summary**

- ◀ There are currently four community hockey clubs playing in Solihull, collectively catering for 986 members and 63 teams.
- ◀ Compared to data collected in 2019, the number of hockey teams has increased from 57 to 63 teams, despite a reduction in senior men's activity.
- ◀ Back to Hockey sessions take place at Solihull School via Old Silhillians HC.
- ◀ Old Silhillians, Olton & West Warwickshire and Solihull Blossomfield all report plans to grow their demand in the future.
- ◀ Olton & West Warwickshire HC reports latent/unmet demand in that current pitch capacity is impacting on demand and potential growth.
- ◀ Based on current demand, pitches at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club, Silhillians Sports Club and West Warwickshire Sports Complex do not have capacity for an increase in demand, although the remainder do.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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## PART 8: OTHER GRASS PITCH SPORTS

### 8.1: Baseball/softball

#### *Introduction*

Both baseball and softball are governed by Baseball and Softball UK (BSUK). BSUK has aligned its strategic goals to Sport England's Uniting the Movement, an initiative concentrated on increasing the sporting activity levels across under-represented communities, in the hope of securing investment for 2022-2027.

Baseball is played between two teams of nine players, both of which, alternate between batting and fielding across nine innings. In contrast, two forms of softball exist: slow pitch and fast pitch.

#### *Consultation*

Birmingham Baseball Club represents the primary demand for baseball/softball within the Borough. It was responsive to consultation requests to inform this section of the report.

#### *Supply*

There is one dedicated baseball diamond in Solihull, located at Marston Green Recreation Ground. This is utilised by Birmingham Baseball Club for training and match play purposes. The Club rents the diamond from the Council on a seasonal basis and reports that it is happy with this arrangement and has no issues.

There are no softball diamonds in the Borough.

#### *Demand*

Despite its name, Birmingham Baseball Club originates in Solihull and fields all demand within the Borough. The Club comprises of circa 40 members and consists of two senior teams, which both compete in the West Midlands Baseball League. The Club trains on Wednesday evenings, whilst matches are played on Saturday afternoons.

#### *Supply and demand analysis*

Birmingham Baseball Club is being adequately accommodated for via the dedicated provision at Marston Green Recreation Ground, with no issues reported in terms of either access, quality or capacity.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – Baseball/softball supply and demand summary**

- It is considered that there is sufficient provision to cater for the current levels of baseball/softball within Solihull on the premise that Birmingham Softball Club have continued access to Marston Green Recreation Ground.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – Baseball/softball supply summary**

- There is one dedicated baseball diamond, located at Marston Green Recreation Ground.

#### **Other grass pitch sports – Baseball/softball demand summary**

- Birmingham Baseball Club originates in Solihull and comprises of circa 40 members and consists of two senior teams.
- The Club trains on Wednesday evenings, whilst matches are played on Saturday afternoons, all at Marston Recreation Ground.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### 8.2: Gaelic football

#### *Introduction*

The British Council of the Gaelic Athletic Association is the singular council of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), responsible for the promotion and development of Gaelic games across Great Britain. The primary objective of Gaelic football is to score by driving the ball through or over the goal posts; the team which accumulates the highest number of points is victorious.

#### *Consultation*

Consultation requests have been sent to Sean McDermott GAA and St John Mitchel GAA to inform this section of the report. Both clubs responded to consultation requests, resulting in a 100% response rate.

#### *Supply*

Páirc na hÉireann is a central hub of Gaelic football provision in the region, also acting as Warwickshire GAA's headquarters. It offers two grass pitches and a full size 3G pitch (captured within Part 3 of this report) as well as a good quality clubhouse with toilets and changing rooms, and secure car parking facilities. Both Gaelic football clubs in the Borough access the site as well as others from across the region.

In addition, there is a further Gaelic football pitch supplied on land behind Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club (Old Damson Lane). This is utilised by Sean McDermott's GAA, predominately for training activity as it is serviced by sports lighting. It is, however, not serviced by ancillary facilities e.g., changing rooms.

Box Tree's Farm also supplies a Gaelic football pitch, with this used for additional activity by John Mitchel's GAA. There are, however, no ancillary facilities at the site.

#### *Future provision*

A planning application has been submitted at Box Tree's Farm for the development of sports pitches. This will include an additional Gaelic football pitch (over marked by rugby union and football), adding to the existing Gaelic pitch which is located at the south end of the site. In addition, there are plans for a 3G pitch with sports lighting, as well as the construction of a large replacement clubhouse and secure car parking.

#### *Quality*

The quality of the pitches at Páirc na hÉireann are considered to be good, with no issues identified. This aligns to it being a prominent Gaelic football venue.

Conversely, the pitches at both Box Tree's Farm and Old Damson Lane are assessed as standard quality. Maintenance is seemingly less sophisticated at both sites and there is a degree of unevenness identified.

#### *Demand*

Two Gaelic football clubs are identified within Solihull, with both affiliating to the Warwickshire GAA County Board.



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### *Sean McDermott's GAA*

Sean McDermott's GAA comprises of 300 members and consists of one senior men's, one senior women's, seven junior boys' and three juniors' girls' teams. After previous growth, the Club reports that its membership numbers have levelled out following the Covid-19 pandemic, although some age groups are stronger than others.

The Club trains on the Gaelic football pitch at Old Damson Lane and uses this on a lease arrangement basis from Birmingham Airport. The Club states that the length of the agreement is unknown but thinks it is for a long period of time, therefore expressing no concern. It is utilised each weekday evening and occasionally on weekends when Páirc na hÉireann is not available.

There are no ancillary facilities on site. Containers used to be provided which acted as changing facilities; however, these were often vandalised and therefore removed. The Club states it would ideally like to have changing rooms and toilets, like what is provided at Páirc na hÉireann.

Matches are played at Páirc na hÉireann, with this facility used at weekends and during evenings in the summer. Unlike its training facility, other clubs in the County also use this so matches have to be arranged to suit. That being said, the Club states that it does not currently require any more pitch time than it presently has access to.

### *John Mitchel's GAA*

The Club comprises of 200-300 members, with ages ranging from as young as three years old to elderly members in their seventies. It consists of several junior teams representing all age groups in addition to five adult teams.

The Club conducts all its training at Box Tree's Farm, with this taking place on weekday evenings for all teams. As mentioned above, there are plans to expand the site to increase Gaelic football activity and to accommodate other sporting users. The Club identifies that capacity is currently an issue at the site.

Matches are played at Páirc na hÉireann.

The Club reports that it has plans to develop its junior teams and bridge the gap between junior to senior teams. It also describes a significant recent expansion in its teams, with the Box Tree's Farm having helped to facilitate this, although it has now reached saturation point.

### ***Supply and demand analysis***

There is no capacity guidance for Gaelic football. However, with four grass pitches and one full size 3G pitch provided across three sites, the sport is seemingly being well provided for within Solihull. However, some capacity issues are identified, which leads to John Mitchel's GAA having expansion plans at Box Tree's Farm. This will increase the level of Gaelic football activity on site and develop it for multi-sport activity.

No capacity issues are reported at either Old Damson Lane or Páirc na hÉireann. However, support should continue to be offered to ensure participation levels can continue grow at the latter site given that it is the premier venue for the sport in the region.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

### **Other grass pitch sports – Gaelic football supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Through provision at Páirc na hÉireann and supplementary facilities at Box Tree's Farm and Old Damson Lane, Gaelic football is seemingly being well provided for within Solihull.
- ◀ However, some capacity issues are identified, which leads to John Mitchel's GAA having expansion plans at Box Tree's Farm.

### **Other grass pitch sports – Gaelic football supply summary**

- ◀ Páirc na hÉireann is a central hub of Gaelic football provision in the region, also acting as Warwickshire GAA's headquarters and offering two grass pitches and a full size 3G pitch.
- ◀ In addition, there is a further Gaelic football pitch supplied on land behind Birmingham Exiles Rugby Club (Old Damson Lane).
- ◀ Box Tree's Farm also supplies a Gaelic football pitch, with this used for additional activity by John Mitchel's GAA.
- ◀ The pitches at Páirc na hÉireann are rated as good quality, whereas the pitches at Box Tree's Farm and Old Damson Lane is standard.
- ◀ No changing facilities are provided at Old Damson Lane or Box Tree's Farm.
- ◀ At Box Tree's Farm, a planning application has been submitted for the development of additional provision; this will include another Gaelic football pitch (over marked by rugby union and football) and a 3G pitch, as well as a large clubhouse and car parking.

### **Other grass pitch sports – Gaelic football demand summary**

- ◀ Sean McDermott's GAA comprises of 300 members and consists of one senior men's, one senior women's, seven junior boys' and three juniors' girls' teams.
- ◀ The Club generally trains at Old Damson Lane and uses Páirc na hÉireann for match play.
- ◀ John Mitchel's GAA comprises of 200-300 members and consists of several junior teams representing in addition to five adult teams.
- ◀ The Club's senior teams play matches at Páirc na hÉireann, due to it being the county ground, whereas matches for its remaining teams and all training takes place at Box Tree's Farm.
- ◀ John Mitchel's GAA reports that it has reached capacity at Box Tree's Farm, with this linking to its expansion plans.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 9: BOWLS

### 9.1: Introduction

Outdoor bowls in Solihull is predominantly played on crown greens, with a typical season running in the Summer from May until October. The British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA) is the NGB with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of the sport.

Flat green bowls is another version of bowls played in England, governed by Bowls England. There is evidence of flat green bowls activity across the Borough, meaning that this format is also included within the study. Bowls England has recently released a new strategy known as Fit for the Future (2021-26).

As bowls was not included in the previous study, an exact comparison to previous levels of supply and demand cannot be presented.

#### **Consultation**

There are 16 bowling clubs identified as currently using outdoor bowls greens in Solihull. Of these, 13 have responded to consultation requests, meaning a response rate of 81%.

Of the 16 clubs, 14 are crown green clubs and two are flat green clubs. The response rate for crown green bowls is 86%, whereas it is 50% for flat green bowls. This is summarised by club in the table below.

Table 9.1: Summary of consultation responses

Club name	Playing format	Responded?
<b>Crown greens</b>		
Banbury BC	Crown	Yes
Bradford Arms BC	Crown	No
Colebrook BC	Crown	Yes
Greville Arms BC	Crown	Yes
Hockley Heath BC	Crown	Yes
King George VI BC	Crown	Yes
Marston Green BC	Crown	Yes
Moseley BC	Crown	No
Olton Tavern BC	Crown	Yes
Pavilions BC	Crown	Yes
Solihull RBL BC	Crown	Yes
Solihull Marsh Lane	Crown	Yes
Woodbourne BC	Crown	Yes
Ye Old Knowle BC	Crown	Yes
<b>Flat greens</b>		
Blossomfield BC	Flat	Yes
Solihull Municipal BC	Flat	No

As seen, the unresponsive clubs at Bradford Arms BC, Moseley BC and Solihull Municipal BC.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## 9.2: Supply

There are currently 16 crown green bowling greens in Solihull provided across 15 sites, in addition to two flat greens across two sites. All of the greens, whether they are crown or flat, are available for community use.

Most crown greens (seven) are located in the Rural Analysis Area, whilst North Analysis Area has the fewest number with four crown greens provided. In comparison, the flat greens are both located in the Central Analysis Area.

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

Analysis area	Number of greens	
	Crown	Flat
Central	5	2
North	4	-
Rural	7	-
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>

Figure 9.1 below shows the location of all bowling greens currently servicing Solihull. For a key to the map, see Table 9.3 overleaf.

Figure 9.1: Location of bowls greens in Solihull



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 9.3: Key to map

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Type	Club user/s	No. of greens
<b>Crown greens</b>						
22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	B37 7NS	North	Crown	Banbury BC	1
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	B94 6HH	Rural	Crown	Hockley Heath BC	1
77	Moseley Cricket Club	B90 3PE	Central	Crown	Moseley CC	1
117	The Pavilions	B37 6BU	North	Crown	Pavilions BC	1
118	Tippetts Field	B91 2PF	Central	Crown	Solihull Marsh Lane BC	1
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	B94 5LW	Rural	Crown	Woodbourne BC	1
131	Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club	B93 8QA	Rural	Crown	Ye Old Knowle BC	2
132	Greville Arms	B91 2RB	Central	Crown	Greville Arms BC	1
133	Olton Tavern	B92 8NU	Rural	Crown	Olton Tavern BC	1
134	Knowle Park	B93 9HT	Rural	Crown	-	1
136	Solihull Royal British Legion	B91 3DH	Central	Crown	Solihull RBL BC	1
137	Colebrook Bowls Club	B90 2LL	Central	Crown	Colebrook BC	1
138	Toby Carvery Castle Bromwich	B36 0AG	North	Crown	Bradford Arms BC	1
139	Hockley Heath Social Club	B94 9NH	Rural	Crown	King George VI BC	1
140	St Leonards Church	B37 7BT	North	Crown	Marston Green BC	1
<b>Flat greens</b>						
13	Blossomfield Club LTD	B91 3JY	Central	Flat	Blossomfield BC	1
105	Solihull Municipal Club	B91 3LE	Central	Flat	Solihull Municipal BC	1

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## *Disused provision*

West Warwickshire BC used to have a crown bowling green at West Warwickshire Sports Complex. However, from non-technical site assessments, it was found that the green is no longer maintained and is overgrown. The BCGBA reports that the Club folded during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A crown bowling green was also provided at Land Rover Sports & Social Club circa 2010. However, this is now also overgrown and no longer maintained.

## *Ownership/management*

Details around the ownership and management arrangements for clubs which responded to consultation requests are provided in the table below.

Table 9.4: Ownership/management arrangements for bowling clubs in Solihull

Name of club	Site ID	Site name	Ownership/management details
<b><i>Crown greens</i></b>			
Banbury BC	22	Chelmsley Wood Onward Club	Rented from the Council
Bradford Arms BC	138	Toby Carvery Castle Bromwich	Rented from the public house
Colebrook BC	137	Colebrook Bowls Club	Freehold
Greville Arms BC	132	Greville Arms	Rented from the public house
Hockley Heath BC	50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Leased until 2027 from the Council.
King George VI BC	139	Hockley Heath Social Club	Owned by the Social Club and rented for bowls
Marston Green BC	140	St Leonards Church	Leased on a five year agreement from St Leonards Church
Moseley CC	77	Moseley Cricket Club	Owned by the cricket club and leased for bowls
Olton Tavern BC	133	Olton Tavern	Rented from the public house
Pavilions BC	117	The Pavilions	Freehold
Solihull RBL BC	136	Solihull Royal British Legion	Rented from Royal British Legion
Solihull Marsh Lane	118	Tippetts Field	Freehold
Woodbourne BC	126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Owned by the Sports Club and leased for bowls
Ye Old Knowle BC	131	Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club	Freehold
<b><i>Flat greens</i></b>			
Blossomfield BC	13	Blossomfield Club	Freehold
Solihull Municipal BC	105	Solihull Municipal Club	Freehold

Where rental agreements are in place, no security of tenure is provided, unless the site is operated by the Council, in which case long-term access is considered guaranteed as part of its commitment to provide a leisure offering. A lack of security of tenure is especially the case at private sites such as public houses which can easily prevent future access beyond current arrangements. This is case for Greville Arms BC, Olton Tavern BC and Bradford Arms BC.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Clubs with lease agreements are considered to have greater security of tenure; however, the arrangements for some are nearing expiry which can be problematic. Examples include Hockley Heath and Marston Green bowls clubs, which both have short-term lease arrangements in place. Generally, clubs require at least 25 years on lease arrangements in order to secure funding for site improvements.

### **Indoor bowls**

Whilst this report only considers outdoor bowling greens, it must be referenced that there is also an indoor bowling facility in Solihull, located at Solihull Municipal Club. This is pertinent to this study as many users and members of outdoor bowling greens also utilise and are members of indoor facilities, particularly during winter months. Indoor greens have greater capacity than outdoor greens and can be used all-year round.

### **Sports lighting**

Bowling greens that are serviced by sports lighting can enable increased usage, especially during evenings outside of summer months. However, in Solihull, no greens are currently serviced. That being said bowling greens with sports lighting are somewhat rare across the Country and this is therefore comparable with the national picture. The indoor provision at Solihull Municipal Club provides a suitable alternative especially during the winter.

### **Quality**

The quality of bowling greens across Solihull 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

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. For further detail regarding the criteria, please see Appendix 2.

Across Solihull, seven crown greens are assessed as good quality (44%) and nine as standard quality (56%), with none assessed as poor. In addition, both flat greens are assessed as standard quality.

Table 9.5: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Type of green	No. of greens	Quality
<b>Crown greens</b>					
22	Chemlsey Wood Onward Club	North	Crown	1	Good
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Crown	1	Standard
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Crown	1	Good
117	The Pavilions	North	Crown	1	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Crown	1	Good
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	Crown	1	Good
131	Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club	Rural	Crown	1	Good

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Type of green	No. of greens	Quality
131	Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club	Rural	Crown	1	Good
132	Greville Arms	Central	Crown	1	Standard
133	Olton Tavern	Rural	Crown	1	Standard
134	Knowle Park	Rural	Crown	1	Standard
136	Solihull Royal British Legion	Central	Crown	1	Standard
137	Colebrook Bowls Club	Central	Crown	1	Standard
138	Toby Carvery Castle Bromwich	North	Crown	1	Standard
139	Hockley Heath Social Club	Rural	Crown	1	Good
140	St Leonards Church	North	Crown	1	Standard
<b>Flat greens</b>					
13	Blossomfield Club	Central	Flat	1	Standard
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	Flat	1	Standard

The good quality greens are provided at Blossomfield Club, Hockley Heath Social Club, Tippetts Field, Woodbourne Sports Club and Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club.

In correlation with no greens being assessed as poor quality, of responding clubs, six report that quality has improved over the last 12 months, with these stating that this is generally due to improved and/or increased maintenance. The clubs are as follows:

- ◀ Banbury BC
- ◀ Greville Arms BC
- ◀ King George VI BC
- ◀ Pavilions BC
- ◀ Solihull RBL BC
- ◀ Woodbourne BC

Contrastingly, Olton Tavern BC reports that the quality of its green has worsened and state this is due to the change in green keeper.

Colebrook BC also reports that its green has decreased in quality and that it has suffered issues with its surface developing bumps and the impact from wild animals. It aspires to have a water sprinkler system put in place but has not secured funding for this.

In addition, Blossomfield BC and Marston Green BC both report that their greens suffer from poor drainage, especially when heavy rainfall is experienced.

Hockley Heath BC reports that its green has suffered issues with vandalism. This has led to damage to the playing surface.

### *Ancillary provision*

Most clubs have access to some form of clubhouse/pavilion on site or through an adjoining public house, although the quality of these ranges from purpose-built, good quality brick pavilions to basic wooden huts and shelters. It is therefore important to recognise the importance of ancillary provision to bowling clubs as, if the facilities onsite are of suitable quantity/quality and meet players' needs, this can help sustain and grow membership levels. This is also acknowledged by the governing bodies as both offer potential grants for clubs looking to make ancillary facility improvements.



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Across Solihull, most clubs report that they are satisfied with their current provision, although some have improvement plans/aspirations, including, Solihull RBL and Woodbourne bowls clubs. Both report plans to renovate their club's pavilions in the near future.

Solihull Marsh Lane BC reports aspirations for disabled access to be improved to the clubhouse at Tippetts Field and for disabled toilets to be provided. However, no funding has been obtained as of yet. The Club also reports that its car parking is inadequate as although it has enough spaces, the surface is poor quality.

Marston Green BC reports that it does not have access to toilets or changing rooms on site and must use the nearby parish hall facilities instead.

### 9.3: Demand

#### *Current demand*

There are 16 clubs using bowling greens in Solihull. Membership across the clubs, where known, equates to 677 members, made up of 458 senior men, 198 senior women and 21 juniors.

For crown green bowls, there are 14 clubs and 607 members. This equates to 423 senior men, 163 senior women and 21 juniors. For flat green bowls, there are two clubs and 70 overall members. This amounts to 35 senior men and 35 senior women.

Membership numbers are summarised in the table below by club.

Table 9.8: Summary of club membership

Club name	Analysis area	Members			Membership total
		Men	Women	Juniors	
<b><i>Crown greens</i></b>					
Banbury BC	Central	36	8	-	<b>44</b>
Bradford Arms BC	North	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	-
Colebrook BC	Central	50	25	1	<b>76</b>
Greville Arms BC	Central	41	4	5	<b>50</b>
Hockley Heath BC	Rural	18	6	1	<b>25</b>
King George VI BC	Rural	17	18	-	<b>35</b>
Marston Green BC	North	38	18	-	<b>56</b>
Moseley BC	Central	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	-
Olton Tavern BC	Central	32	13	-	<b>45</b>
Pavilions BC	Central	8	5	-	<b>13</b>
Solihull RBL Club	Central	22	16	-	<b>38</b>
Solihull Marsh Lane BC	Central	58	25	1	<b>84</b>
Woodbourne Sports BC	Rural	25	6	3	<b>34</b>
Ye Old Knowle BC	Rural	78	19	10	<b>107</b>
<b>Total (where known)</b>		<b>423</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>607</b>
<b><i>Flat greens</i></b>					
Blossomfield BC	Central	35	35	-	<b>70</b>
Solihull Municipal BC	Central	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	-
<b>Total (where known)</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	-	<b>70</b>

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The average club membership is 43 for the crown green clubs and 70 for the flat green clubs. The largest clubs are Ye Old Knowle BC (107 members), Solihull Marsh Lane BC (84 members) and Colebrook BC (76 members), whilst the smallest is Pavilions BC (13 members).

By analysis area, the Central Analysis Area provides for the most demand for both formats, which aligns to it containing the largest number of greens. The North Analysis Area has the least participation.

Table 9.9: Summary of membership by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of members			
	Men's	Women's	Juniors	Total
<b>Crown greens</b>				
Central	247	96	7	<b>350</b>
North	38	18	-	<b>56</b>
Rural	138	49	14	<b>201</b>
<b>Solihull (where known)</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>607</b>
<b>Flat greens</b>				
Central	35	35	-	<b>70</b>
North	-	-	-	-
Rural	-	-	-	-
<b>Solihull (where known)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>70</b>

### **Participation trends**

Despite a national trend of declining membership, only Hockley Heath BC reports that it has experienced a decrease in its membership numbers over recent years.

Most remaining clubs report that demand has generally remained static. That being said, due to the nature of the sport, even clubs with static membership need to continuously attract new members to mitigate against the loss of existing users.

Solihull Marsh Lane BC reports that its senior members has increased in recent years, which has enabled the Club to field an additional team due to the extra members. It suggests that this is due to increased advertising and word of mouth.

### **Additional demand**

Five crown green clubs report that their greens are available for pay and play, in addition for use by members. The clubs are Banbury BC (at Chelmsley Wood Onward Club), Blossomfield BC (at Blossomfield Sports Club), Greville Arms BC (at Greville Arms), Marston Green BC (at St Leonards Church) and Solihull Marsh Lane BC (at Tippetts Field).

Notwithstanding the above, none of the clubs report significant uptake and the most state that any pay and play users are generally accompanied by members.

For the remaining clubs, the most prominent reason for pay and play not being offered is that there is no one on site at required times to manage the process. There is also a perceived lack of demand to make it financially viable.

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### *Play Bowls*

Play Bowls is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play users. Clubs are able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website. The aim is for this to help greens become more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience.

### *Bowls Big Weekend*

Bowls' Big Weekend gives people across the country the opportunity to play the sport for free in a relaxed, informal setting.

Bowls' Big Weekend ran from Friday 26th to Monday 29th May in 2023. The aim of the weekend allows clubs across the country will open their doors to enable new participants to discover everything that is great about our sociable, accessible sport.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand amounting to 386 people in Solihull, which equates to just over 0.01% of the population. This resembles the national average, also of 0.01%.

Notwithstanding the above, all responding clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated on the current level of provision available to them, and none report having a waiting list in place. As such, no clubs report any latent or unmet demand, with the majority actively trying to recruit new members. This means that it is likely that other barriers are preventing increased participation, rather than a lack of provision or capacity.

### ***Future demand***

The BCGBA and Bowls England are actively working to negate the stereotype that bowls is a sport is for the older generation. As such, they are taking active steps at county and national level to encourage younger players to participate.

Furthermore, using ONS projections, the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to significantly increase for the period up to 2037. Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for greens could increase, although exactly to what extent is unclear.

Of responding clubs, five crown green clubs report future demand aspirations, with this equating to an overall growth of 108 members (50 senior and 48 junior). This in addition to Blossomfield BC which has ambitions to grow by an additional 10 members (all senior). This summarised by club in the following table.

Table 9.10: Summary of future demand

Club name	Future demand (members)		Total
	Senior	Junior	
<b><i>Crown greens</i></b>			
Banbury BC	10	8	<b>18</b>
Greville Arms BC	5	5	<b>10</b>
Marston Green BC	5	5	<b>10</b>

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Club name	Future demand (members)		Total
	Senior	Junior	
Olton Tavern BC	5	-	5
Pavilions BC	20	25	45
Woodbourne Sports BC	15	5	20
Ye Old Knowle BC	10	-	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Flat greens</b>			
Blossomfield BC	10	-	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>

## *Bowls Bash*

To increase participation, Bowls England has recently launched a product known as Bowls Bash. This is an exciting, new form of lawn bowls that is easy to play, shortened and fun for all ages and abilities. The aim is to roll the ball at the Jack; the closer you get, the more points you earn for your team, and bonus points are given for kissing the target. It is normally played in teams of two, with players delivering 30 bowls each per match, and generally lasts an hour.

## 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 morning and afternoons by club members who bowl socially, with access a potential issue during peak times if membership is particularly high.

Neither the BCGBA nor Bowls England have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity, stating that it can vary from site-to-site and from club-to-club. However, 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 80 may need additional resource to ensure that it is meeting the required level of demand. It is also agreed that capacity should be assessed on a site-by-site and club-by-club basis as the club-orientated nature of the sport means that demand cannot and does not easily transfer.

Based on the above, capacity ratings for bowling greens in Solihull are classified as follows:

<b>Within capacity range</b>	Membership ensures green is sustainable without capacity issues
<b>At capacity range</b>	Membership is at the capacity limit of the green
<b>Outside capacity range</b>	Membership is below or above the recommended capacity range

Following this, the table below highlights the level of usage each green receives, taking into account both current and expressed future demand.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 9.11: Supply and demand balance of bowling greens in Solihull

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Club user	No. of greens	Capacity threshold	Current members	Future demand
<b>Crown greens</b>							
22	Chemlsey Wood Onward Club	North	Banbury BC	1	20-80	44	62
50	Hockley Heath Recreation Ground	Rural	Hockley Heath BC	1	20-80	25	25
77	Moseley Cricket Club	Central	Moseley BC	1	20-80	Unknown	Unknown
117	The Pavilions	North	Pavilions BC	1	20-80	13	58
118	Tippetts Field	Central	Solihull Marsh Lane BC	1	20-80	84	84
126	Woodbourne Sports Club	Rural	Woodbourne BC	1	20-80	34	54
131	Ye Old Knowle Bowling Club	Rural	Ye Old Knowle BC	2	40-160	107	117
132	Greville Arms	Central	Greville Arms BC	1	20-80	50	60
133	Olton Tavern	Rural	Olton Tavern BC	1	20-80	45	50
134	Knowle Park	Rural	-	1	20-80	0	0
136	Solihull Royal British Legion	Central	Solihull RBL BC	1	20-80	38	38
137	Colebrook Bowls Club	Central	Colebrook BC	1	20-80	76	76
138	Toby Carvery Castle Bromwich	North	Bradford Arms BC	1	20-80	Unknown	Unknown
139	Hockley Heath Social Club	Rural	King George VI BC	1	20-80	35	35
140	St Leonards Church	North	Marston Green BC	1	20-80	56	66
<b>Flat greens</b>							
13	Blossomfield Club LTD	Central	Blossomfield BC	1	20-80	70	80
105	Solihull Municipal Club	Central	Solihull Municipal BC	1	20-80	Unknown	Unknown

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As seen, only one of the clubs is currently operating above the recommended capacity limit, with this being at Tippetts Field (used by Solihull Marsh Lane BC). However, the Club does not report any existing capacity issues, suggesting that both current and future demand can be accommodated via the existing provision. This is especially the case given that all other sites seemingly have capacity for growth.

At the other end of the spectrum, Pavilions BC is currently operating below the capacity limit with just 13 members. However, the club expresses future demand sufficient to take it above the membership required to ensure sustainability.

The green at Knowle Park is also below the capacity limit as it is currently unused by clubs.

### **9.5: Conclusion**

Whilst there are some capacity pressures on the bowling greens in Solihull, this is relatively minimal, with only one green currently operating above recommended levels. Furthermore, no clubs report any issues, with all responding clubs suggesting that existing provision can meet both current and future demand. As such, supply is considered sufficient to meet both current and future demand, with no additional greens required.

Whilst no provision shortfalls are identified, with all but one green currently in use, it is also clear that most of the supply requires protection to ensure that demand can continue to be accommodated. That being said, clubs operating with a low membership may require support to ensure continued sustainability.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Only one of the greens is currently operating above the capacity limit, with this being at Tippetts Field (used by Solihull Marsh Lane BC), although no issues are reported.
- ◀ With no affected clubs reporting any issues and with all remaining greens having capacity for growth, currently supply is considered sufficient to meet demand.
- ◀ Whilst no shortfalls are identified, with all but one green in current club use, it is also clear that most of the supply requires protection to ensure that demand can continue to be accommodated.

### **Bowls – supply summary**

- ◀ There are 16 crown green bowls greens in Solihull provided across 15 sites, in addition to two flat greens at two sites.
- ◀ There are two crown greens (at West Warwickshire Sports Complex and The Land Rover Sports and Social Club) that have been identified as disused, although both sites are still active for other sports.
- ◀ Tenure issues exist for Greville Arms, Old Tavern and Bradford Arms bowls clubs due to only rental agreements existing, as well as Hockley Heath BC and Marston Green BC on account of their lease arrangements nearing expiry.
- ◀ None of the crown greens or flat greens in Solihull are serviced by sports lighting.
- ◀ Across the Borough, seven crown greens are assessed as good quality, nine as standard quality and none as poor quality, whereas both flat greens are standard quality.
- ◀ Solihull Marsh Lane, Solihull RBL and Woodbourne bowls clubs all state a need for their ancillary facilities to improve.

### **Bowls – demand summary**

- ◀ There are 16 clubs using bowling greens in Solihull. Membership across the clubs, where known, equates to 677 members, made up of 458 senior men, 198 senior women and 21 juniors.
- ◀ For crown green bowls, there are 14 clubs and 607 members, with this equating to 423 senior men, 163 senior women and 21 juniors, whereas there are 70 flat green members (although data is unknown for one of the two clubs).
- ◀ The average membership across the clubs is 43 for crown greens and 70 for flat greens.
- ◀ Despite a correlation of the national trend of declining membership, only Hockley Heath BC reports a decrease in membership numbers, with most remaining clubs reporting static participation.
- ◀ Five crown bowls clubs report that their greens are also available for pay and play, although take-up is seemingly low.
- ◀ 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.
- ◀ Seven crown green and one flat green club report future demand aspirations, with this equating to an overall growth of 118 members (80 senior and 48 junior).

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 10: TENNIS

### 10.1: Introduction

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

#### **Consultation**

There are eight tennis clubs in Solihull. Of these, six responded to consultation requests, resulting in a response rate of 75%, as summarised in the table below. The unresponsive clubs are Marston Green TC and West Warwickshire Sports TC.

Information from non-responsive clubs is gathered through non-technical site visits, information from the LTA and online research.

Table 10.1: Summary of consultation responses

Club name	Analysis area	Responded?
Berkswell & Balsall Common TC	Rural	Yes
Blossomfield TC	Central	Yes
Hampton-in-Arden TC	North	Yes
Knowle & Dorridge Racquets TC	Rural	Yes
Marston Green TC	North	No
Solihull Arden TC	Central	Yes
Solihull TC	Central	Yes
West Warwickshire Sports TC	Central	No

### 10.2: Supply

There are 155 traditional tennis courts identified in Solihull across 35 sites. Of these courts, 121 are categorised as being available for community access across 26 sites compared to 34 courts that are unavailable at nine sites. This includes the mini court identified at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club.

The Central Analysis Area has the largest number of available courts (85), whilst the Rural Area has the lowest number (32). In terms of unavailable courts, the majority are also in the Central Analysis Area due to the large number of courts at Solihull School and Solihull Sixth Form College. The North Analysis Area has the smallest number of four unavailable courts.

Table 10.2: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use
Central	61	24
North	34	4
Rural	26	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>34</b>



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Please note that courts 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 mixture of both). This is, however, not applicable when the price of membership is significant enough to prevent inclusive access, as is considered to be the case at David Lloyd Club Solihull (Cranmore).

In full, the unavailable courts in Solihull are located at:

- ◀ Castlewood Special School
- ◀ Dickens Heath Community Primary School
- ◀ Fordbridge Community Primary School
- ◀ Hazel Oak School
- ◀ Heart of England School
- ◀ Saint Martin's School
- ◀ Solihull School
- ◀ Solihull Sixth Form College

### *Changes from the previous study*

Overall, there has been an increase in the number of tennis courts within Solihull since the 2019 study. This includes an increase in community available provision from 137 courts to 155 and a decrease in unavailable provision from 40 to 34 courts. This is primarily due to a greater number of schools now allowing access e.g., Park Hall Academy.

The table below summarises the percentage of changes in provision since the previous study for both available and unavailable courts.

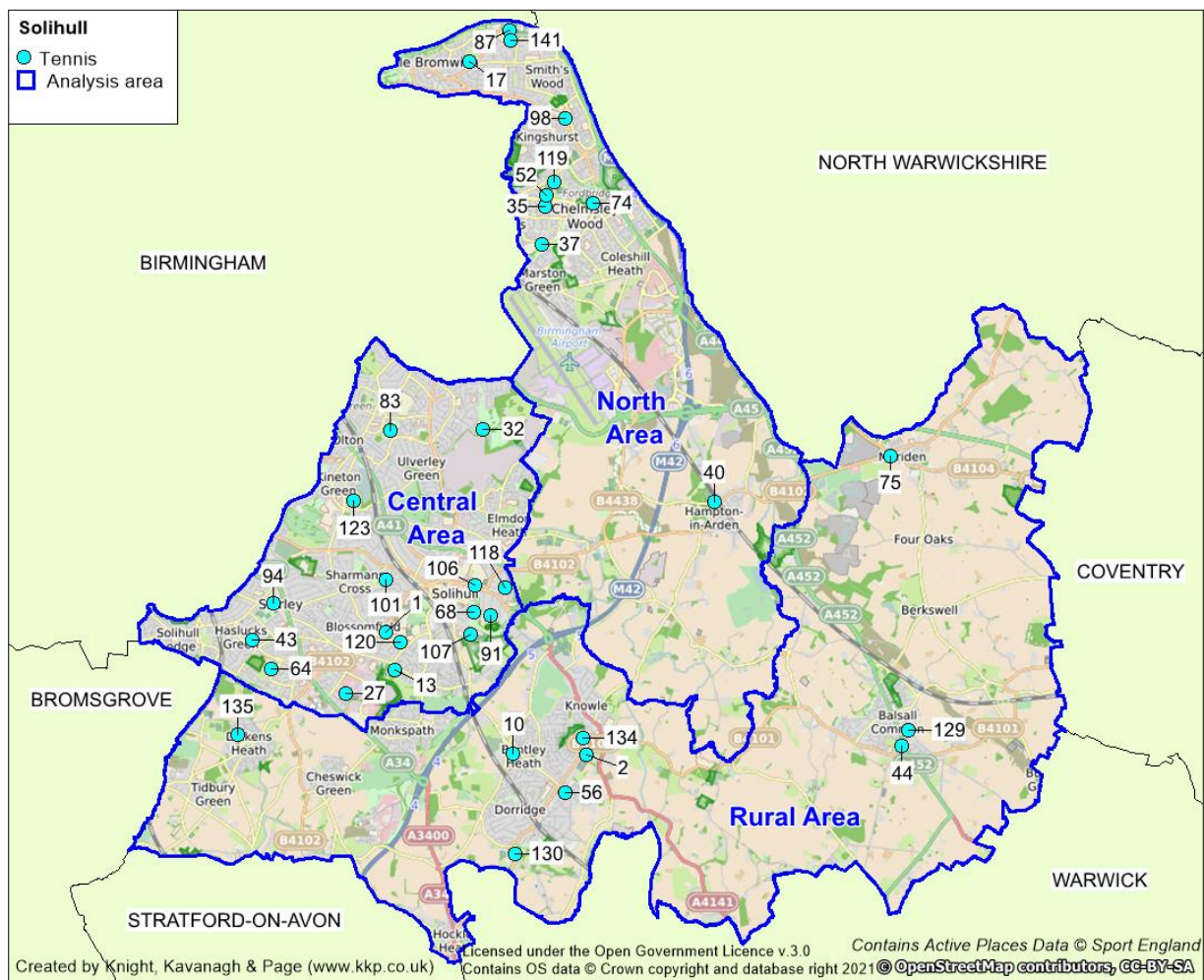
Table 10.3: Summary of the changes in the number of courts since the previous study

Analysis area	Courts available for community use	Courts unavailable for community use
Central	13% increase	50% increase
North	36% increase	64% decrease
Rural	44% increase	54% decrease
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>13% increase</b>	<b>15% decrease</b>

Figure 10.1 shows the location of courts servicing Solihull that are included within the study. For a key to the map, see Table 10.4

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Figure 10.1: Location of tennis courts in Solihull



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Table 10.4: Summary of outdoor tennis courts in Solihull

Site ID	Site Name	Postcode	Analysis Area	Ownership	Community use?	Club user?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
1	Alderbrook School	B91 1SN	Central	School	Yes	-	4	No	Polymeric	Standard
1	Alderbrook School	B91 1SN	Central	School	Yes	-	1	No	Macadam	Poor
2	Arden Academy	B93 0PT	Rural	School	Yes	-	6	No	Macadam	Standard
10	Bentley Heath Recreation Ground	B93 9AN	Rural	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Good
13	Blossomfield Sports Club	B91 3JY	Central	Club	Yes	Blossomfield TC	3	No	Macadam	Standard
13	Blossomfield Sports Club	B91 3JY	Central	Club	Yes	Blossomfield TC	2	Yes	Artificial	Good
13	Blossomfield Sports Club	B91 3JY	Central	Club	Yes	Blossomfield TC	2	Yes	Artificial clay	Standard
17	Castle Bromwich Playing Fields	B39 9PB	North	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Standard
27	David Lloyd Club (Solihull Cranmore)	B90 4AL	Central	Private	Yes	-	2	No	Artificial	Poor
32	Elmdon Park	B92 2EY	Central	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Poor
35	Fordbridge Community Primary School	B37 5BU	North	School	No	-	2	No	Macadam	Standard
37	Grace Academy	B37 5JS	North	School	Yes	-	4	Yes	Macadam	Standard
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	B92 0DQ	North	Club	Yes	Hampton-in-Arden TC	4	Yes	Artificial clay	Standard
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	B92 0DQ	North	Club	Yes	Hampton-in-Arden TC	1 <sup>15</sup>	Yes	Macadam	Standard
43	Hazel Oak School	B90 2AZ	Central	School	No	-	1	No	Macadam	Good
44	Heart of England School	CV7 7FW	Rural	School	No	-	6	No	Macadam	Standard
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	B37 5GA	North	School	Yes	-	4	No	Macadam	Standard
56	Knowle & Dorridge Racquets Club	B93 0PJ	Rural	Club	Yes	Knowle & Dorridge RC	8	Yes	Artificial	Good
64	Lighthall School	B90 2PZ	Central	School	Yes	-	4	No	Polymeric	Standard
68	Malvern Park	B91 3DW	Central	Council	Yes	-	4	No	Macadam	Good
74	Meriden Park	B37 5SD	North	Council	Yes	-	3	No	Macadam	Poor
75	Meriden Sports Park	CV7 7SP	Rural	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Poor
83	Olton Jubilee Park	B92 8QE	Central	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Poor
87	Park Hall Academy	B36 9HF	North	School	Yes	-	4	No	Macadam	Standard
91	Saint Martin's School	B91 3EN	Central	School	No	-	6	Yes	Artificial	Good
94	Shirley Park	B90 3GF	Central	Council	Yes	-	4	No	Macadam	Good
98	Smith's Wood Academy	B36 0UE	North	School	Yes	-	3	No	Macadam	Standard
101	Solihull Arden Club	B91 1RG	Central	Club	Yes	Solihull Arden TC	7	Yes	Artificial	Good
101	Solihull Arden Club	B91 1RG	Central	Club	Yes	Solihull Arden TC	3	No	Artificial	Standard
101	Solihull Arden Club	B91 1RG	Central	Club	Yes	Solihull Arden TC	3	No	Macadam	Good
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	School	No	-	8	Yes	Artificial	Good
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	School	No	-	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	B91 3WR	Central	College	No	-	4	No	Polymeric	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	B91 2PF	Central	Club	Yes	Solihull TC	3	Yes	Artificial	Standard
118	Tippetts Field	B91 2PF	Central	Club	Yes	Solihull TC	3	No	Artificial	Standard
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	B37 6NU	North	School	Yes	-	4	Yes	Polymeric	Standard
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	School	Yes	-	5	No	Macadam	Poor
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	B91 1DA	Central	Club	Yes	West Warwickshire Sports TC	7	Yes	Artificial	Good
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	B37 7BS	North	Club	Yes	Marston Green TC	2	Yes	Artificial	Standard
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	B37 7BS	North	Club	Yes	Marston Green TC	2	No	Artificial	Standard
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	B37 7BS	North	Club	Yes	Marston Green TC	1	Yes	Macadam	Standard
130	Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club	CV7 7GE	Rural	Club	Yes	Berkswell & Balsall TC	4	Yes	Artificial	Good
130	Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club	CV7 7GE	Rural	Club	Yes	Berkswell & Balsall TC	2	Yes	Clay	Standard

<sup>15</sup> Mini size tennis court

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Site ID	Site Name	Postcode	Analysis Area	Ownership	Community use?	Club user?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Court quality
134	Knowle Park	B93 9HT	Rural	Council	Yes	-	2	No	Macadam	Good
135	Dickens Heath Community Primary School	B90 1NA	Central	School	No	-	1	No	Macadam	Standard
141	Castlewood Special School	B36 9LF	North	School	No	-	2	No	Macadam	Poor

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### ***Disused/lapsed provision***

No tennis courts have been identified as being disused in Solihull.

### ***Future provision***

There are no known plans to develop new traditional tennis court provision in Solihull. There are development proposals in place at Sharman's Cross, which is located adjacent to Solihull Arden Club; however, this only relates to the disused playing field land at the site. In fact, the Club could benefit from the scheme via improved access. The existing entry road is extremely tight.

It is also set out in the Mitigation Strategy that this could be tied into the development of Site allocation 9: South of Knowle due to the proximity of the sites; however, proposals in relation to Arden Academy Trust have since stalled.

Solihull Arden TC reports aspirations for more padel courts to cater for the increased demand across the Borough.

### ***Mini tennis provision***

Mini tennis provides children aged 4-10 with an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of tennis at an early age. It utilises smaller courts, nets and rackets as well as lower-bouncing tennis balls to develop vital tennis skills and techniques. The game has three levels, with the LTA stating that each stage has key aims and goals as follows:

- ◀ Red (Stage 3): 4-8 year olds – serve, rally and score
- ◀ Orange (Stage 2): 8-9 year olds – develop a rounded game
- ◀ Green (Stage 1): 10 year olds – put skills to the test

One dedicated mini court has been identified in Solihull, with this provided at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club. However, traditional tennis courts can also be used for the activity.

### ***Padel provision***

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. In 2022, 90,000 people reportedly played padel more than once in England, representing a 493% year on year increase compared to 2021 (15,000). This exemplifies the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for.

In order to grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, whereas there are now 275, with a projected growth to 450 in 2023. It is therefore envisaged that the infrastructure and participation in padel will increase significantly in the next five years.

There are three padel courts within Solihull, all located at Solihull Arden Club. These have all been provided since the previous study.

The LTA states that padel court development at leisure centre sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model. Furthermore, it identifies that they can benefit clubs and

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particularly those that may be otherwise struggling due to the additional revenue that they can provide.

Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging providers to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of traditional tennis courts remains sufficient.

### **Indoor provision**

There are three indoor tennis courts provided at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. Although indoor courts are not considered within the PPOSS, it is acknowledged that they can provide additional capacity for tennis demand.

### **Ownership/management**

The table below highlights the management/ownership of tennis courts within Solihull. In total, 57 courts are provided at club sites and 23 are provided at local authority sites, with all of these available for community use. There are 73 provided at education sites, although only 39 of these are community available, whilst the two courts classified as 'other' are those at David Lloyd Club (Solihull Cranmore) which is ran commercially.

Table 10.5: Outdoor tennis courts by management type

Community use	Number of courts			
	Sports Club	Council	Education	Other
Available	57	23	39	2
Unavailable	-	-	34	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2</b>

### **Security of tenure**

Security of tenure is provided to all tennis clubs in Solihull, with all clubs either owning their sites or leasing them on a long-term basis. As such, no clubs report any issues in this regard.

Venues used by each club and the tenure arrangements in place are summarised in the following table.

Table 10.6: Summary of club venues and tenure

Club name	Site used	Type of tenure
Berkswell & Balsall Common TC	Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club	Lease
Blossomfield TC	Blossomfield Club LTD	Freehold
Hampton-in-Arden RC	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	Lease
Knowle & Dorridge Racquets TC	Knowle & Dorridge Racquets Club	Freehold
Marston Green TC	Marston Green Tennis Club	Freehold
Solihull Arden TC	Solihull Arden Club	Freehold
Solihull TC	Tippetts Field	Lease
West Warwickshire Sports TC	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	Freehold

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## ***Court type***

Most outdoor tennis courts have a macadam surface, with 74 of the 155 courts being of this type and 58 of these being available for community use. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment.

The remaining provision is either artificial (57 courts), artificial clay (six courts), clay (two courts) and polymeric (16 courts). Whilst artificial courts have a similar lifespan to macadam courts, clay courts are generally much harder and more expensive to maintain, especially during bad weather spells.

The clay courts in Solihull are found at Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club.

Table 10.7: Summary of tennis court types across Solihull

<b>Court type</b>	<b>Available for community use</b>	<b>Unavailable for community use</b>	<b>Total number of courts</b>
Artificial turf	43	14	57
Clay	2	-	2
Artificial clay	6	-	6
Polymeric	12	4	16
Macadam	58	16	74
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>155</b>

## ***Sports lighting***

Sports lit courts 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 allow for a 35% increase in available court time on an annual basis.

In Solihull, 65 out of the 155 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing just 42% of the provision. Of these, 47 are available for community use across the following sites:

- ◀ Berkswell and Balsall Tennis Club
- ◀ Blossomfield Sports Club
- ◀ Grace Academy
- ◀ Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club
- ◀ Knowle & Dorridge Racquets Club
- ◀ Marston Green Tennis Club
- ◀ Solihull Arden Club
- ◀ Tippetts Field
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst
- ◀ West Warwickshire Sports Complex

The sports lit courts unavailable for community use are located at Solihull School, Solihull Sixth Form College and Saint Martin's School.

A lack of sports lighting at other school sites presents a key reason as to why many of the courts are unavailable for community use. Many of the providers state that making them available for lettings would not be financially viable as usage would be limited, although the

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LTA does offer solutions to help overcome this including initiatives such as Clubspark and Gate Access (detailed further on).

Access to courts with sports lighting is considered particularly key for clubs as it allows for greater use of provision, which in turn can help accommodate more members. To that end, it must be noted that in Solihull, all clubs have access to some courts that are sports lit.

Notwithstanding the above, Blossomfield TC, Solihull Arden TC and Solihull TC all aspire to upgrade their sports lighting. Both Blossomfield TC and Solihull TC note plans to replace current halide lighting with an LED alternative and the latter is currently looking for sources of funding to support this.

Berkswell & Balsall TC also has aspirations for new sports lighting on its courts and states that it has a sinking fund in place to assist with this, although it is also looking for other forms of funding to support the project.

Away from clubs, increasing the number of local authority courts with sports lighting is also a strategic aim for the LTA due to the additional recreational demand and tennis programmes such provision can help accommodate. Of the local authority courts in Solihull, none of the courts are currently serviced by sports lighting. This is rare.

### *LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme<sup>16</sup>*

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

The objectives of the fund are to:

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

As part of the fund, the LTA will fund:

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

### **Overmarking of courts**

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

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<sup>16</sup> [Quick Access Loan Scheme for tennis facilities \(lta.org.uk\)](#)



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be detrimental to quality over time, as well as creating capacity issues if there is community demand from more than one sport.

In Solihull, some or all of the courts at the sites featured in the following table are overmarked.

Table 10.8: Summary of tennis court overmarking

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Tennis courts	Overmarked with
1	Alderbrook School	Central	5	Four netball courts
2	Arden Academy	Rural	6	Four netball courts
37	Grace Academy	North	4	Three netball courts
44	Heart of England School	Rural	6	Three netball courts
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	North	4	Three netball courts
64	Lighthall School	Central	4	Three netball courts
75	Meriden Sports Park	Rural	2	Two netball courts
87	Park Hall Academy	North	4	Three netball courts
98	Smith's Wood Academy	North	3	Three netball courts
106	Solihull School	Central	4	Three netball courts
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	Central	4	One netball court
119	Tudor Grange Kingshurst Academy	North	4	Four netball courts
120	Tudor Grange Solihull Academy	Central	5	Four netball courts
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	North	1	One netball court
135	Dickens Heath Community Primary School	Central	1	One netball court
141	Castlewood Special School	North	2	One basketball court

The majority are overmarked by netball courts which are identified in greater detail in Part 11: Netball.

### 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).

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

Maintaining high court quality is an important aspect of tennis and therefore the non-technical assessment assesses several factors are used to determine court quality. The criterion for the non-technical assessment include assessing grip underfoot, damage to the surface, line markings, evidence of moss/lichen, slope of courts, disability access, fencing and courts being of an appropriate size for competitive tennis.

Of the courts in Solihull, 58 are assessed as good quality (39 of which are available for community use), with 78 assessed as standard quality (65 available for community use) and 19 assessed as poor quality (17 are available for community use). Quality across Solihull is summarised in the following table; for site-by-site findings, see Table 10.3.

Table 10.9: Quality of tennis courts across Solihull

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Community use	Court quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	39	65	17
Unavailable	19	13	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>19</b>

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

- ◀ Alderbrook School
- ◀ Elmdon Park
- ◀ Meriden Park
- ◀ Meriden Sports Park
- ◀ Olton Jubilee Park
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Solihull

Issues recorded at these sites include poor grip underfoot, the presence of moss, worn line markings and loose gravel. Moreover, maintenance is also considered to be basic and infrequent at most of the poor quality sites, which can lead to further deterioration.

A few of the poor quality courts are located at local authority sites (Elmdon Park, Meriden Park, Meriden Sports Park and Olton Jubilee Park). Improving local authority courts is currently 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 if the provision is serviced (or could be serviced) by changing facilities and sports lighting.

Tudor Grange Academy Solihull reports it has acquired funding to resurface its poor quality tennis courts to improve quality and to improve community access appeal.

Away from the poor quality courts, Berkswell & Balsall Common TC reports that it has plans to resurface one of its clay courts to improve its quality. Its clay provision is currently assessed as standard.

Similarly, both Blossomfield TC and Hampton-in-Arden TC report plans to resurface all their courts. Both currently have provision that is assessed as standard quality. Blossomfield TC reports that its macadam courts are currently unsuitable for matches, which reduces the total capacity across its provision. If quality was improved, it could field more teams.

### *Renovation fund<sup>17</sup>*

The LTA has secured a £22 million investment fund to be put into public tennis courts across Britain, together with an £8.5 million investment from the LTA. This will see thousands of public park tennis courts that are in poor or unplayable condition improved for the benefit of local communities.

The LTA's ambition is to drive participation across park tennis sites, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of these facilities. As well as paying for the refurbishment of public park courts, the new investment will also pay for the implementation of sustainable operating models for the facilities, with specialist programmes (e.g., gated access and Smart Access lite) and support to ensure courts are both affordable and utilised.

<sup>17</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/news/30-million-package-to-refurbish-4500-public-tennis-courts-in-deprived-parts-of-uk-announced>

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At present, in Solihull, Elmdon Park (two courts) and Meriden Park (three courts) have been identified for investment. This follows recent improvement at Bentley Heath Recreation Ground, Knowle Park, Malvern Park and Shirley Park (with courts now assessed as good quality).

Of the above, the courts at Elmdon Park are to be resurfaced, whilst the courts at Meriden Park are just being gated.

### ***Ancillary provision***

In total, three clubs through consultation report ancillary facility issues in Solihull. These are Hampton-in-Arden TC, Solihull Arden TC and Solihull TC.

Hampton-in-Arden TC reports that the ancillary provision at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club is in poor condition. Through consultation, the Club states that it has been granted planning permission to develop the clubhouse but needs to find funding streams to support this.

Solihull Arden TC reports, no issues with its clubhouse but notes that, as part of its development plan, it wishes to increase the amount of car parking at Tippetts Field.

Solihull TC reports it has plans to refurbish its clubhouse as it is looking outdated and tired. In addition, it would like to make its pavilion more disability friendly. However, it is still looking for funding streams to support this project.

Through consultation, Knowle and Dorridge RC report it has aspirations to extend its bar area and make the clubhouse more disability friendly. It rates its current provision as good quality, having recently refurbished its changing rooms.

For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic. Whilst most of the other sites do provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for tennis and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Often, the facilities predominately service football/cricket pitch users and therefore are not readily available or suited to tennis court users.

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.

### **10.3: Demand**

#### ***Competitive tennis***

There are eight clubs across Solihull. Across the clubs, there is an overall membership of 3,149 which broken down amounts to 2,293 senior members and 856 junior members. The average club membership is 393, which represents substantial demand.

A club-by-club breakdown can be seen in the table below.

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Table 10.10: Summary of tennis club membership

Name of club	Sites used	Number of members		
		Seniors	Juniors	Total
Berkswell & Balsall Common TC	Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club	216	159	<b>375</b>
Blossomfield TC	Blossomfield Club	180	140	<b>320</b>
Hampton-in-Arden TC	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	156	98	<b>254</b>
Knowle & Dorridge Racquets TC	Knowle & Dorridge Racquets Tennis Club	120	136	<b>256</b>
Marston Green TC	Marston Green Tennis Club	44	17	<b>61</b>
Solihull Arden TC	Solihull Arden Club	1,100	200	<b>1,300</b>
Solihull TC	Tippetts Field	148	49	<b>197</b>
West Warwickshire Sports TC	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	329	57	<b>386</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,293</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>3,149</b>

Many of the clubs are large such as Solihull Arden TC, which has 1,300 members. However, it must be noted that this relates to total membership across the site, which also incorporates squash courts and a health club (including a gym, fitness studio and sauna). As such, only a proportion of the members will be accessing the tennis provision.

Marston Green TC has the smallest membership with 61 members.

### *Changes from the previous study*

Since the previous study, Ullenhall TC is now not included within the remit of the study due to playing within Stratford-upon-Avon.

Three clubs report that membership levels have increased over recent years. These are:

- ◀ Berkswell TC
- ◀ Solihull Arden TC
- ◀ West Warwickshire TC

Berkswell TC states its memberships has increased due to the general rise in demand following Covid-19. Nevertheless, it also notes that its junior membership has remained pretty static.

Solihull Arden TC states it has acquired an additional 500 members due to the club's investment in its padel courts. In addition, the extension of the gym and introduction of combined racket membership has also contributed to the increase.

In contrast, Hampton-in-Arden TC and Solihull TC both report a decrease, with this relating to both senior and junior participation. The Clubs give a variety of reasons for the decrease such as members playing for other clubs or moving away from the area or the increase in membership rates.

With three clubs reporting demand increases and two reporting decreases, where known. This correlates to a national picture of growing demand. The LTA reports that demand has increased significantly in recent years, especially since Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.

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Nationally, the LTA has announced participation figures for 2022 showing sustained success in getting more people playing tennis more often, with growth across all demographics, regions and nations of Great Britain. This is particularly amongst 16-34 year-olds and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The number of adults reporting that they had played tennis during 2022 increased 43% compared to the previous year (2021), rising from 3.3 million to 4.7 million from January through to December. This is the highest total recorded since 2017 and has continued the growth seen across 2018 and 2019, before being interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, more than two million adults play monthly and this is the highest level recorded since the LTA started tracking this measure seven years ago. This means that the LTA has achieved the targets set out in its five-year 2018-23 strategy for adult annual and monthly participation, one year ahead of schedule.

Finally, children's weekly participation in tennis has seen positive growth in the past year with over three and a half million children playing tennis and with an extra 328,000 children playing tennis in schools.

### ***Informal and parks tennis***

Away from club courts, usage can be difficult to quantify as it is not always monitored, especially at sites that are free to access with is currently the case at all local authority sites in Solihull (see Free Parks Tennis section). Demand for such provision is generally at its highest during summer months, especially following events such as Wimbledon, but significant capacity is likely to exist outside of this.

The LTA has developed a support package for local authorities to grow and track the use of tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation, with products known as ClubSpark, Play (previously Rally) and Gate Access established. These represent what the LTA calls a major improvement to the customer journey and provide a clear revenue stream to reinvest into court provision.

In Solihull, the following sites are known to utilise some or all of the products currently:

- ◀ Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club
- ◀ Bentley Heath Recreation Ground
- ◀ Castle Bromwich Playing Fields
- ◀ Elmdon Park
- ◀ Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club
- ◀ Knowle Park
- ◀ Malvern Park
- ◀ Meriden Park
- ◀ Meriden Sports Park
- ◀ Olton Jubilee Park
- ◀ Shirley Park
- ◀ Tippetts Field

Despite the above sites having Gate Access established, this was suspended during covid and has not been re-activated since. The Council reports plans to re-instate the system in the hope of them being in active operation by Spring 2024.

The LTA products are further summarised below.

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### *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 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; this allows for identification of trends and patterns and evidence to demonstrate participation levels and impact.

### *LTA Play*

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

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

### *Gate Access*

The LTA has developed two Gate Access gate 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 has supported the installation of 177 gate access systems within the last two years. Furthermore, it states that sites with Gate Access installations:

- ◀ Attracted 65,751 unique players
- ◀ Led to 791,226 court bookings

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- ◀ Generated £1.5 million of income

### ***Additional demand***

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

#### *Local tennis leagues*

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

Operating within Solihull is the Solihull Tennis League. It suggests use of the following sites:

- ◀ Bentley Heath Recreation Ground
- ◀ Elmdon Park
- ◀ Malvern Park
- ◀ Meriden Park
- ◀ Shirley Park
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst
- ◀ Tudor Grange Leisure Centre

#### *LTA Youth Start*

This is a six-week coaching offer for children who have never played tennis and is identified as a priority by the LTA. For £25, young people get coaching from an LTA accredited coach, a free racket, a pack of balls and personalised t-shirt so that they can continue playing.

In Solihull, LTA Youth Start is known to be in operation at Shirley Park, Solihull Tennis Club and West Warwickshire Sports Complex.

#### *LTA Big Tennis Weekend*

The LTA Big Tennis Weekend is an LTA initiative which all registered venues can access. Clubs and venues can sign up to host open days, which are free of charge, and create a relaxed and welcoming environment for those new to tennis to participate. This in turn can potentially lead to the clubs attracting new members.

The LTA hosts three dedicated weekends a year (in May, July and October). These are the UK's biggest public tennis events. Furthermore, venues are able to run additional events outside these dates and will benefit from their events being promoted on the national LTA campaign website. All clubs running an open day are asked to promote a follow-on offer to all attendees, such as a reduced rate introductory membership or a number of free coaching sessions, to encourage people to continue playing after the event.

No sites in Solihull currently host Big Tennis weekends.

#### *Free Parks Tennis*

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The LTA has launched the LTA Free Parks Tennis offer. It states that this is due to the following needs:

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

The key points of a free park tennis session are:

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

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

In Solihull, all local authority courts are free to access, with the Council joining in partnership with the LTA to increase access and opportunities for all to play.

### *Padel*

Currently 90,000 people reportedly play Padel more than once a year in England - a 493% year on year increase compared to 2021 (15,000). This exemplifies the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for.

As previously identified, Solihull Arden Club provides Padel tennis courts and reports aspirations to develop more provision. Given the growing popularity of the format, it is likely that there will be further demand moving forward as it is thought that take-up would be considerable were additional provision to be established.

### ***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 for local authorities and other providers to address such barriers, whilst also bettering understanding of court usage, although an element of this has already taken place in Solihull following recent park court improvements and implementation of LTA products (e.g., Clubspark).



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In addition, Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables an analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis but that 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 3,921 people within Solihull, which represents approximately 1.6% of the Borough's population compared to a national average of 1.7%. This therefore suggests that unmet demand is marginally lower than what would otherwise be expected.

Notwithstanding the above, all responding clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated on the current level of provision available to them and that no potential members are being turned away due to capacity issues. As such, no clubs report any latent or unmet demand, with the majority actively trying to recruit new members. This suggests that the latent demand identified through other methods is for non-club activity, or that other barriers aside from facilities are preventing activity.

Away from traditional tennis, as referenced previously, Solihull Arden TC reports that if it had more padel courts, it would be able to accommodate an increase in padel demand.

### **Future demand**

Four of the responsive clubs report plans to increase their membership numbers; Hampton-in-Arden, Knowle & Dorridge, Solihull Arden and Solihull tennis clubs. The total future demand expressed by these equates to 270 senior and 170 junior members, as shown in the table below.

Table 10.12 Summary of future tennis club demand (responsive clubs)

Club	Future demand (members)	
	Senior	Junior
Hampton-in-Arden TC	20	20
Knowle & Dorridge RC	40	30
Solihull Arden TC	200	100
Solihull TC	10	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>170</b>

In addition, the LTA also expects future growth as identified in its insight tools, with much of this demand likely to include participation outside of the club environment.

## **10.4: Supply and demand analysis**

### **Club tennis**

The LTA suggests that a hard court with no sports lighting can accommodate 40 members whereas a hard court with sports lighting can accommodate 60 members. However, it must be noted that this should only be used as a guide as capacity can, in reality, vary from site to site depending on how the demand operates and the programmes of use in place. Some clubs can comfortably operate over capacity guidance, whilst others may have pressures without theoretically being over capacity.

Using the guide, the table overleaf identifies the capacity balance at all sites currently used by clubs in Solihull, taking into account both current and future demand.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Table 10.13 Capacity analysis (club courts)

Site ID	Site	Club users	Current demand (members)	Future demand (members)	No of courts	Sports lighting?	Capacity (members)	Current capacity balance	Future capacity balance
13	Blossomfield Club	Blossomfield TC	320	-	7	Yes (4)	360	40	40
40	Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club	Hampton-in-Arden TC	254	40	5	Yes	300	46	6
56	Knowle & Dorridge Racquets Club	Knowle & Dorridge TC	256	70	8	Yes	480	224	154
101	Solihull Arden Club	Solihull Arden TC	1,300	300	13	Yes (7)	660	640	940
118	Tippetts Field	Solihull TC	197	30	6	Yes (3)	300	103	73
123	West Warwickshire Sports Complex	West Warwickshire Sports TC	386	-	7	Yes	420	34	34
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	Marston Green TC	61	-	5	Yes (3)	300	239	239
130	Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club	Berkswell & Balsall TC	375	-	4	Yes	360	15	15

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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As evidenced in the table above, there is a theoretical shortfall of provision for club-based tennis in Solihull, with two clubs currently operating over the capacity guide. These are:

- ◀ Berkswell & Balsall TC (at Berkswell & Balsall Tennis Club)
- ◀ Solihull Arden TC (at Solihull Arden Club)

The total current shortfall across the sites adds up to 655 members, whilst the future shortfall equates to 995 members. This represents a significant deficit, although most of it relates to Solihull Arden TC, whereby its membership figures do not relate only to its tennis court provision. Berkswell & Balsall TC is only marginally oversubscribed, and none of the two clubs report any capacity issues.

All remaining clubs have overall spare capacity, with this collectively amounting to 686 members currently and 546 members when accounting for future demand.

### ***Non-club tennis***

For non-club courts, analysing supply and demand is difficult in Solihull as full usage figures are not known. However, it is considered likely that some courts are being well utilised given the use of LTA products such as ClubSpark at all local authority sites and the majority of club sites. That being said, capacity is likely to be limited, particularly outside of summer months, with no courts operated by the Council currently serviced by sports lighting.

Based on the above, whilst no capacity issues have been identified and no requirement for additional courts has been uncovered, increased recreational demand could be sought through improving the existing stock of courts. As well as increased sports lighting, quality improvements at additional sites (e.g., Meriden Park) could also be pursued.

### **10.5: Conclusion**

For club-based tennis, there is a perceived shortfall of provision in Solihull, particularly for Solihull Arden TC, although this is skewed by the presence of other facilities on site. In actuality, no clubs report any issues, suggesting that there is no requirement for additional court space. This should, however, be closely monitored, and improvements to the existing stock should be sought to ensure it remains the case.

For non-club activity, Solihull is seemingly well placed given recent improvements to park courts and the supporting infrastructure and technology that is in place. However, a lack of sports lighting presents a clear problem as this will be limiting demand, especially outside of summer months.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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### **Tennis – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ For club-based tennis, there is a perceived shortfall of provision in Solihull, particularly for Solihull Arden TC. However, no clubs report any issues, suggesting that there is no requirement for additional court space.
- ◀ For non-club activity, Solihull is seemingly well placed given the quality of most of its courts and the supporting infrastructure and technology that is in place, although a lack of sports lighting presents a clear problem as this will be limiting demand.

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- ◀ A total of 155 tennis courts are identified in Solihull across 35 sites.
- ◀ Of the courts, 121 are categorised as being available for community use at 26 sites compared to 34 that are unavailable at nine sites.
- ◀ Mini tennis courts are provided at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club, whilst three padel courts are located at Solihull Arden Club.
- ◀ Of the courts, 57 are operated by sports clubs, 23 by the Council, 73 by education providers and two are ran commercially.
- ◀ All clubs have security of tenure, either via freehold for their sites or long term lease agreements.
- ◀ Most courts have a macadam surface; there are 74 of this type compared to 57 artificial courts, six artificial clay courts, two clay courts and 16 polymeric courts.
- ◀ Only 65 courts are serviced by sports lighting, with 47 of these are available for community use. Furthermore, whilst all clubs are serviced to some degree, no local authority courts are.
- ◀ 58 courts are assessed as good quality, 78 are standard quality and 19 are poor quality and included within the good quality stock are courts at Bentley Heath Recreation Ground, Knowle Park, Elmdon Park, Malvern Park and Shirley Park following recent improvements.
- ◀ Hampton-in-Arden TC reports that the ancillary provision at Hampton-in-Arden Sports Club is in poor condition, whilst Solihull Arden TC wishes to increase the amount of car parking at Tippetts Field.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- ◀ There are eight tennis clubs in Solihull, with membership equating to 3,149, where known through consultation.
- ◀ Club-based demand has seemingly increased in recent years, aligned to national trends.
- ◀ Informal and recreational tennis demand is relatively high and participation is aided through the implementation of LTA products (e.g., ClubSpark) at most local authority and park sites.
- ◀ All local authority courts are free to access, with the Council joining in partnership with the LTA to increase access and opportunities for all to play.
- ◀ There is one Local Tennis League (Solihull Tennis League) which recommends use of eight sites.
- ◀ LTA Youth Start is taking place at Shirley Park, Solihull Tennis Club and West Warwickshire Sports Complex.
- ◀ Future demand is expressed by four clubs (Hampton-in-Arden TC, Knowle & Dorridge RC, Solihull Arden TC and Solihull TC) and equates to 440 members.
- ◀ The LTA also predicts future growth via its insight tools, with much of this demand likely to include participation outside of the club-environment.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 11: NETBALL

### 11.1: Introduction

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

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

As netball was not included in the previous study, an exact comparison to previous levels of supply and demand cannot be presented.

#### **Consultation**

Information to inform this section of the report was primarily obtained through discussions with England Netball. In addition, there are five clubs in the Borough that were contacted, with these being Elmdon NC, Foxes NC, Lyndon Centre NC, Marston Green NC, North Solihull Stars NC.

### 11.2: Supply

A total of 60 netball courts have been identified in Solihull across 20 sites. Of the courts, 45 across 14 sites are available for community use, with 15 courts at six sites unavailable.

The largest number of courts are in the Central Analysis Area (32), whereas the fewest courts are in the Rural Analysis Area (nine). This is summarised in the following table.

Table 11.1: Summary of the number of courts by analysis area

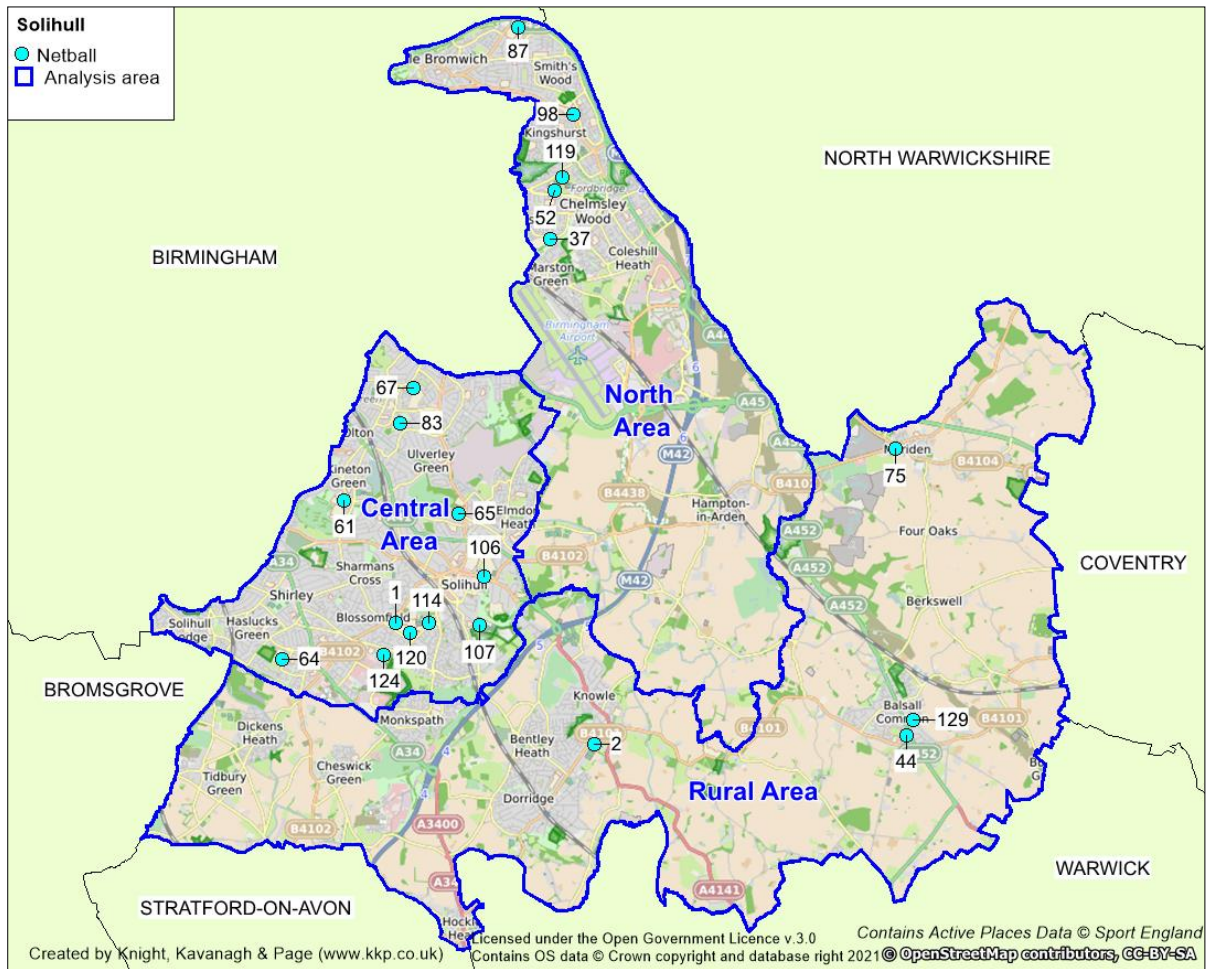
Analysis area	No. of courts available for community use	No. of courts unavailable for community use
Central	21	11
North	18	1
Rural	6	3
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>15</b>

A traditional netball court is 30.5 metres long and 15.25 metres wide. As such, please note that some additional courts are not included in the above figures due to them being undersize, especially those located at primary schools. Such courts are generally marked out on generic playgrounds and are not considered to be permanent or conducive for formal play. It is, however, recognised that the provision can meet a curricular and extra-curricular needs.

Figure 11.1 shows the location of the netball courts included within the study. Please see Table 11.2 for a key to the map.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Figure 11.1: Location of netball courts in Solihull



## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 11.2: Netball courts in Solihull

Site ID	Site name	Postcode	Analysis area	Ownership	Community use?	No. of courts	Sports lighting?	Court type	Over-marked?	Court quality
1	Alderbrook School	B91 1SN	Central	School	Yes	4	No	Polymeric	Yes	Standard
1	Alderbrook School	B91 1SN	Central	School	Yes	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
2	Arden Academy	B93 0PT	Rural	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
37	Grace Academy	B37 5JS	North	School	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Standard
44	Heart of England School	CV7 7FW	Rural	School	No	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
52	John Henry Newham Catholic College	B37 5GA	North	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
61	Langley School	B92 7ER	Central	School	Yes	2	No	Macadam	No	Poor
64	Lighthall School	B90 2PZ	Central	School	Yes	3	No	Polymeric	Yes	Standard
65	Lode Heath School	B91 2HW	Central	School	Yes	5	No	Macadam	No	Standard
67	Lyndon School	B92 8EJ	Central	School	No	4	No	Macadam	No	Poor
75	Meriden Sports Park	CV7 7SP	Rural	Council	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
83	Olton Jubilee Park	B92 8QE	Central	Council	Yes	1	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
87	Park Hall Academy	B36 9HF	North	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
87	Park Hall Academy	B36 9HF	North	School	Yes	1	No	Macadam	No	Standard
98	Smiths Wood Academy	B36 0UE	North	School	Yes	3	No	Macadam	Yes	Standard
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	School	No	3	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Standard
106	Solihull School	B91 3DJ	Central	School	No	2	No	Macadam	No	Standard
107	Solihull Sixth Form College	B91 3WR	Central	College	No	1	No	Polymeric	Yes	Standard
114	St Peter's Catholic School	B91 3NZ	Central	School	No	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
119	Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst	B37 6NU	North	School	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Standard
120	Tudor Grange Academy Solihull	B91 3PD	Central	School	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Yes	Poor
124	Widney Junior School	B91 3LQ	Central	School	Yes	1	No	Macadam	No	Poor
129	Marston Green Tennis Club	B37 7BS	North	Club	Yes	1	Yes	Macadam	Yes	Good
142	Forest Oak School	B36 0UE	North	School	No	1	No	Artificial	Yes	Standard

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## **Future provision**

No development plans appertaining to netball courts have been identified.

## **Management and security of tenure**

Most outdoor netball courts in Solihull are operated by education providers, with 59 courts falling under this management type. However, only 44 of these are available to the community.

The remaining court is provided at Marston Green Tennis Club. This is fully available to the community.

Table 11.3: Courts by management type

Community use	Number of courts			
	Club	Education	Local authority	Other
Available	1	44	-	-
Unavailable	-	15	-	-
<b>Solihull</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Marston Green NC has a long-term lease agreement in place for use of the court at Marston Green Tennis Club.

No other courts provide security of tenure on account of being located at school sites, whereby without a community use agreement access can be stopped at any point. However, none are reportedly being accessed by clubs, with all remaining activity identified as taking place indoors.

## **Court type**

All but nine of the outdoor netball courts in Solihull have a macadam surface, with 48 being of this type and 35 of these being available for community use. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

Eight courts have a polymeric surface, with seven available for community use (four at Alderbrook School and three at Lighthall School). The remaining court has an artificial surface and is located at Forest Oak School, although this is unavailable for community use.

## **Sports lighting**

Despite 60 outdoor netball courts being provided in Solihull, only 11 (18%) are serviced by sports lighting across four sites, which is a significantly low number. The sports-lit courts are located at:

- ◀ Grace Academy
- ◀ Martson Green Tennis Club
- ◀ Solihull School
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Kingshurst

Of these, eight are available to the community, with three of the courts at Solihull School unavailable, despite the presence of sports lighting.



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A lack of sports lighting at the remaining sites presents a key reason as to why some are unavailable for community use, with providers of non-lit courts stating that they are not financially viable without lighting because usage can be significantly limited.

An absence of sports lighting on courts is an issue nationwide, with England Netball's national database (updated in 2020) identifying that only 1,941 of 5,108 outdoor netball courts are with sports lighting throughout the Country (38%). Despite this being identified as problematic, the percentage is substantially higher than that identified in Solihull, evidencing a particular issue within the Borough.

### Over markings

Netball courts, particularly at school sites, are often overmarked, predominately by tennis courts but also on occasion by basketball and/or football courts. Provision such as this tends to receive higher levels of use which can be detrimental to quality over time, as well as potentially causing capacity issues when there is external netball demand.

In Solihull, 42 netball courts are overmarked compared to 17 that are dedicated for netball use. This represents a comparatively low number of standalone courts and can be attributed to most of the provision being located at secondary schools where tennis markings are also often provided.

The dedicated netball courts are provided at:

- ◀ Alderbrook School
- ◀ Langley School
- ◀ Lode Heath School
- ◀ Lyndon School
- ◀ St Peter's Catholic School
- ◀ Solihull School
- ◀ Widney Junior School

Moreover, only eight dedicated netball courts are accessible to the community. These are located at Alderbrook School (one court), Langley School (two courts) and Lode Heath School (five courts).

### Quality

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

Of the courts in Solihull, one is assessed as good quality, 45 as standard quality and 14 as poor quality. Of those available to the community, one court is assessed as good quality, 35 are standard quality and nine are poor quality.

Table 11.5: Quality of all netball courts in Solihull

Community use	Quality		
	Good	Standard	Poor
Available	1	35	9
Unavailable	-	10	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>14</b>

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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The above shows a direct correlation between quality and community access, with 100% of the good quality courts and 78% of the standard quality courts being available to the community in comparison to 64% of unavailable courts.

The poor quality courts available for community use are found at:

- ◀ Alderbrook School
- ◀ Langley School
- ◀ Tudor Grange Academy Solihull
- ◀ Widney Junior School

The poor quality courts unavailable for community use are identified at Lyndon School and St Peter's Catholic School. Issues surrounding the poor quality courts include poor grip underfoot, evidence of moss and worn line markings.

As mentioned above, only the court at Marston Green Tennis Club is currently used for community activity, with this assessed as good quality.

### ***Ancillary provision***

Ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic for community netball. Whilst most sites provide changing facilities and/or toilets, they are not specific for netball and are generally too far away from the courts to be realistically used. Moreover, given that most courts are located at schools, the facilities predominately service sports halls or grass pitches and are therefore not readily available or suited to netball court users. Access can then also be limited, even at sites that allow for community use as this may entail opening the main school buildings.

### **11.3: Demand**

There are five clubs identified as being based within Solihull, in addition to unaffiliated demand and various netball-based initiatives such as Back to Netball and walking netball.

#### ***Club demand***

The clubs within Solihull are as follows:

- ◀ Elmdon NC
- ◀ Foxes NC
- ◀ Lyndon Centre NC
- ◀ Marston Green NC
- ◀ North Solihull Stars NC

No affiliated leagues cater for clubs within the Borough, with them all instead generally competing in Birmingham-based competitions. As an example, all clubs have teams competing in the Birmingham Netball League, which has a winter and summer league in operation.

The Birmingham Netball League operates on a central venue format. The Winter League runs from September to March and currently caters for 111 teams across 14 divisions, with fixtures arranged for every Saturday at Shenley Academy in Birmingham, whilst the Summer League runs from April to July. This operates across three different sites, with matches played on both Wednesdays and Thursdays. In 2022, 72 teams participated across 12 divisions.

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Some clubs also compete in the Birmingham Intermediate Netball League, which is for girls aged 11-15. It has grown exponentially in recent years and now caters for over 100 teams across 16 divisions, with all matches played via the courts at University of Birmingham (Bournbrook). The League runs from February to July each year, with matches played on Sundays.

### *Elmdon NC*

Elmdon NC is a large club catering for five senior and 12 junior teams. It is currently based across two sites in Solihull, with these being Alderbrook School and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, both of which are used for training purposes. However, this all takes place on the indoor courts rather than the outdoor provision.

### *Foxes NC*

Foxes NC fields five senior and numerous junior teams and is based at Solihull College & University Centre and Lighthall School, although it uses the indoor provision at both sites rather than outdoor courts. It competes in the Birmingham Netball League and Birmingham Intermediate Netball League.

### *Lyndon Centre NC*

Lyndon Centre NC fields seven senior and six junior teams and is based, for training, at Lode Heath School and Alderbrook School, again utilising the indoor courts at these venues. Its teams compete in the Birmingham Netball League.

### *Marston Green NC*

Marston Green NC fields two senior and five junior teams. It is based at Marston Green Tennis Club, where there is an overmarked netball court which is used for training purposes. Its junior teams compete in the Birmingham Netball League and the Birmingham Intermediate Netball League.

### *North Solihull Stars NC*

North Solihull Stars NC fields three senior teams in the Birmingham Netball League. It currently trains at Grace Academy on Wednesday evenings but uses the indoor provision. In addition, the Club also runs a youth section for girls between 8-11 years called North Stars Minis, running netball camps and training sessions.

### ***Additional demand***

#### *Little League demand*

Foxes Little League is for girls in school years from years 3-6. All matches are played via a central venue, with the indoor courts at Lighthall School utilised rather than outdoor provision.

#### *Commercial leagues*

In addition to the club-based demand identified above, there are also several commercial netball leagues operating in Solihull with these catering for teams outside of the normal club environment on more of a casual/recreational basis. The leagues generally run all-year round (a new season begins as soon as the previous one ends) and, in addition to welcoming already established teams, individual players are also encouraged to sign up before being within a team that suits their ability.

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Play Netball operates a league at St Peter's Catholic High School, with matches played every Thursday evening with six teams currently catered for. However, this activity takes place in the sports hall at the site rather than the outdoor court (which is not serviced by sports lighting).

Leisure Leagues operates a commercial league every Sunday, utilising Lighthall School. However, this is also via the indoor provision, with the outdoor courts on site not serviced by sports lighting. There are 10 teams competing in the format.

### *Back to Netball*

Back to Netball is a scheme put into place by England Netball in 2010, with participation increasing ever since. Sessions are running weekly by qualified coaches across England with the aim of re-introducing female players over the age of 16 to the sport.

In Solihull, several Back to Netball sessions are running, with Tudor Grange Leisure Centre utilised.

### *Walking netball*

Walking netball is a lower version of the sport, designed so that anyone can play regardless of age or fitness level. It can give those who are isolated an outlet, provide an activity for those who do not deem themselves fit enough and offer a stepping-stone for those looking for a pathway back into traditional netball.

Walking Netball sessions are hosted at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, taking place on Monday mornings.

### *Bee Netball*

A new initiative by England Netball, Bee Netball a programme for children all about friendship, inclusion, fair play and teamwork, with each session managed by an England Netball accredited coach. There are, however, currently no sessions operating in Solihull.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

All clubs otherwise located within Solihull export match play demand to play within Birmingham, with no affiliated league structure present within the Borough. The Birmingham Netball League and Birmingham Intermediate Netball League service the demand.

In addition, a proportion of training demand is also exported to Birmingham. England Netball reports that this is its biggest concern, noting that availability and cost are the biggest factors causing this.

### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball but that 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 601 people within Solihull, which represents approximately 0.3% of the Borough's population compared to a national average of just over 0.2%. This therefore suggests that unmet demand is marginally higher in the Borough than what would otherwise be expected.

Notwithstanding the above, no clubs in Solihull report any unmet or latent demand, suggesting that other barriers to participation are preventing growth.

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## ***Future demand***

Most clubs within Solihull express future demand; however, none quantify this in terms of membership or teams. It is generally reported that each club is open to growth, with no limitations presently identified.

### **11.4: Supply and demand analysis**

With the presence of five clubs as well as recreational activity and England Netball initiatives, there is a relatively high level of demand for netball identified across Solihull. However, the large majority of this is taking place through indoor provision rather than via outdoor courts, although this could be due to a lack of suitability. There is only one good quality court provided and very few outdoor courts in the Borough are serviced by sports lighting, whilst security of tenure is also limited. All three factors are likely preventing usage, other than for Marston Green NC (which has secure access to a good quality court with sports lighting).

Furthermore, all affiliated match play and a proportion of training demand is currently taking place outside of Solihull, in Birmingham, with no league structure directly servicing the Borough.

### **11.5: Conclusion**

The current supply of outdoor netball provision in Solihull is insufficient to meet demand, primarily due to a lack of good quality provision, sports lighting and security of tenure. This is likely leading to some clubs within Solihull using indoor provision and/or travelling to neighbouring authorities, such as Birmingham.

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### **Netball – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ With the presence of five clubs as well as recreational activity and England Netball initiatives, there is a relatively high level of demand for netball identified across Solihull, although this is predominately taking place via indoor provision and/or in Birmingham.
- ◀ Increased utilisation of outdoor courts is being prevented due to a lack of security of tenure and because there is only one good quality court provided and very few sports-lit courts.

### **Netball – supply summary**

- ◀ There are 60 netball courts identified in Solihull across 20 sites, with 45 courts at 14 sites available for community use.
- ◀ 59 courts are operated by education providers, with the remaining court managed by a sports club at Marston Green Tennis Club.
- ◀ There are 48 courts with a macadam surface, eight with a polymeric surface and the remaining one court has an artificial surface.
- ◀ Only 11 courts (18%) are serviced by sports lighting across four sites, which represents a significantly low number.
- ◀ 42 netball courts are overmarked (e.g., by tennis courts) compared to only 17 that are dedicated for netball use (standalone).
- ◀ Of the courts, one is assessed as good quality, 45 as standard quality and 14 as poor quality, with the good quality court available to the community as well as 35 standard quality courts and nine poor quality courts.

### **Netball – demand summary**

- ◀ There are five netball clubs based in Solihull, although only Marston Green NC utilises outdoor provision (at Marston Green Tennis Club).
- ◀ The remaining four clubs (Elmdon, Foxes, Lyndon Centre and North Solihull Stars netball clubs) utilise indoor provision for training activity at Grace Academy, Lode Heath School, Solihull College & University Centre, Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and Alderbrook School).
- ◀ All affiliated match play demand takes place in Birmingham via the use of central venues by the Birmingham Netball League and the Birmingham Intermediate League (exported demand).
- ◀ Some training demand is also exported due to lack of availability within Solihull and because of hire costs.
- ◀ Imported demand is identified through Aces NC, which is otherwise based in Birmingham.
- ◀ Foxes Little League operates in Solihull, with the indoor courts at Lighthall School utilised.
- ◀ Play Netball and Leisure Leagues run commercial leagues at St Peter's Catholic High School and Lighthall School, although this is via indoor provision.
- ◀ England Netball initiatives Back to Netball and Walking Netball are being operated via indoor provision at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- ◀ No clubs report any latent or unmet demand, and they all express demand to grow, although this is not quantified.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## PART 12: ATHLETICS

### 12.1: 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.

#### Consultation

In total, three out of the four clubs have responded to consultation requests, representing a 75% response rate. The unresponsive club is Knowle & Dorridge Running Club.

Table 12.1: Summary of athletics response rate

Name of Club	Responded?
Balsall Common Run Club	Yes
Centurion Running Club	Yes
Knowle & Dorridge Running Club	No
Solihull & Small Heath AC	Yes

### 12.2: Supply

There are two full size purpose-built outdoor athletics tracks in Solihull, located at North Solihull Sports Centre and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. Both provide synthetic 400-metre tracks, with an eight lane track provided at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre and a six-lane track provided at North Solihull Sports Centre.

In addition to its track, North Solihull Sports Centre also provides two sand pits for jumping events. However, due to the presence of a sand-based AGP within the track, throwing events are not possible.

The track at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre surrounds a grass playing field (containing an adult football pitch) that is used for throwing events. It is serviced by a throwing cage as well as sand pits for jumping events.

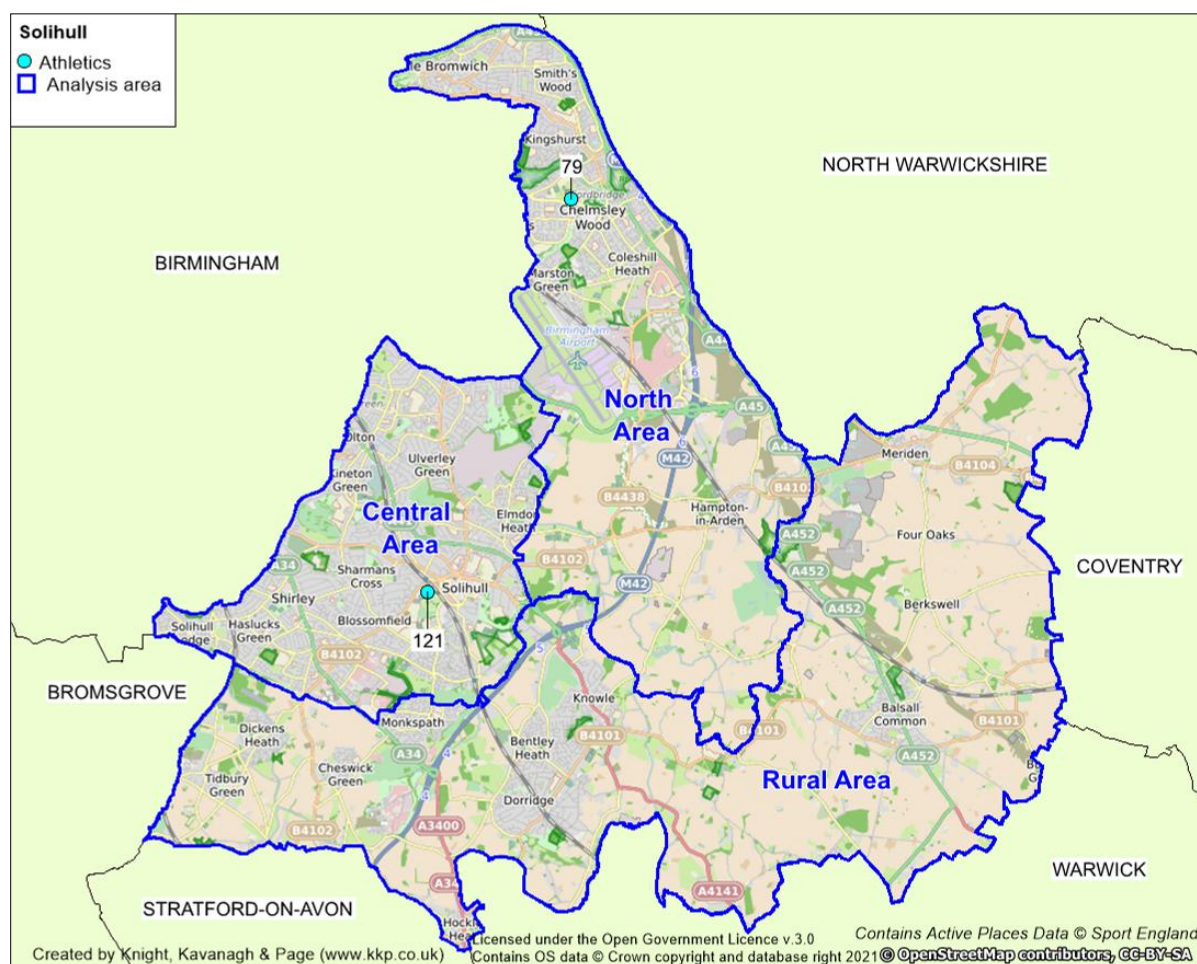
Table 12.2: Summary of outdoor athletics tracks in Solihull

Site ID	Site	Postcode	Analysis area	Length	Surface type	No. of lanes	Sports lighting ?
79	North Solihull Sports Centre	B37 5LA	North	400m	Synthetic	6	Yes
121	Tudor Grange Leisure Centre	B91 1NB	Central	400m	Synthetic	8	Yes

North Solihull Sports Centre is located within the North Analysis Area, whereas Tudor Grange Leisure Centre is situated centrally. For specific locations of the facilities, please see Figure 12.1 below.

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Figure 12.1: Location of athletics tracks in Solihull



## Future provision

An emerging feasibility study in relation to North Solihull Sports Centre identifies that there is no strategic need to retain the existing 400-metre athletics track at the site as the main track and field provision for the Borough is provided at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. This is also reinforced by the fact there is no dedicated athletics club use of the site, with only very limited use by a road running club (Centurion Road Runners). As such, it is not considered to be sustainable through England Athletics guidance and the space could therefore be better utilised. However, consultation with England Athletics identifies that it would also like athletics to be considered as part of the wider development of the site, and that the new facility mix could include one of its new generation of athletics products (as summarised below). In addition, the study only consulted with current user groups, meaning wider consultation is still required to further inform the potential development.

As intimated above and through wider consultation, England Athletics report that, nationally, no new standard 400-metre athletics tracks are planned to be constructed. Focus is instead on the development of new, innovative, entry level facilities such as mini tracks and endurance loops, particularly if they can be provided as part of sports-lit, multi-sport developments. As such, four alternative approaches have been developed in designing new athletics provision, with these presenting alternative approaches to development via more affordable and feasible means. The designs are known as Play Track, Compact Track, Mini Track and Active Track.



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### *Play Track*

The first of the four alternative designs is a 'play track' featuring visually hardstanding areas which can be located in school playgrounds (KS1 & KS2), parks and play areas. The track encourages participation through challenging environments and promotes independent learning and skills development.

### *Compact Track*

A 'compact track' featuring sprint straight (4x lane, 40m length) with an accompanying long jump runways, landing pit and shot put space. This provision is the smallest of the four and is installed at education sites or community and club settings.

### *Mini track*

A 'mini track' features a sports lit synthetic oval track (min 100m/max 200m) 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.

### *Active Track*

Finally, an 'active track' is a macadam surface or synthetic loop with no fixed shape or distance (similar to a formula one circuit), in which a track is drawn to fit its natural surroundings such as an existing park or school field. An Active Track attracts users of all ages and abilities across a wide variety of activities (runners, joggers, walkers (particularly the elderly), cyclists, wheelchair users).

## **Management**

Both tracks in Solihull are operated by Everyone Active on behalf of the Council and both are available for community use.

## **Quality**

The quality of the athletics tracks at North Solihull Sports Centre and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre has been assessed via a combination of site visits using non-technical assessments and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed quality rating. Key factors which impact on the quality rating include the condition and age of the track surface, prominence of line markings and any signs of wear and tear or unofficial use (for the full site assessment criteria, please see Appendix 2).

The provision at North Solihull Sports Centre is assessed as poor quality, primarily due to the age of the surface, with significant signs of wear and tear and faded line markings noted. There has been no refurbishment since 1995 and, as such, the track has considerably exceeded its lifespan. Despite the track being serviced by sports lighting, it is not operational during midweek evenings, which is a particular issue during the winter months and limits activity levels.

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The track at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre is assessed as standard quality. It is serviceable; however, the surface is now nearing the end of its lifespan following its last refurbishment in 2011. As such, it will need to be resurfaced in the near future and within the lifespan of this study.

To conform with the above, Labosport has recently undertaken an assessment at the site and identifies that “the track surfacing has worn and will continue to harden during its lifetime”. It goes on to provide two potential future refurbishment options.

### *TrackMark*

TrackMark is UK Athletics’ quality assurance scheme for outdoor track and field athletics facilities. A venue that achieves TrackMark is recognised by UK Athletics as having well managed, compliant facilities that are accessible to participants of all abilities. From 2021, venues that actively choose not to pursue accreditation are not eligible to apply for a competition licence at any level.

Tudor Grange Leisure Centre has TrackMark accreditation; however, as stated above, the track surface will need to be resurfaced within the lifespan of the PPOSS in order to maintain certification. Labosport notes that work will likely be required prior to it receiving re-accreditation in December 2024.

North Solihull Sports Centre is not accredited and would not pass the process due to its current quality issues.

### *Ancillary provision*

There are no issues specifically raised regarding the quality or accessibility of ancillary provision through consultation or non-technical site assessments at either Tudor Grange Leisure Centre or North Solihull Sports Centre.

## **12.3: Demand**

For the purposes of this study, athletics demand is considered to come in various forms, rather than just the traditional track and field activity. As such, running clubs are 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.

### *Club demand*

There are four clubs in Solihull affiliated to England Athletics. These are summarised below.

#### *Solihull & Small Heath Athletics Club*

Solihull & Small Heath Athletics Club is a large athletics club based at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. It currently caters for men, women, boys and girls of all ages within amateur athletics and has a membership totalling 300 people. Broken down, this equates to 60 senior and 240 junior members.

The Club accesses Tudor Grange Leisure Centre for field activity on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and for track activity on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. In addition, it competes in a range of competitions and leagues meaning it also has requirements to utilise the facility on weekends.

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Members compete in track and field leagues such as the Heart of England League, the Midland Track & Field League and the UK Youth Development League. In addition, various cross-country and road running leagues are accessed as well as county, area and national championships.

The Club reports future growth aspirations for both senior and junior members. It states that it is always open to taking on new members and that there is not currently a waiting list in place.

In addition, the Club has reported that the management and upkeep of equipment at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre is problematic, as is the expenditure involved.

### *Centurion Running Club*

Centurion Running Club is a road running and track club, which meets twice weekly at North Solihull Sports Centre. The Club runs structured sessions on Tuesday evenings and has between 20-30 participants attending, with these split into three groups of varying abilities.

The Club reports that it has recently negotiated a group booking at North Solihull Sports Centre for its members. This has resulted in an upsurge both in new members and existing member usage.

### *Balsall Common Run Club*

Balsall Common Run Club is a road running club which accommodates both men and women of all ages and abilities. It uses Meeting House Lane car park as a base before utilising the local road network. It therefore has no demand to access formal facilities.

### *Knowle & Dorridge Running Club*

Knowle & Dorridge Running Club is a cross-country club that welcomes runners of all ages and abilities. Its ladies team compete in Division 1 of the Midland Women's Cross Country League and the men's team compete in Division 1 of the Birmingham Cross Country League. The Club also participates in the Warwickshire Road Race League, which is a series of events usually held between April and October, with distances ranging from 5k to half marathon.

The Club trains every Monday and Wednesday evening. Its Monday sessions consist of interval training and tempo runs on Wednesdays. It utilises the road network and therefore does not access a formal facility.

### ***Additional demand***

#### *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 Solihull, there is one Run Together group, known as Run Shirley.

A key focus for England Athletics is increasing demand for participation programmes such as Run Together, meaning this could be targeted moving forward, especially given the large number of clubs in Solihull that could be involved.

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### *Park Run*

Parkrun is a series of 5k runs held on Saturday mornings in areas of open space around the UK, with 1,063 events now operating across the Country. They are open to all, free, and are safe and easy to take part in. Runners must first register online to access a printed barcode which gives them access to all Parkrun events.

There are currently two Parkrun events held weekly in Solihull, with these taking place at Babbs Mill Park and Malvern Park. Across the sites, there have been 747 events, with 617 events taking place at Malvern Park and 130 at Babbs Mill Park. The former's average attendance is 331, whilst for the latter it is 108.

In addition, there is also a Junior Parkrun in Solihull for participants aged between four and 14. This has been held 106 times at Malvern Park and averages 83 runners.

### *Other events*

Other running events are held in Solihull across the year, normally on an annual basis. This includes the Solihull Half Marathon & 10K, which is organised by a running community known as RunThrough. It hosts several social and competitive events across the Midlands.

### *Couch to 5k*

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

The plan consists of three runs per week and a day of rest in between, with a different schedule for each of the nine weeks to completion. It starts with a mix of running and walking, to gradually build up fitness and stamina, 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.

Whilst no data is available in relation to take up of the Couch to 5k initiative in Solihull, anecdotal evidence suggests that it is popular and also growing in popularity. It is also championed by clubs in the Borough.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

None of the clubs identify any exported or imported demand, although it is likely that some members of Solihull-based clubs will come from outside of the Borough just as nearby clubs from outside of the Borough will likely attract some members from Solihull. Similarly, many events in the region will likely accommodate significant levels of cross-border demand.

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### ***Latent/unmet demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but that 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies significant latent demand amounting to 4,405 people in Solihull, which works out at around 1.8% of the population compared to a national average of 1.9%.

Notwithstanding the above, no clubs currently based in Solihull express latent or unmet demand, with no waiting lists in place and each club open to new members. This suggests that anyone wanting to participate can do so via the clubs and facilities that are in place. It is therefore likely that other barriers are preventing participation, rather than provision or a lack of capacity.

### ***Future demand***

All clubs consulted with express an aspiration to grow membership, although the majority state that this is difficult to quantify as they will do their utmost not turn demand away.

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

## **12.4: Supply and demand analysis**

There is considerable demand for athletics and in particular running in Solihull, as evidenced by the numerous clubs in existence and the variety of events held across the Borough. However, with only one club currently requiring regular access to purpose a built facility (Solihull & Small Heath Athletics Club), the current supply of provision is considered to be sufficient to meet the demand in quantitative terms, although some level of qualitative improvement would be beneficial at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre. This is especially in regard to the surface of the track.

Away from Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, with demand levels particularly low at North Solihull Sports Centre, the findings of the feasibility study at the site should be supported in that the space could be better utilised. However, athletics should still be considered as part of the wider development of the site, with England Athletic's new generation of products to be considered (Play Track, Compact Track, Mini Track and Active Track). This is further supported by Centurion Runners, which utilises the site weekly and would continue to do so providing that the provision suited its needs.

## **12.5: Conclusion**

Supply is sufficient to meet demand, although quality improvements are required at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre in the near future to ensure that this remains the case. There is no requirement to retain the 400-metre track at North Solihull Sports Centre in its current form, although athletics should still be considered as part of the wider site development via England Athletics new generation products (a traditional track is not needed but an alternative track is).

Away from track and field activity, emphasis should also be placed on supporting the other activities identified in Solihull, with a focus on retaining and increasing participation and growing the various initiatives that are in place. This, however, does not require dedicated provision.

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### **Athletics – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is considerable demand for athletics and running within Solihull, although via the track at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre, supply is sufficient to meet this, providing qualitative improvements take place within the lifespan of this strategy.
- ◀ There is no requirement to retain the 400-metre track at North Solihull Sports Centre in its current form, although EA have recommended that athletics/running should continue to have a presence as part of the wider site development via a NewGen type development.
- ◀ Away from track and field activity, emphasis should be placed on supporting the other activities identified (e.g., Parkrun), with a focus on retaining and increasing participation and growing the various initiatives that are in place.

### **Athletics – supply summary**

- ◀ In Solihull, there are two full size purpose built outdoor athletics tracks provided, located at North Solihull Sports Centre and Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- ◀ An emerging feasibility study in relation to North Solihull Sports Centre identifies that there is no strategic requirement to retain the existing 400m athletics track, although there is a need for some sort of athletics / running facility to be provided as part of the wider development.
- ◀ Both tracks are operated by Everyone Active on behalf of the Council.
- ◀ The provision at North Solihull Sports Centre is assessed as poor quality with significant signs of wear and tear evident, whilst the provision at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre is assessed as standard quality, with resurface due within the lifespan of this study.
- ◀ Tudor Grange Leisure Centre has UKA TrackMark accreditation; North Solihull Sports Centre does not.

### **Athletics – demand summary**

- ◀ There are four clubs in Solihull affiliated to England Athletics.
- ◀ Solihull & Small Heath Athletics Club is a large athletics club with around 300 members based at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre.
- ◀ Centurion Running Club is a road running and track club that utilises provision at North Solihull Sports Centre for some of its activity.
- ◀ Balsall Common Run Club and Knowle & Dorridge Running Club utilise the road network for all activity and therefore do not have demand for access to a purpose-built facility.
- ◀ There is also currently one Run Together group in Solihull, based at Shirley Park.
- ◀ Two Parkrun events are held weekly, at Babbs Mill Park and Malvern Park, as well as one junior Parkrun event at Malvern Park.
- ◀ Other running events are held annually including Solihull Half Marathon & 10k.
- ◀ No clubs express latent or unmet demand, suggesting that any latent or unmet demand that does exist is due to other barriers preventing participation, rather than a lack of club capacity.
- ◀ All clubs have aspirations to grow membership, whilst England Athletics also believes that demand for initiatives such as Parkrun is likely to increase.

### 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 Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity (2023)***

The Government published its new strategy for sport in August 2023. The 2015 government sport strategy, Sporting Future: A New Strategy for a More Active Nation, was a fundamental re-framing of sport and physical activity in the UK. It set out five outcomes delivered by sport and physical activity:

- ◀ Physical wellbeing
- ◀ Mental wellbeing
- ◀ Individual development
- ◀ Social and community development
- ◀ Sustainable economic development

This new strategy builds on the foundations of Sporting Future and retains these five outcomes at its core. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of three core priorities, with seven indicators to achieve these priorities as follows:

- ◀ **Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active**
  - ◀ Ensuring everyone is focused on increasing physical activity, meaning fewer inactive children, and narrowing the gap on inactivity where groups are not being reached, with visible progress across the country by 2030
  - ◀ Focusing on evidence, data and metrics
  - ◀ Setting the future direction for facilities and spaces where people can be active
- ◀ **Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport**
  - ◀ Helping the sector to be welcoming to all
  - ◀ Improving how issues and concerns are dealt within the sector
- ◀ **Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust**
  - ◀ Supporting the sector to access additional, alternative forms of investment
  - ◀ Working towards a more environmentally sustainable sector

Delivering against these priorities will help create a more active nation and a more sustainable sport sector. These aims are complementary; greater participation, stronger governance and confidence in the sector will help to drive investment, which in turn helps to attract new audiences. The vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come – for the benefit of individuals and the country.

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### ***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 (updated December 2023)***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes.



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In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown that the open space, buildings or land is surplus to requirements.
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

### ***The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;

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- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ◀ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock** to maintain current provision, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

### *Local Football Facility Plans*

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA has commissioned a national project. Over the next two years to 2020, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all will be identified via LFFPs. LFFPs will guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

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

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

### ***The FA: Time for Change Strategy (2020-24)***

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in January 2021 which aims to 'unite the game and inspire the nation'. It will do this in two ways, by 'changing the game to maximise its impact' and by 'serving the game to deliver football for all'.

To achieve this, the strategy will focus on six Game Changer objectives, to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead:

- ◀ Win a major tournament
- ◀ Service > two million through a transformed media platform
- ◀ Ensure equal opportunities for every girl

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- ◀ Delivery of 5,000 quality pitches
- ◀ A game free of discrimination

These are underpinned by eight Serve objectives, ensuring maintenance of brilliant business-as-usual services to support the growing and evolving needs of the game:

- ◀ Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- ◀ Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- ◀ Personalised and connected learning experiences
- ◀ Maximum investment into the game
- ◀ Diverse, high-performing workforce and inclusive culture
- ◀ World class venues and events
- ◀ Strong reputation and clear brand identity
- ◀ Technology enabled and insight driven

### ***England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)***

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ◀ **Grow and nurture the core**
  - ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
  - ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
  - ◀ Invest in club facilities
  - ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
  - ◀ Further invest in County Competitions
- ◀ **Inspire through elite teams**
  - ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
  - ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
  - ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
  - ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ◀ **Make cricket accessible**
  - ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
  - ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
  - ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
  - ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
  - ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- ◀ **Engage children and young people**
  - ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
  - ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
  - ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people
- ◀ **Transform women's and girls' cricket**
  - ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
  - ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
  - ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
  - ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme
- ◀ **Support our communities**
  - ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
  - ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
  - ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
  - ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

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### *The Rugby Football Union Strategy 2021 Onwards*

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

#### Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

#### Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

### *Rugby Football League Strategic Plan 2015 – 2021*

The RFL's most recent strategy aims to establish rugby league as "a growing sport, available throughout the country, that is recognised as providing positive experience for all participants and spectators, in environments that are welcoming, inclusive, vibrant, safe and comfortable - encouraging people to return again and again, featuring:

- ◀ Financially viable and sustainable professional clubs creating stable employment opportunities, showcasing local, national and international playing talent, and leading the sport's development - and making a difference - in their own communities;
- ◀ Welcoming community clubs, putting players first, offering recreational enjoyment for children and adults alike in a safe and inclusive environment;
- ◀ A central organisation that stands out for excellence, innovation, mutual respect, integrity and inclusion that understands its role in servicing the wider sport;
- ◀ A sports that lives its values in all its decisions and actions.

This vision is underpinned by 13 core principles, including:

- ◀ **An integrated whole sport.** Each constituent part of the sport will have a responsibility to ensure the good health of the entire game;
- ◀ **Return on investment.** Investment will be targeted to ensure the sustainability of member clubs, and growth in the number and quality of players thus seeking an effective return for the game;
- ◀ **Financial parameters.** Financial distributions will be undertaken to ensure the whole of the game will move forward together;

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- ◀ **Geographic expansion.** Geographic expansion of the sport should be carried out in a proportionate and sustainable manner.

### ***Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme***

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of an ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

### ***England Hockey Strategy***

England Hockey’s Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#). Please note it is currently being updated.

**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.

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### ***Bowls England: 'Fit for the Future' | Strategy 2021-26***

*Bowls is a sport steeped in tradition.*

For centuries the simplest of pursuits has provided untold enjoyment across generations and the local bowling green has been a place of great jollity and togetherness. Yet, despite its colourful history and intrinsic qualities, the numbers of people playing bowls across England is in steady decline and the challenges the sport faces are significant.

The 2021-26 Strategy 'Fit for the Future' frames a new and exciting course for the sport. It is believed that it will:

- ◀ Unite the sport behind a compelling vision, creating a sense of belonging and source of inspiration for our volunteers.
- ◀ Guide staff team's activity allowing us to better allocate resources to the areas that matter most.
- ◀ Help put issues and problems into a broader context, engendering a can-do, optimistic culture.
- ◀ Build confidence and enthusiasm amongst current partners and act as a catalyst to forge new relationships.
- ◀ Enable with one voice why those outside the sport should care.

The five year plan, launched in August 2021, is designed with the ultimate goal of getting more people playing and enjoying the sport.

It sets out the vision for the sport, how the NGB plans to achieve the objectives and what success looks like in 2026. The priorities that will get us to the target of **One Million Bowls Experiences** 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 the sport, by increasing the support for clubs in order to empower them to thrive;
- ◀ **Leading the sport with purpose** by developing the Governance structures, diversifying revenue streams, and work collaboratively with all the sport's key stakeholders.

### ***British Crown Green Bowling Association***

Please note there is no current facility guidance provided by British Crown Green Bowling Association responsible for crown green bowls in England.

<http://bcqba.org.uk/index.html>

### ***Tennis in Britain - LTA Strategy***

The LTA's vision for 2019 – 2023, Tennis Opened Up includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around its mission 'to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable'.

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## PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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### Objectives:

- ◀ Increase the number of fans on our database from [623,602] to [1,000,000] by 2023.
- ◀ More people playing more often;
  - ◀ Increase the number of adults playing tennis each year from [7.7% (4,018,600)] of the population to [8.5% (4,420,460)], and the frequency of adults playing tennis twice a month 2.5% 1,311,800 to 1.9% 1,500,000 by 2023.
  - ◀ The number of children playing tennis once a week from 550,000 to 700,000 (7.9% to 10% of the population) by 2023.
- ◀ Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.

### 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.

## SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

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The organisation is also committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of the country it proudly represents, and ensures the sport continues to evolve and adapt to thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association (EMMNA) to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as England Netball pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport a possibility within everyone's reach.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to protect the future of the sport. Working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision will pave the way for greater community participation. The organisation will accelerate the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game to keep them physically active and in the game for life.

### *Facility Development*

The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- ◀ Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- ◀ Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- ◀ Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- ◀ For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:-
- ◀ Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- ◀ Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- ◀ Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
- ◀ Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.
- ◀ Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- ◀ Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

### ***England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond***

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- ◀ Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- ◀ Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- ◀ Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims "To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England".

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## APPENDIX 2: NON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT SHEETS

### Grass football pitch non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Football						
Please complete one form per pitch						
Site reference:			Site Name:			
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID(s):			
Number of football pitches on site:			Pitch size:	(Adult 11v11, Youth 11v11, 9v9, 7v7 Mini, 5v5, 7v7)		
Availability			Are any other pitches marked out over this pitch?	<input type="checkbox"/>		
If yes, please indicate what pitches are overmarked? (i.e. one youth pitch is overmarked on a adult pitch) in Pitch Issues						
Weather at time of visit & date of visit						
Pitch Issues:						
<b>Assessment Criteria</b> (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)						
Element (Gathered via a non technical site assessment)	Rating			Guidance notes	Comments	
<b>Playing surface</b>						
Grass Cover	Good >80%		Adequate 60-80%		Poor <60%	Advice is to walk through the middle of the pitch
Does the pitch meet The FA minimum size?	Yes - as per the FA recommended size		Within FA recommended guidelines		No	See size chart below for recommended dimensions
Slope of pitch (gradient and cross fall)	Flat		Moderate		Severe	
Length of grass	Good		Too long		Too short	Good 30mm-50mm, Too long 51mm plus, Too short 29mm less
Evenness of pitch	Good		Adequate		Poor	
Problem Areas: Evidence of dog fouling/glass/litter/vehicle tracks	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of unofficial use/damage to the surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots	
Problem Areas: Evidence of poor drainage	No evidence of standing water or poor drainage		Some evidence of poor drainage		Yes, poor drainage	
<b>Maintenance programme (information from maintenance schedule/grounds team/club survey)</b>						<b>Section total</b>
Grass cutting	Yes, as required		Yes, but not frequent enough		No	
Seeded	Yes, as required		Not known		No	
Aerated (per year)	Three or more times		Once/ twice		No	
Sand dressed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
Fertilised	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
Weed killed	Within the last 12 months		Within the last 2 years		No	
						<b>Section total</b>
NB If none of this information is provided you should assume that only the grass is being cut and the rest of the maintenance items should be marked with the lowest score option.						
PITCH SCORE			0.0%	RATING		Poor

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Cricket pitch non-technical assessment

Element	Rating			Guidance notes	Comments (use the guidance notes to help complete)
<b>About the cricket outfield</b>					
Grass coverage	Good	Acceptable	Poor	<B>ECC falls below the ECP basic standard	
Length of grass	Good	Acceptable	Poor	Ideally 42mm - 25mm	
Evenness	Even		Uneven	Ball should run without deviation or ramp	
Evidence of Dog fouling/glass/stones/litter?	None	Yes	Immediate action required	Play also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to maintenance/mile manager	
Evidence of Unofficial use?	None	Yes	Immediate action required	eg informal, casual use, unauthorised use, kids kick about etc. Play also wish to refer to user survey. If yes, refer to maintenance/mile manager	
Evidence of Damage to surface?	None	Yes	Immediate action required	eg from animals/vehicles - rakkil, gulle and faeces etc may also wish to refer to user survey	
<b>Artificial wickets</b>					
Is the wicket and surrounds married in	Yes		No	There should be no trip points	
Evenness of wicket	Even		Uneven	There should be no contours in surface levels	
Stump holes	Yes		No	Should be no wider than a standard cricket ball	
Moss or materials in the surface	Yes		No	There should be none	
Rips or surface lifting	Yes		No	If "yes" contact site manager	
Surface worn in high traffic areas - creases	Yes		No	If "yes" contact site manager	
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down?	Yes		No		
<b>Grass wickets</b>					
Presence of line markings	Yes		No		
Evidence of rolling - is wicket smooth and uniform	Yes		No		
Evidence of straight cut and height	Yes		No	3mm on wicket wicket/12mm rest of square	
Evidence of repair work on old wickets	Yes		No		
Grass coverage (square and wickets)	Yes		No	<B>ECC falls below the ECP basic standard	
Hardness - does a cricket ball thrown straight down into the surface rebound?	Yes		No		
<b>Changing/ Pavilion</b>					
Umpires provision	Yes		No		
Toilets	Yes		No		
Hot/cold water	Yes		No		
Heating	Yes		No		
Condition of building	Good	Acceptable	Requires attention		
<b>NTP</b>					
Is the wicket and surrounds married in (no trip points)	Yes		No		
Evenness of wicket (no contours in surface levels)	Even		Uneven		
Stump holes (no wider than a standard cricket ball)	Yes		No		
Moss or materials in the surface (should be none)	Yes		No		
No rips or surface lifting	Yes		No		
Surface worn in high traffic areas - crease	Yes		No		
Hardness - does the ball rebound when thrown straight down	Yes		No		
Is the steel frame/posts upright?	Yes		No		
Are steel cross members detached?	Yes		No		
Are all posts and net fixings in place?	Yes		No		
Can a ball pass through any part of the netting?	Yes		No		
Is appropriate safety/supervisory signage present?	Yes		No		

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Rugby pitch non-technical assessment

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Rugby Union										
Please complete one form per pitch										
Site reference										
6 figure grid reference										
Date of assessment										
Number of pitches on site										
Availability										
Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused										
Weather at time of visit										
General comments/observations										
Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)										
Qualitative information (gathered on site)	Rating					Guidance notes	Comments			
Grass Coverage	Good		Adequate		Poor		>90% = good. <80% = poor			
Size of pitch	Acceptable (between recommended minimum and maximum sizes)		Flag for further investigation (below recommended minimum size)		Unacceptable (above maximum size)		Maximum size = width 70m, goal line to goal line 100m, in goal area 22m, run offs 5m where practical. Recommended minimum size = width 68m, goal line to goal line 94m, in goal area 6m, run offs 5m where practical.			
Length of grass	Too Long		Good		Too short		Too long = >75mm. Too short = <50mm			
Problem Areas: Evidence of glass/litter/vehicle tracks/dog fouling	None		Yes - some		Yes lots					
<b>GOALPOSTS</b>										
Are goalposts installed?	Yes		No							
Is there any obvious danger on posts?	Yes		No							
Are the posts stable in the ground?	Yes		No							
Is the crossbar fixed securely?	Yes		No							
Is there evidence of rust on the posts?	Yes		No							
<b>ANCILLARY</b>										
Is the pitch floodlit?	Yes		No							
Is there changing accommodation for the pitch?	Yes		No							
Is an appropriate level of car parking available?	Yes		No							
<b>Pitch maintenance (information gathered via club survey/ pitch provider consultation) - refer to the guidance notes below</b>										
Aerated (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Sand dressed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Fertilised (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Weed killed (per year)	three or more times		twice		once		never			
Chain harrowed	every week		fortnightly		monthly		never			
							<b>Pitch Maintenance Score</b>			
<b>Drainage</b>	Natural (inadequate) <b>SCORE D0</b>		Natural (adequate) <b>SCORE D1</b>		Pipe drained <b>SCORE D2</b>		Pipe and slit drained <b>SCORE D3</b>		Unknown <b>SCORE D0</b>	<b>Natural (adequate)</b> = 3 or less training/match cancellations per season <b>Natural (inadequate)</b> = 4 or more training match cancellations per season *Based on a <b>pipe drained</b> system at 5m centres that has been installed in the previous eight years **Based on a <b>slit drained</b> system at 1m centres completed in the previous five years.

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Artificial grass pitches non-technical assessment (including third generation turf pitches)

Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Artificial grass pitches										
Site reference			Site Name							
6 figure grid reference			Pitch ID							
Number of AGPs on site			Pitch size	Full (i.e., 100m x 60m)		Half (i.e., 60m x 40m)				
Availability			Community Use - used, Community Use - unused, No Community Use, Available but Unused							
Type of pitch	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)		Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)		Short Pile 3G (40mm)		Sand Dressed		Sand Filled	
<b>Assessment Criteria</b> (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)										
Element	Rating					Guidance notes	Site comments			
Age of Surface	less than 2 years		2-5 years		5-10 years		over 10 years			
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots					
Problem Areas: Evidence of damage to surface	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		If no evidence, assume none.			
Access for disabled players. i.e.: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Condition of posts/ nets/ goals	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor					
Adequate safety margins (w here appropriate)	Yes - fully		No- but adequate		No - not adequate					
Is the AGP floodlit?	Yes		No							
Is the AGP left open at all times?	Yes		No							
Are there dug outs?	Yes		No							
Are there youth shelters/spectator seating around AGP?	Yes		No							
Is there changing accommodation for the AGP?	Yes		No							
<b>Maximum score</b>	<b>93</b>		<b>Scoring:</b>	Poor <=50		<b>Total Score</b>	<b>0</b>			
				Standard 51-79		<b>Potential Rating</b>	<b>Poor</b>			
				Good 80+						

# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

Court non-technical assessment

## Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Tennis/ Netball/ Basketball Courts

KKPref										
Site name:										
Number of courts -	Tennis	Netball	Basketball	Five-a-side						
General Playground or specific sports court area?										
Court surface	Management			Community Use?						
	Artificial turf, Clay, Grass, Macadam, Polymeric, Shale			Club, LA - Parks, Parish Council, Public, School						

**Assessment Criteria** (please rank each of the following aspects for each pitch with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating						Comments
<b>About the courts</b>							
Evidence of moss/lichen (all surfaces)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Loose gravel (macadam surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Holes or rips in surface (macadam, art. grass or polymeric surface)	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Grip underfoot	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Line markings - quality	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Surrounding fencing	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Size of courts	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate		
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully		No - but adequate		No - not adequate		
Slope of courts	Flat		Slight		Gentle		Moderate
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Problem Areas: Evidence of inappropriate use	None		Yes - some		Yes - lots		
Access for disabled players - ie: ramps onto courts, width of gates	Good		Adequate		Poor		
<b>Changing Accomodation</b>							
Changing Accomodation	Yes		No				
<b>About the equipment</b>							
Posts and net	Good		Adequate		Poor		
Are the courts locked when not in use?	Yes		No				
Practice wall	Yes		No				



# SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT ASSESSMENT

## Athletics track non-technical assessment

### Non Technical Visual Quality Assessment - Athletics Tracks

KKPref	<input type="text"/>
Site name:	<input type="text"/>
Track surface	<input type="text"/> Grass, polymeric, cinder, other specify <input type="text"/> Specify If 'Other' <input type="text"/>
No. of Lanes	<input type="text"/>
Length of track:	<input type="text"/>
Community Use:	<input type="text"/>

Assessment Criteria (please rank each of the following aspects for each track with an 'X' in the coloured box to the right of the chosen answer)

Element	Rating						Comments
<b>About the track facilities</b>							
Damage to the track surface	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - some	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Grip underfoot	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Line markings - quality	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Track edging	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Disabled access	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Problem Areas: Evidence of Glass/ stones/ litter	None	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - some	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes - lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Floodlighting	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Is the track fenced?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Surface of run ups - long/triple jump, high jump</b>							
Surface of run ups - long/triple jump, high jump	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate landing areas - jumps	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate safety margins	Yes - fully	<input type="checkbox"/>	No-but adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	No-not adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Take off boards	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Landing mats	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Surface of throwing areas - shot, discuss, hammer	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Adequate safety margins - throws	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Throwing cages	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Access to facilities</b>							
Access to toilets	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Changing accommodation	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Changing accommodation - quality	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Club room	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Car parking	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>General Comments</b>							
<input type="text"/>						<b>ENTER Athletics</b>	Please make sure there is no filter on in sheet At_db!