

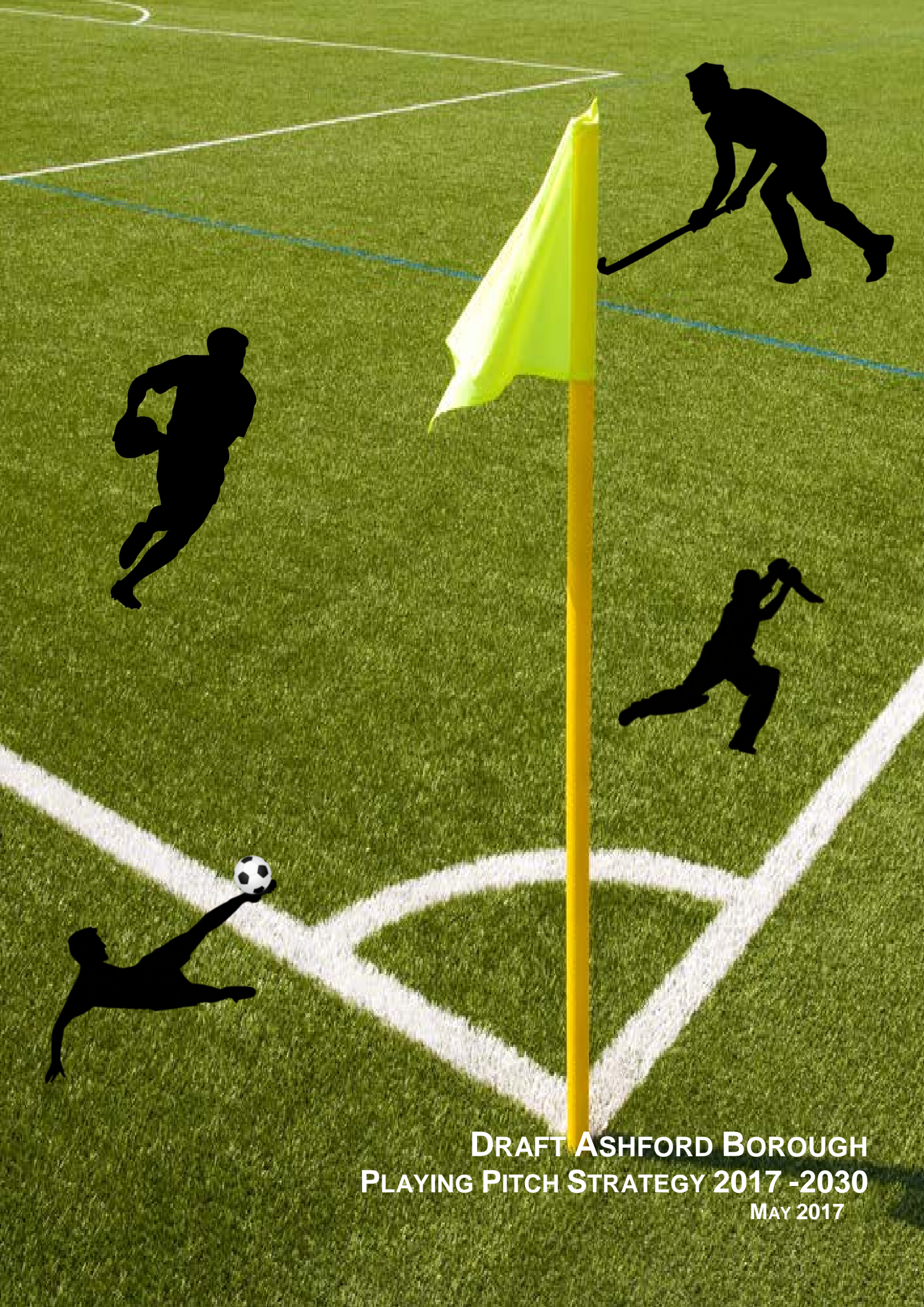
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Ashford Borough Council

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY 2017- 2030

MAY 2017





**DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY 2017 -2030**

MAY 2017

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APPENDICES

1 ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL PPS NEEDS ASSESSMENT STAGE C

- FOOTBALL SUMMARY
- CRICKET SUMMARY
- RUGBY SUMMARY
- HOCKEY SUMMARY
- TENNIS SUMMARY
- BOWLS SUMMARY
- NETBALL SUMMARY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The Ashford Borough Playing Pitch Strategy 2017 (PPS) considers the following outdoor sports:

- **Football**
- **Cricket**
- **Rugby Union**
- **Hockey**
- **Bowls**
- **Tennis**
- **Netball**

1.2. The Playing Pitch Strategy for the Borough of Ashford has been developed in line with Sport England's Playing Pitch Guidance. The assessment has been undertaken to establish whether there is sufficient playing pitch provision across the Borough of Ashford both currently and to meet the future requirements up to 2030. There are a number of strategic recommendations and actions for individual sites which consider a range of options relating to the sports listed above.

1.3. The report considers current levels of active participation from clubs based within the Ashford area, their playing pitch requirements and the facilities available for use. Peak time of play and current and future carrying capacity have also been considered. Further consideration is also given to the potential for participation to increase during the life of this strategy.

1.4. The analysis within the technical appendices sets out the current and future supply and demand position. The assessment has identified that some existing facilities in the borough need to address quality issues to improve their ability to cope with current demand and where they may struggle to cope with future demand as the population increases.

1.5. In addition to those qualitative improvements, the strategy identifies areas where new facilities maybe required to address projected shortfalls in provision as the population grows. In summary the Playing Pitch Assessment has identified existing and future deficiencies in playing pitch facilities, prioritising key actions to meet the needs of the Borough's residents.

1.6. The strategy provides an Action Plan to address the key findings, indicating which partners could be involved to address qualitative and quantitative issues during the life of the plan. There will be proposals to address the projected deficiencies by securing contributions from development to where it is appropriate and securing other funding where necessary.

1.7. Reference is made to sites which are outside of the Borough Council's control but form part of the existing useable provision. These sites are significantly important to the Borough. Therefore, their continued community use will need to be considered and support given to their continued use wherever it is appropriate to do so.

1.8. With a significant growth agenda for the Borough, this strategy provides a platform from which detailed projects can be developed to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for our residents to benefit from quality facilities for the foreseeable future.

POLICY CONTEXT

1.9. The development of a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is a key component of the future development of Ashford Borough's playing pitches as it quantifies the present and future need for outdoor pitch provision in the Borough. An approved PPS allows proper planning for the delivery and playing of outdoor pitch sport into the future; as well as informing proposals for the development of new playing pitches and improvements to existing sites.

1.10. The development and ongoing updating of a PPS is also required to inform the Council's Local Plan, specific planning policies and its responses to individual applications for planning consent.

1.11. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that planning authorities' Local Plans should meet objectively assessed need and positively seek to meet the development needs of an area. Specifically, planning policies for open spaces and sport and recreation should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and

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opportunities for new provision. The information gained from these assessments should be used to determine what open spaces, sports and recreation provision is required which, going forward, will provide an evidence for the emerging Ashford Borough's Local Plan 2030.

1.12 Sport England is a statutory consultee regarding applications for planning consent that have sports pitch and/or recreational green space implications and will develop its consultation responses in the context of the existence and currency of the local PPS.

1.13 The key strategic themes with regards to outdoor pitch and non-pitch sports in Ashford Borough emanate from the policy context which is considered to be:

- The Council's Five Year Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020
- The emerging Local Plan 2030
- Developing Open Space Strategy
- Sport England Active Lives Survey.

METHODOLOGY

1.14 This Strategy is based on a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's PPS Guidance: An Approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy 2013:

1.15 The Guidance recommends the establishment of a Steering Group to oversee the development of the draft PPS and a collaborative approach with Sport England and relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport. In Ashford's case the development of the draft PPS has been overseen by a Steering Group comprised representatives of:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • Sport England | • England and Wales Cricket Board |
| • England Hockey | • Football Association |
| • Lawn Tennis Association | • Rugby Football Union |
| • Ashford Borough Council Planning Department and Culture Team | |

1.16 The Steering Group followed the staged approach, included within the Guidance, to the development of the PPS for Ashford:

- A: Prepare and tailor the approach;
- B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision;
- C: Assess the supply and demand information and views;
- D: Develop the strategy.

1.17 The PPS for Ashford provides:

- **An accurate audit of the supply of pitches and ancillary facilities;**
- **An accurate audit of the current demand for pitches;**
- **An understanding of the future demand for playing pitches;**
- **Detailed views on the adequacy of provision from users and pitch providers;**
- **An understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community;**
- **Whether the current study area is adequate to meet both current and future demand;**
- **The views and opinions of all relevant parties on the adequacy of provision;**
- **The key issues with the supply and demand for provision in the study area.**

1.18 The PPS sets out a significant number of individual pitch, sport and site specific recommendations which, constitutes a useable strategy document which is owned by all relevant parties and which sets out a clear set of recommendations for playing pitch provision into the future together with a prioritised sport, area and site specific action plan.

1.19 The aim of the PPS is:

“Ensure that the current and future demand for sports and recreation are planned for holistically and that the needs of the current and growing population of Ashford Borough can be fully met.”

1.20 The Playing Pitch Strategy provides a framework for delivery with partners and other stakeholders and sets out aspirations and provides a priority list for when funding becomes available. The summary of Key PPS Strategic Priorities for each sport is shown below.

ENGLAND AND WALES CRICKET BOARD – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. There is a need to protect all community use cricket pitches across Ashford Borough in the Local Plan unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided. No sites have been identified to be lost as part of the Action Plan.
2. Ensure cricket clubs have appropriate levels of security of tenure at playing pitch sites where feasible, to secure the long term future of the club.
3. Need to work in partnership with the ECB and Kent Cricket Board to support Clubs and Schools in improving the quality of pitches, and in accessing funding through the ECB Grant Aid and Pitch Advisory Scheme. Any improvements undertaken should seek to ensure that facilities are in line with ECB standards as well as meeting specifications for the local league.
4. Need to ensure that ancillary facilities meet cricket club needs and requirements to ensure sustainability of use where required in the action plan through joint working with Town and Parish Councils, Charitable Trusts, cricket clubs, the ECB, and Kent Cricket.
5. Need to work with cricket clubs to identify satellite facilities of appropriate quality when demand exceeds supply at the club base e.g. Mersham Cricket club and Tenterden Cricket Club. This may include use of Parish Council cricket pitches where clubs have folded.
6. There is a need to provide for shortfalls in supply in the future to 2030: Identified latent demand can be met with existing cricket pitches with the exception of Mersham Cricket Club. It is a priority for Mersham Cricket Club and Kent Cricket to provide a second square at the club to meet current overplay and future latent demand. There is a need for 2 cricket squares to meet population demands to 2030. 1 square and outfield should be provided as part of the Chilmington Green development. The second square could be provided at either Mersham Sports or improved facilities of one of the 2 squares at Ashford Cricket Club to meet demand from the Finberry housing developments in particular.
7. Ashford Borough Council should work with the ECB and Kent Cricket to support clubs applying for funding, and planning, particularly with clubs that can demonstrate long term development plans and have achieved the appropriate accreditations and provide player and sports development pathways.
8. Where appropriate use CIL or Section 106 funding (match funding) to bring existing facilities up to the required ECB and Sport England Guidance Standards for playing pitches and changing accommodation.

FOOTBALL – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. There is a need to protect all existing football pitches across Ashford Borough. Unless suitable equivalents or better replacements are provided.
2. There is a need to ensure formal Community Use Agreements are in place with Education and establishments providing football pitches and 3G rubber crumb pitches for community use.
3. There is a need to support junior clubs to develop with the management and improvement of facilities and ensure security of tenure of playing pitches for junior clubs either through leasing or community asset transfers so clubs can become sustainable in the future e.g. Bromley Green FC, Park Farm FC and Kennington FC.
4. Ashford Borough Council, Town and Parish Councils and Football Clubs need to engage with the FA Pitch Improvement Programme scheme, there are regional pitch advisors that are currently going around the grounds to identify as many sites as possible that can benefit from the scheme. Priorities would be Sandyacres, Biddenden (Gordon Jones Playing Field) and High Halden and sites where pitch improvements would benefit the delivery of latent demand and based on the willingness of the site to participate. Other sites include Kingsnorth Pavilion, Pound Lees Recreation Ground (Hamstreet), Wittersham Sports Field, Ashford Hockey Club (Ball Lane), Pitchside/John Wallis, Great Chart Playing Fields and Cornes Meadow (Smarden).
5. There is a need to improve the standard of non-playing pitch facilities including access and car parking and the quality of changing rooms to provide segregated changing for male and females where feasible. Priority sites are Swan Centre – development of new changing rooms and pavilion; Kingsnorth Pavilion – development of changing rooms and Tenterden – support for the development of a new clubhouse for Tenterden FC and Tenterden Tigers. Other improvements include Rolvenden – provision of changing rooms, Wittersham Sports Field – improvements to changing facilities, Mersham Sports – improvements to changing rooms, Wye Junior FC improvements to changing rooms and Shadoxhurst Recreation Field – improvements to changing rooms.
6. Jemmett Road (South Ashford School) is identified in the Local Plan as a housing development site. Any proposed development on this site will need to meet Sport England's Policy Exemption 4 below:
Sport England's Playing Fields Policy - 'A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England'
Policy Exemption E4:
'The playing field or playing fields, which would be lost as a result of the proposed development, would be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development'.
7. The need to support the development of 3 x 3G rubber crumb full size pitches with floodlights for future training needs. The FA and Ashford Borough Council should work in partnership to provide a local investment plan for the delivery of 3G rubber crumb pitches. Identified sites are Homewood School (Tenterden), Discovery Park (Chilmington Green) and Finberry Park.
8. There is a need to provide for shortfalls in supply in the future to 2030:
 - Adult 11 v 11 football latent demand can be met on existing pitches. After considering latent demand there are 2 adult 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions spare per week and 1 match equivalent session spare every other week. Population increases through team generation rates project a requirement for 8 adult 11 v 11 pitches.
 - Junior 11 v 11 football latent demand can be met from reconfiguration and use of existing facilities and leaves spare capacity of 3 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions. Additional demand should be met by provision of a 3G pitch at Homewood School (Tenterden) and additional pitches at Homewood School playing fields, Appledore Road (Tenterden). These pitches would provide additional playing facilities for Tenterden Tigers. Discussions are ongoing between the FA, Homewood School, Tenterden Tigers, Tenterden FC, Tenterden

Town Council and Ashford Borough Council. Population increases through team generation rates require 4 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions and 4 pitches in the future.

- Junior 9 v 9 latent demand identifies a shortfall of 9.5 junior 9 v 9 match equivalent sessions. Latent demand can be met by reconfiguration and additional pitches on sites that have spare space currently. Population Increases through team generation rates project a need for 3 junior 9 v 9 pitches. The priority site for these new pitches is Discovery Park (Chilmington Green).
- There are sufficient mini soccer 7 v 7 pitches and sufficient mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches. Latent demand can be met from reconfiguration and improving current pitches or moving match equivalents to 3G rubber crumb pitches. Future population projections project a need for 1 mini soccer 7 v 7 and 2 mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches.
- A total of 12.86Ha of space will be required for football pitches at the new Discovery Park. A masterplan is required to identify the best layout and fit for pitches.

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Need to protect all rugby pitches across Ashford Borough unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided. No pitch sites have been identified as lost in the Action Plan.
2. There is a need to improve the quality, availability and carrying capacity of existing rugby pitches and ancillary facilities to meet current and future needs of rugby clubs. There needs to be a particular emphasis on improving maintenance, installing drainage and providing access to floodlit training. This can be achieved by:
 - Seeking to enhance existing facilities with additional floodlighting to reduce midweek over play of pitches.
 - Enhance the Ashford Rugby Club clubhouse with an extension to provide additional changing and toilets, particularly for women and girls.
 - Seek to provide additional grass pitches on land near to Ashford Rugby Club - 2 senior grass pitches with floodlights or a 3G Rugby World 22 compliant pitch with floodlights.
3. There is a need to provide for shortfalls in supply in the future to 2030: Latent demand can be met on match days at Ashford Rugby Club. Over play increases midweek when the latent demand is added to training equivalents and overplay rises to 26 match equivalents per week. Ashford Barbarians latent demand can be met on its existing rugby pitch at Sandyacres. There is a need to provide for additional pitches near to Ashford Rugby Club (minimum of 2 adult pitches with floodlights and or a 3G Rugby World 22 compliant rubber crumb pitch). An additional 2 rugby pitches would be required as part of the developments at Chilmington Green.
4. The Local Authority should work with the RFU to support clubs applying for funding and planning, that are able to demonstrate long term development plans and have achieved the appropriate accreditations and provide player and sports development pathways.
5. Where possible use CIL or Section 106 funding to develop new playing pitch facilities and bring existing facilities up to the required RFU and Sport England Guidance Standards for playing pitches, clubhouse and changing accommodation.

HOCKEY – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Protection of all AGP hockey pitches across Ashford Borough. The sand filled carpets at the North School and Highworth School should only be changed to 3G following discussion and agreement with the National Governing Bodies of Hockey, the Football Association, Ashford Borough Council and the School.
2. Need to ensure that the quality of AGPs is sufficient and there is an appropriate reserve fund in place for the refurbishment of existing facilities.

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3. Need to seek funding for an additional Hockey suitable AGP, replacement of the existing carpet and additional changing rooms to ensure hockey continues to grow in participation at Ashford Hockey Club, Ball Lane. At the same time there is a need to ensure security of use of football pitches on the site or provision of the same or improved football facilities elsewhere.
4. Need to encourage the ongoing development of school and Hockey Club links.
5. Need to work with England Hockey to promote small sided informal games throughout the year to increase participation.

BOWLS – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. All existing provision should seek to be protected through an assessment of quantity, quality and accessibility.
2. There is no evidence of increasing membership in clubs in recent years although clubs have been trying to increase their membership and the latent demand is limited. In terms of quantity there are sufficient bowling greens across Ashford Borough to accommodate both current and future demand. However, there are shortfalls in the quality of existing provision.
3. Ashford Bowls Club Pavilion requires replacing and the club has a desire to move to a new site and Ashford Borough Council is actively supporting the club in securing a new site.
4. Tenterden Bowls Club require a refurbished Pavilion and discussions should be held with Tenterden Town Council to seek funding to facilitate the required improvements.

TENNIS – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. There is a need to protect all community use tennis courts across Ashford Borough.
2. The area is not an LTA focus area but facilities with 3 or more courts could be developed further e.g. Wye Tennis Club and Courtside.
3. Need to prioritise opportunities to invest or seek capital investment into an indoor facility either purpose built providing 4 indoor courts and additional facilities such as health and fitness to ensure sustainability. Sites to be considered include Courtside which can be linked with netball provision. Further sites such as the Julie Rose Stadium could also be considered where the LTA and Sport England are currently undertaking a high level feasibility study.
4. Consider provision of 3 tennis courts with floodlights (0.16ha) as part of the Chilmington Green Development – exploration to see if a tennis operator would be interested in managing such a facility.
5. Need to broadly encourage and support the work to link between venues, coaches and schools to ensure the young people in Ashford Borough have an opportunity to participate in tennis.
6. Need to develop opportunities for growth in the tennis workforce to support the tennis environments.

NETBALL – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Need to ensure the protection of Courtside and ensure that a reserve fund is maintained to repair/refurbish surfaces to netball courts at Courtside in the future.
2. Kent Netball and Ashford Netball League to provide links between schools and clubs and work to increase participation in the future.

MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

- 1.21 It is important that regular monitoring and review occurs through meetings of the Steering Group following sign off by the National Governing Bodies and Sport England and adoption of the Strategy and Action Plan by Ashford Borough Council.
- 1.22 The Steering Group should be led by Ashford Borough Council. As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the Strategy being signed off by the Steering Group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the Playing Pitch strategy to be out of date.
- 1.23 It is important to ensure that any ongoing review of this strategy encompasses the priorities identified in the Action Plan and is mindful of the rural nature of a significant part of the Borough.

2. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. Ashford Borough Council commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), which has been developed for grass and all weather pitches. The Playing Pitch Strategy will guide future provision and management of sports pitches, to serve existing and new communities in Ashford Borough.
- 2.2. In line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the PPS sets out to assess existing Playing Pitches, the future need for Playing Pitches, and opportunities for new provision. The key factors for Ashford Borough Council are:

- **The requirements of the 2012 NPPF and specifically paragraph 73**

'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. 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. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required'.

(Source: NPPF 2012 Paragraph 73)

- **and additionally, paragraph 74 of the NPPF** emphasise that existing open space, sports and recreational facilities and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
 - An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - Any loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - The development is for alternative recreation or open space facilities, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

AIM OF DEVELOPING A PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- 2.3. The aim of developing the Playing Pitch Strategy is to:

"Ensure that the current and future demand for sports and recreation are planned for holistically and that the needs of the current and growing population of Ashford Borough can be fully met."

- 2.4. The Strategy will provide evidence to support:

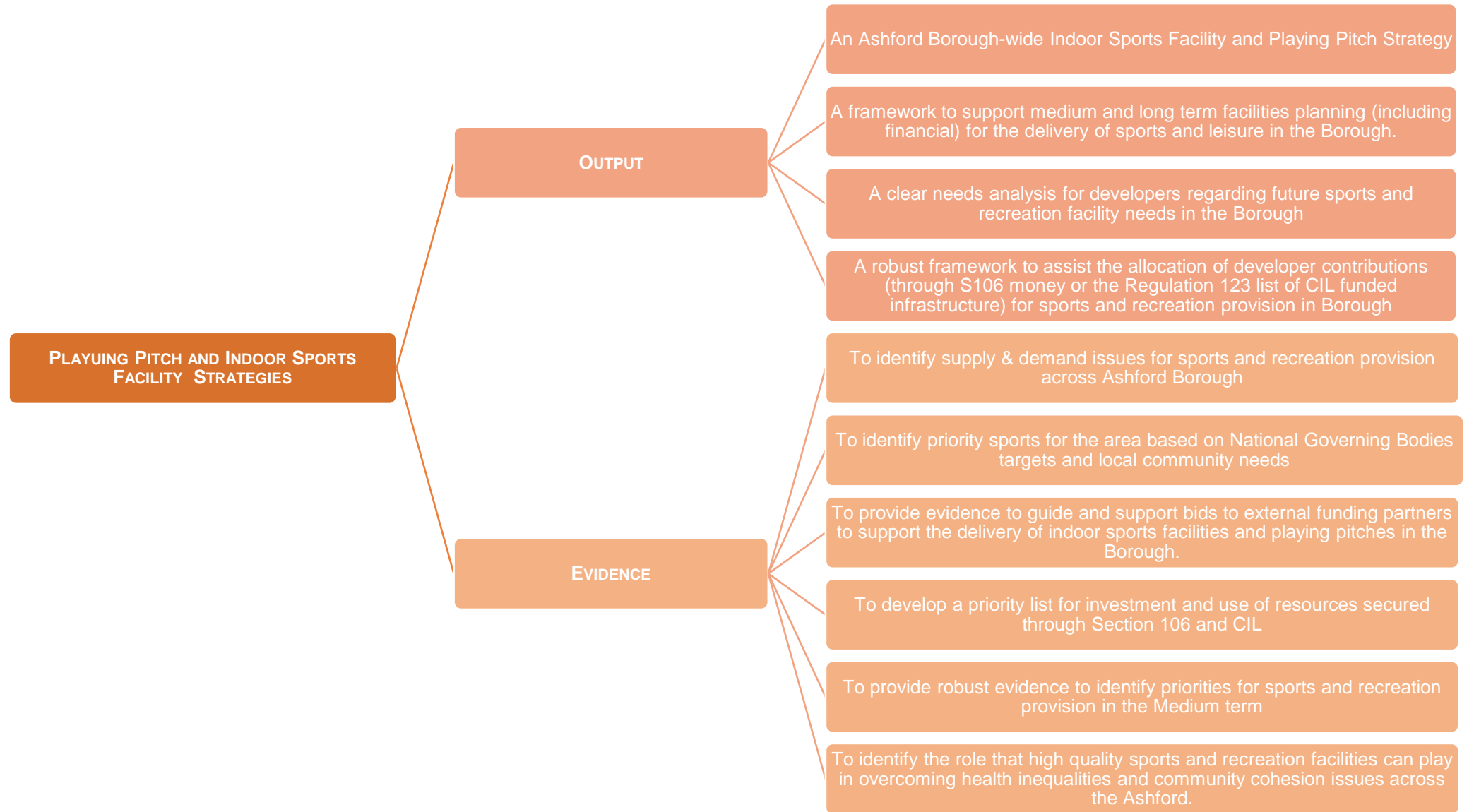
- **The Council's emerging Local Plan 2030;**
- **The production of the Regulation 123 list of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded infrastructure;**
- **Funding bids from National Sports bodies like Sport England and the National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport;**
- **Additionally, the Strategy will focus on revenue and capital spending in the medium term.**

- 2.5. This work will ensure that a planned approach to sport and physical activity facilities takes place in Ashford Borough over the medium term, ensuring that the Ashford community has access to high quality facilities, helping communities improve their health and remain cohesive. It is imperative that where Ashford Borough Council provides facilities, they are as efficient and effective as possible due to continuing financial pressures.

- 2.6. The following chart shows the outputs that will be delivered by the Playing Pitch Strategy.

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Figure 2.1: The outputs that will be delivered by the Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy



STRATEGY SCOPE

2.7. The project scope for the playing pitch strategy includes:

- **Football**
- **Cricket**
- **Rugby Union**
- **Hockey**
- **Bowls**
- **Tennis**
- **Netball**

2.8. The Strategy addresses facilities provided by the following sectors:

- **Local Authority**
- **Education (school based), Higher and Further Education.**
- **Voluntary and private sectors**

RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING A PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

2.9. Ashford Borough Council wishes to understand both the needs of its playing pitch and playing pitch ancillary facilities portfolio, and future need for provision, driven by increased population, and identification of any gaps in the existing facility network.

2.10. The development of this new Playing Pitch Strategy will enable Ashford Borough Council and other local providers to shape their future playing pitch facilities offer; this may comprise direct provision and that undertaken by education, voluntary, community, private sectors and National Governing Bodies.

2.11. The Strategy will underpin the contribution that sport, and the facilitation of opportunities to have a healthy lifestyle, make to the local authority's Corporate Plan and priority objectives. It will also help provide a rationale to enable National Governing Bodies to further invest and deliver their working outcomes as outlined in their various strategic development documents.

2.12. The development of the Strategy is an opportunity to set out a strategic Vision for future provision of playing pitch facilities, based on robust evidence and a needs assessment.

2.13. This will guide and inform future investment and partnerships, influence the Local Plan, future proof and increase participation opportunities to 2030 and beyond.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.14. The detailed requirements of each element of the study are set out below; these reflect the requirements and structure of the Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy guidance:

2.15. The strategy has been developed in line with guidance by Sport England (Playing Pitch Guidance, An approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy).

- **Stage A: (Step 1) – of the methodology is to prepare and tailor the approach.**
- **Stage B: (Steps 2 & 3) - Gather supply and demand information and views. Information was gathered on both the supply of pitches and the demand for these pitches, specifically:**
 - Supply – site details, see Technical Assessments Football, Cricket, Rugby and Hockey Appendix 1, accessibility and overall quality of current provision, including the use of Sport England's Active Places database, existing records of pitch provision, Sport England's non-

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- technical visual quality assessment template, views of Ashford Borough Council, NGBs, schools and user clubs.
- Demand - see Technical Assessments Football, Cricket, Rugby and Hockey Appendix 1- teams and their match and training requirements, casual and educational demand as well as displaced and latent demand, through consultation with clubs.
- Details of potential changes to the future pitch stock, as well as projected and aspirational increases in participation.
- **Stage C: (Steps 4, 5 & 6) – Assessing the Supply and Demand Information and Views. The supply and demand information collated has been used to:**
 - Understand the situation at individual sites.
 - Develop the current and projected future pictures of provision.
 - Identify the key findings and issues that need to be addressed.
- **Stage D: Steps 7 & 8 – Developing the recommendations for an action plan and writing and adopting the strategy.**

2.16. This document continues on from the needs assessment (Stage A, B & C) and aims to:

- Summarise the key strategic findings of the individual sport assessments and sets out the main issues to be addressed in the strategy.
- Provides specific proposals for each sport.
- Takes into consideration the current and future needs of the individual playing pitch sites.
- Provides a guide to monitoring and reviewing the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS).

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

THE STUDY AREA

2.17. The extent of the study area is within the Borough boundary of Ashford. Members of sports clubs in Ashford travel quite extensively within the Borough and across the borough's boundaries to access their home ground particularly for rugby and hockey. There is high dependence on private transport across Ashford, 84% of the population has access to private transport.

2.18. Map 2.1 below shows Ashford and its relationship to the rest of Kent, London and Paris.

Map 2.1: Ashford in relation to Kent, London and Paris



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- 2.19. Ashford Borough Council is in the County of Kent, bounded to the north by the borough of Swale, by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells to the west, Rother District to the south west, Shepway District to the south east, and Canterbury to the north.
- 2.20. Ashford is well connected to the South East, the rest of the UK, and mainland Europe via the M20 and A28, domestic rail services, and the international rail link to Paris and Brussels. Both domestic and international links have improved with the opening of the High Speed 1 (HS1) rail services to London and Europe. Journey times to London are now just 37 minutes. These links give Ashford a major competitive advantage, which will be vital to the future growth of its economy.
- 2.21. Ashford Borough is the largest local authority (spatially) within Kent and covers an area of approximately 58,062 ha. At the time of the 2011 Census the borough had a population of 118,405 residents.
- 2.22. The town of Ashford (population of approximately 60,000 people) is the Borough's largest settlement and is where most sporting and cultural activity is focused. The rest of the borough is rural in nature and includes the historic market town of Tenterden (population of approximately 7,000 people) and a number of medium to small sized villages.
- 2.23. **The population is expected to be 146,500 by 2030 (Source: ONS Sub National 2014 Population Projections). In addition, the Ashford age profile is changing, by 2030 there are expected to be 35,000 people over the age of 65.**
- 2.24. **The Council is in the process of producing its Local Plan which will set out the level of housing growth that is needed to come forward by 2030. Currently, the evidence base which supports the Local Plan is suggesting that an additional 14,680 houses will be required (2011 – 2030). The majority of this future growth will be focused towards the town of Ashford 75% and 25% in the rural areas.**

OTHER LOCAL FACTORS

- 2.25. The Indices of Deprivation 2015 shows a change in Ashford's national rank, moving up 22 places between 2010 and 2015. This indicates that Ashford is more deprived in 2015 than in 2010 relative to all other local authorities in England. Ashford has a deprivation ranking in 2015 of 198 out of 326 nationally and in Kent 8 out of 12. In 2010 Ashford was 176 out of 326 nationally and 7 out of 12 in Kent.
- 2.26. Ashford does not have any Lower Super Output Areas ranked within the top 10% most deprived in England. Stanhope and Victoria Wards are the most deprived areas in Ashford.
- 2.27. 84% of Ashford's households have access to private transport, with 31% of households having access to 2 cars or vans. This suggests that the households in Ashford are fairly mobile.
- 2.28. There is high dependence on private transport across Ashford, because although there are larger villages in the area, many people travel to Town for education, retail opportunities and employment. This explains why 84% of the population has access to private transport.
- 2.29. Overall communities in Ashford have good health, life expectancy is not significantly different for people in the most deprived areas of Ashford than in the least deprived areas. Obesity levels in children in year 6, 21.6% (292) of children are classified as obese, worse than the average for England and in 2012, 22.7% of adults were classed as obese.
- 2.30. The Health Profile for Ashford 2015 identified the priorities in Ashford to include improving the levels of healthy weight amongst adults and children through increasing levels of physical activity, addressing health inequalities (heart disease), and addressing smoking prevalence and smoking in pregnancy.

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S FIVE YEAR CORPORATE PLAN 2015 – 2020 - ASPIRATION, ACTION, ACHIEVEMENT

PRIORITY 1: ENTERPRISING ASHFORD – ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AND GROWTH

Our Aspiration: To promote growth and achieve greater economic prosperity for Ashford Borough. We will work to secure inward investment to create a wide range of jobs carried out by highly skilled workforce.

PRIORITY 2: LIVING ASHFORD – QUALITY HOUSING & HOMES FOR ALL

Our Aspiration: To secure quality homes across the Borough, catering for a range of ages, tenure and need, in well planned and attractive new places.

PRIORITY 3: ACTIVE & CREATIVE ASHFORD – HEALTHY CHOICES THROUGH PHYSICAL, CULTURAL AND LEISURE ENGAGEMENT

Our Aspiration: To provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.

PRIORITY 4: ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD – ENVIRONMENT, COUNTRYSIDE, TOURISM & HERITAGE

Our: Aspiration: To achieve an environment that creates higher standards of public space, design, alongside improved standards of presentation of key green spaces. To safeguard and conserve our local heritage and areas of outstanding landscape quality to ensure the very best attractive environment with thriving and vibrant town centres.

2.31. The Corporate Strategy Priority 3 identifies what Ashford Borough Council wishes to achieve by healthy choices through physical, cultural and leisure engagement. The priorities are shown below.

2.32. Our Aspiration: To provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.

- **What do we want to achieve and how will we do it?**
 - Delivery of the best mix of sports, cultural, recreational experiences supporting a range of health & wellbeing benefits for residents of all ages and abilities.
 - Invest in new provision and refurbishment of existing facilities to provide a high quality sports, culture and leisure offer [Substantial investment in Stour Centre].
 - Improve the quality of the management of leisure & cultural facilities so that they are among the best in the UK.
 - Extend the cultural, sport & recreational offers at key sites: Conningbrook, Julie Rose.
 - Innovative ways for people to choose active lifestyles.
 - Ascertain and support best solutions for providing healthy & active communities in new developments – Repton Park, Chilmington.
 - Strengthen culture & sport in the Local Plan and through Master Planning.
 - Develop a 'cycle town' strategy.
 - Recognising the growing elderly demographic, embed a new approach to activities for the 60+ group across the borough.
 - Grow our cultural offer to be a successful and alternative destination.
 - Deliver town centre cinema & associated attractions.
 - Continue to support Revelation St Mary's, develop Create & exploit its brand.
 - Attract cultural industries.
 - Support Tenterden's leisure & cultural offer.
 - Work with the private sector on cultural & leisure provision.
 - Maximise the value of our key green sites.
 - Masterplan future development at Conningbrook.
 - Planned improvement to key public space and parks – Victoria Park, Memorial Gardens & Willesborough Dykes.

LOCAL PLAN TO 2030

THE VISION

- 2.33. The following sets out the vision for Ashford Borough in 2030.
- 2.34. Ashford Borough will meet its housing and employment needs, and take account of the needs of investors, through the provision of new high quality development forming attractive places, with the necessary supporting infrastructure and services, and in sustainable and accessible locations that take account of the Borough's environmental constraints.
- 2.35. The town of Ashford will continue to be the main focus for development with the regeneration of the town centre and areas where there are existing environmental and social issues and the creation of attractive and vibrant new communities on the periphery of the town.
- 2.36. A regenerated Ashford Town Centre will expand significantly its leisure, cultural, educational and residential offer. A new Commercial office Quarter next to the railway station will be a major economic impetus for the area, helping to substantially increase employment, trigger more spending in the town centre economy, and improve wage rates and skills levels. The town centre's heritage will be conserved and enhanced alongside quality new public realm reflecting the various different character areas.
- 2.37. Tenterden will continue to serve the south western part of the Borough as a principal rural service centre with a strong offer of shops and services, conserving and enhancing its historic centre and accommodating development of a suitable scale, design and character.
- 2.38. The other rural service centres of Charing, Hamstreet and Wye will remain important providers of local shops and services, with care taken to conserve and enhance their historic centres and the delivery of limited development.
- 2.39. The identity and attractive character of the Borough's rural area, with its range of attractive settlements, wealth of heritage assets and its expansive countryside, including the Kent Downs AONB to the north and the High Weald AONB to the south, will be protected and enhanced.
- 2.40. The Borough's green spaces will be protected and enhanced to serve expanding populations including two new strategic parks at Ashford and the promotion of sporting and recreational hubs in accessible locations; the retention of flood storage areas; reinforcement of wildlife corridors and an improved cycle network to foster healthier lifestyles for residents and workers.
- 2.41. A positive approach to the adaptation of climate change will be secured by avoiding development in areas at greatest risk of flooding; protecting and enhancing green networks; carefully considered new layouts and designs of housing areas; and promoting sustainable drainage and challenging water efficiency standards.

SPORT RECREATION AND PLAY

- 2.42. The draft Local Plan 2030 states the following:
- 2.43. Recreation, sport, open space and play areas can enrich the quality of our lives and contribute towards healthy living. The Borough currently enjoys a wide range of such space and this provision will be added to when current planning applications are implemented, most notably Chilmington Green which will deliver significant recreational and leisure areas.
- 2.44. The following total quantum's of recreational, play, sport and open space are required to meet the needs of the new development proposed in this Local Plan. These figures are derived from the emerging Sports Pitches and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, alongside standards set out in the current Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. They take into account planned provision that is

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earmarked to come forward, such as at Chilmington Green. The figures do not take into account the role which could be played by provision at schools. This provision should be treated as supplementary as in most cases it tends to have limited public access at key times.

Table 2.1: Total Spatial Target for play, open space and sports

INFORMAL SPACE	22.5ha
CHILDREN'S PLAY	5.6ha
STRATEGIC PARKS	3.4ha
ALLOTMENT PROVISION	2.2ha
SPORTS HALLS (1 BADMINTON HALL OR EQUIVALENT)	4
3G ARTIFICIAL PITCH	1
FOOTBALL PITCHES	7 adult, 3 junior
HOCKEY 2G PITCH	1 adult
RUGBY	2 senior pitches
CRICKET SQUARE AND OUTFIELD	1

2.45. These figures are a 'target' as not all residential development coming forward will be required to deliver a proportion of these provisions. For example, some development will be excluded on viability grounds such as most proposals coming forward in the town centre, and a number of developments will fall below the threshold that trigger a requirement for provision. However, this is somewhat countered as CIL receipts can be used to deliver recreation, sport, play and open space, where it is strategic in nature. This type of provision effectively meets a need for all new developments in the Borough. Therefore the identification of a target figure is considered to be a robust starting point for the policy below.

2.46. In order to determine the quantum and type of provision required for each qualifying proposal, applicants will be expected to use the Sports England Calculator and the relevant standards in the Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. Aside from informal space – which will normally be delivered on site and form part of the wider landscaping/ SUDs strategy, incidental space around buildings, discussions with the Council shall then take place as to what exact provision will be sort from any S106 monies to be collected, using the projects identified within the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan schedule as the starting point.

THE HUB APPROACH

2.47. The Local Plan seeks to deliver a community hub model and the strategies emerging for recreation, sports, open space and play all recommend the same model. The sport and recreational hubs are identified on Strategic Diagram 2 which supports this Local Plan. They are:

- **Discovery Park:** a new, major open space and recreational area that is proposed to include a number of sports pitches (including the provision for 3G pitches), a large scale indoor sports building, strategic play space and managed outdoor recreational space. The majority of Discovery Park will come forward in response to development at Chilmington Green and the area is protected as part of the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan, the provisions of which fall outside the scope of this Local Plan. However, an extension to Discovery Park is proposed to come forward as part of the Court Lodge development (policy S3).
- **Conningbrook Park:** a new large water based recreational resource and facilities at Conningbrook Lakes and significant indoor sports provision in the form of the existing Julie Rose

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Stadium. Complementary provision in the form of strategic play space and informal space will also be provided here.

- **Ashford Town Centre:** a key location for indoor sports provision within the Borough. The Stour Centre is the principal indoor sports facility within the borough and caters for a range of sports, including swimming, badminton, squash, netball and football. In addition the Town Centre is also home to green spaces in the form of Victoria Park, Memorial Gardens and the Green Corridor. The Town Centre will continue to be a key recreational and sporting hub over the plan period.
- **Finberry/Park Farm:** a community and leisure hub adjacent to the planned primary school that compliments the open space facilities planned at Bridgefield Park. This Hub aims to deliver a 3G state of the art sports pitch which will be supported by a multi-use play area, a community building with indoor sports courts and changing facilities.
- **Kingsnorth Recreation Centre:** already a well-established urban hub for the area and town. This could support an increase in the recreational and outdoor space offer located here.
- **Sandyhurst Lane:** another site already offering social, community and sports provision (comprising two full size grass football pitches and one rugby pitch supported by a pavilion comprising four team and one officials changing room, bar and large function room). New provision could be planned which could include improved sports pitches, informal and natural green space and potentially allotment space.
- **Spearpoint:** a busy football hub already existing on this site and contains six grass pitches, a newly built pavilion and recently refurbished tennis courts (2). Further leisure development on this site could also be considered.
- **Pitchside/Courtside:** Pitchside and Courtside are adjacent dual use sites in South Ashford on the campus of John Wallis Academy. Pitchside consists of a full size 3G pitch and two full size grass football pitches for community use. In addition the Academy grass playing field has a junior pitch; full size football pitch and full size rugby pitch which are available for occasional community use as demand dictates. Pitchside is supported by a 4 changing room pavilion. Courtside comprises six hard courts supported by a two changing room pavilion with meeting room and office. The primary use of the courts is for netball, with tennis the main secondary use. This provides a key mixed use sports hub and has the potential to be extended and upgraded.

LOCAL PROVISION

2.48. Not all of the provision of recreation, sport, open space and play areas will serve a wider catchment or play a strategic role. There are a number of local areas which fulfil a key role in meeting the everyday community's needs. These areas include Bridgefield Park, South Willesborough (Bulleid Place/Swan Centre), Singleton (Cuckoo Park/ Singleton Environment Centre), and Repton Park Community Centre. These offer multi-use community space for local residents, children's play and informal recreational open space. Hythe Road Recreation ground should be up-graded to provide a much needed quality open space for informal recreation including multi-use games area. When new development comes forward, there will remain a need to deliver provision at a local scale, to directly serve the community in which it is located.

THE APPROACH IN THE RURAL AREA

2.49. The spatial approach in the rural area has to be a different one to the strategic hub approach above, given the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern. Here the Council has a strong track record of working with Parish Councils to ensure the delivery and maintenance of small scale provision across the rural settlements of the Borough.

2.50. In the rural areas it is important that the provision is linked where possible to public transport routes in order to work to avoid social exclusion, to ensure facilities are as accessible as possible to the widest

catchment of users and thereby maximize the viability and vitality of the facilities themselves.

2.51. The Council will continue to liaise with the Parish Councils to determine the optimum level of provision possible in the rural areas.

Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces

As a target, the Council shall seek to deliver the quantum of provision as new recreation, sport, play and open space provision by 2030 as set out in table 4 of this Local Plan.

Proposals will utilise the Sports England Calculator and comply with the standards set out within the Green Spaces and Water SPD, where practical.

Informal green space will normally be provided on site in line with the guidance and provisions contained within the Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD.

In Ashford, the provision of children's play, strategic parks, allotments, sports facilities shall be concentrated on key allocated sites within this Local Plan or at the sports and recreation hubs identified above. Proposals which undermine the ability of a hub to play a role in delivering this provision shall not be supported.

Provision that meets a localised need shall normally be required to be delivered on-site in a way that supports the local community as it comes forward.

In the rural area, provision should normally be delivered in a way that helps maintain, enhance and potentially expand existing provision at the settlement where development is proposed, or at the nearest settlement.

In line with the provision within the NPPF exceptions to the approach outlined above could be justified, should the following circumstances arise in that:

- a. there is suitable open/ green space provision nearby and this provision can be accessed by green routes,**
- b. there is suitable sports provision nearby and this provision is accessible and the facility is able to and has the capacity to be used by the public at key times and this access can be secured over the long term at determination of the application,**
- c. delivering such provision would render a scheme unviable,**
- d. not delivering the required provision is supported by the Council or in agreement with the Parish Council.**

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASHFORD

2.52. The overall housing requirement of 14,680 dwellings is proposed to be delivered in the Borough between 2011 and 2030.

2.53. The principal opportunities for new growth lie on the edge of the existing built up area of Ashford through carefully managed and planned growth. There are locations adjoining the town that could accommodate new development without seriously undermining the wider environmental objectives of this Plan.

2.54. This approach has been influenced by a number of important factors, including the implementation of the Chilmington development across the Plan period, the availability of additional motorway junction capacity that is due to be created by the construction of the proposed M20 Junction 10a and the need to ensure a consistent supply of available housing sites to cater for different elements of the market.

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- 2.55. Development at Tenterden: Although only about one-tenth the size of Ashford, Tenterden is the second largest settlement in the borough and it's only other town. It plays a main rural service centre role for much of the south-western part of the borough. It is an attractive, historic town which is relatively well served by shops and services and is an important tourist destination which contributes greatly to the rural economy of the borough.
- 2.56. Tenterden has been the focus of relatively small-scale 'organic' growth which has been usually more on a village-type scale than the scale of allocations at Ashford. However, the previous Core Strategy identified increased levels of development for Tenterden and the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD allocated a significant development area to the south of the town centre (TENT1) for which the first phase now has planning permission.
- 2.57. Development at villages: The borough is home to a wide range of smaller rural settlements which play a key part in establishing its overall character. Many lie in attractive and /or designated landscape settings and contain areas of historic value. Some fulfil a local service centre role and have a range of key local facilities such as a primary school or a post office.
- 2.58. The government's policy for development in rural settlements has changed since the advent of the NPPF and its supporting Planning Practice Guidance. In para.55 of the NPPF, the ability of development in one village to support services in a nearby village is cited as an example of sustainable development in the rural areas and the practice guidance states that *"all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence"*.

CURRENT PARTICIPATION RATES

- 2.59. Sport England's Active People Survey (APS) 10 (2015/16) based on a survey of 500 people across the Borough highlights that of those aged 16+ in Ashford Borough: 29.9% participates once a week in sport; this is lower than, South East (37.7%) and England (35.8%), and is lower than previous levels of participation in Ashford in 2012/2013 (34.5%), 2013/2014 (35.1%) and 2014/15 (33.8%). This means that circa 66% of Ashford residents over 16, are not physically active at least once a week.

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Table 2.2: Adult (16+) Participation in Sport (at least once a week), by year

YEAR	ASHFORD	SOUTH EAST	ENGLAND
2005/06	32.3 %	37.1 %	34.6 %
2007/08	35.6 %	39.0 %	36.6 %
2008/09	32.6 %	37.9 %	36.5 %
2009/10	30.3 %	37.9 %	36.2 %
2010/11	26.3 %	36.8 %	35.6 %
2011/12	32.9 %	38.4 %	36.9 %
2012/13	34.5 %	38.1 %	36.6 %
2013/14	35.1 %	37.6 %	36.1 %
2014/15	33.8 %	37.7 %	35.8 %
2015/16	29.9%	38.3%	36.1%

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Adult (16+) participation in sport (at least once a week) by year, one session per week (at least 4 sessions of at least moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes in the previous 28 days). Time period(s): 2005/06, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16

2.60. Other key participation performance indicators are shown below in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Active People Survey Key Performance Indicators

INDICATOR	ASHFORD				SOUTH EAST				ENGLAND			
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
KPI3 - Club Membership in the last 4 weeks	18.5 %	26.3 %	21.0 %	20.3 %	24.3 %	24.2 %	23.7 %	24.5 %	21.0 %	21.6 %	21.8 %	22.2 %
KPI4 - Received tuition or coaching in last 12 months	11.2 %	17.4 %	17.1 %	14.6 %	18.1 %	19.0 %	18.0 %	18.3 %	15.8 %	16.4 %	15.6 %	15.6 %
KPI5 - Took part in organised competition in last 12 months	11.9 %	11.8 %	13.5 %	10.0 %	14.2 %	15.0 %	14.7 %	15.6 %	11.2 %	13.3 %	13.3 %	13.3 %
KPI6 - Very/fairly satisfied with local sports provision	64.9 %	59.3 %	56.6 %	70.5%	63.7 %	63.8 %	63.6 %	64.6 %	60.3 %	61.6 %	61.8 %	62.1 %

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Key Performance Indicators 3,4,5,6. Time Period(s): 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16

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2.61. The table above shows that club membership in the last 4 weeks is slightly lower in Ashford in 2015/2016 (20.3%) than in 2014/2015 and is lower than the South East and England. Those that have received coaching in the last 12 months (14.6%) are lower than that of England (15.6%) and the South East (18.3%).

2.62. Those that have taken part in organised competition in Ashford 2015/2016 (10.0%) are lower than the South East (15.6%) and England (13.3%).

2.63. The Very/Fairly satisfied with local sports provision in Ashford is 70.5% in 2015/2016 higher than the previous year 56.6% and has risen above the previous high 64.9% and is higher than the South East (64.6%) and England (62.1%).

2.64. APS 10 also identifies that:

- **In terms of Latent Demand, 57.4% of all those aged 16+ want to do more sport**
- **28.8% of those aged 16+ in Ashford who are already physically active, want to do more sport**
- **28.5% of those who are physically inactive in Ashford want to do more sport**

SPORT ENGLAND MARKET SEGMENTATION

2.65. Sport England has developed nineteen sporting segments to provide a better understanding of people's attitudes to sport, their motivations and barriers. The key data sources were Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) 'Taking Part' survey and Active People. Further data was added from Experian Mosaic databases. Population data is used for people aged 18 and over.

2.66. Segmentation provides information on who participates in sport and what they want in terms of sport and active recreation provision. In total there are nineteen segments.

2.67. The Market Segmentation analysis for Ashford identifies that the dominant segments are Tim, Philip, Alison, Roger and Joy.

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Table 2.4: Market Segmentation Summary – Dominant Segments Ashford Borough Council

MARKET SEGMENT AND NUMBER	SEGMENT NAME	DESCRIPTION	TOP PARTICIPATION SPORTS NATIONALLY	ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	
				NUMBER	RATE
Tim (6)	Settling Down Males	Sporty male professionals (aged 26-45), buying a house and settling down with partner.	Tim is an active type that takes part in sport on a regular basis. Tim's top sports are cycling (21%), keep fit/ gym (20%), swimming (15%), football (13%) and golf (7%)	10,200	11.7%
Philip (1)	Comfortable Mid-life Males	Mid-life professional, sporty males with older children and more time for themselves	Philip's sporting activity levels are above the national average. Philip's top sports are cycling (16%), keep fit/ gym (15%), swimming (12%), football (9%), and golf (8%)	8,800	10.1 %
Alison	Stay at Home Mums		Alison is a fairly active segment with above average levels of participation in sport. Alison's top sports are: keep fit/ gym (27%), swimming (25%), cycling (12%), athletics including running (11%), and equestrian (3%)	6,400	7.4%
Roger and Joy	Early retirement couples, free time couples nearing the end of their careers.	The main motivations for Roger & Joy playing sport are enjoyment and keeping fit where their scores are above the national average.	Keep fit/gym, swimming, cycling, golf and angling.	10,400	7.4%

Source: Sport England, 2010, Measure: Sport Market Segmentation

- 2.68. There are also quite large groups of: Ben (Competitive male urbanites - who participate in Football, 'keep fit and gym', cycling, and athletics or running); Chloe (Fitness Class Friends, young image conscious female keeping fit and trim) and Elaine (Empty nest career ladies. Mid-life professional who have more time on their hands since their children left home).
- 2.69. The market segments with the highest participation rates and which are most likely to play pitch sports are aged from 16 – 34 (segments 1-7 in the scale). Tim who is the most dominant market segment in Ashford is in this age group. This suggests that a proportion of the population will be keen to play outdoor sports.

3. KEY FINDINGS

Note on definitions of artificial pitch surfaces.

Sport England has produced guidance on “Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union” This guidance should be followed when selecting an artificial surface. The guidance can be found at:

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/4275/selecting-the-right-artificial-surface-rev2-2010.pdf>

Throughout this section of the Strategy the following abbreviations are used to describe specific types of playing pitch facility that has an artificial surface rather than natural grass.

NTP or non-turf pitch refers to an artificial turf sports surface designed specifically for cricket.

FTP 3G - Stands for football turf pitch and is commonly referred to as a 3G (third generation) pitch. This pitch type comprises blades of polypropylene of 40mm to 65mm in length (i.e. short pile or long pile) supported by a thin base layer of sand and by an infill of rubber crumb. The 3G playing surface is laid on various types of stone base with or without a porous macadam layer and shock pad. FTPs are suitable for football to a high level of competition.

AGP - stands for an England Hockey recognised artificial pitch which is either sand based/dressed or water playing surface

World Rugby 22 IRB Compliant stands for a long pile FTP 3G with an engineered sub base system (of stone base, porous tarmac layer and shock pad) and are accepted by the rugby governing bodies (RFU and RFL).

FOOTBALL SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.1. There are 101 grass football pitches provided on 48 sites across the Ashford Borough that are available for community use. There are 29 adult 11 v 11 grass and 2 FTP (3G) pitches are used for adult competitive games, 21 junior 11 v 11 grass pitches, 14 junior 9 v 9 grass pitches, 27 mini soccer 7 v 7 grass pitches and 10 mini 5 v 5 grass pitches.
- 3.2. There are grass pitches on school sites that are not available for community use – 2 Junior 11 v 11 grass pitches, 2 junior 9 v 9 grass pitches, 11 mini soccer 7 v 7 grass pitches and 7 mini soccer 5 v 5 grass pitches. New football pitches have also been provided at Ashford Prep School, Friars, and Great Chart which opened in September 2016. These pitches are not available for community use.
- 3.3. There are currently 172 teams, comprising 53 11 v 11 adult teams (49 adult men’s and 4 women’s), 39 junior boys 11 v 11 teams, 2 junior girls 11 v 11, 31 junior boys 9 v 9, 1 junior girls 9 v 9, 28 mini soccer 7 v 7 and 18 mini soccer 5 v 5 teams.

IS THERE ENOUGH ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION?

- 3.4. There are sufficient adult match equivalent sessions (6 spare match equivalent sessions weekly and 1 match equivalent session every other week) available if all the unsecured match equivalent session were reduced or stopped. The spare capacity for maintenance and repair of pitches to be carried out is normally identified as 10% of the pitch stock. The 6 spare match equivalent sessions is more than 10% of the adult pitch stock (29 pitches).

- 3.5. All of the junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions are in secured community use. There is a spare capacity of 2 pitches at peak time which allows for more than 10% of the pitch stock to be rested (11 pitches).
- 3.6. Current peak time play for junior 9 v 9 is Saturday AM and there are 11 available match equivalent sessions and 9 match equivalent sessions are required. When considering unsecured community use there are 10 available match equivalent sessions and 9 match equivalent sessions are required. Still sufficient pitches to meet peak time demand. There is also 2 spare match equivalent sessions at peak time which allows for 10% of the pitch stock to be rested (11 pitches).
- 3.7. There are also sufficient match equivalent sessions for 7 v 7 and 5 v 5 teams if unsecured community use was reduced or stopped.

LAPSED OR DISUSED PITCHES

- 3.8. Pitches that were formerly playing pitches but are no longer used for formal or informal sports use within the last five years (lapsed) or longer (disused).
- 3.9. It is important to understand that where a pitch is identified as being lapsed, underused or of poor quality this does not necessarily mean that the facility is surplus to requirements. Equally where proposed development is located within access of a high quality playing pitch, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further pitch provision or improvements to existing pitches. The Playing Pitch Strategy may, if appropriate, be used to inform a Development Management decision. However, all applications are assessed by the Council on a case by case basis.
- 3.10. Sport England is a statutory consultee for playing pitches of greater than 0.2 hectares in size that have been used in the last five years. Sport England's playing field policy only allows for development of lapsed or disused playing fields if a PPS shows a clear excess in the quantity of playing pitch provision at present and in the future across all sports, the site concerned has no special significance to sport and the development involves measures to address any deficiencies in terms of quality or accessibility identified by the PPS. Playing Pitch Strategy guidance similarly states that loss of such sites without appropriate replacement should not be considered except in very limited circumstances where the assessment has clearly shown:
 1. **That there is an excess of accessible provision with secured community use in the study area, and;**
 2. **The particular provision at a site to be surplus to requirements and is not of special interest to sport. It may be appropriate to dispose of some existing playing field sites (that are of low value i.e. one/two pitch sites with no changing provision) to generate investment towards creating bigger better quality sites (Hub Sites).**
- 3.11. Disused pitches – there is 1 junior 11 v 11 disused pitch identified at the old South Ashford Primary School site, Jemmett Road. The site is identified in the draft Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030 as a housing development site.
- 3.12. In 2007, there were 2 junior 11 v 11 pitches at the South Ashford Primary School site used by 2 community football teams. 1 pitch has transferred to Ashford Oaks Community Primary School adjacent to the old South Ashford Primary School site and 1 pitch is now disused and is overgrown and is within the development boundary within the draft Local Plan 2030.
- 3.13. Planning permission was originally agreed in December 2007 for housing on the South Ashford Primary School site with mitigation of funds discussed to provide for new playing pitches or improved quality of current playing pitches in the area. The intention was to provide mitigation funds for the new Pitchside 3G full size pitch with floodlights built and opened in 2008.

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- 3.14. Pitchside was built at the Ashford Mini Soccer Centre which had been operational since 2001. The Ashford Mini Soccer Centre due to its success and popularity, could not meet demand as the heavy clay soil grass pitches could not be intensively used, and indeed the whole facility had to be closed for eleven weeks every year in order to allow for pitch renovation. The installation of an artificial pitch enabled the centre to be more intensively used in order to meet the demand.
- 3.15. The 2 junior teams (South Ashford FC) that had been using South Ashford Primary School pitches were transferred to Pitchside upon opening of the facilities in 2008 and still play at the site.
- 3.16. In 2012 planning permission was withdrawn for the South Ashford Primary School site by the applicant Kent County Council and opened as a temporary school used by Finberry Primary School. Finberry Primary school is awaiting new facilities that are being developed as part of the new housing development at Finberry. The new school at Finberry is due to be available in 2017.
- 3.17. It is expected that a new planning application will be submitted for the South Ashford Primary School Site once the Finberry School has relocated to its new site.
- 3.18. The single junior pitch at the Jemmett Road School site has not been used since 2008 and is overgrown.
- 3.19. There is no identified use in the future for this single pitch which would have no ancillary changing facilities and would require funding to bring it back into use. Ashford Borough Council's current planning policy for this site requests mitigation to improve existing playing pitch facilities in the area. The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies that this funding could be utilised either at Kingsnorth Pavilion and or Ashford Hockey club to improve the football pitches.
- 3.20. The loss of the single grass junior pitch at the old South Ashford Primary School site has had no impact on the supply and demand of football pitches across Ashford Borough since 2008 and has no current impact. The approach in the future will be to cluster sports pitches together wherever possible, to provide a concentrated 'hub' of activity and the benefit of co-location for shared facilities such as changing rooms and car parking.
- 3.21. The FA would like to ensure that the Pitchside 3G pitch continues to maintain its FA Registration and continues to have assessments undertaken when required.
- 3.22. The Playing Pitch Strategy has not identified any future use for the disused playing pitch at the old South Ashford Primary School site and recommends that mitigation provides for improved football facilities at nearby facilities. The recommendation has been placed in the action plan for the 3G pitch at Pitchside to maintain FA Registration.

IS PROVISION ACCESSIBLE AND OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED?

- 3.23. There is only 1 site that is of good quality and these are the Ashford Borough Council pitches at Spearpoint (The Ridge). 12 sites provide 'Standard' quality, and most of the FTPs are 'Standard' quality.
- 3.24. However, poor natural drainage and compaction of the ground are issues at several of the grass football pitch sites and these are rated as 'Poor' quality. The FA have carried out some pitch inspections and have agreed to continue with these inspections to identify what works need to be carried out and how best to carry out any identified works. The FA have identified priority sites for improvements and other sites that need improvements. These are:
- **Priority Sites:**
 - Sandyacres, - Drainage is identified as an issue
 - Biddenden (Gordon Jones Playing Field) - site suffers from waterlogging and pitch cancellations.

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- High Halden (Hopes Grove) – drainage is an issue
- **Others:**
 - Kingsnorth Pavilion – drainage issues
 - Pound Leas Recreation Ground (Hamstreet) - Priority for the site is new drainage
 - Reynolds Playing Field (Aldington) - Poor site requires pitch improvements
 - Wittersham Sports Field – drainage issues
 - Ashford Hockey Club (Ball Lane) – wear and tear on junior 9 v 9 pitches
 - Great Chart Playing Fields – drainage issues
 - Cornes Meadow (Smarden) - the site suffers from drainage issues and the pitches require rest. The club need help with maintenance issues.

3.25. It is important that fit for purpose ancillary provision (changing and social facilities) is provided and on Council owned sites this is improving with an improved pavilion at Spearpoint (The Ridge) provided in 2016. High Halden Parish Council provided a new pavilion at Hopes Grove in 2015.

3.26. There are a number of sites where new or improvements are required. The identified priority sites are:

- **Priority Sites:**
 - SWAN Centre – Development of new changing rooms and pavilion.
 - Kingsnorth Pavilion – Development of changing rooms.
 - Tenterden – Support the development of a new clubhouse for Tenterden FC and Tenterden Tigers.
- **Others sites that have been identified as requiring improvements or changing rooms/clubhouse are:**
 - Biddenden – require improved access to the changing and pavilion already on site.
 - Rolvenden – Provision of changing rooms.
 - Wittersham Sports Field – Improvements to changing rooms.
 - Mersham Sports – Improvements to changing rooms (see cricket)
 - Wye Junior FC – Improvements to changing rooms.
 - Shadoxhurst Recreation Field – Improvements to changing rooms.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF PROVISION

Latent Demand

3.27. The growth plans of the football clubs across Ashford Borough will provide further pitch needs by 2030. Consultation has identified the following:

Adult 11 v 11

- Latent demand identifies a need for an additional 5 adult match equivalent sessions. There is a current oversupply of 8.5 adult 11 v 11 equivalent sessions. Latent demand can be met by the spare adult 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions. This leaves 3.5 match equivalent sessions spare to provide for rest or to carry out maintenance. These spare pitches could be reconfigured as junior 11 v 11 pitches.

Junior 11 v 11

- Oversupply of 2 adult pitches could be reconfigured to meet 2 junior 11 v 11 pitch requirements.
- Appledore FC – has latent demand of 3 junior boys' teams 1 junior 11 v 11 and 2 9 v 9. Reconfiguration of the adult pitch which is quite wide will allow for reconfiguration of the site. Raising the quality standard of the adult pitch will allow for over marking and over play of the adult pitch.

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- Ashford Angels – 2 junior girl’s teams 9 v 9 - Could be accommodated at Spearpoint (The Ridge) with provision of an additional 9 v 9 pitch that can be supplied.
- Ashford Courtside - 2 junior teams – can be accommodated at Shadoxhurst if existing pitch quality was improved.
- Bromley Green – 2 junior teams 9 v 9 – If adult teams moved to the new 3G artificial grass pitch at Finberry boys teams could be accommodated on the existing adult pitch.
- Charing FC – 1 junior team - there is sufficient capacity at the ground.
- High Halden - 3 junior boy’s teams 1 junior girl’s team. There is space for an additional 11 v 11 pitch on site this could accommodate 2 9 v 9 pitches and these would need to be as a minimum, a Standard quality pitch.
- Mersham Sports – 1 junior team – There is capacity for 1 additional junior team on existing pitches.
- Park Farm Rangers - 2 junior boy’s teams. 1 junior girl’s team – The current pitch is poor standard and over played by 1 game. There would be a need to raise the standard of the junior 9 v 9 and 11 v 11 pitch on site.
- Rolvenden FC – 1 junior team there would be a need for 9 v 9 additional pitch.
- Tenterden Tigers FC 2 junior teams – The current pitch at Tenterden Recreation Ground and the pitches used at the Homewood School (Appledore Road site) are over played. There is an identified need to provide a 3G rubber crumb pitch in Tenterden and provide a pavilion with additional junior grass pitches at the Homewood School (Appledore Road site).
- Wittersham – 1 junior team there is a need to raise the standard of the junior 9 v 9 pitch from poor to good.
- Wye juniors – 1 junior team there is sufficient capacity to cope with the additional team.

Mini Soccer 7 v 7 and 5 v 5

- There are an additional 11 pitches required to meet latent demand for mini soccer. Overall there is a requirement for 3 x 7 v 7 and 8 x 5 v 5 mini soccer pitches. These pitches can be met either by improving the condition of existing pitches or using the 3G rubber crumb pitches as a central venue e.g. Pitchside, Towers School or a new 3G pitch at Tenterden. Provision of 2 x 7 v 7 pitches or 4 5 v 5 pitches can be accommodated on a 3rd Generation adult pitch every hour.

Population Growth 2030

3.28. Population growth by 2030 identifies through Ashford Borough forecast population estimates source: ONS 2014 population projections and the use of team generation rates, that there will be a need for:

- 8 additional adult 11 v 11 football pitches,
- 7 junior pitches (4 junior 11 v 11 and 3 Junior 9 v 9) and
- 1 mini soccer 7 v 7 pitches and 2 mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches.

3.29. Latent demand and future team generation rates will place pressure on training facilities as well as grass pitches and clubs through consultation have stated that there are currently insufficient FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches available and demand will increase in the future.

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

3.30. Ashford Borough Council through a Section 106 agreement is seeking approximately 20 ha of playing pitch space at Discovery Park to provide a Sports Hub as part of the Chilmington Green Development. It is envisaged that a proportion of the additional grass football pitches required through team generation rates and population growth projections could be provided at Discovery Park.

3.31. Other football grass pitch provision identified in the Local Plan identifies the following pitch provision.

- Hamstreet - Land North of St Mary's Close 80 dwellings - Provide a new youth football pitch to Football Association standards with changing room facilities and storage, for use by Hamstreet Primary Academy and by the wider community at other times; Provide a new area of staff car parking for the Academy with a minimum of 60 spaces which would be used to serve the new football pitch at other times.
- Sandyacres – has been identified in the draft Local Plan 2030 as a Sports Hub that could possibly have new playing pitches in the future. A masterplan to identify the viability of this is required.

IS THERE ENOUGH ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND?

3.32. Over the period of the strategy to 2030, to address existing team numbers (172), team generation rates from forecast population growth (up to 36 teams), expressed demand from clubs for team growth (up to 52 teams), there will be a training need for 260 teams. The FA ratio for provision of 1 FTP 3G rubber crumb pitch for use as a training pitch is 42 football teams to 1 full size FTP 3G pitch.

3.33. Ashford with its current demand, latent demand and new population growth requires 260 teams divided by 42 teams = 6 3G rubber crumb pitches required. There are currently 3 x FTP 3G full size rubber crumb pitches across Ashford Borough. 3 more FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches may be required.

3.34. These additional 3G rubber crumb pitches could be met from provision of facilities at:

- Tenterden – Homewood School
- Finberry New Housing Development – full size 3G
- Discovery Park – Chilmington Green full size 3G.

3.35. Grass pitches will be provided through new development on secured use sites and if required with Community Use Agreements on school sites. All latent demand can be met on existing sites providing secured community use.

CRICKET SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

3.36. In the 2016/17 season, 24 cricket squares providing 176 adult grass cricket pitches and 4 non-turf cricket pitches were identified as maintained and available for community cricket at 23 playing field sites providing secured community use.

3.37. There are 23 cricket clubs using cricket facilities across Ashford Borough with 56 adult men's teams and 19 junior teams. Mersham Sports Cricket Club has the highest number of teams across Ashford Borough. Mersham Sports CC, Kennington CC, Boughton and Eastwell CC, Great Chart CC, Wye CC, Egerton CC, Ashford Town CC and Rolvenden CC all have junior sections.

3.38. Tenterden Cricket Club has to use an alternative home ground due to insufficient cricket squares at their home ground on a Saturday.

THERE ARE ISSUES WITH LEASES THAT COULD IMPACT ON SECURITY OF TENURE FOR SOME CLUBS

3.39. When comparing demand with current capacity of pitches, pitch demand meets supply. Where clubs such as Tenterden CC have to use alternative grounds as they have insufficient squares on a Saturday. There are still sufficient squares available for use. There is a need to support Mersham Sports Club to provide an extension to its current facilities.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

3.40. Overall across Ashford Borough there is sufficient current supply to meet current demand for cricket. There are particular sites where there is over play and Tenterden Cricket Club 3rd X1 is displaced from its home ground. There are 3 grounds with over play these are Bilsington Cricket Club (need to extend number of pitches); Kennington Cricket Club (square needs relaying and provision of a non-turf pitch) and Mersham Cricket Club (need additional square on available land on existing site).

ACCESSIBLE OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED

3.41. Although the cricket pitches at most of the club-operated sites are either of good or standard quality, there are clubhouse and pavilion improvements required and provision of equipment and practice facilities. It is important that ancillary facilities and equipment are fit for purpose.

3.42. The club and ECB consultation reported:

- Mersham Sports Cricket Club – ECB Priority is to deliver an additional square at this facility. The club also require non-turf practice nets, mobile net cage and a need to refurbish the clubhouse.
- Ashford Town Cricket Club – there is a need to improve drainage. Non turf pitch needs renewing and there is a need for non-turf practice nets and mobile covers.
- Bethersden Cricket Club - Square improvements and netting needs to be placed along the A28.
- Boughton and Eastwell – Mitigation measures to tackle vandalism problems.
- Challock Cricket Club – Drainage improvements and non-turf wicket needs replacing, nets need renewing, need for new gang mower for the outfield, need for a bigger storage unit to secure equipment and the club wishes to extend the pavilion.
- Cornes Meadows (Smarden) – New drainage system.
- Charing Cricket Club - Mobile covers, practice net and cage.
- Egerton Cricket Club – Club need to remove fungal issue from the pitches and require new nets.
- Kennington Cricket Club – Square requires relaying and need a non-turf pitch, mobile covers and nets.
- Little Chart Cricket Club – Require non-turf practice net facility.
- Mersham le Hatch Cricket Club – Club need to remove moss from the pitch.
- Pluckley Cricket Club – Need to ensure succession planning of groundsman.
- Reynolds Playing Field (Aldington) – need for club to encourage volunteers to assist with grounds maintenance.

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- Rolvenden Cricket Club – Require practice nets
- Smallhythe Cricket Club – The square and outfield need improvements and the pavilion roof needs replacing
- Stone in Oxney Cricket Club – Require a catching cradle and new practice nets.
- Woodchurch Cricket Club – Need to ensure succession planning for groundsman.
- Willesbrough Cricket Club – Require mobile covers.
- Wye Cricket Club – Require a new mower and rainwater harvesting to reduce energy costs.

FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

3.43. Population growth and club development - The projected club development growth of 8 adult men's, 2 women's teams. 1 girl's team and 6 junior boy's teams will add to current demand as will the 1 junior team from population growth. The club development can be catered for with some funding for improvements at existing sites and a cricket square being provided at Chilmington Green Village as part of a new housing development. There will be a need to provide a second square at Mersham Sports CC as well. This should be sufficient to meet future demand.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

3.44. There will be sufficient accessible and secured community use if funding can improve some facilities. It is a priority for the ECB to assist Mersham Sports CC to provide a second square and that the development of a cricket square and pavilion takes place as part of the Chilmington Green development.

OVERALL QUALITY LEVEL

3.45. Ashford Borough Council has no cricket facilities. The majority of the cricket facilities are either in the ownership of clubs or Parish and Town Councils. There are 2 standard quality sites which are used by leagues and 1 poor site Wittersham CC where only friendlies are played. Some sites lack adequate ancillary facilities for cricket teas and changing accommodation and some sites require training nets and maintenance equipment.

HOCKEY KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

3.46. There are 5 AGPs in the borough - at Ashford Hockey Club (Ball Lane), Highworth Grammar School for Girls, The Ashford School (Prep and Pre Prep School), The Ashford School (Senior School) and the North School. These are all full size and have either sand dressed or sand based playing surfaces (i.e. England Hockey category 2 & 3 as defined in the new policy agreed in June 2016 for hockey play on 3G surfaces).

3.47. All but one of the pitches used for hockey use are on school sites. The Ashford School Site (Prep and Pre Prep) is a brand new facility and not available for community use. The AGP at Ashford Senior School is used as a secondary pitch facility for some junior training on Sunday mornings. Highworth Grammar School for Girls pitch is in poor condition and no longer used for hockey. The North School have indicated they would like to change the surface of the sand filled pitch to a 3G rubber crumb.

3.48. Ashford Hockey Club has security of access to its own pitch facility at Ball Lane.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND?

- 3.49. If Ashford Hockey Club can continue to use Ashford School AGP for training and some additional junior matches on a Sunday morning. However, the Ashford School facility does not allow access to changing facilities on site.
- 3.50. In planning for the future, opportunities should be pursued to deliver community hockey clubs with secure access to playing, training and ancillary facilities for longer than a single season. If possible, the secure access for the larger clubs will be to sites able to accommodate all the club's activities in one location - i.e. either double pitch sites, or two single pitch sites in close proximity, with good quality ancillary facilities.

ACCESSIBLE OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED

- 3.51. It is important that ancillary and pitch facilities are fit for purpose. The current pitch at Ashford Hockey Club although classed as 'Standard' quality is in need of repair and the changing facilities are standard and the club needs additional changing facilities to enable the club to grow. The secondary pitch at Ashford Senior School is 'Standard' quality.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.52. The future growth in demand is likely to be driven primarily by the growth plans of Ashford Hockey Club (as new youth age group squads graduate to senior play).
- 3.53. Since 2011 England Hockey has seen a 36% growth in the total number of club players. This is especially noted at U/18 club level where there has been an 80% increase in members. As part of the new England Hockey Strategy 'A Nation where Hockey matters' 2017-2021 a long term aspiration is to double the number of people playing hockey in clubs by 2028.
- 3.54. Ashford Hockey Club has stated for latent demand it would like to grow its junior base by 1 junior boy's and 1 junior girl's team. From team generation rates and forecast population growth, there is potentially 1 adult team growth. This increase will exert pressure on the match slots for peak Saturday senior fixture time as well as slots on Sundays for junior training.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.55. The current accessible supply of hockey facilities in Ashford Borough will not be enough to meet future demand. Particular pressures on existing provision will result from the Ashford Hockey Club if the club expands in line with the England Hockey Plan 2017 – 2021. The number of adult and junior teams needs to be monitored so plans can be put in place with regards to future facilities when required through the review and monitoring of this playing pitch strategy.
- 3.56. The PPS states that at least 1 additional AGP England Hockey category 1 – 3 will be required in the Borough.
- 3.57. Ideally, any new hockey AGP in the Borough should be located close to an existing pitch and served by changing and social facilities with security of tenure. Ashford Hockey Club believes that their site is the most suitable for a second hockey pitch. At the same time there is a need to ensure security of use of football pitches on the site or provision of the same or improved football facilities elsewhere.
- 3.58. If it is not feasible to provide a second hockey pitch at Ashford Hockey Club then continuation of use of the secondary pitch at Ashford Senior School should be explored but it is important to ensure that a formal community use agreement is in place between the school and the hockey club. As a fall back position a full size hockey AGP should be considered as part of the Discovery Park (Chilmington Green) but its location will need to be part of the masterplan process..

OVERALL QUALITY LEVEL

3.59. The overall pitch quality is adequate. However, there are repairs that are required to the Ashford Hockey Club AGP. There is a need to ensure that sink funds are in place for full carpet replacement. There is a lack of changing facilities available at Ashford School (Senior School) for junior training on a Sunday morning.

RUGBY SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.60. There are 2 sites with rugby pitches providing community use with 3 senior rugby pitches non floodlit and 2 floodlit senior rugby pitches.
- 3.61. Sandyacres is run by a Trust and the pitch is used by Ashford Barbarians for match games only (1 adult rugby non floodlit pitch). The club trains at Highworth Grammar School mid-week. Ashford Rugby Club own the Kinney Field (2 adult non floodlit and 2 adult floodlit pitches).
- 3.62. In addition there are 5 adult rugby pitches provided on school sites and 1 junior rugby pitch. The North School (1 junior rugby pitch), Ball Lane (3 adult pitches used by Ashford School) and Ashford School (1 adult pitch) are not available for public use. The Towers School and John Wallis Academy both have an adult rugby pitch which are available for public use but are not used by the public.
- 3.63. Ashford Barbarians, who play at Sandyacres, have 1 adult team and Ashford RFC have 3 adult men's teams, 1 women's team, 2 youth teams 18 - 19 years, 7 junior teams U13 – 17 and 7 mini teams U7 - 12, a total of 20 teams.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

- 3.64. Security of access to rugby grounds in the borough is good. Both clubs play at secured community use sites.
- 3.65. Ashford Rugby Club men's teams train on a Tuesday and a Thursday. The women's team and youth teams train on Thursday evenings. The minis and juniors train on a Sunday morning. Adult men's competitive games are played on Saturday afternoons, colt's rugby U18 – 19s takes place midweek, all U13-18 rugby takes place on a Sunday morning and women's rugby union takes place Sunday pm.
- 3.66. There is a sufficient secured supply of rugby pitches to meet league rugby demand on Saturday afternoons. However, Ashford Rugby Club's four pitches are over played by 26 match and training equivalents. The reason is mid-week training requirements mainly for junior teams. The club has sufficient pitches at peak match times on a Saturday but the pitches are over used for training. The club would benefit from additional pitches with floodlights.
- 3.67. Ashford Barbarians Rugby Club pitch at Sandyacres is currently under played by 0.5 match and training equivalents each week. This is because training takes place elsewhere.

ACCESSIBLE SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED

- 3.68. It is important that ancillary and pitch facilities are fit for purpose. The following quality issues have been raised as part of the consultation:
- **Ashford Rugby Club** have 4 pitches they have pipe drainage but still cancel approximately 6 games a season this can be due to frost but also due to flooding of the River Stour right by the side of them. The clubhouse requires an extension. They have recently had a refurb on the clubhouse (2012). However, they still need a second story and space for woman's changing.

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

They recently had a capital grant accepted by the RFU but turned down by Sport England. They feel a 3G pitch would be the next step in allowing the club to develop.

- **Ashford Barbarians Rugby Club** use 1 senior pitch at Sandyacres. The pitch is on a slight slope but in good condition. The club has a five year development plan to find a location to have a clubhouse that they manage themselves and have floodlit training facilities. Training currently takes place at Highworth Grammar School.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.69. There is spare capacity currently at peak times but not for training match equivalents. Both teams have expressed latent demand for 1 adult men's team. At peak times this would meet the current supply. Training needs would increase in the future by 1 additional match/training equivalent session. Future population growth and team generation rates have identified the need for 1 additional adult pitch this would meet the need of increased junior and mini teams from future population growth.
- 3.70. Without rugby compliant AGP capacity, the forecast increase in teams resulting from population growth and club's own development plans will place further demand on the existing grass pitch supply, most of which is already used at or near its playing capacity particularly for training.
- 3.71. There is a need to provide for additional pitches near to Ashford Rugby Club (minimum of 2 adult pitches with floodlights and or a 3G Rugby world 22 compliant rubber crumb pitch). An additional 2 rugby pitches would be required as part of the development at Discovery Park.

WHAT IS THE OVERALL QUALITY LEVEL?

- 3.72. Future investment in quality enhancement is required to sustain and grow the clubs based in Ashford Borough. There is a need to provide for additional pitches near to Ashford Rugby Club (minimum of 2 adult pitches with floodlights and or a 3G Rugby world 22 compliant rubber crumb pitch). An additional 2 rugby pitches would be required as part of the development at Chilmington Green Discovery Park.

TENNIS, BOWLS AND NETBALL

TENNIS SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION?

- 3.73. The audit has identified 14 public and club sites providing 33 tennis courts providing community access. 20 of these courts are floodlit. There are 9 clubs with 21 tennis courts in Ashford. Schools provide a further 30 tennis courts but not all of these school courts are available for community use.
- 3.74. There are currently no indoor courts although feasibility work is being undertaken for an indoor tennis centre.
- 3.75. Spearpoint (The Ridge) and Courtside are outdoor tennis courts provided by Ashford Borough Council. The remaining public courts are managed and operated by Tenterden Town Council and 2 Parish Councils and there are 9 tennis clubs across Ashford Borough providing 21 tennis courts.
- 3.76. There are 3 tennis clubs not currently registered with the Lawn Tennis Association. These are Aldington, Little Chart and Pluckley Tennis Clubs. The remaining clubs are registered.
- 3.77. Clubs that have higher membership than capacity are Betersden membership 395 and a capacity of 100, a difference of 295; Charing membership 156 and capacity of 120, a difference of 36;

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Chilham membership of 189 and capacity of 120, a difference of 69 and Wye Tennis club has a membership of 361 and a capacity of 280, a difference of 81.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

- 3.78. In terms of outdoor provision, the borough has a good level of existing supply both in terms of community clubs and pay and play facilities to meet expressed demand, although as the market segmentation data shows, there is an area of unmet demand with 2,072 people currently participating in Tennis across Ashford and a further 2,229 people wanting to participate in Tennis in Ashford. Clubs have higher membership than capacity.
- 3.79. From Sport England's Market Segmentation modelling, it suggests that there are sufficient courts in the villages and the highest demand for tennis is around existing courts at Courtside and Spearpoint (The Ridge).
- 3.80. There are 3 tennis clubs not currently registered with the Lawn Tennis Association. These are Aldington, Little Chart and Pluckley Tennis Clubs. The remaining clubs are registered.
- 3.81. Clubs that are registered with the Lawn Tennis Association that have higher membership than capacity are:
- Bethersden membership 395 and a capacity of 100, a difference of 295.
 - Charing membership 156 and capacity of 120 a difference of 36.
 - Chilham membership of 189 and capacity of 120 a difference of 69.
 - Wye Tennis club has a membership of 361 and a capacity of 280, a difference of 81.

ACCESSIBLE OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED?

- 3.82. An audit of quality has been undertaken across Ashford. There was one identified court that was poor and this was at Appledore Recreation Ground. All other courts are classified as good quality courts.
- 3.83. Ashford Borough is not seen as a high profile area for the LTA currently.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION?

- 3.84. LTA research shows that most players who play in parks only travel a short distance to play, therefore a network of park courts needs to be retained throughout the borough and maintained to a playable quality.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.85. The area is not a Lawn Tennis Association focus area but facilities with 3 or more courts could be developed further e.g. Wye Tennis Club and Courtside.
- 3.86. There is a need to prioritise opportunities to invest or seek capital investment into an indoor facility either purpose built providing 4 indoor courts and additional facilities such as health and fitness to ensure sustainability or provide a bubble over existing courts. Sites to be considered include Courtside which can be linked with netball provision. Sites such as the Julie Rose Stadium could also be considered.
- 3.87. There needs to be consideration of provision of 3 tennis courts with floodlights (0.16ha) as part of the Chilmington Green Discovery Park Development.

NETBALL SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.88. The audit has identified 6 courts at Courtside and Schools provide a further 19 netball courts but not all of these are available for community use.
- 3.89. The 2016 Senior Summer League at Courtside consisted of 30 teams playing on Monday and Tuesday evenings from February to the end of July across 3 Divisions. 29 teams played in the Senior Winter league 2015. The Ashford Youth Netball Summer League 2016 was played on Friday evenings during April, May and June providing for 23 teams. The Youth League operates England Netball's High Five Rules.
- 3.90. The Ashford Netball League operates Pay and Play session on Mondays during the summer for over 16's at courtside.
- 3.91. Breakaways Netball Club - Clubmark approved netball, delivering qualified coaching locally also operate the following sessions:
- 12-16 years Improvers, Saturday 09:00-10:30, Stour Centre, Ashford
 - 12-16 years Beginners and 8-11year olds (school year 4, 5 & 6), Saturday 10:30-12:00, Stour Centre, Ashford
 - Advanced group by selection only - Monday 16:40-18:00

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

- 3.92. Courtside is the main existing supply and meets current need and is in secured community use.

ACCESSIBLE OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED

- 3.93. It is important that pitch and ancillary facilities are fit for purpose. The main issue has been the quality of the surface at Courtside but this was renewed in 2015.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.94. Sport England Market Segmentation data for netball has been drawn down to the local authority level. The data identifies that 417 participants across Ashford Borough currently participate in Netball and that a further 366 would like to participate in Netball.
- 3.95. Between April 2015 and March 2016, 164,100 people played netball once a week across England with Sport England documenting that 13,100 more people are involved in netball than the previous year. This increase is mostly driven by the older (25+) populations (and in particular a big increase in the 35-44 age group).
- 3.96. If this participation success was to be followed through in Ashford and some of the 366 who would like to participate started participating then an extra evening for the senior netball league could easily be created at Courtside along with increased population usage to 2030

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.97. Courtside has the capacity to meet future demand. However, the three additional tennis courts being provided as part of the future Discovery Park Development should be marked for netball use. These courts would provide additional secured community use in the future.

BOWLS SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CURRENT SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.98. There is a good level of supply of bowls greens across Ashford Borough. There are 6 clubs identified in the audit - Ashford Town Bowls Club 6 rinks, Ashford Railway Bowls Club 6 rinks, Tenterden Bowls Club 6 rinks, Biddenden Bowls Club 6 rinks, Hamstreet Bowls Club 4 rinks and Charing Bowls Club 6 rinks.
- 3.99. Out of the 6 clubs identified, Tenterden Bowls Club is a public facility. Access to supply is secured community use for all sites.
- 3.100. Club membership levels are generally in decline in the Borough (as the national trend). Highest membership is Ashford Town Bowls Club and Railway Bowls Club both clubs located near to Ashford Town Centre
- 3.101. All Bowls Clubs are maintained by the Clubs and to a Good Standard.
- 3.102. The quality of the pavilion at Tenterden Bowls Club is a key issue as is Ashford Town Bowls Club.
- 3.103. At Ashford Town Bowls Club the current Clubhouse has been in use since 1909. The floor is gradually giving way, and there are various gaps in the entire structure. The Home and Visitor's Changing Room (Male) was, in fact, a very old wooden Railway Carriage, dating from circa 1890. Lady members have to change in a dilapidated shed tacked onto the left side. All Toilet Facilities are located externally and there is no provision for Disabled persons. The club is engaged with Ashford Borough Council in a re-location scheme to Kingsnorth Entrance Park in time for the 2018 season.
- Grass cover is good on all the greens, as is the surrounds of the greens.
 - None of the greens have floodlights.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET CURRENT DEMAND

- 3.104. Existing supply more than meets current demand bearing in mind the decline in club playing membership numbers to below the minimum recommended by the Bowls Development Alliance to sustain a healthy club level (i.e. 40 per green) and within the Bowls England benchmark comfortable capacity for a 6 rink green (i.e. 60 playing members).
- 3.105. The highest membership and sustainable clubs are the Ashford Railway Bowls Club and Ashford Town Bowls Club.

ACCESSIBLE OF SUFFICIENT QUALITY AND APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED

- 3.106. It is important that ancillary and pitch facilities are fit for purpose. The quality is good, the issues are as raised above:
- The quality of the pavilion at Tenterden Bowls Club is a key issue as is Ashford Town Bowls Club.
 - Ashford Town Bowls Club the current Clubhouse has been in use since 1909. The floor is gradually giving way, and there are various gaps in the entire structure. The Home and Visitor's Changing Rooms (Male) was, in fact, a very old wooden Railway Carriage, dating from circa 1890. Lady members have to change in a dilapidated shed tacked onto the left side. All Toilet

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Facilities are located externally and no provision for Disabled persons. The club is engaged with the Council in a re-location scheme to Kingsnorth Entrance Park in time for the 2018 season.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FUTURE SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR PROVISION

- 3.107. Increased demand over the strategy period that may arise from population growth is quite small and is likely to be outweighed by the general trend of declining demand.
- 3.108. Provide quality pavilion and changing facilities at Tenterden and re-locate Ashford Town Bowls Club.

ACCESSIBLE AND SECURED COMMUNITY USE PROVISION TO MEET FUTURE DEMAND

- 3.109. There is substantial spare capacity, with most clubs based at the greens in the borough operating at lower membership levels than recommended by the Bowls Development Alliance for a healthy, sustainable 6 rink site (40 playing members) and well within Bowls England guide capacity (60 playing members).

SCENARIO TESTING

- 3.110. Potential scenarios identified in the course of researching the assessments of need for the individual playing pitch sports and consultation with members of the project Steering Group are identified below together with conclusions as to the potential impact on the overall picture of supply and demand and future needs. Only 2 scenarios have been provided for football 3G pitches.

FOOTBALL FTP 3G RUBBER CRUMB PITCHES

WHAT IF THE SUGGESTED DELIVERY OF 3G PITCHES FROM NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT FINBERRY AND DISCOVERY PARK NEEDS TO BE BROUGHT FORWARD BECAUSE TRAINING DEMAND REQUIRES THE PITCHES EARLIER THAN 2030?

- 3.111. The FA has identified that there is a need for a 3G rubber crumb pitch for every 42 football teams in an area. Ashford Borough with its current demand (172 teams), latent demand (52 teams) and new population growth (36 teams) equates to 260 teams. When this is divided by 42 teams there is a requirement for 6 x 3G rubber crumb pitches.
- 3.112. It has been identified that the Playing Pitch Strategy will support the development of FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches at:
- **Tenterden – Homewood School – also highlighted in FPM as an area of demand for a 3G pitch (Not to be full size).**
 - **Finberry 3G Pitch – New Growth development (Section 106 funding).**
 - **Discovery Park – 3G pitch – New growth development (Section 106 funding).**
- 3.113. The provision of the Finberry and Discovery Park 3G rubber crumb pitches have their own risks and will not be delivered until housing developments are underway. This could be as late as 2030. The Playing Pitch Strategy will need to consider how it can deliver 3G pitches earlier if training demand requires them.
- 3.114. Opportunities to provide 3G pitches earlier than 2030 could be provided by change of use of 2 existing sand based pitches at the North School and Highworth School both have sand dressed artificial pitches that are worn and need replacing. The North School have already stated they would wish to replace their current surface with a 3G rubber crumb pitch.

WHAT IF ALL COMPETITIVE MATCHES CURRENTLY PLAYED ON ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, PARISH COUNCIL AND TOWN COUNCIL PITCHES, SCHOOL SITES AND SITES LEASED TO CLUBS AT THE RELEVANT PEAK PERIOD WERE TRANSFERRED TO FTP 3G RUBBER CRUMB PITCHES?

- 3.115. The FA is keen to work with LAs to understand the potential demand for full size floodlit 3G FTPs should all competitive matches, currently played on LA Parish and Town council managed natural grass pitches, be transferred to one.
- 3.116. The table 3.1 below takes information from the Assessment stage of this PPS to present the number of teams playing on LA managed natural grass pitches including Parish and Town Council sites, school sites and sites leased to clubs and the relevant peak periods.

Table 3.1: Number of teams playing on Ashford area natural grass pitches

PITCH TYPE	PITCH SIZE	PEAK PERIOD	NO. OF TEAMS
ADULT	(11 v 11)	[Sunday AM]	53 (28 at peak time)
YOUTH	(9 v 9)	[Saturday AM]	32 (22 at peak time)
YOUTH	(11 v 11)	[Saturday AM]	41 (26 at peak time)
MINI	(5 v 5)	[Saturday AM]	18 (14 at peak time)
MINI	(7 v 7)	[Saturday AM]	28 (20 at peak time)

- 3.117. The FA suggest an approach for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G FTPs that teams may demand for competitive matches. The table 3.2 below presents the results of this approach for the number of teams set out in table 3.1 above.

Table 3.2: Number of 3G FTPs that may be required

FORM AT	NO OF TEAM PER TIME (X)	NO OF MATCHES AT PEAK TIME (Y) = X/2	3G UNITS PER MATCH (Z)	TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED FORMATS (A) = (Y) * (Z)	3G PITCHES REQUIRED B = (A) / 64
5 v 5	14	7	4	28	0.438
7 v 7	20	10	8	80	1.250
9 v 9	22	11	10	110	1.719
11 v 11 (Y)	23	13	32	416	6.5
11 v 11 (A)	28	14	32	448	7.00
					16.90625

- 3.118. Table 3.2 above identifies the need for 17 FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches to provide for all current football match equivalent sessions across all football typologies across Ashford Borough.

WHAT IF ALL 5 v 5 MINI SOCCER, 7 v 7 MINI SOCCER AND 9 v 9 JUNIOR COMPETITIVE MATCHES CURRENTLY PLAYED ON ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, PARISH COUNCIL AND TOWN COUNCIL PITCHES, SCHOOL SITES AND SITES LEASED TO CLUBS AT THE RELEVANT PEAK PERIOD WERE TRANSFERRED TO FTP 3G RUBBER CRUMB PITCHES?

- 3.119. Table 3.2 identifies that 4 full size 3G rubber crumb pitches would be required to cater for all the 5 v 5 mini soccer (0.438 FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches), 7 v 7 mini soccer (1.250 FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches) and 9 v 9 junior (1.719 FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches) games played at peak time across Ashford Borough.

4. STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN FOR ENABLING FUTURE DELIVERY OF PLAYING PITCH PROVISION

- 4.1. The Strategy and Action Plan has been developed from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within Ashford Borough and this is provided in Appendix 1 Stage C Borough Playing Pitch Analysis and Assessment.
- 4.2. This section sets out a strategy to enable the delivery of Football, Cricket, Hockey, Rugby Union, Tennis, Bowls and Netball for Ashford Borough. **The strategy provides a framework for delivery with partners and sets out aspirations and provides a priority list for when funding becomes available.**
- 4.3. The identified outputs for the Playing Pitch strategy are:
- Provide a framework to support medium and long term facilities planning for the delivery of sports and leisure in the Borough.
 - A clear needs analysis for developers regarding future sports and recreation facility needs in the Borough
 - A robust framework to assist the allocation of developer contributions (through S106 money or the Regulation 123 list of CIL funded infrastructure) for sports and recreation provision in Borough.
 - To identify priority sports for the area based on National Governing Bodies targets and local community needs.
 - To develop a priority list for investment and use of resources secured through Section 106 and CIL
- 4.4. The strategy framework and action plan focusses on the 5 points above and these points are addressed throughout the Priority Sports Specific Actions and Individual Site Action Plans.
- 4.5. The strategy framework focuses on the following three principles:
- **PROTECT:** The strategy seeks to make sure that the right amount of playing pitches and ancillary facilities of the right quality are in the right place. It promotes the protection of existing provision and recognises the benefits of multi pitch sites by:
 - **Highlighting sites which have a particular significance for sport and seeks to designate them as a local recreational space through the Development Plan process (see NPPF paragraphs 76 and 77)**
 - **Negotiate security of tenure for clubs at leased sites**
 - **ENHANCE:** Key partners such as Ashford Borough Council, local schools, private and voluntary sector sports clubs, and NGBs must work together to maximise the full potential of playing pitch assets and the long term sustainability of these assets and recognise that an improvement in quality and ongoing maintenance can have an impact on the capacity of use. The strategy will do this by:
 - **Improving the quality of the playing surface by providing improved maintenance and as a last resort drainage, by undertaking and supporting improvements and enhancement at sites that do not meet required quality standards, supporting clubs that require improved facilities in order to play at a higher standard, ensuring that pitches have a period of rest and recovery where appropriate.**
 - **Provision of enhanced ancillary facilities where they are required – floodlighting and changing**
 - **Ensure that clubs have access to sufficient training facilities**
 - **Identification of hub sites for further development**

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- **PROVIDE:** In times of public sector austerity, investment needs to be directed at sites which will provide the best impact and highest increase in participation. It is the policy of Ashford Borough Council to support projects and sports clubs that are able to demonstrate sustainable long term development, increase participation and support those clubs that have achieved the appropriate accreditations e.g. Clubmark and or Charter Standard and provide player and sports development pathways. The strategy looks at:
 - **Addressing capacity in junior and mini football by designating under played adult football pitches to junior and mini sites to ensure that all teams are playing on pitches of the right size.**
 - **Addressing the need for artificial grass pitches to meet increasing and changing demand for AGP surfaces for both training and competition in football, hockey and rugby and other pitch sports.**
 - **Providing the required number and type of pitches on-site, or appropriate provision off-site, to meet the specific needs of residential development proposals.**

PRIORITY SPORT SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- 4.6. All existing playing field land is protected by the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan, Sport England policies and the NPPF to deliver current and future needs.
- 4.7. **As a priority for all partners on the Steering Group there is a need for the Local Authority Ashford Borough Council, Football Association, Kent FA, England Hockey, ECB and Kent Cricket, Rugby Football Union and Sport England to work together to provide a local investment plan to ensure the successful implementation of this Playing Pitch strategy.**
- 4.8. The Football, Cricket, Rugby and Hockey individual Sport Specific actions are shown in the table below.
- 4.9. The action plans are given a priority:
 - **Priority 1. Delivered against or worked towards within three years (ahead of the first full review of the Playing Pitch Strategy)**
 - **Priority 2. Delivered within 6 years**
 - **Priority 3. No specific date – In many instances the action is a general support for clubs or other bodies to progress with ground improvements and is not necessarily an action the Council or the Playing Pitch Steering Group have control over.**

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 4.1: Individual Sport Specific Action Plans

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
FOOTBALL						
PROTECT	Football 1.	All football pitches across Ashford Borough should be protected in the Local Plan unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided. No sites have been identified to be lost as part of the Action Plan.	All existing pitches and sites that have been previously used as playing fields across Ashford Borough.	1	Local Planning Authority	Low
PROTECT	Football 2.	Ensure formal Community Use Agreements are in place with Education establishments providing football pitches and 3G rubber crumb pitches for community use	All schools, colleges and Higher Education facilities used by clubs.	1	Local Planning Authority / Schools / Academies / Colleges and Higher Education	Low
PROTECT	Football 3.	Ensure clubs have appropriate levels of security of tenure at playing pitch sites where feasible to secure the long term future of the club.	All relevant clubs	1	Local Authority / Parish and Town Councils Owners / Tenants.	Medium
ENHANCE	Football 4.	Increase the quality and playing capacity of pitches at priority sites and those that are classified as 'Poor' in the assessment for junior 11 V 11, junior 9 v 9 and mini soccer	<p>Priority Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandyacres Biddenden (Gordon Jones Playing Field) High Halden (Hopes Grove) <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kingsnorth Pavilion Pound Leas Recreation Ground (Hamstreet) Reynolds Playing Field (Aldington) Wittersham Sports Field Ashford Hockey Club (Ball Lane) Great Chart Playing Fields Cornes Meadow (Smarden) 	1	Site Owners / Schools/ FA	High
ENHANCE	Football 5.	Improve the standard of non-playing pitch facilities including access and car parking and the quality of changing rooms to provide segregated changing for male and females where feasible.	<p>Priority Sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SWAN Centre (Bromley Green FC) – Development of new changing rooms and pavilion. Kingsnorth Pavilion – Development of changing rooms. Tenterden – Support the development of a new clubhouse for Tenterden FC and Tenterden Tigers. <p>Others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biddenden – require improved access to the changing and pavilion already on site. Rolvenden – Provision of changing rooms. Wittersham Sports Field – Improvements to changing rooms. Mersham Sports – Improvements to changing rooms (see cricket) Wye Junior FC – Improvements to changing rooms. Shadoxhurst Recreation Field – Improvements to changing rooms. 	2	Football clubs, FA and Kent FA, Parish and Town Councils, Ashford Borough Council	High
ENHANCE	Football 6.	Consider the re-designation of some adult pitches (maximum 2) for junior, and 9v9 use	Sites where appropriate	1 - 3	FA, Kent FA, Site Owners	Low

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ENHANCE	Football 7.	Work with junior football clubs that meet the Councils and NGB's priorities and support clubs to achieve Charter Standard accreditation as a minimum kite mark for the Council to provide future support and funding and support those clubs that wish to achieve community or development club standards.	Clubs where appropriate	1	Clubs and Kent FA, Parish and Town Council's, Ashford Borough Council	Low																																																																																															
ENHANCE	Football 8.	Support junior clubs to develop with the management and improvement of facilities and ensure security of tenure of playing facilities for junior clubs either through leasing or community asset transfers so clubs can become sustainable in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bromley Green FC, Park Farm FC, Kennington FC 	1	All site owners, Kent FA. FA	Low																																																																																															
PROVIDE	Football 9.	Support the development of 3 x 3G rubber crumb pitches (artificial grass pitches).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homewood School, Tenterden Discovery Park – from new housing development. Finberry – from new housing development. <p>There are risks with time frames and land allocated for use. Masterplans need to support appropriate locations at Finberry and Discovery Park – there is a need to be flexible if other opportunities come forward.</p>	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council, FA, Kent FA, Schools identified. Tenterden Town Council	High																																																																																															
PROVIDE	Football 10.	Provide a solution to meet current identified latent demand and future demand to 2030.	<p>Meeting Current Latent Demand – Adult Teams</p> <p>Table 1. 1 In the column to the left - shows that there are 8 adult 11 v 11 weekly match equivalent sessions spare and 1 match equivalent session spare every other week across Ashford.</p> <p>Latent demand has identified that there is a requirement for 5 match equivalent sessions. One club requested not to be part of the Playing Pitch Assessment. However, the adult teams from this club require 1 match equivalent session per week.</p> <p>After considering latent demand and the non-participating club in the assessment. This leaves 2 adult 11 v 11 spare match equivalent sessions per week and 1 spare match equivalent session every other week. Spare capacity will allow for 2.5 pitches to be rested at any one time.</p> <p>Future Demand adult 11 v 11</p> <p>Population increases through new development and using team generation rates projects a requirement for 8 peak time match equivalents and this will require 8 adult 11 v 11 pitches.</p> <p>These new adult pitches required as part of new housing development could become part of a proposed 20ha Sports Hub site identified as part of the new development at Chilmington Green – Discovery Park.</p> <p>Also See Football Recommendation 9 Artificial 3G rubber crumb pitches.</p>	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council, Parish and Town Councils, Kent FA, FA	High																																																																																															
		<p>Table 1: Current and future Adult Peak Time of Play</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Site</th> <th rowspan="2">Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)</th> <th colspan="5">Demand (match equivalent sessions)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Overplay</th> <th>Latent Demand</th> <th>Current total</th> <th>Future demand 2030</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Chilham Sports Centre</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gordon Jones playing Field (Biddenden)</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Halden</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Homewood School</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kingsnorth Pavilion</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sandyacres</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spearpoint (Ridge)</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Goldwyn School</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pluckley Recreation Ground</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Smeeth and Brabourne</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Towers School</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford</td> <td>8.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>5</td> <td>3.5</td> <td>8</td> <td>-4.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					Overplay	Latent Demand	Current total	Future demand 2030	Total	Chilham Sports Centre	1	0	0	1			Gordon Jones playing Field (Biddenden)	0.5	0	0.5	0			High Halden	0.5	0	0	0.5			Homewood School	0.5	0	0	0.5			Kingsnorth Pavilion	0.5	0	0.5	0			Sandyacres	2	0	1	1			Spearpoint (Ridge)	2	0	2	0			Goldwyn School	1	0	0.5	0.5			Pluckley Recreation Ground	0.5	0	0	0.5			Smeeth and Brabourne	0.5	0	0	0.5			Towers School	0.5	0	0.5	0			Ashford	8.5	0	5	3.5	8	-4.5			
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		<p>Table 1.3 Current and future Junior 9 v 9 Peak Time Play</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Site</th> <th rowspan="2">Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)</th> <th colspan="5">Demand (match equivalent sessions)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Overplay</th> <th>Latent Demand</th> <th>Current total</th> <th>Future demand -2032</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Appledore FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford Courtside FC - Shadoxhurst</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford Angels FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kingsnorth Pavilion –Park Farm FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Spearpoint (The Ridge)</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>The SWAN Centre (Bromley Green FC)</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Halden</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rolvenden FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wittersham FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Imperial College – Wye Juniors FC</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gordon Jones Playing Field (Biddenden)</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.5</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford Hockey Club – Ball Lane</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ashford</td> <td>2.5</td> <td>0.5</td> <td>8</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site	Actual spare capacity (match equivalent sessions)	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					Overplay	Latent Demand	Current total	Future demand -2032	Total	Appledore FC	0	0	1	1			Ashford Courtside FC - Shadoxhurst	0	0	1	1			Ashford Angels FC	0	0	1	1			Kingsnorth Pavilion –Park Farm FC	0	0.5	0.5	1			Spearpoint (The Ridge)	1	0	0	1			The SWAN Centre (Bromley Green FC)	0	0	1	1			High Halden	0	0	2	2			Rolvenden FC	0	0	0.5	0.5			Wittersham FC	0	0	0.5	0.5			Imperial College – Wye Juniors FC	0	0	0.5	0.5			Gordon Jones Playing Field (Biddenden)	0.5	0	0	0.5			Ashford Hockey Club – Ball Lane	1	0	0	1			Ashford	2.5	0.5	8	6	3	9	<p>In summary, the current deficit in junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions can be met from the above and leave 1 match equivalent session available at Pitchside.</p> <p>One club has chosen not to participate in the Playing Pitch Assessment but this club has 5 teams that require 2.5 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions per week. These can be met by utilising the 1 spare match equivalent session at Pitchside junior 11 v 11 and reconfiguration of adult pitches to junior 11 v 11 at Sandyacres and Chilham Sports Centre.</p> <p>There is currently 1 disused site South Ashford Primary School. There was a planning application for new housing to be built at this site dated 2007 and there should have been a Section 106 agreement in place to provide funds to provide new or improve quality of football pitches in the surrounding area. However, the planning application was withdrawn in 2012. The current site has opened as a temporary school. The school is known as Finberry Primary School and will remain on site until the new Finberry School is built as part of the new Finberry Development in 2017. The playing field on the Finberry Primary School site in Jemmett Road should remain protected.</p> <p>Any planning application for housing on the Finberry Primary School site should provide a sum of money to improve the quality of pitches for local clubs in the area eg Kingsnorth Pavilion and Ashford Hockey club site football pitches.</p> <p>Future Demand Junior 11 v 11</p> <p>Population increases through new development and using team generation rates projects a requirement for 4 peak time match equivalents and this will require 4 junior 11 v 11 pitches.</p> <p>These new junior 11 v 11 pitches are required as part of new housing development and could become part of a proposed 20ha Sports Hub site identified as part of the new development at Chilmington Green – Discovery Park.</p> <p>Meeting current Latent Demand Junior 9 v 9 Teams</p> <p>Table 1. 3 In the column to the left - shows that there are 3 junior 11 v 11 weekly match equivalent sessions spare and 1 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions spare every other week across Ashford.</p> <p>Latent demand has identified that there is a requirement for 8 match equivalent sessions. One club requested not to be part of the Playing Pitch Assessment. However, the junior 9 v 9 teams from this club require 1 match equivalent session per week and 1 match equivalent session every other week.</p> <p>After considering latent demand 8 match equivalent sessions and the non-participating club 1 match equivalent session weekly and 1 match equivalent session every other week. This leaves a short fall of 9.5 junior 9 v 9 match equivalent sessions weekly. These match equivalent sessions can be met by the following actions:</p>			
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OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>Appledore FC – latent demand for 2 junior 9 v 9 boy’s teams which equals 1 match equivalent session. – Existing adult pitch needs to be reduced in width (currently over wide). This will allow for reconfiguration of pitches on site to provide an additional 9 v 9 pitch.</p> <p>Ashford Courtside FC - 2 junior 9 v 9 boy’s teams which equals 1 match equivalent – can be accommodated at Shadoxhurst. There is space to reconfigure the 7 v 7 pitch and replace with a 9 v 9 pitch and allow overplay of the 9 v 9 by 7 v 7.</p> <p>Ashford Angels – latent demand for 2 junior 9 v 9 girl’s teams which equals 1 match equivalent session - Can be accommodated at the Ridge by provision of an additional 9 v 9 pitch. These games would take place at different times to boys 9 v 9 matches allowing for further capacity of the pitch.</p> <p>Park Farm Rangers - 1 junior girl’s team 9 v 9 this equals 1 match equivalent session every other week. The site where the team plays at Kingsnorth Pavilion is currently over played by 1 match equivalent every other week. Teams can be accommodated at Spearpoint where there is spare capacity for 1 junior match equivalent session. The girls match would be played at a different time to the boys match allowing for further capacity of the pitch.</p> <p>The Swan Centre Bromley Green – 2 junior boy’s teams 9 v 9 equals 1 match equivalent session – There is spare capacity at The Swan Centre for a 9 v 9 match equivalent session. The current pitch only caters for 1 match equivalent session per week if organised kick offs take place 2 match equivalent sessions could be played on this pitch per week. The placement of Bromley Green adult 11 v 11 team at the proposed Finberry 3G pitch in the future would release spare capacity of 1 adult match equivalent session which could be used for additional junior 11 v 11, 9 v 9 or 7 v 7 match equivalents in the future at this site</p> <p>High Halden - 3 junior 9 v 9 boys teams 1 9 v 9 junior girls’ team equals 2 match equivalent sessions per week. There is space on site for an additional 2 9 v 9 pitches and these would need to be as a minimum, a Standard quality pitch.</p> <p>Rolvenden FC – 1 junior boy’s 9 v 9 team equals 1 match equivalent session every other week. There is space to reconfigure the existing unused 7 v 7 pitch on the site to a 9 v 9 junior pitch.</p> <p>Wittersham – 1 junior boy’s 9 v 9 team equals 1 match equivalent session every other week. The current 9 v 9 pitch on site is of poor quality. If the quality was improved to standard and kick off times were scheduled then this pitch would accommodate the required match equivalent sessions per week. There is a spare 7 v 7 pitch on site that could alternatively be reconfigured as a 9 v 9 pitch.</p> <p>Wye Juniors – 1 junior boy’s 9 v 9 the team equals 1 match equivalent session every other week. The current 9 v 9 pitch on</p>			

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>site is of poor quality.</p> <p>If the quality was improved to standard and kick off times were scheduled then this pitch would accommodate the required match equivalent sessions per week. There are spare 7 v 7 pitches on site that could be reconfigured as a 9 v 9 pitch.</p> <p>One club has chosen not to participate in the Playing Pitch Assessment but this club has 3 teams that require 1 junior 9 v 9 match equivalent sessions per week and 1 match equivalent session every other week. The teams currently use the 9 v 9 pitch at Spearpoint. This pitch in table 1.3 is identified as current spare capacity but can meet this requirement and the requirement of latent demand for 1 girl's 9 v 9 match equivalent previously identified above and 1 boy's match equivalent session. The girls play at different times to the boy's matches. The pitch is of good quality and has a 4 match equivalent capacity each week.</p> <p>Future Demand New Housing:</p> <p>The projected number of new 9 v 9 pitches provided by the increased population and new development is:</p> <p>3 Junior 9 v 9 pitches</p> <p>The priority site for these new pitches is the 20ha Sports Hub site identified as part of the new development at Chilmington Green – Discovery Park.</p> <p>Meeting the Current and Latent Demand Mini Soccer Teams 7 v 7 and 5 v 5.</p> <p>Mini Soccer 7 v 7</p> <p>Current peak time play for mini soccer 7 v 7 is Saturday AM and there are 15 available pitches with capacity for 52 match equivalent sessions per week. 10 match equivalent sessions take place on a Saturday AM weekly and one every other week at peak time.</p> <p>There are sufficient mini soccer 7 v 7 pitches for peak time use currently.</p> <p>When considering latent demand there is a requirement for an additional 3 match equivalent sessions. These additional match equivalent sessions can be met within the current capacity of 7 v 7 pitches.</p> <p>When considering the club that has not participated in the Playing Pitch Strategy there are 2 mini 7 v 7 match equivalent sessions required and these can be catered for in the overall capacity of the 52 match equivalent sessions available at peak time.</p>			

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>Mini soccer 5 v 5</p> <p>Current peak time play for mini soccer 5 v 5 is Saturday AM and there are 4 available match equivalent sessions with capacity for 10 match equivalent sessions per week. There is current demand for 5 match equivalent sessions weekly and 1 match equivalent session every other week. There are sufficient mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches for peak time use currently.</p> <p>When considering latent demand there is a requirement for an additional 8 match equivalent sessions. Of these additional match equivalent sessions 3 can be met within the current capacity of existing pitches and the remaining 5 from reconfiguring 7 v 7 mini soccer pitches.</p> <p>When considering the club that has not participated in the Playing Pitch Strategy there is 1 match equivalent session to be catered for there are still sufficient mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches for peak time use if 7 v 7 pitches are reconfigured.</p> <p>There are an additional 8 pitches required to meet latent demand for mini soccer. Overall there is a requirement for 13 pitches 7 v 7 and 5 v 5. These pitches can be met either by improving the condition of existing pitches or using 3G rubber crumb pitches as a central venue e.g. Pitchside, Towers School or a new pitch at Tenterden. A 3G pitch can provide 2 7 v 7 pitches or 4 5 v 5 pitches every hour.</p> <p>Future Demand New Housing:</p> <p>The projected number of new pitches provided by the increased population and new development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ 1 mini soccer 7 v 7 pitches and 2 mini soccer 5 v 5 pitches. <p>The priority site for these new pitches is the 20ha Sports Hub site identified as part of the new development at Chilmington Green – Discovery Park.</p> <p>With the development of a 3G rubber crumb pitch at Discovery Park and the need for additional grass pitches as identified above.</p> <p>It may be prudent to provide a space that will be able to supply the above pitches but they could also be moved around within the space.</p> <p>11.45 Ha for football pitch space + 0.81 Ha for 3G rubber crumb pitch. 1.23 Ha to provide for rest and maintenance</p> <p>Total 13.49 Ha</p>			
PROVIDE	Football 11.	Provide off site payments to enhance football facilities across Ashford Borough for use by residents of new developments.		1 - 3	Ashford Council and other Stakeholders. Borough and other	

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
CRICKET						
PROTECT	Cricket 1.	All cricket pitches across Ashford Borough should be protected in the Local Plan unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided. No sites have been identified to be lost as part of the Action Plan.	All existing pitches and sites that have been previously used as playing fields across Ashford Borough.	1	Local Planning Authority	Low
PROTECT	Cricket 2.	Ensure clubs have appropriate levels of security of tenure at playing pitch sites where feasible to secure the long term future of the club.	All relevant clubs	1	Local Authority / Owners / Tenants.	Low
ENHANCE	Cricket 3.	Work in partnership with the ECB and Kent Community Cricket to support clubs and schools in improving the quality of pitches, and in accessing funding through the ECB Grant Aid and Pitch Advisory Scheme. Any improvements undertaken should seek to ensure that facilities are in line with ECB standards as well as meeting specifications for the local leagues	Mersham Sports Cricket Club – ECB Priority is to deliver an additional square at this facility. Ashford Town Cricket Club – there is a need to improve drainage. Bethersden Cricket Club - Square improvements. Challock Cricket Club – Drainage improvements. Cornes Meadow (Smerden) – New drainage system Egerton Cricket Club – Club need to remove fungal issue from the pitches. Kennington Cricket Club – Square requires relaying. Mersham le Hatch Cricket Club – Club need to remove moss from the pitch. Pluckley Cricket Club – Need to ensure succession planning of groundsman. Reynolds Playing Field (Aldington) – need for club to encourage volunteers to assist with grounds maintenance. Rolvenden Cricket Club – Require practice nets Smallhythe Cricket Club – The square and outfield need improvements. Woodchurch Cricket Club – Need to ensure succession planning for groundsman.	1	Site Owners / Ashford Borough Council, ECB and Kent Cricket Board.	High
ENHANCE	Cricket 4.	Ensure that ancillary facilities meet club needs and requirements to ensure sustainability of use.	Ashford Cricket Club – Non turf pitch needs renewing and there is a need for non-turf practice nets and mobile covers. Bethersden Cricket Club – Netting needs to be placed along the A28 Challock Cricket Club – Non turf wicket needs replacing, nets need renewing, need for new gang mower for the outfield, need for a bigger storage unit to secure equipment and the club wishes to extend the pavilion. Charing Cricket Club - Mobile covers, practice net and cage Egerton Cricket Club – Require new nets.	1	ECB, Kent Cricket, Site Owners and Clubs	High

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>Kennington Cricket Club – Non-turf pitch, mobile covers and nets are required. Little Chart CC – Require non-turf practice net facility.</p> <p>Mersham Cricket Club – Non turf practice nets, mobile net cage and a need to refurbish the clubhouse. (Particularly for women and girls use)</p> <p>Smallhythe Cricket Club – The pavilion roof needs replacing.</p> <p>Stone in Oxney Cricket Club – Require a catching cradle and new practice nets.</p> <p>Willesbrough Cricket Club – Require mobile covers.</p> <p>Wye Cricket Club – Require a new mower and rainwater harvesting to reduce energy costs.</p>			
PROVIDE	Cricket 5.	<p>Work with clubs to identify satellite facilities of appropriate quality when demand exceeds supply at the club base.</p> <p>This may include use of Parish Council pitches where clubs have folded.</p>	<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Work with Mersham Sports Club to provide an additional square.</p> <p>Work with Tenterden Cricket Club and Smallhythe Cricket Club to enable use of the Smallhythe Cricket Club square by Tenterden's 3rd Saturday team for home games.</p>	1	Mersham CC, Tenterden CC, Smallhythe CC, ECB and Kent Cricket	Low
PROVIDE	Cricket 6.	Provide a solution for under and oversupply in the future to 2030.	<p>Cricket requirements 2016 – 2030.</p> <p>Latent Demand</p> <p>Bethersden Cricket Club – Latent demand 1 adult team and 1 under 11 can be met on existing pitches.</p> <p>Boughton and Eastwell Cricket Club – Latent demand for a Saturday X1. This can be accommodated at the existing ground.</p> <p>Challock Cricket Club – Latent demand for 2 men's adult teams. This can be accommodated at the existing ground if one team plays Saturday and one team plays Sunday.</p> <p>Charing Cricket Club – Latent demand for 1 men's team. This can be accommodated at the existing ground.</p> <p>Kennington Cricket Club – Latent demand for a girl's team. Currently existing ground is over capacity of play. However, the club has requested a non-turf pitch to be placed on the edge of the square for some youth games to be played. This would alleviate the over play.</p> <p>Mersham Cricket Club – Latent demand is for 1 Women's team and 2 junior teams including girls. The pitches are currently over played. It is a priority of the club and Kent Cricket to provide a second square at the club. If the second square is provided then the over play and latent demand can be met.</p> <p>Pluckley Cricket Club – Latent demand for 1 adult team, the latent demand can be met with the existing facilities.</p>	1 - 3	Site owners, Clubs, ECB, Kent Cricket and Ashford Borough Council	Low

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>Ashford Town Cricket Club – Latent demand for 1 junior team. The latent demand can be met with existing facilities.</p> <p>Tenterden Cricket Club – Latent demand for a girl’s team. Despite the 3rd X1 team having to use an alternative home ground on a Saturday a girls team can be accommodated at the existing ground as they would play either midweek or on a Sunday.</p> <p>Willesborough Cricket Club – Latent demand is for 2 adult men’s teams and 1 junior team. There is sufficient supply to provide for these teams on the existing ground if 1 men’s team plays Saturday and 1 plays Sunday. The junior team will play mid-week.</p> <p>Wye Cricket Club – Latent demand is for 1 junior team. There is sufficient supply for a junior team to be accommodated at the existing ground.</p> <p>Future Demand New Housing:</p> <p>The projected number of new pitches provided by the increased population and new development is:</p> <p>New teams provide from team generation rates identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 adult and • 3 junior teams. <p>A cricket square can be played 26 times on a Saturday during the season. Junior cricket takes place mid-week. On average a cricket team plays 13 games a season – this equals 13 games times 4 new teams = 62 games divided by 26 = 2.38 squares. It can be assumed that 1 team will play on a Sunday. The need therefore being for 2 squares.</p> <p>1 square and outfield is being provided for at Chilmington Green as part of the new housing development.</p> <p>The second square could be provided for at either Mersham Sports or improved facilities of one of the 2 squares at Ashford Cricket Club to deal with demand from Finberry housing developments.</p>			
PROVIDE	Cricket 7.	Provide off site payments to enhance cricket facilities across Ashford Borough for use by residents of new developments.		1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council and other Stakeholders	
RUGBY						
PROTECT	Rugby 1.	All Rugby pitches in Ashford Borough should be protected unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided.	All existing pitches and sites that have been previously used as playing fields and remain of potential value,	1	Local Planning Authority	Low
ENHANCE	Rugby 2	The quality, availability and carrying capacity of existing rugby pitches to meet current and future needs of clubs. Particular emphasis on improving maintenance and installing drainage and access to floodlit training facilities.	Ashford Rugby Club - Seek to provide additional grass pitches on land nearby for 2 senior grass pitches with floodlights or 1 3G rugby compliant pitch with floodlights. Seek Section 106/CIL	1 - 3	Ashford Rugby Club, RFU	High
ENHANCE	Rugby 3.	Support the improvement of all ancillary facilities to the required NGB standard.	Ashford Rugby Club – Rugby Football Union and club to work together to enhance the club house with an extension to provide additional changing and toilets particularly for women and girls.	1	Ashford Rugby Club, RFU	Medium
PROVIDE	Rugby 4.	Provide a solution for under and oversupply in the future to 2030.	Latent Demand	1 - 3	Ashford Rugby Club,	High

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OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
			<p>Ashford Rugby Club – Latent demand for 1 senior team. This team can be accommodated on match days at the existing pitches. The over play increases mid-week on the pitches when this team is added to training equivalents and over play rises to 26 match equivalents per week.</p> <p>Ashford Barbarians Rugby Club – Latent demand of 1 senior team. This team can be accommodated on the existing pitch for match play and it assumes that the club will continue training at Highworth School mid-week.</p> <p>Future Demand New Housing:</p> <p>The projected number of new pitches provided by the increased population and new development is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 adult pitch • 1 junior pitch • 1 mini/midi pitch <p>There is a need to provide for additional pitches nearby to Ashford Rugby Club a minimum of 2 adult pitches with floodlights and or a 3G rubber crumb pitch and space for a minimum of 2 rugby pitches at Chilmington Green Discovery Park.</p> <p>The 2 rugby pitches at Discovery Park 2.46 Ha</p>		RFU, Ashford Borough Council	
PROVIDE	Rugby 5.	Provide off site payments to enhance rugby facilities across Ashford Borough Council for residents of new developments.		1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council and other Stakeholders	
HOCKEY						
PROTECT	Hockey 1.	<p>All hockey suitable sand-based AGPs in Ashford Borough Council area are required to be protected.</p> <p>Future use of the Ashford School (Senior School) requires a formal community use agreement.</p> <p>Change of use of existing hockey artificial turf pitches to 3G rubber crumb pitches should be discussed and agreed with Ashford Borough Council, the Football Association, England Hockey and the Rugby Football Union.</p>	<p>All existing pitches and sites that have been previously used as hockey AGPs and remain of potential value,</p> <p>Community use agreement to be put in place to secure hockey needs</p>	1 1 1	<p>Local Planning Authority</p> <p>Ashford Hockey club, Ashford School, England Hockey.</p> <p>Ashford Borough Council, FA, England Hockey, RFU</p>	Low Low
PROTECT	Hockey 2.	It is important to ensure that those AGPs used for hockey and provide community use have prioritised peak time match slots and training slots for hockey use.	Clubs and schools.	1	Clubs / NGB / Schools / Academies/Colleges and Higher Education and site owners.	Low
ENHANCE	Hockey 3.	<p>The quality, availability and carrying capacity of existing sand-based AGPs.</p> <p>Particular emphasis on ensuring sink funds are in place for sand based AGPs.</p>	Ashford Hockey Club AGP carpet requires repair.	1	Site Owners / Schools	Medium
PROVIDE	Hockey 4.	<p>Provide a solution for under and oversupply in the future to 2030.</p> <p>Future Population to 2030. England Hockey and Ashford Hockey Club to work together to provide a second sand based AGP at Ashford Hockey Club, Ball Lane.</p> <p>The impact on existing grass football pitches at Ball Lane will need to be considered if a second sand based artificial grass pitch is provided.</p> <p>If by providing a second sand based pitch means the loss of existing football pitches. Then the</p>	<p>Latent Demand</p> <p>Ashford Hockey Club – Latent demand 1 junior boys' team and 1 junior girls' team. This would increase additional match slots on a Sunday to 3 leaving 1 match slot free. This can be met from the existing pitch.</p> <p>Future Demand New Housing:</p>	1 - 3	Ashford Hockey Club, England Hockey, Ashford Borough Council	High

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
		<p>football pitches will be required to be replaced elsewhere.</p> <p>If a second sand based pitch is not feasible at Ball Lane consider Discovery Park Chilmington Green</p>	<p>The projected number of new teams using team generation rates is:</p> <p>1 adult men's team and 1 junior boys team with an increase in women and girls players but not sufficient to form a team.</p> <p>There would be a need to provide Ashford Hockey Club with sustainability and security of a second sand based pitch to ensure match slots can be played and club development. Ideally this would be at Ball Lane. At the same time providing security of use of all football pitches on the site. The secondary pitch use of the Ashford School AGP would require a formal community use agreement to be put in place.</p> <p>A second pitch should be considered if Ball Lane and use of Ashford School is not possible at Discovery Park Chilmington Green</p>			
FTP 3G / AGP						
PROTECT	FTP 3G /AGP 1.	Protect all existing FTP 3G and AGPs currently in use for hockey and football	All existing pitches	1	Local Planning Authority	Low
PROTECT	AGP 2	Ensure that there remain sufficient sand based/dressed facilities to fulfil hockey need at both the current time and in the future by retaining sand based facilities that are strategically important for hockey	Ball Lane sand based/dressed facilities.	1	Clubs / Local Authority / NGB / Schools / Academies	Low
ENHANCE	FTP 3G / AGP 3.	Ensure that the quality of AGPs is sufficient and that a sinking fund is in place for the refurbishment of existing facilities.	All FTP 3G and AGPs	1	Local Authority / Clubs / Schools / Academies	Medium
PROVIDE	FTP 3G / AGP 4.	<p>Provide 3 additional FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chilmington Green Discovery Park ➤ Finberry ➤ Homewood School, Tenterden. ➤ Or alternative sites if they become free <p>Ensure new sites can accommodate floodlights, changing, toilets, car parking and shelters.</p>	<p>Provide 3 additional FTP 3G rubber crumb pitches at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chilmington Green Discovery Park ➤ Finberry ➤ Homewood School, Tenterden. ➤ Or alternative sites if they become free <p>Ensure new sites can accommodate floodlights, changing, toilets, car parking and shelters.</p> <p>Ensure all site's new pitches are assessed and placed on the FA Register for 3G Pitches.</p>	1 - 3	Site Owners / Schools, Ashford Borough Council, FA, RFU and England Hockey.	High
PROVIDE	Hockey 4.	Ashford BC to work with England Hockey and Ashford Hockey Club and consider provision of a second sand based AGP on Ashford Hockey Club site. Ball Lane. Also consider a second pitch at Discovery Park Chilmington Green if the second pitch is not possible at Ball Lane.	<p>Seek funding for a second sand based pitch at Ball Lane.</p> <p>Consider Discovery Park if Ball Lane is not feasible for a second pitch or other sites.</p> <p>At the same time consider any replacement football pitches that may be required due to the loss of any existing football provision at Ball Lane.</p>	1 - 3	Ashford Hockey Club, England Hockey, Kent FA, Ashford Borough Council	High
TENNIS						
PROTECT	Tennis 1.	Protect all existing tennis courts	All existing pitches	1	Ongoing	Local Planning Authority
ENHANCE	Tennis 2.	Ashford Borough Council to focus its work with the LTA on tennis facilities with 3 or more courts to further develop and prioritise any opportunities to invest or seek capital investment	Tennis facilities with 3 or more courts e.g. Courtside	1	Ashford Borough Council, Lawn Tennis	Medium

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OBJECTIVE	RECOMMENDATION	STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY SITES / CLUBS / ACTIONS	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
		into tennis facilities.			Association	
ENHANCE	Tennis 3.	Need to prioritise opportunities to invest or seek capital investment into an indoor facility either purpose built providing 4 indoor courts and additional facilities such as health and fitness to ensure sustainability or provide a bubble over existing courts.	Sites to be considered include Courtside which can be linked with netball provision. Sites such as Julie Rose Stadium could also be considered.	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council, LTA and Sport England	High
PROVIDE	Tennis 4.	Consider provision of 3 tennis courts with floodlights (0.16ha) as part of the Chilmington Green Discovery Park Development and or at another site.	Development of new sports facilities at Discovery Park, Chilmington and or other sites	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	Medium
ENHANCE	Tennis 5.	Broadly encourage and support the work to link between venues, coaches and schools to ensure young people in Ashford have an opportunity to participate in tennis.	Club venues, schools and coaches	2	Ashford Borough Council – venues, schools, coaches.	Low
ENHANCE	Tennis 6.	To work develop opportunities for growth in workforce to support the three tennis environments.	Workforce	1	Ashford Borough Council and the LTA	Low
ENHANCE	Tennis 7.	To support the profile of mass marketing campaigns (e.g. Great British Tennis Weekend) to raise the profile of tennis across parks – focusing on allowing people to choose the venue where the customer wishes to play tennis.	Appropriate sites	1	Ashford Borough Council and the LTA	Low
BOWLS						
PROTECT	Bowls 1.	All existing provision should seek to be protected through an assessment of quantity, quality and accessibility.	All Bowls Greens across Ashford Borough Area	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
ENHANCE	Bowls 2.	Consider the refurbishment of Tenterden Bowls Club Pavilion	Tenterden	1	Tenterden Town Council	Low
PROVIDE	Bowls 3.	New site for pavilion and bowls green	Ashford Town Bowls Club	1	Ashford Town Bowls Club and Ashford Borough Council	Medium
NETBALL						
PROTECT	Netball 1.	Ensure protection of Courtside	Courtside	1	Ashford Borough Council, Ashford Netball League, KCC, John Wallis Academy	Low
ENHANCE	Netball 2.	Ensure that a reserve fund is in place to repair refurbish surfaces to netball courts at Courtside in the future.	Courtside	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council	Medium
		To meet future needs provide netball court markings on tennis courts provided as part of the Chilmington Development at Discovery Park.	Discovery Park	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council	Medium
		Provide links between schools and clubs and work to increase participation in the future.		1	Kent Netball, Ashford Netball League and Ashford Borough Council.	Low

GENERAL ACTIONS

- 4.10. The tables below identify the general Planning Policy recommendations, Playing Pitch Strategy Development recommendations, the general actions which are followed by the sub area site by site action plan.
- 4.11. The actions are given priorities and relevant potential delivery partners are highlighted. By being highlighted as a potential delivery partner, partners are not obligated to fund or facilitate the action but they should be involved in the project.
- 4.12. The action plans are given a priority:
- **Priority 1. Delivered against or worked towards within three years (ahead of the first full review of the Playing Pitch Strategy)**
 - **Priority 2. Delivered within 6 years**
 - **Priority 3. No specific date – In many instances the action is a general support for clubs or other bodies to progress with ground improvements and is not necessarily an action the Council or the Playing Pitch Steering Group have control over.**

COSTS

- 4.13. The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium or high based on cost. The brackets in which these sits are:
- **(L) -Low - less than £50k;**
 - **(M) -Medium - £50k-£250k;**
 - **(H) -High £250k and above.**
- 4.14. These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs Quarter 2 2016 and costs supplied by the Lawn Tennis Association.

FUNDING PLAN

- 4.15. In addition to using the planning system to lever in contributions through Section 106 or CIL, it is recognised that external partner funding will need to be sought to deliver much of the action plan. Although seeking developer contributions in applicable situations and other local funding/community schemes could go some way towards meeting deficiencies and/or improving provision, other potential/match sources of funding should be investigated e.g. look to apply for grants and work with NGBs and Sport England to seek partnership funding for a number of projects.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 4.16. It is important that the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering group keep this strategy alive. This will be achieved by:
- **Monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and actions.**
 - **Providing up to date annual supply and demand for pitch stock.**
 - **Addressing changing trends and formats for the different pitch sports as they develop and monitoring participation of these changes and trends.**

- 4.17. The on-going monitoring of the strategy will be led by Ashford BC and will be linked to the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group. The Strategy will be updated every 3 – 5 years to fit in with Planning Policy reviews.
- 4.18. Sport England recommends that a process should be put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered. This monitoring should be led by the local authority and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the Playing Pitch strategy has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. This should form an on-going role of the steering group.
- 4.19. As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the Steering Group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date.
- 4.20. Once the PPS is complete the role of the steering group should evolve so that it:
- **Acts as a focal point for promoting the value and importance of the PPS and playing pitch provision in the area.**
 - **Monitors, evaluates and reviews progress with the delivery of the recommendations and action plan.**
 - **Shares lessons learnt from how the PPS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances.**
 - **Ensures the PPS is used effectively to provide input into any new opportunities to secure improved provision and influence relevant programmes and initiatives.**
 - **Maintains links between all relevant parties with an interest in playing pitch provision in the area.**
 - **Reviews the need to update the PPS along with the supply and demand information and assessment work on which it is based. Further to review, the group should either:**
 1. Provide a short annual progress and update paper;
 2. Provide a partial review focussing on a particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
 3. Lead a full review and update of the PPS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).
- 4.21. The Steering Group should meet at relevant points throughout the year to ensure that this role is progressed. This could be at six months and a year on from when the steering group signed off the PPS and/or arranged to tie in with the different seasons of the sports and any meetings with the NGBs.
- 4.22. Ideally the PPS could be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment that would have been built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.
- 4.23. An annual review should not be regarded as a particularly resource intensive task. However, it should highlight:
- **How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others)**
 - **How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt**

- **Any changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area (e.g. the most used or high quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information and what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues**
- **Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport or recent information e.g. the FA modelling for 3G pitch requirements.**
- **Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.**

4.24. There is further information in Section E of Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy guidance.

4.25. The table below provides general Planning Policy recommendations and Playing Pitch Strategy Development recommendations.

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 4.2: General Recommendations

GENERAL PLANNING & PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT			ACTION
GENERAL PLANNING	RECOMMENDATIONS	FOR	<p>Agree the following Actions for the Local Plan. Allocations for playing fields should be applied to the Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Plan Planning Policy, should be in accordance with the NPPF, which seeks to protect playing pitches unless 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 the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss. • Planning consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to CIL or a Section 106 Agreement. Where developer contributions are applicable, a Section 106 Agreement must be completed specifying the amount and timing of sums to be paid. • The Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule should include projects for investment in playing pitch facility provision and maintenance for sites • Where new pitches are provided changing rooms should be located on site as a minimum for adult use including provision for women and girls or as a minimum toilet facilities should be provided for junior and mini football use including toilets for women and girls. • Where schools or higher education establishments seek planning permission for outdoor playing pitches and/or artificial grass pitches the planning conditions must stipulate a formal community use agreement is put in place with the School and the Local Authority to provide for community use of the facility.
GENERAL PLANNING	RECOMMENDATIONS	PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	<p>Ashford Borough Council will work in partnership with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football Association Regional Investment and Facilities manager & Kent Football Association. • England and Wales Cricket Board Facilities and Investment Manager & Kent Community Cricket • Rugby Football Union Investment and Facilities Manager • England Hockey Relationship Manager for Kent and • Sport England <p>Short Term Action By September 2017</p> <p>Ashford Borough Council will continue working with the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group. The Steering Group will monitor and review the PPS and site action plans on a six monthly basis.</p>

GENERAL PLANNING & PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	ACTION
	<p>Short Term Action September 2017 - Long Term Action May 2020:</p> <p>The action plan from the PPS should be implemented by the Steering Group.</p> <p>It is important that the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group keep this Strategy alive. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to seek investment appropriate to deliver the Playing Pitch Strategy in Partnership. • Monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and actions. • Providing up to date annual supply and demand for pitch stock. • Addressing changing trends and formats for the different pitch sports as they develop and monitoring participation of these changes and trends. <p>The on-going monitoring of the strategy will be led by Ashford Borough Council and will be linked to the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group. The Strategy will be updated every 3-5 years.</p>

INDIVIDUAL SITE ACTION PLANS

4.26. The following provides information on individual sites.

Table 4.2: Individual Site Action Plans

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
APPLEDORE RECREATION GROUND SPORTS – FOOTBALL.	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Need to improve car parking at the site	3	Charitable Body – Appledore Recreation Ground Management Committee	Low
	PROVIDE	Provide reconfiguration of the adult pitch and raise to a good standard. This will allow for over play on the adult pitch and additional pitches to cater for the latent demand identified.	3	Charitable Body – Appledore Recreation Ground Management Committee	Low
ASHFORD RUGBY CLUB – KINNEY FIELDS RUGBY UNION	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Extension of the club house to provide for additional changing particularly for women and girls	1	Ashford Rugby Club, Rugby Football Union.	Medium
	PROVIDE	Seek to provide additional grass pitches on land nearby for 2 senior grass pitches with floodlights or 1 3G rugby compliant pitch with floodlights. Seek Section 106/CIL	1 - 2	Ashford Rugby Club, Rugby Football Union.	High
ASHFORD HOCKEY CLUB – BALL LANE HOCKEY, FOOTBALL AND ASHFORD SCHOOL RUGBY	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	All football pitches on this site are currently over played – there is a need to raise the quality standard of these football pitches from poor to good. If Ashford School transfer rugby to the Great Chart site there is an opportunity to increase football on this site or possible future provision for Ashford Barbarians Rugby Club.	2	Kennington FC, Kent FA, Ashford Hockey Club.	Low
		Repair the existing carpet for the sand based hockey pitch	1	Ashford Hockey Club	Medium
		Replace the sand based hockey pitch carpet in 2019	2	Ashford Hockey Club	Medium
	PROVIDE	Second sand based artificial grass pitch to meet the needs of new population and residents from new housing developments.	1 – 2	Ashford Hockey Club and England Hockey supported by Ashford Borough Council	High
		Provide additional changing facilities	1 - 2	England Hockey supported by Ashford Borough Council	High
ASHFORD SCHOOL (SENIOR SCHOOL) EAST HILL AGP, FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
		There is a need for a formal community use agreement to be put in place for use of the AGP by Ashford Hockey Club.	1	Ashford Hockey Club, England Hockey and Ashford School.	Low
	ENHANCE PROVIDE				
BETHERSDEN CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The square needs to be brought up to standard and netting needs to be placed along the A28	1 - 3	ECB – Kent Community Cricket and Bethersden Cricket Club.	Low
	PROVIDE				

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SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
BILSINGTON CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE				
BOUGHTON AND EASTWELL CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE		2	Cricket Club	
	PROVIDE				
BRABOURNE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan. Formal community use agreement is required.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE				
BROOK CRICKET CLUB – SPELDERS FIELD SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE				
CHARING PLAYING FIELDS – CHARING CRICKET CLUB AND FOOTBALL CLUB SPORTS: FOOTBALL AND CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Club to provide floodlights on new pavilion to allow for training in the winter Cricket club requires mobile covers, practice net and cage	3 3	Charing Football Club Charing Cricket Club, ECB	Low Low
CHARING HEATH PLAYING FIELD SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE				
CHILHAM SPORTS CENTRE SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Funding being pursued from Section 106 funding from Bagham Place for improvements to drainage – would benefit from a visit by Kent FA Groundsman to provide advice on how to deal with drainage issue	1	Kent FA and Club	Medium
	PROVIDE				
CHILMINGTON GREEN – DISCOVERY PARK	PROTECT	This site when provided will need to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
	PROVIDE	Discovery Park will be required to provide for 20 ha of formal playing pitch space with ancillary facilities including changing rooms and car parking. Playing pitches to include space for 2 senior floodlit rugby pitches 2.46ha , 3G rubber crumb full size floodlit rubber crumb pitch and additional football pitch space 13.49ha, - to meet future identified demand.	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council	High
		Provision of 3 tennis courts that are marked for netball are required.	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council	Low
		Possible provision of a sand based AGP for Hockey.	1 - 3		
CHILMINGTON GREEN – VILLAGE GREEN	PROTECT	This site when provided will need to be protected as a playing pitch field site in the Local Plan	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Requirement to provide cricket square with minimum of 6 pitches and outfield – to meet future identified demand	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	Medium
CORNES MEADOW SMARDEN SPORTS: CRICKET AND FOOTBALL (CRICKET SQUARE AND OUTFIELD SEPARATE FROM FOOTBALL PITCHES)	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The site would benefit from a visit from Kent FA and Cricket Groundsman to provide advice on how to deal with drainage issue	1	Kent FA, Kent Community Cricket and Clubs	Low
	PROVIDE	Could provide additional junior pitches in the future, at least 2 junior 11 v 11.			Low
FINBERRY – NEW 3G RUBBER CRUMB PITCH	PROTECT	When provided the site will need to be protected as a playing pitch site in the Local Plan		Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Through new housing development funding provide a new 3G rubber crumb pitch full size with floodlights and meets the FIFA requirements to be on the FA Register	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	High
EGERTON CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Club needs to deal with fungal issues on the pitch	1	Club with advice from Kent Community Cricket.	Low
		Club to develop youth teams in the near future	1	Club with capacity building advice from Kent Community Cricket.	
GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL - FOOTBALL	PROVIDE	New practice nets	2	ECB, Club,	Low
	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan. Formal Community Use agreement needs to be put in place.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
GOLDWYN SCHOOL - FOOTBALL	PROVIDE				
	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan. Formal Community Use agreement needs to be put in place.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
	PROVIDE				
GORDON JONES PLAYING FIELD - BIDDENDEN	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL OCCASIONAL CRICKET	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and cost required to bring the pitches up to a good standard	1	Kent FA and Biddenden FC	Low
	PROVIDE	Seek to provide Section 106 funding to ensure pitches at Gordon Jones Playing Field are of a good standard.	1 - 2	Ashford Borough Council	Low
GREAT CHART PLAYING FIELDS	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard.	1	Kent FA and Football Club	Low
	PROVIDE				
GREAT CHART CRICKET CLUB	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: CRICKET	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Need for non-turf practice nets		Cricket Club, ECB, Kent Community Cricket.	
HIGHWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The carpet on the Sand based AGP on this site is 15 years old and needs to be replaced.	3	Highworth Grammar School	Medium
	PROVIDE				
HIGH HALDEN PLAYING FIELDS (HOPES GROVE)	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard.	1	Kent FA and Football Clubs	Low
	PROVIDE	An additional Junior 11 v 11 pitch can be provided on site if required.	3	Parish Council & Football Clubs	Low
HOMEWOOD SCHOOL TENTERDEN (SCHOOL SITE)	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Provision of 3G rubber crumb pitch with floodlights and a community use agreement in place for Tenterden FC and Tenterden Tigers to use the facility for training and coaching.	1 - 2	Homewood School, Tenterden FC, Tenterden Tigers FC, Tenterden Town Council, Kent FA, Ashford Borough Council.	High
HOMEWOOD (APPLEDORE ROAD SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS)	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the Local Plan This site requires a formal community use agreement to be in place between the school and Tenterden FC and Tigers.	1	Ashford Borough Council Homewood School/Tenterden FC and Tenterden Tigers	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Tenterden Town Council and Tenterden FC to explore extending the site and purchasing additional private land to provide a club house and additional playing pitches for use by Tenterden FC and Tigers.	1 - 2	Tenterden Town Council and Tenterden FC and Kent FA	High

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
KENNINGTON CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The square needs enhancing by being re-layed	3	Kennington Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE	Need to provide non-turf pitch. Mobile covers and nets are required.	1 - 3	ECB, Kent Community Cricket	Low
KINGSNORTH PAVILION SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard.	1	Kent FA, Kingsnorth Parish Council	Low
	PROVIDE	Provide an extension to the pavilion	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council	Low
LITTLE CHART CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
		The lease of the site has only 5 years remaining. The lease requires renewing.	1	Little Chart Parish Council and Little Chart Cricket club.	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Non Turf practice net facility	3	ECB and Kent Community Cricket	Low
MERSHAM LE HATCH CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Kent Community Cricket to advise club how to remove moss from the pitch	1	Kent County Cricket and Mersham le Hatch Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE				
MERSHAM SPORTS CLUB SPORTS: FOOTBALL AND CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Football and Cricket Club to seek funding for clubhouse improvements and purchase of additional land from the church commissioners	3	Mersham Cricket Club, Mersham Football Club, Kent FA and Kent Community Cricket and ECB	Medium
	PROVIDE	Provision of an additional cricket square at the ground is a priority Non turf practice nets, mobile net cage and a need to refurbish the clubhouse.	1 2 - 3	Kent Community Cricket, ECB, Mersham Sports Cricket Club Mersham Sports Cricket Club	Medium
PITCHSIDE/JOHN WALLIS ACADEMY AND JOHN WALLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan. Academy and Primary School Site	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Ensure a reserve fund is in place for replacement carpet and FA registration of 3G pitch is continued	1 – 3	Ashford Borough Council	Medium
	PROVIDE				
PLUCKLEY CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Need to ensure succession planning for grounds staff	1	Kent Community Cricket and Pluckley Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE				
POUND LEAS RECREATION GROUND - HAMSTREET SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard.	1	Kent FA, Orlestone Parish Council supported by Ashford Borough Council	Low

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
	PROVIDE	Provide improvements to pitches through developer contributions	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council/ Parish Council	Low
REYNOLDS PLAYING FIELDS – ALDINGTON CRICKET CLUB AND ALDINGTON FC SPORTS: FOOTBALL AND CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The club requires assistance in maintaining the ground. A visit from the Kent Community Cricket Groundsman to ascertain what the club need to do to improve maintenance	1	Aldington Cricket Club and Kent Community Cricket	Low
	PROVIDE	Provide improvements to pitches through developers contributions for new housing in the locality of the playing fields The Football Club will be moving onto land known as Barratt Field adjacent to the Cricket Club – there is a need to support Rolvenden Parish Council to provide a pavilion for the club.	1 - 3	Parish Council, Ashford Borough Council	Low
ROLVENDEN PLAYING FIELDS – BARRATT FIELD SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE		1	Aldington Cricket Club and Kent Community Cricket	Low
	PROVIDE	The football Club will be moving onto land known as Barratt field adjacent to the cricket club – there is a need to work with Rolvenden Parish Council to provide a pavilion for the club.	1 - 3	Parish Council, Ashford Borough Council	Low
SANDYACRES SPORTS: FOOTBALL AND RUGBY	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard	1	Kent FA and Sandyacres Trust	Low
	PROVIDE				
SHADOXHURST PLAYING FIELDS SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Reconfiguration of the 7 v 7 mini soccer pitch to a 9 v 9 pitch will allow for 7 v 7 to over play the 9 v 9 pitch.	2	Shadoxhurst Parish Council and Football Club	Low
	PROVIDE	Club needs to seek funding with the Parish Council to replace changing rooms	3	Parish Council and Club	High
SMALLHYTHE CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The outfield and square need improvements.	2	Smallhythe Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE	The pavilion roof needs replacing	3	Smallhythe Cricket Club	Medium
		Smallhythe Cricket Club to assist Tenterden Cricket Club by allowing the Tenterden 3 rd X1 team to hire the Smallhythe ground on Saturdays when they require use for a home ground	1	Smallhythe Cricket Club, Tenterden Cricket Club and Kent Community Cricket.	Low
SMEETH AND BRABOURNE RECREATION GROUND SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Possible opportunity to provide additional pitches through development of farm land from developer contributions which would enable Smeeth and Brabourne FC to play all its games in its home village	3	Smeeth and Brabourne Parish Council	Medium
	PROVIDE				

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
SOUTH ASHFORD SCHOOL – JEMMETT ROAD	PROTECT	This site is identified as a development site in the local plan. The PPS has not identified any future use of this 1 pitch site in the future and recommends that mitigation funds from the development are required to improve facilities at Kingsnorth and or the football pitches at Ashford Hockey Club.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE				
SPEARPOINT (THE RIDGE) SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	New clubhouse opened for 2016/17 season and there is space for an additional 2 9 v 9 pitches if required.	1 - 2	Ashford Borough Council	Completed
	PROVIDE				
STACIANS PARK AND STACIANS PARK ANNEXE SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Kent Community Cricket to work with Ashford Cricket Club to develop its junior teams and general club development.	1 - 3	Kent Community Cricket. ECB, Ashford Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE	Non turf pitch needs renewing and there is a need for non-turf practice nets and mobile covers. There is also a need to improve the playing facilities at the annexe to be able to cater for new residents from Finberry developments	1 - 3	ECB and Kent Community Cricket supported by Ashford Borough Council.	Low Medium
STONE IN OXNEY CRICKET CLUB	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	New practice nets and a catching cradle	3	ECB, Kent Community Cricket	Low
TENTERDEN CRICKET CLUB SPORTS: CRICKET	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the local plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Club requires use of a second square for it 3 rd X1 team – Smallhythe Cricket Club has capacity to hire their square.	1	Tenterden Cricket Club, Smallhythe Cricket Club and Kent Community Cricket	Low
THE SWAN CENTRE (BROMLEY GREEN FC) SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs protecting as a playing field site in the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Senior team to become the main team user of the new Finberry 3G rubber crumb pitch which allows further development of junior pitches.	2	Ashford Borough Council and Bromley Green FC	Low
	PROVIDE	New changing pavilion and car parking	1 - 3	Ashford Borough Council, Kent FA and Bromley Green FC.	High
THE NORTH SCHOOL SPORTS: FOOTBALL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	The sand based carpet will need to be refurbished in 2018	1	The North School	Medium
	PROVIDE	Provide a 3G pitch replacement if required before 2030.	1 - 3	North School, FA, England Hockey, Ashford Borough Council	Medium
THE TOWERS SCHOOL	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low

DRAFT ASHFORD BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

SITE NAME / OWNERSHIP	STRATEGY	ACTION	PRIORITY	RESPONSIBILITY	COST
SPORTS: FOOTBALL	ENHANCE	The carpet of the 3G rubber crumb pitch will require replacing in 2025	3	The Towers School	Medium
	PROVIDE				
WILLESBROUGH CRICKET CLUB	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL	ENHANCE		1		
	PROVIDE	Mobile covers are required	3	Willesborough Cricket Club, ECB, Kent Community Cricket.	Low
WITERSHAM SPORTS FIELD	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: FOOTBALL AND CRICKET	ENHANCE	Kent FA to carry out an assessment of pitches and identify the works and costs required to bring the pitches up to a good standard	1	Kent FA	Low
	PROVIDE	Consider a new pavilion if land is passed to the Parish Council and a lease can be arranged with the football and cricket clubs.	1	Wittersham Football and Cricket Clubs, Parish Council	High
WOODCHURCH CRICKET CLUB	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
SPORTS: CRICKET	ENHANCE	Need succession training for maintenance of square	1	Woodchurch Cricket Club and Kent Community Cricket.	Low
	PROVIDE				
WYE CRICKET CLUB – HORTON MEADOW	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE	Require a new mower	3	Wye Cricket Club	Low
	PROVIDE	Rainwater harvesting to reduce energy costs	1 - 2	ECB and Kent Community Cricket	Low
WYE JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB – IMPERIAL COLLEGE	PROTECT	This site needs to be protected as a playing field site within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council	Low
	ENHANCE				
	PROVIDE	Requires a new clubhouse, Lease needs to renegotiated beyond 2020.	1 - 3	Wye FC and lease holder.	High

SCHOOL SITES WITH NO COMMUNITY USE BUT NEED PLAYING PITCHES PROTECTED				
The Ashford School (Prep And Pre Prep School) Great Chart	PROTECT	These sites need to be protected as playing field sites within the Local Plan.	1	Ashford Borough Council
Aldington Primary School				
Ashford Oaks Primary School				
Beaver Green Community School				
Brabourne C E Primary School				
Challock Primary School				
Downs View Infant School				
East Stour Primary School				
Hamstreet Primary Academy				
Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary School (Wye)				
Mersham County Primary School				
Phoenix Primary School				
Repton Park Primary				
St Mary's Ashford Primary School				
St Michael's Primary School				
St Simon's Primary School				
Spring Grove School				

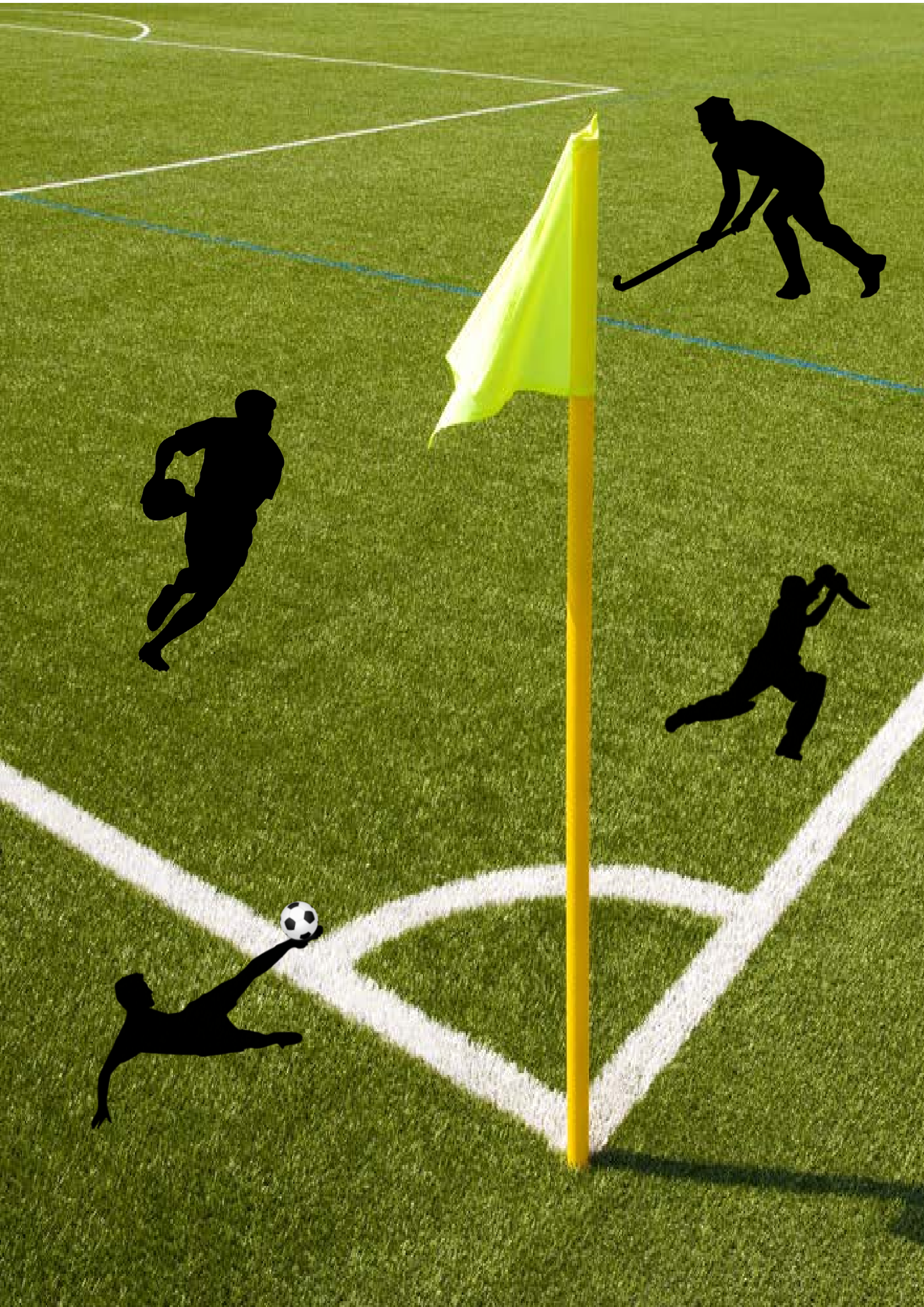
TENNIS COURTS (PUBLIC COURTS)	PROTECT
Appledore Recreation Ground (Parish Council)	These sites need to be protected as tennis courts within the Local Plan. Courtside needs to be protected as a netball and tennis court facility.
Hamstreet (Parish Council)	
Spearpoint (Ashford Borough Council)	
Courtside (Ashford Borough Council)	
Tenterden Recreation Ground (Tenterden Town Council)	

TENNIS CLUBS	PROTECT
Aldington Tennis Club	These sites need to be protected as tennis courts within the Local Plan.
Bethersden Tennis Club	
Biddenden Tennis Club	
Charing Tennis Club	
Chilham Tennis Club	
Little Chart Tennis Club	

Pluckley Tennis Cub	
Woodchurch Tennis Club	
Wye Tennis Club	

BOWLS GREENS	PROTECT
Ashford Town Bowls club – Church Road	These sites need to be protected as bowls green facilities within the Local Plan.
Ashford Railway Bowls Club - Beaver Road	
Tenterden Bowls Club – Recreation Ground Road	
Biddenden Bowls club – Gordon Jones Playing Field	
Hamstreet Bowls Club – Ruckinge Road	
Charing Bowls Club – Arthur Baker Playing Fields	

NETBALL	PROTECT
Courtside -Ashford	This site needs to be protected as netball facility within the Local Plan.





ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



DRAFT

**INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN
FOR THE BOROUGH OF ASHFORD**

2017 TO 2030

May 2017

INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

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DRAFT - INDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy for the Borough of Ashford summarises the information, key findings, and issues contained within the Context and Needs Assessment report. Both the Assessment Report and the Strategy have been prepared in accordance with the guidance from Sport England contained in the document 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities' (ANOG), December 2014.

The Strategy and Action Plan aims to ensure that there is a network of sustainable indoor facilities in place that will promote and support participation and growth in sport, recreation and fitness across the Borough of Ashford to 2030.

The Strategy quantifies the present and future need for built sports facilities in the Borough of Ashford (the Borough). It allows proper planning for the delivery and playing of indoor sport into the future; as well as informing proposals for the development of new indoor sports facilities and improvements to existing sites.

The Context and Needs Assessment provides sound evidence for the emerging Ashford Borough's Local Plan 2030 and the production of the Regulation 123 list of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded infrastructure. The overall housing requirement of 14,680 dwellings is proposed to be delivered in the Borough between 2011 and 2030 which is reflected in this strategy.

POLICY CONTEXT

The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** requires that planning authorities Local Plans should meet objectively assessed need and positively seek to meet the development needs of an area. Specifically, planning policies for open spaces and sport and recreation 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.

The Strategy follows **Sport England's planning objectives** for sport which are:

- **Protect:** Develop Policies and provide evidence for the Local Plan to protect sports facilities for use by the community irrespective of their ownership.
- **Provide:** Access to a sustainable sports facility infrastructure for all residents and visitors.
- **Enhance:** Enhance current facilities where feasible and provide a programme of sports activities that meets the needs of residents and visitors that leads to an increase in participation.

Ashford Borough Council's Five Year Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 identifies a number of priorities for the Borough relating to sporting, recreational and health outcomes, these are:

- Delivery of the best mix of sports, cultural, recreational experiences supporting a range of health & wellbeing benefits for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Invest in new provision and refurbishment of existing facilities to provide a high-quality sports, culture and leisure offer [Substantial investment in Stour Centre].
- Improve the quality of the management of leisure & cultural facilities so that they are among the best in the UK.
- Extend the cultural, sport & recreational offers at key sites.
- Innovative ways for people to choose active lifestyles.
- Ascertain and support best solutions for providing healthy & active communities in new developments.

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- Strengthen culture & sport in the Local Plan and through Master Planning.
- Recognising the growing elderly demographic, embed a new approach to activities for the 60+ group across the borough.
- Support Tenterden's leisure & cultural offer.

DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy's Action Plan sets out the key priorities that have emerged and makes recommendations against timescales and identifies key delivery partners. The Action Plan helps ensure that a planned approach to indoor sport and physical activity facilities takes place in the Borough over the medium term. It helps focus funding bids to Sport England and other funding bodies including National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport.

It provides a framework for key stakeholders to work together and provide facilities that will meet the sport and physical activity needs of current and future residents. There will need to be an ongoing engagement with a range of key delivery partners in the future these include:

- **Ashford Borough Council**
- **Local Sports Clubs**
- **Local Secondary and Primary Schools**
- **Local Sport and Leisure Trusts**
- **Leisure Management Operators**
- **Town and Parish Councils**
- **National Governing Bodies of Sport**

KEY FINDINGS

The following paragraphs contain a summary of the key findings from the Context and Needs Assessment report, by facility type.

KEY FINDINGS FOR INDOOR SPORTS HALLS

All residents are within a 20-minute drive time of a sports hall, either within the Borough or a neighbouring Borough.

Sport England's Facility Planning Model states 38.05 courts of sports hall space are currently required across Ashford Borough. The current supply is 35.10 courts, which leaves a deficit of 2.95 courts (rounded 3 courts). The Ashford School Sports Halls at the Senior School and the Preparatory School are not included in these calculations. There is also room to extend opening hours at Education owned sports halls to improve available capacity. Capacity could also be improved at Tenterden Leisure Centre.

There is a need for an additional 6 courts of sports hall space in 2030. This should be provided by developer contributions.

KEY FINDINGS OTHER ACTIVITY HALLS

There are a number of activity halls, village halls, community halls and facilities that can and do provide for sport and physical activity in the towns and villages across the Borough. The activities vary but include dance, yoga, pilates, aerobics, table tennis, badminton, judo, martial arts, tai chi, boot camps, and short mat bowls.

Badminton can be played at Chillham Sports Centre, Mountbatten Hall, Mersham and the hall at Rolvenden.

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These facilities need to be protected and enhanced to provide a local door step sport and physical activity provision in the rural areas. Where an opportunity arises through new developments that doesn't warrant a full size 4 court badminton hall then built facilities providing a 1 badminton court facility with meeting rooms toilets and changing space with an outdoor multi use games area should be provided. Repton Community Centre is an example of this facility in practice - currently being built.

There is a need to support Tenterden boxing club to find a home within Tenterden. The club currently train in Woodchurch.

Kestrel Gymnastics club needs support to find a home of its own. This would release sports hall capacity at Tenterden Leisure Centre.

KEY FINDINGS FOR SWIMMING POOLS

All residents are within a 20-minute drive time of a swimming pool within the Borough or a neighbouring Borough.

There is a projected undersupply of water space by 2030 - an additional 4.07 (216.46m²) swimming lanes are required. However there is a current positive balance (162.19m²), which leaves additional water space required in 2030 to be 54.27 sqm (rounded to one lane). This should be met by under capacity currently at Tenterden Leisure Centre.

KEY FINDINGS FOR HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

New community accessible health and fitness facilities should be considered where these are viable and supported by site specific latent demand analysis. Sites to consider are Tenterden Leisure Centre, Courtside and Julie Rose Stadium.

KEY FINDINGS FOR INDOOR BOWLS

Current provision across the Borough is meeting existing need. There is no requirement for additional indoor bowls provision in the Borough. There is a long-term trend for declining participation continues but the Borough does however have an ageing population and this could improve future trends in participation.

KEY FINDINGS FOR SQUASH COURTS

There is no requirement for additional squash provision in the Borough. Demand for squash is falling nationally, resulting in underutilisation of courts. Operators are increasingly converting squash courts for more popular, revenue generating, activities.

However, existing court provision should not be reduced as this would have a negative impact on squash and current users may find it difficult to secure bookings at alternative sites during peak times.

KEY FINDINGS FOR INDOOR TENNIS

Feasibility work is currently being undertaken to identify the best site within the Borough for an Indoor Tennis Centre with support from Sport England and the Lawn Tennis Association who jointly commissioned a feasibility study in July 2016.

KEY FINDINGS FOR GYMNASTICS

British Gymnastics have made it clear that they would like to see additional gymnastic activities within the Borough's Sports Halls and would also support the development of Gymnastics Clubs having their own venues where the equipment is laid out permanently. The Clubs with their own venues would operate as commercially viable businesses.

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It would be feasible for the Stour Centre to improve its own Gymnastic offer and roll out a programme at other venues such as the Julie Rose Stadium. As mentioned above under Sports Halls there is a need to relocate Kestrel Gymnastics Club into its own venue where the equipment is laid out permanently.

KEY FINDINGS FOR ATHLETICS

There is a sufficient supply of athletics facilities in the Borough. There is an option to improve the leisure offer at the Julie Rose Stadium with improved health and fitness facilities and further linkages to Conningbrook Lakes and Country Park that could provide running trails way marked and providing km markers. There are many different types of athletic activity. The growth area in the sport is in recreational road and off-road running that has resulted in significant new runners into the sport over the past few years and evidence strongly suggests this growth will continue. There is an option to build on the profile of the existing triathlon events and England Athletics three strategic priorities of building capacity, increase performance levels and participation in the wider athletic markets.

KEY FINDINGS INDIVIDUAL FACILITIES

STOUR LEISURE CENTRE

1. Consider actions to improve the dry side offer such as:

- Adventure soft play
- Clip and climb
- Gymnastic classes

2. Reduce the Carbon footprint

TENTERDEN LEISURE CENTRE

1. Improve the dry side offer by:

- Relocating the health and fitness facilities and grow the gym to cater for the anticipated growth in population.
- Use the existing gym as a clip and climb facility.
- Add soft play facilities

2. Create additional capacity in the Sports Hall by working with Kestrel Gymnastics Club to assist them secure their long term sustainability.

JULIE ROSE STADIUM

- 1. Investigate the relocation and extend the health and fitness offer.**
- 2. Existing gym becomes club room/meeting area.**
- 3. Indoor training area to provide physical activity classes.**

COURTSIDE

- 1. Improve the Leisure offer on site by considering a health and fitness facility.**

1. ASHFORD BOROUGH INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 The Indoor Sports Facility Strategy (ISFS) for Ashford summarises the information, key findings, and issues contained within the Context and Needs Assessment report. Both the Assessment Report and the Strategy have been prepared in accordance with the guidance from Sport England contained in the document 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG), December 2014.

1.2 The Strategy and Action Plan have been produced to ensure that there is a network of sustainable facilities in place that will promote and support participation and growth in sport, recreation and fitness across Ashford Borough.

1.3 In line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the ISFS sets out to assess existing indoor sports facilities, the future need for indoor sports facilities, and opportunities for new provision. The key factors for Ashford Borough Council are:

- **The requirements of the 2012 NPPF and specifically paragraph 73**

'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. 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. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required'

(Source: NPPF 2012 Paragraph 73)

- **and additionally, paragraph 74 of the NPPF** emphasise that existing open space, sports and recreational facilities and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
 - An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - Any loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - The development is for alternative recreation or open space facilities, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

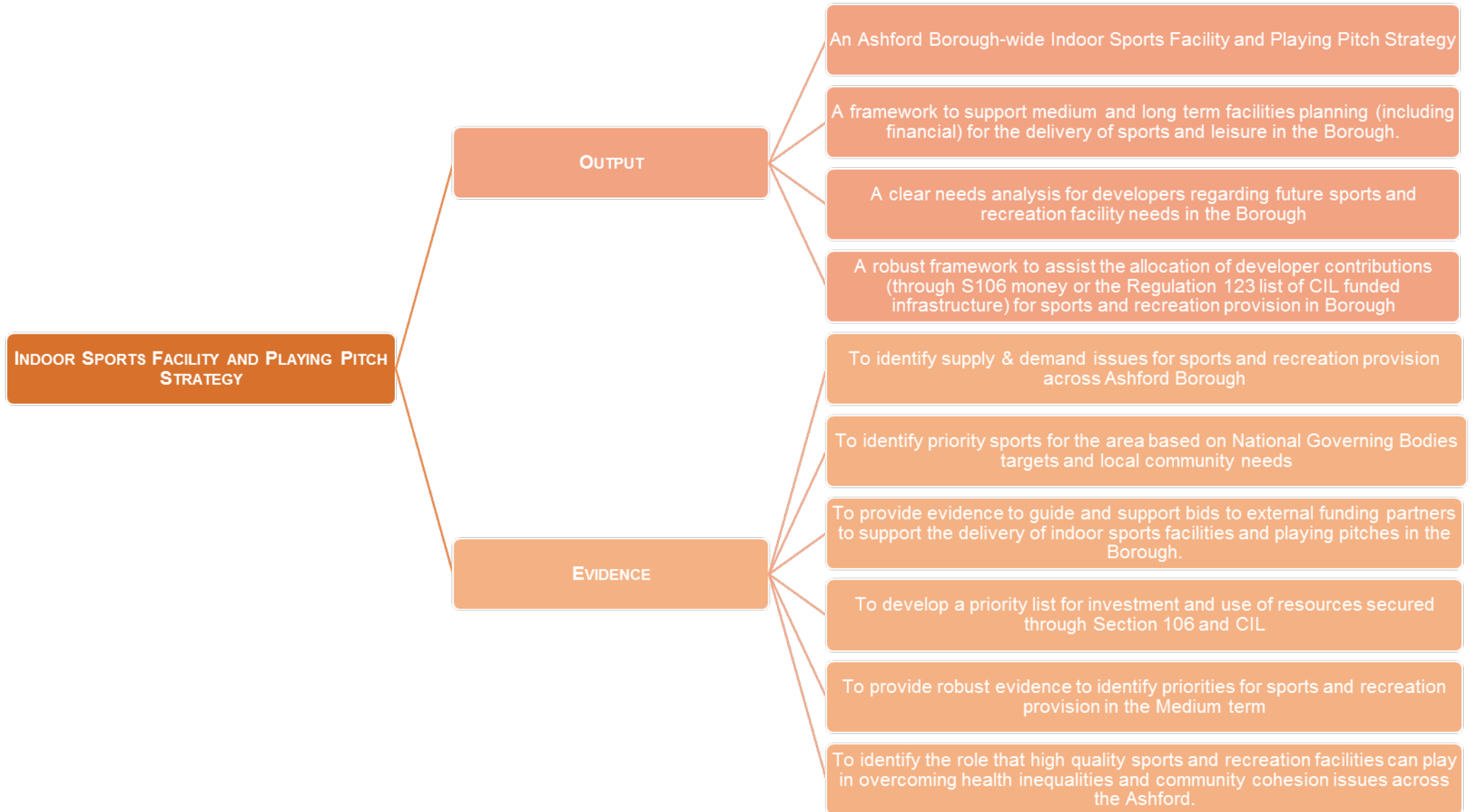
1.4 The indoor Sports Facility Strategy provides evidence to support:

- **The Council's emerging Local Plan 2030,**
- **The production of the Regulation 123 list of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded infrastructure,**
- **Funding bids from National Sports bodies like Sport England and the National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport,**

1.5 The Strategy helps ensure that a planned approach to sport and physical activity facilities takes place in Ashford Borough over the medium term, ensuring that the Ashford community has access to high quality facilities, helping communities improve their health and remain cohesive. It is imperative that where the Council provides facilities, they are as efficient and effective as possible due to continuing financial pressures.

1.6 The following chart shows the outputs that will be delivered by the Indoor Sports Facility.

DRAFT INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN ASHFORD BOROUGH



DRAFT INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

ASHFORD BOROUGH

1.7 There will need to be an ongoing engagement with a range of key partners in the future these partners include:

- **Ashford Borough Council**
- **Ashford Sports Clubs**
- **Ashford Schools**
- **Ashford Borough Council Leisure Management Operator**
- **Town and Parish Councils**
- **National Governing Bodies of Sport**

STRATEGY SCOPE

1.8 The strategy scope includes:

- **Sports Halls**
- **Rugby**
- **Tennis**
- **Bowls**
- **Cricket**
- **Hockey**
- **Netball**

THE VISION

1.9 The Vision for the Indoor Built Facility Strategy is:

“To provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.”

1.10 In translating the Borough’s vision and results of consultation into practical outcomes, Ashford Borough Council has identified a number of priorities for the Borough. These are:

- **Delivery of the best mix of sports, cultural and recreational experiences supporting a range of health & wellbeing benefits for residents of all ages and abilities.**
- **Invest in new provision and refurbishment of existing facilities to provide a high-quality sports, culture and leisure offer [Substantial investment in Stour Centre].**
- **Improve the quality of the management of leisure & cultural facilities so that they are among the best in the UK.**
- **Extend the cultural, sport & recreational offers at key sites.**
- **Innovative ways for people to choose active lifestyles.**
- **Ascertain and support best solutions for providing healthy & active communities in new developments.**
- **Strengthen culture & sport in the Local Plan and through Master Planning.**
- **Recognising the growing elderly demographic, embed a new approach to activities for the 60+ group across the borough.**
- **Support Tenterden’s leisure & cultural offer.**

DRAFT INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1.11 The three strategic objectives for the Ashford Built Facilities Strategy follow Sport England's planning objectives for sport and they are:

1. **Protect:** Develop Policies and provide evidence for the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to protect sports facilities for use by the community irrespective of their ownership.
2. **Provide:** Access to a sustainable sports facility infrastructure for all residents and visitors.
3. **Enhance:** Enhance current facilities where feasible and provide a programme of sports activities that meets the needs of the Ashford Borough Residents and Visitors that leads to an increase in participation.

1.12 The Action Plan sets out the key priorities that have emerged from the strategy and makes recommendations against timescales and whom the Partners to deliver should be.

2. BACKGROUND CONTEXT

THE STUDY AREA

2.1. Map 2.1 below shows Ashford and its relationship to the rest of Kent, London and Paris.

Map 2.1: Ashford in relation to Kent, London and Paris



- 2.2. Ashford Borough Council is in the County of Kent, bounded to the north by the borough of Swale, by Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells to the west, Rother district to the south west, Shepway district to the south east, and Canterbury to the north.
- 2.3. Ashford is well connected to the South East, the rest of the UK, and mainland Europe via the M20 and A28, domestic rail services, and the international rail link to Paris and Brussels. Both domestic and international links have improved with the opening of the High Speed 1 (HS1) rail services to London and Europe. Journey times to London are now just 38 minutes. These links give Ashford a major competitive advantage, which will be vital to the future growth of its economy.
- 2.4. Ashford Borough is the largest local authority (spatially) within Kent and covers an area of approximately 58,062 ha. At the time of the 2011 Census the borough had a population of 118,405 residents.
- 2.5. The town of Ashford (population of approximately 60,000 people) is the Borough's largest settlement and is where most sporting and cultural activity is focused. The rest of the borough is rural in nature and includes the historic market town of Tenterden (population of approximately 7,000 people) and a number of medium to small sized villages.
- 2.6. **The population is expected to be 146,500 by 2030 (Source: ONS Sub National 2014 Population Projections). In addition, the Ashford age profile is changing, by 2030 there are expected to be 35,000 people over the age of 65.**
- 2.7. **The Council is in the process of producing its Local Plan which will set out the level of housing growth that is needed to come forward by 2030. Currently, the evidence base which supports the Local Plan is suggesting that an additional 14,680 houses will be required (2011 – 2030). The majority of this future growth will be focused towards the town of Ashford 75% and 25% in the rural areas.**

DRAFT INDOOR SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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OTHER LOCAL FACTORS

- 2.8. The Indices of Deprivation 2015 shows a change in Ashford's national rank, moving up 22 places between 2010 and 2015. This indicates that Ashford is more deprived in 2015 than in 2010 relative to all other local authorities in England. Ashford has a deprivation ranking in 2015 of 198 out of 326 nationally and in Kent 8 out of 12. In 2010 Ashford was 176 out of 326 nationally and 7 out of 12 in Kent.
- 2.9. Ashford does not have any Lower Super Output Areas ranked within the top 10% most deprived in England. Stanhope and Victoria Wards are the most deprived areas in Ashford.
- 2.10. 84% of Ashford's households have access to private transport, with 31% of households having access to 2 cars or vans. This suggests that the households in Ashford are fairly mobile.
- 2.11. There is high dependence on private transport across Ashford, because although there are larger villages in the area, many people travel to Town for education, retail opportunities and employment. This explains why 84% of the population has access to private transport.
- 2.12. Overall communities in Ashford have good health, life expectancy is not significantly different for people in the most deprived areas of Ashford than in the least deprived areas.

OBESITY LEVELS IN CHILDREN: IN YEAR 6, 21.6% (292) OF CHILDREN ARE CLASSIFIED AS OBESE, WORSE THAN THE AVERAGE FOR ENGLAND AND IN 2012, 22.7% OF ADULTS WERE CLASSIFIED AS OBESE.

- 2.13. The Health Profile for Ashford 2015 identified the priorities in Ashford to include improving the levels of healthy weight amongst adults and children through increasing levels of physical activity, addressing health inequalities (heart disease), and addressing smoking prevalence and smoking in pregnancy.

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN:

FIVE YEAR CORPORATE PLAN 2015 – 2020

ASPIRATION, ACTION, ACHIEVEMENT

PRIORITY 1: ENTERPRISING ASHFORD – ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AND GROWTH

Our Aspiration: To promote growth and achieve greater economic prosperity for Ashford Borough. We will work to secure inward investment to create a wide range of jobs carried out by highly skilled workforce.

PRIORITY 2: LIVING ASHFORD – QUALITY HOUSING & HOMES FOR ALL

Our Aspiration: To secure quality homes across the Borough, catering for a range of ages, tenure and need, in well planned and attractive new places.

PRIORITY 3: ACTIVE & CREATIVE ASHFORD – HEALTHY CHOICES THROUGH PHYSICAL, CULTURAL AND LEISURE ENGAGEMENT

Our Aspiration: To provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.

PRIORITY 4: ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD – ENVIRONMENT, COUNTRYSIDE, TOURISM & HERITAGE

Our Aspiration: To achieve an environment that creates higher standards of public space, design, alongside improved standards of presentation of key green spaces. To safeguard and conserve our local heritage and areas of outstanding landscape quality to ensure the very best attractive environment with thriving and vibrant town centres.

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2.14. The Corporate Strategy Priority 3 identifies what Ashford BC wishes to achieve by healthy choices through physical, cultural and leisure engagement. The priorities are shown below.

2.15. Our Aspiration: To provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.

- **What do we want to achieve and how will we do it?**

- Delivery of the best mix of sports, cultural, recreational experiences supporting a range of health & wellbeing benefits for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Invest in new provision and refurbishment of existing facilities to provide a high quality sports, culture and leisure offer [Substantial investment in Stour Centre].
- Improve the quality of the management of leisure & cultural facilities so that they are among the best in the UK.
- Extend the cultural, sport & recreational offers at key sites: Conningbrook, Julie Rose.
- Innovative ways for people to choose active lifestyles.
- Ascertain and support best solutions for providing healthy & active communities in new developments – Repton Park, Chilmington.
- Strengthen culture & sport in the Local Plan and through Master Planning.
- Develop a 'cycle town' strategy.
- Recognising the growing elderly demographic, embed a new approach to activities for the 60+ group across the borough.
- Grow our cultural offer to be a successful and alternative destination.
- Deliver town centre cinema & associated attractions.
- Continue to support Revelation St Mary's, Develop Create & exploit its brand.
- Attract cultural industries.
- Support Tenterden's leisure & cultural offer.
- Work with the private sector on cultural & leisure provision.
- Maximise the value of our key green sites.
- Masterplan future development at Conningbrook.
- Planned improvement to key public space and parks – Victoria Park, Memorial Gardens & Willesborough Dykes.

LOCAL PLAN TO 2030

THE VISION

2.16. The following sets out the vision for Ashford Borough in 2030.

2.17. Ashford Borough will meet its housing and employment needs, and take account of the needs of investors, through the provision of new high quality development forming attractive places, with the necessary supporting infrastructure and services, and in sustainable and accessible locations that take account of the Borough's environmental constraints.

2.18. The town of Ashford will continue to be the main focus for development with the regeneration of the town centre and areas where there are existing environmental and social issues and the creation of attractive and vibrant new communities on the periphery of the town.

2.19. A regenerated Ashford Town Centre will expand significantly its leisure, cultural, educational and residential offer. A new Commercial office Quarter next to the railway station will be a major economic impetus for the area, helping to substantially increase employment, trigger more spending in the town centre economy, and improve wage rates and skills levels. The town centre's heritage will be conserved and enhanced alongside quality new public realm reflecting the various different character areas.

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- 2.20. Tenterden will continue to serve the south western part of the Borough as a principal rural service centre with a strong offer of shops and services, conserving and enhancing its historic centre and accommodating development of a suitable scale, design and character.
- 2.21. The other rural service centres of Charing, Hamstreet and Wye will remain important providers of local shops and services, with care taken to conserve and enhance their historic centres and the delivery of limited development.
- 2.22. The identity and attractive character of the Borough’s rural area, with its range of attractive settlements, wealth of heritage assets and its expansive countryside, including the Kent Downs AONB to the north and the High Weald AONB to the south, will be protected and enhanced.
- 2.23. The Borough’s green spaces will be protected and enhanced to serve expanding populations including two new strategic parks at Ashford and the promotion of sporting and recreational hubs in accessible locations; the retention of flood storage areas; reinforcement of wildlife corridors and an improved cycle network to foster healthier lifestyles for residents and workers.
- 2.24. A positive approach to the adaptation of climate change will be secured by avoiding development in areas at greatest risk of flooding; protecting and enhancing green networks; carefully considered new layouts and designs of housing areas; and promoting sustainable drainage and challenging water efficiency standards.

SPORT RECREATION AND PLAY

- 2.25. The draft Local Plan 2030 states the following:
- 2.26. Recreation, sport, open space and play areas can enrich the quality of our lives and contribute towards healthy living. The Borough currently enjoys a wide range of such space and this provision will be added to when current planning applications are implemented, most notably Chilmington Green which will deliver significant recreational and leisure areas.
- 2.27. The following total quantum’s of recreational, play, sport and open space are required to meet the needs of the new development proposed in this Local Plan. These figures are derived from the emerging Sports Pitches and Indoor Sports Facility Strategy, alongside standards set out in the current Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. They take into account planned provision that is earmarked to come forward, such as at Chilmington Green. The figures do not take into account the role which could be played by provision at schools. This provision should be treated as supplementary as in most cases it tends to have limited public access at key times.

Table 2.1: Total Spatial Target for play, open space and sports (draft Local Plan 2030)

INFORMAL SPACE	22.5ha
CHILDREN’S PLAY	5.6ha
STRATEGIC PARKS	3.4ha
ALLOTMENT PROVISION	2.2ha
SPORTS HALLS (1 BADMINTON HALL OR EQUIVALENT)	4
3G ARTIFICIAL PITCH	1
FOOTBALL PITCHES	7 adult, 3 junior
HOCKEY 2G PITCH	1 adult
RUGBY	2 senior pitches
CRICKET SQUARE AND OUTFIELD	1

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- 2.28. These figures are a ‘target’ as not all residential development coming forward will be required to deliver a proportion of these provisions. For example, some development will be excluded on viability grounds such as most proposals coming forward in the town centre, and a number of developments will fall below the threshold that trigger a requirement for provision. However, this is somewhat countered as CIL receipts can be used to deliver recreation, sport, play and open space, where it is strategic in nature. This type of provision effectively meets a need for all new developments in the Borough. Therefore, the identification of a target figure is considered to be a robust starting point for the policy below.
- 2.29. In order to determine the quantum and type of provision required for each qualifying proposal, applicants will be expected to use the Sport England Calculator and the relevant standards in the Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD. Aside from informal space – which will normally be delivered on site and form part of the wider landscaping/ SUDs strategy and incidental space around buildings - discussions with the Council shall then take place as to what exact provision will be sought from any S106 monies to be collected, using the projects identified within the supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan schedule as the starting point.

THE HUB APPROACH

- 2.30. The Local Plan seeks to deliver a community hub model and the strategies emerging for recreation, sports, open space and play all recommend the same model. The sport and recreational hubs are identified on Strategic Diagram 2 which supports this Local Plan. They are:
- **Discovery Park:** a new, major open space and recreational area that is proposed to include a number of sports pitches (including the provision for 3G pitches), a large scale indoor sports building, strategic play space and managed outdoor recreational space. The majority of Discovery Park will come forward in response to development at Chilmington Green and the area is protected as part of the Chilmington Green Area Action Plan, the provisions of which fall outside the scope of this Local Plan. However, an extension to Discovery Park is proposed to come forward as part of the Court Lodge development (policy S3).
 - **Conningbrook Park:** a new large water based recreational resource and facilities at Conningbrook Lakes and significant indoor sports provision in the form of the existing Julie Rose Stadium. Complementary provision in the form of strategic play space and informal space will also be provided here.
 - **Ashford Town Centre:** a key location for indoor sports provision within the Borough. The Stour Centre is the principal indoor sports facility within the borough and caters for a range of sports, including swimming, badminton, squash, netball and football. In addition, the Town Centre is also home to green spaces in the form of Victoria Park, Memorial Gardens and the Green Corridor. The Town Centre will continue to be a key recreational and sporting hub over the plan period.
 - **Finberry/ Park Farm:** a community and leisure hub adjacent to the planned primary school that compliments the facilities planned at Bridgefield Park. This Hub aims to deliver a 3G state of the art sports pitch which will be supported by a multi-use play area, a community building with indoor sports courts and changing facilities.
 - **Kingsnorth Recreation Centre:** already a well-established urban hub for the area and town. This could support an increase in the recreational and outdoor space offer located here.
 - **Sandyhurst Lane:** another site already offering social, community and sports provision (comprising two full size grass football pitches and one rugby pitch supported by a pavilion comprising four team and one officials changing room, bar and large function room). New provision is proposed which could include improved sports pitches, informal and natural green space and potentially allotment space.

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- **Spearpoint:** a busy football hub already exists on this site and contains six grass pitches, a newly built pavilion and refurbished tennis courts (2016). The aspiration is to provide a major new play area. Further leisure development on this site could also be considered.
- **Pitchside/Courtside:** Pitchside and Courtside are adjacent dual use sites in South Ashford on the campus of John Wallis Academy. Pitchside consists of a full size 3G pitch and two full size grass football pitches for community use. In addition, the Academy grass playing field has a junior pitch, full size football pitch and full size rugby pitch which are available for occasional community use as demand dictates. Pitchside is supported by a 4-changing room pavilion. Courtside comprises six hard courts supported by a two-changing room pavilion with meeting room and office. The primary use of the courts is for netball with tennis the main secondary use. This provides a key mixed use sports hub and has the potential to be extended and upgraded.

LOCAL PROVISION

2.31. Not all of the provision of recreation, sport, open space and play areas will serve a wider catchment or play a strategic role. There are a number of local areas which fulfil a key role in meeting the community's everyday needs. These areas include Bridgefield Park, South Willesborough (Bulleid Place/Swan Centre), Singleton (Cuckoo Park/ Singleton Environment Centre), and Repton Park and Community Centre. These offer multi-use community space for local residents, children's play and informal recreational open space. Hythe Road Recreation ground should be up-graded to provide a much needed quality open space for informal recreation including multi-use games area. When new development comes forward, there will remain a need to deliver provision at a local scale, to directly serve the community in which it is located.

THE APPROACH IN THE RURAL AREA

- 2.32. The spatial approach in the rural area has to be a different one to the strategic hub approach above, given the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern. Here the Council has a strong track record of working with Parish Councils to ensure the delivery and maintenance of small scale provision across the rural settlements of the Borough.
- 2.33. In the rural areas, it is important that the provision is linked where possible to public transport routes in order to work to avoid social exclusion, to ensure facilities are as accessible as possible to the widest catchment of users and thereby maximize the viability and vitality of the facilities themselves.
- 2.34. The Council will continue to liaise with the Parish Councils to determine the optimum level of provision possible in the rural areas.

Policy COM2 - Recreation, Sport, Play and Open Spaces

As a target, the Council shall seek to deliver the quantum of provision as new recreation, sport, play and open space provision by 2030 as set out in table 4 of this Local Plan.

Proposals will utilise the Sport England Calculator and comply with the standards set out within the Green Spaces and Water SPD, where practical.

Informal green space will normally be provided on site in line with the guidance and provisions contained within the Green Spaces and Water Environment SPD.

In Ashford, the provision of children's play, strategic parks, allotments and sports facilities shall be concentrated on key allocated sites within this Local Plan or at the sports and recreation hubs identified above. Proposals which undermine the ability of a hub to play a role in delivering this provision shall not be supported.

Provision that meets a localised need shall normally be required to be delivered on-site in a way that supports the local community as it comes forward.

In the rural area, provision should normally be delivered in a way that helps maintain, enhance and potentially expand existing provision at the settlement where development is proposed, or at the nearest settlement.

In line with the provision within the NPPF exceptions to the approach outlined above could be justified, should the following circumstances arise in that:

- a. there is suitable open/ green space provision nearby and this provision can be accessed by green routes,**
- b. there is suitable sports provision nearby and this provision is accessible and the facility is able to and has the capacity to be used by the public at key times and this access can be secured over the long term at determination of the application,**
- c. delivering such provision would render a scheme unviable,**
- d. not delivering the required provision is supported by the Council or in agreement with the Parish Council.**

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN ASHFORD

- 2.35. The overall housing requirement of 14,680 dwellings is proposed to be delivered in the Borough between 2011 and 2030.
- 2.36. The principal opportunities for new growth lie on the edge of the existing built up area of Ashford through carefully managed and planned growth. There are locations adjoining the town that could accommodate new development without seriously undermining the wider environmental objectives of this Plan.
- 2.37. This approach has been influenced by a number of important factors, including the implementation of the Chilmington development across the Plan period, the availability of additional motorway junction capacity that is due to be created by the construction of the proposed M20 Junction 10a and the need to ensure a consistent supply of available housing sites to cater for different elements of the market.
- 2.38. Development at Tenterden: Although only about one-tenth the size of Ashford, Tenterden is the second largest settlement in the borough and it's only other town. It plays a main rural service centre role for much of the south-western part of the borough. It is an attractive, historic town which is relatively well served by shops and services and is an important tourist destination which contributes greatly to the rural economy of the borough.
- 2.39. Tenterden has been the focus of relatively small-scale 'organic' growth which has been usually more on a village-type scale than the scale of allocations at Ashford. However, the previous Core Strategy identified increased levels of development for Tenterden and the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD allocated a significant development area to the south of the town centre (TENT1) for which the first phase now has planning permission.
- 2.40. Development at villages: The borough is home to a wide range of smaller rural settlements which play a key part in establishing its overall character. Many lie in attractive and /or designated landscape settings and contain areas of historic value. Some fulfil a local service centre role and have a range of key local facilities such as a primary school or a post office.

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2.41. The government's policy for development in rural settlements has changed since the advent of the NPPF and its supporting Planning Practice Guidance. In para.55 of the NPPF, the ability of development in one village to support services in a nearby village is cited as an example of sustainable development in the rural areas and the practice guidance states that *"all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence"*.

CURRENT PARTICIPATION RATES

2.42. Sport England's Active People Survey (APS) 10 (2015/16) based on a survey of 500 people across the Borough highlights that of those aged 16+ in Ashford Borough, 29.9% participate once a week in sport; this is lower than, South East (37.7%) and England (35.8%), and is lower than previous levels of participation in Ashford in 2012/2013 (34.5%), 2013/2014 (35.1%) and 2014/15 (33.8%). This means that circa 66% of Ashford residents over 16, are not physically active at least once a week.

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Table 2.2: Adult (16+) Participation in Sport (at least once a week), by year

YEAR	ASHFORD	SOUTH EAST	ENGLAND
2005/06	32.3 %	37.1 %	34.6 %
2007/08	35.6 %	39.0 %	36.6 %
2008/09	32.6 %	37.9 %	36.5 %
2009/10	30.3 %	37.9 %	36.2 %
2010/11	26.3 %	36.8 %	35.6 %
2011/12	32.9 %	38.4 %	36.9 %
2012/13	34.5 %	38.1 %	36.6 %
2013/14	35.1 %	37.6 %	36.1 %
2014/15	33.8 %	37.7 %	35.8 %
2015/16	29.9%	38.3%	36.1%

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Adult (16+) participation in sport (at least once a week) by year, one session per week (at least 4 sessions of at least moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes in the previous 28 days). Time period(s): 2005/06, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16

2.43. Other key participation performance indicators are shown below in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Active People Survey Key Performance Indicators

INDICATOR	ASHFORD				SOUTH EAST				ENGLAND			
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
KPI3 - Club Membership in the last 4 weeks	18.5 %	26.3 %	21.0 %	20.3 %	24.3 %	24.2 %	23.7 %	24.5 %	21.0 %	21.6 %	21.8 %	22.2 %
KPI4 - Received tuition or coaching in last 12 months	11.2 %	17.4 %	17.1 %	14.6 %	18.1 %	19.0 %	18.0 %	18.3 %	15.8 %	16.4 %	15.6 %	15.6 %
KPI5 - Took part in organised competition in last 12 months	11.9 %	11.8 %	13.5 %	10.0 %	14.2 %	15.0 %	14.7 %	15.6 %	11.2 %	13.3 %	13.3 %	13.3 %
KPI6 - Very/fairly satisfied with local sports provision	64.9 %	59.3 %	56.6 %	70.5%	63.7 %	63.8 %	63.6 %	64.6 %	60.3 %	61.6 %	61.8 %	62.1 %

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Key Performance Indicators 3,4,5,6. Time Period(s): 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16

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2.44. The table above shows that club membership in the last 4 weeks is slightly lower in Ashford in 2015/2016 (20.3%) than in 2014/2015 and is lower than the South East and England. Those that have received coaching in the last 12 months (14.6%) is lower than that of England (15.6%) and the South East (18.3%).

2.45. Those that have taken part in organised competition in Ashford 2015/2016 (10.0%) is lower than the South East (15.6%) and England (13.3%).

2.46. The Very/Fairly satisfied with local sports provision in Ashford is 70.5% in 2015/2016 higher than the previous year 56.6% and has risen above the previous high 64.9% and is higher than the South East (64.6%) and England (62.1%).

2.47. APS 10 also identifies that:

- **In terms of Latent Demand, 57.4% of all those aged 16+ want to do more sport**
- **28.8% of those aged 16+ in Ashford who are already physically active, want to do more sport**
- **28.5% of those who are physically inactive in Ashford want to do more sport**

SPORT ENGLAND MARKET SEGMENTATION

2.48. Sport England has developed nineteen sporting segments to provide a better understanding of people's attitudes to sport, their motivations and barriers. The key data sources were Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) 'Taking Part' survey and Active People. Further data was added from Experian Mosaic databases. Population data is used for people aged 18 and over.

2.49. Segmentation provides information on who participates in sport and what they want in terms of sport and active recreation provision. In total there are nineteen segments.

2.50. The Market Segmentation analysis for Ashford identifies that the dominant segments are Tim, Philip, Alison, Roger and Joy.

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Table 2.4: Market Segmentation Summary – Dominant Segments Ashford Borough Council

MARKET SEGMENT AND NUMBER	SEGMENT NAME	DESCRIPTION	TOP PARTICIPATION SPORTS NATIONALLY	ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	
				NUMBER	RATE
Tim (6)	Settling Down Males	Sporty male professionals (aged 26-45), buying a house and settling down with partner.	Tim is an active type that takes part in sport on a regular basis. Tim's top sports are cycling (21%), keep fit/gym (20%), swimming (15%), football (13%) and golf (7%)	10,200	11.7%
Philip (1)	Comfortable Mid-life Males	Mid-life professional, sporty males with older children and more time for themselves	Philip's sporting activity levels are above the national average. Philip's top sports are cycling (16%), keep fit/ gym (15%), swimming (12%), football (9%), and golf (8%)	8,800	10.1 %
Alison	Stay at Home Mums		Alison is a fairly active segment with above average levels of participation in sport. Alison's top sports are: keep fit/ gym (27%), swimming (25%), cycling (12%), athletics including running (11%), and equestrian (3%)	6,400	7.4%
Roger and Joy	Early retirement couples, free time couples nearing the end of their careers.	The main motivations for Roger & Joy playing sport are enjoyment and keeping fit where their scores are above the national average.	Keep fit/gym, swimming, cycling, golf and angling.	10,400	7.4%

Source: Sport England, 2010, Measure: Sport Market Segmentation

2.51. The top dominant segments in the table above identify a large number of the resident population likely to participate in indoor sport particularly swimming and keep fit. There are also quite large groups of: Ben (Competitive male urbanites - who participate in Football, 'keep fit and gym', cycling, and athletics or running); Chloe (Fitness Class Friends, young image conscious female keeping fit and trim) and Elaine (Empty nest career ladies. Mid-life professional who have more time on their hands since their children left home).

3. NEED ASSESSMENT REPORT CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The following section summarises the key findings of the Assessment Report. These enable key conclusions to be drawn.
- 3.2 The Context and Needs Assessment Report Built Sports Facilities Ashford Borough. identifies that in facility terms the nature of provision is changing from traditional offers to more flexible facilities, which match health and physical activity aspirations as opposed to traditional sport's needs. In terms of delivery partnership working, particularly with education providers and Town and Parish Council's is a key strategic theme.
- 3.3 The future demographics of Ashford Borough indicate that the proportion of residents most likely to participate in sport in Ashford is expected to decrease slightly overall in the period to 2037 as a result of population change. These population trends will have implications for future provision of sports facilities. The population is increasing in age. There will be a need to provide additional day time sports provision for the ageing population in the future.
- 3.4 Regular users of the main types of community sporting and recreation facilities, such as swimming pools, sports halls, dance studios and health and fitness centres travel between 2 – 3 miles to participate on a regular basis. However, in rural areas where there are fewer towns and concentrated centres of population then regular users will travel greater distances.
- 3.5 Ashford Borough fits with the rural description and Sport England research data on travel distances and catchment areas for community level provision such as sports halls and swimming pools and which is applied in all its modelling of the current and future needs for community sports facilities does evidence greater travel distances for regular participation. This can be up to 5 miles before the rate of participation starts to decline based on fewer people prepared to travel between 5 – 10 miles to participate (known as the distance decay function).
- 3.6 This strategy looks at the evidence base for Ashford Borough as a whole.
- 3.7 Sport England's Active People survey 2015/16 clearly identifies cycling, gym session, swimming and fitness classes as the 4 most popular activities to participate in.
- 3.8 Sport England Active People 2015/16 Participation in sport once per week shows Ashford as having a lower percentage of people 29.9% participating in sport than the national average 36.1% and the regional average 38.3%.
- 3.9 Other Sport England key indicators show that sports club membership in Ashford in 2015/16 is lower 20.3% than the South East (24.5%) and in England (22.2%). Those that received tuition in sport is also lower in Ashford (14.6%) compared to the South East (16.8%) and England (18.3%). Those that took part in competition in the Ashford (10.0%) is just lower than England (13.3%) and lower than the South East (15.6%).
- 3.10 Satisfaction with local sports provision was fairly high in 2015/16. 70.5% a rise on the previous year's 56.6%. The South East was 64.6% and England 62.1%.

SPORTS HALL SUMMARY

- 3.11 The Sport England Facility Calculator (SFC) is primarily intended to estimate the demand for facilities in discrete areas e.g. it is useful in determining the likely demand for sports halls, swimming pools from increased populations or residents of new housing growth. With some provision it can be used to give a broad estimate of the demand over a local authority area, though it takes no account of demand across LA boundaries, quality of facilities and detailed opening times.

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- 3.12 The Sport Facility Calculator estimates that (with the latest population estimate of 126,268 in 2016 and an increase in population to 2030 146,500 – population increase of 20,232 persons ONS Subnational Population Projections 2014) there will be an additional **future demand in 2030 for 5.63 additional badminton courts.**
- 3.13 There are seven main halls (3+ courts) in the Borough that are currently available for community use. The largest hall is located at the Stour Centre (8 courts) and is the jewel in the crown of Ashford Facilities. Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre has six courts and the remaining five halls are all 4-court in size.
- 3.14 Five of the main halls are owned by education. There are no formal community use agreements in place on the education sites. The school sports halls are block booked by clubs and associations. The Norton Knatchbull School will only take bookings of 2 hours or more for its sports hall.
- 3.15 Stour Centre and Tenterden Leisure Centre operate on a pay and play basis
- 3.16 There are 2 sports halls both at The Ashford School (Senior) and the Preparatory School with 4 court sports halls that are not open to the public.
- 3.17 The Sport England's Facility Planning Model identifies the need for 38.05 courts of sports hall space currently required across Ashford Borough. The current supply is 35.10 courts, which leaves a deficit of 2.95 courts (rounded 3 courts).
- 3.18 Non-technical visual assessments were carried out and, in the main, the quality of sports halls in and around Ashford is considered good. Generally, the sports halls in the Borough are fit-for-purpose in terms of quality, although the Towers School is ageing and will soon be due for refurbishment. The Stour Centre dry side facilities require refurbishment.
- 3.19 The sports hall at Stour Leisure Centre is forecast to be operating at 100% capacity during the peak period which underlines its importance as a community facility. Whilst the sports hall at The John Wallis C of E Academy is also forecast as being completely full during the weekly peak periods there may be opportunities to increase community usage of other educational sites within Ashford.
- 3.20 Stour Centre – the Council is committed to updating the dry-side sport and leisure facilities at the Stour Centre. The Centre tends to be seen in two parts. The new re-modelled section with a high-quality gym, swimming pool, fitness and dance studios and a health suite and the older section, which includes a large main hall, changing facilities, a crèche, squash courts, and meeting rooms. Since the remodelling of the wet-side facilities was completed in 2007 some piecemeal changes have been made to the dry-side part of the building. To offer an alternative leisure attraction to the Stour Centre considerations are being given to:
- **Adventure Soft-play**
 - **Adventure Climbing and**
 - **To improve health and fitness performance and introduce an older person wellness centre and programme. (To help with the need for facilities for the ageing population)**
- 3.21 The 3 new activities above would not impact on the provision of the 8 existing badminton courts in the existing sports hall.
- 3.22 There are opportunities to raise capacity of usage at Tenterden Leisure Centre. The Sport England Facility Planning Model states the sports hall to be at 64% capacity at peak times.
- 3.23 Kestrels Gymnastics Club have been looking for premises for some time. They have 260 members at Tenterden Leisure Centre and are at maximum capacity. They have 180 on the waiting list at present and are likely to expand their membership to nearly 700 over the next 5 years.

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- 3.24 The requirements of Kestrel Gymnastics Club would include an area, which would need to be permanently set up to avoid dismantling and re-assembly. They also have a requirement for a 10m high ceiling in the trampoline area (6m elsewhere). The club has plans for a new proposed building of 25 x 35 metres.
- 3.25 Releasing space from Tenterden Leisure Centre used by Gymnastics would create 16 additional hours of use for other sports. The club use the facility on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.
- 3.26 All residents of Ashford Borough are within a 20-minute drive time of a sports hall either within the Borough or a neighbouring Borough. For instance, the residents of Chilham are closer to the Kingsmead Leisure Centre in Canterbury than they are to the Stour Centre in Ashford.
- 3.27 There will be a need to access day time use of Sports Hall space in the future due to the ageing population of Ashford Borough.
- 3.28 In real terms, there are sufficient sports hall facilities currently in the Borough and surrounding neighbouring authorities, but they could be improved and they need to be maintained and cannot be lost to development. Consultation has identified that a new purpose built basketball facility is to be built in Folkestone. If this is the case, then this will release spare space at John Wallis where Folkestone Basketball Club currently play their home matches.
- 3.29 Consultation has identified that there is a need for a boxing facility in Tenterden.
- 3.30 Ashford Outlaws Basketball Club currently use the Stour Centre on a Friday evening. There has been a women's club in the past and it is hoped this will come back into being in the future.
- 3.31 Badminton clubs playing league fixtures are Kennington, Willesborough and Appolo Badminton club. Kennington Badminton Club use Norton Knatchbull School Sports Hall on Wednesday evenings. Willesborough Badminton Club use Norton Knatchbull on Thursday evenings and Appolo are based at the Mountbatton Centre, Mersham.

OTHER ACTIVITY HALLS

- 3.32 There are a number of activity halls, village halls, community halls and facilities such as Kingsnorth Recreation Centre that can and do provide for sport and physical activity in the villages across Ashford Borough. The needs assessment has identified a number of facilities in villages and where available has provided the size of the facility and the activity that takes place within the hall space. The activities vary but include dance, yoga, pilates, aerobics, table tennis, badminton, judo, martial arts, tai chi, boot camps, and short mat bowls.
- 3.33 Badminton can be played at Chillham Sports Centre, Mountbatten Hall, Mersham and the hall at Rovenden.
- 3.34 These facilities need to be protected and enhanced to provide a local door step sport and physical activity provision in the rural areas. Where an opportunity arises through new developments that doesn't warrant a full size 4 court badminton hall then built facilities providing a 1 badminton court facility with meeting rooms toilets and changing space with an outdoor multi use games area should be provided. Repton Community Centre is an example of this in practice currently being built.
- 3.35 The council has recently rebuilt Spearpoint Pavilion and the new facility can now accommodate martial arts and exercise classes during the week.

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SWIMMING POOLS

THE SPORT ENGLAND FACILITY PLANNING MODEL

- 3.36 The Sport England Facility Calculator (SFC) is primarily intended to estimate the demand for facilities in discrete areas e.g. it is useful in determining the likely demand for sports halls, swimming pools from increased populations or residents of new housing growth. With some provision it can be used to give a broad estimate of the demand over a local authority area, though it takes no account of demand across LA boundaries, quality of facilities and detailed opening times.
- 3.37 The SFC estimates that (with the latest population estimate of 126,268 in 2016 and an increase in population to 2030 146,500 – population increase of 20,232 persons (ONS Subnational Population Projections 2014) there will be an additional **future demand in 2030 for 4.07 (216.46m²) additional swimming lanes.**
- 3.38 Ashford Borough Council area has 6 swimming pools on 6 separate sites not including 3 small school swimming pools. There are only 2 pay and play swimming pools offering full community use, The Stour Centre (Owned by Ashford Borough Council and managed by Ashford Leisure Trust) and Tenterden Leisure Centre (Owned by Ashford Borough Council on Town Council land, leased to a Trust and operated by a leisure management company Serco).
- 3.39 There are 3 swimming pools attached to commercial health and fitness facilities. These are not completely available to all the community but do provide for those residents that can afford to pay for membership. Sport England Market Segmentation identified that the highest segment in Ashford is Tim. Tim's profile states that he is likely to be a member of a gym and likes swimming.
- 3.40 The Ashford School provides an indoor pool for its students use at the Senior School and the Preparatory School. Both swimming pools are 20m x 10m.
- 3.41 Given that communities use sports facilities in areas other than where they live, the development of new or improved provision can impact significantly on both participation levels and capacity cross-boundary. Local Authority Leisure provision that may impact on Ashford Borough residents in the future include Canterbury City Council and Shepway Council swimming pool developments. Chilham in the north of Ashford is closer to Canterbury's Kingsmead Leisure Centre (7.2 miles 17 minutes) than it is to the Stour Centre in Ashford Town (10.5 miles 21 minutes). Parts of the South East of Ashford are relatively close to Hythe.
- 3.42 Canterbury City Council recognises the need for investment into its Kingsmead Leisure Centre in Canterbury. Current plans will see the refurbishment and retention of the Centre's three pools – main pool, learner pool and leisure pool. The Council does not foresee an increase or decrease in pool provision; however, the final decision on investment at the Centre has not yet been made.
- 3.43 Shepway District Council has just provided £170,000 emergency refurbishment work for the 40-year-old swimming pool in Hythe and is currently considering a new swimming pool in Hythe at Princess Parade as a replacement for the ageing swimming pool. This could serve some rural residents in the South East of Ashford.
- 3.44 Sport England FPM (2015 National Run), the total supply of water space in the Borough equates to a supply of 14.65m² of water space per 1,000 of population. This figure is higher than the figures for England 12.46m², the South-East Region (13.82m²) and all but two of the neighbouring authority areas.
- 3.45 The Sport England FPM model predicts that Ashford's population generates an amount of swimming pool demand that equates to 7,890 visits per week in the peak period.

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- 3.46 The model analyses this demand and converts it to a facility equivalent – 1,309.47m² of water space in the case of Ashford. This includes a built-in comfort factor that helps to ensure that any “target figure” includes additional space so as to make sure that any facilities are not going to be at 100% of their theoretical capacity.
- 3.47 The analysis suggests that the current supply of water space is sufficient to meet the demand that is generated by the population of Ashford.
- 3.48 The Supply/Demand Balance identifies a ‘surplus’ of circa 162m² of water space. This is a very simplistic picture of the overall supply and demand across Ashford. The resident population is estimated to generate a demand for 1,309.47m² worth of water space. This compares to a current available supply of 1,471.66m² of water space giving a positive supply/demand balance of 162.19m² of water space.
- 3.49 It must be remembered that 4 of the 7 different swimming pool sites are commercial facilities which, as already mentioned, may not be affordable for all members of the local community who will therefore be dependent upon accessing public facilities.
- 3.50 Satisfied demand is the demand created by the residents of the District that is met by current swimming pool supply in the area, including pools inside and outside of the borough boundaries. The FPM shows that 93.3% of the demand generated by the residents of Ashford is currently being met. This is slightly higher than both National (91.4%) and Regional figures (93%) and also higher than all but 1 of the neighbouring authority areas in Kent.
- 3.51 Circa 86% of the demand satisfied is from people that travelled by car – a figure that is also above national and regional averages. This suggests that there is a mobile population in Ashford.
- 3.52 94.2% of the demand is retained within Ashford and met by facility provision within the borough. Again, this is relatively high when compared to Ashford’s neighbouring authorities. Not all of the demand that is created by Ashford’s population will be met by swimming pools within the borough. The model shows that 5.8% of the demand that is currently satisfied is exported into other authority areas.
- 3.53 The Stour Centre is well used by the community it also highlights that there may be potential opportunities to increase the levels of community use at Tenterden Leisure Centre, which the model forecasts as having a low level of used capacity.
- 3.54 The pools at the commercial sites and private education are predicted to have relatively lower levels of used capacity from their membership and visitors. There may well be opportunities to explore potential relationships with these sites to see if it is feasible for their pools to be used by the wider community during some of the peak times for community aquatics activity.
- 3.55 The model identifies that Ashford imports the lowest level of visits as a percentage of the overall used capacity when compared to the other neighbouring authority areas and therefore retains a higher level of visits from its own residents (93.6% of the overall used capacity).

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3.56 The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) has been consulted and said the following:

“The swimming club are keen but not performing with great regularity. They are always seeking more water space and the programme that Ashford School run is picking up time that has been taken away from the local swimming club. This will either restrict the opportunities for growth of the club or compromise the offer to the community if more time is granted. Ashford as a club belongs to East Invicta Network which has been in place for about five years, they compete as East Invicta at Regionals and Nationals. The ASA recognises that Kent is without a 50m pool and see this as a priority area for future growth to support community and competitive swimming. With its good infrastructure links, the exception being Operation Stack, Ashford represents an area that we would consider being explored further. Links with Ashford School would open up opportunities for a more diverse business case to support such a consideration. The Stour Centre having been built in 1975 is an area to focus on when considering the long-term future and investment strategies.”

- 3.57 From consultation with Ashford School it appears that they do not have any plans to increase community usage of their current facilities. In considering a 50m pool to replace the Ashford School swimming pool and the Stour Centre swimming pool there would not be any additional water space. The Stour Centre Swimming Pool was refurbished in 2007 and does require energy saving plant and equipment replacements. Apart from the replacement equipment the swimming facilities are in good order.
- 3.58 Ashford Town Swimming Club Masters used to use the Ashford School Pool once a week. They now use a pool in Maidstone for 1 hour a week.
- 3.59 Consultation has identified that there is spare capacity at Tenterden Leisure Centre. The review of the centre supports this. Whilst the centre would like further space for teaching lessons, there is current capacity within the programme.
- 3.60 The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) would like to see all swimming water space protected and would like to work with the authority to share its knowledge on the most appropriate swimming programmes for the Borough. The ASA have invested into the swimming participant in order to ensure that swimming programmes are appropriate in facilities to increase usage and participation at swimming pools.
- 3.61 The Sport Facility Calculator calculates the need for 4.07 additional swimming lanes by 2030. Tenterden Leisure Centre is currently operating at 37% capacity with a 6-lane pool. This facility can accommodate the spare capacity required in the future.
- 3.62 The alternative would be to consult and negotiate community use of the Ashford School Swimming Pools or the commercial sector to allow some community use.

HEALTH AND FITNESS

- 3.63 Health and fitness facilities are normally defined and assessed using a base scale of a minimum of 20 stations. A station is a piece of static fitness equipment and larger health and fitness centres with more stations are generally able to make a more attractive offer to both members and casual users. They can provide a valuable way to assist people of all ages, ethnicities and abilities to introduce physical exercise into their daily lives with the obvious benefits to health, fitness and wellbeing. The assessment looks at 20 fitness stations and above across Ashford Borough Council and latent demand from Sport England's Market Segmentation has been used to identify any current latent demand across the Borough.
- 3.64 The **2016 State of the UK Fitness Industry Report** reveals that the UK health and fitness industry is continuing to grow. It has more clubs, more members and a greater market value than ever before. The 2016 report highlights that the industry has experienced another year of impressive growth over

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the twelve-month period to the end of March 2016, with increases of 1.9% in the number of fitness facilities, 5.3% in the number of members and 3.2% in market value. For the first time, ever, member numbers have exceeded 9 million. 1 in every 7 people in the UK is a member of a gym, an all-time penetration rate high of 14.3%. The influential low cost market with its large membership numbers, online joining, 24/7 opening hours and low price points has continued to expand rapidly and drive the growth in the industry. The private low cost sector now accounts for 12% of the total number of private clubs, 13% of the private market value and a huge 32% of the private sector membership. For the first time ever, a low-cost fitness operator is the UK's number one operator. Pure Gym have added 60 clubs in the last 12 months taking them past the 150 mark and into the top position.

- 3.65 Increasing provision within the low-cost segment is expected to remain the primary source of further development into the medium term, a period in which consumers are expected to respond particularly favourably to the more flexible payment and pricing options becoming available.
- 3.66 The flexible payment trend poses a trading-down threat to the mid-market and premium segments. In response, operators are likely to invest strongly in new technologies that offer more stimulating exercise experiences and increasingly personalised training programmes including nutrition and diet.
- 3.67 Across the existing health and fitness gyms there are 859 fitness stations. Access is generally good for health and fitness facilities across Ashford. There are some areas to the north and south of the Borough where neighbouring facilities meet the demand.
- 3.68 The largest gaps in provision are in the rural areas. Rural area residents have high numbers of cars per household and are likely to be willing to travel by car to a health and fitness facilities in an urban area. Some rural residents have a choice of neighbouring Borough facilities.
- 3.69 The model is based on the premise that for the supply to be sufficient, it must be large enough to cater for demand at any one time at peak time. Utilising the UK penetration rate of 14.3% in 2016 and the population aged 15+ (102,000 – source ONS 2014 Population Projections) requirement of fitness stations is 418 across Ashford Borough. Using this model the supply (859 stations) is higher than the required demand in 2016 (418) providing a surplus of 441 stations.
- 3.70 If the rate of the UK penetration rate was to continue rising upwards as it has done in the past year by 0.6% until 2030. The penetration rate would be 22.7% and demand would be 774 fitness stations. The current supply (859) would still meet the demand and provide an oversupply of stations.
- 3.71 The existing Sport England Market Segmentation shows there are high numbers of Tim's and Philip's resident across Ashford. These 2 segments profiles identify that they are likely health and fitness club members. There is also a high latent demand identified for health and fitness by the Sport England latent demand rate 6,366. This identifies a possible need for 183 stations to meet latent demand currently.
- 3.72 Latent demand could be met by reconfiguring facilities at the Julie Rose stadium to improve the health and fitness offer and also at Courtside where the overall leisure offer could be improved in conjunction with the John Wallis School. Tenterden Leisure Centre will need to enlarge its fitness facilities to cater for new housing in the area.

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INDOOR BOWLS

3.73 There is one indoor bowls facility in Ashford. In summary, there is sufficient supply of indoor bowls facilities in Ashford Borough. Assuming the long term down trend for declining participation nationally continues. The identified downward trend of bowls participation in England has shown a 30% drop in the last 10 years. However, the borough does have an ageing population and therefore this could lead to improved participation trends in the future.

ATHLETICS FACILITIES

JULIE ROSE STADIUM

3.74 There is one athletics facility in Ashford at the Julie Rose Stadium. Its facilities are at a very high level and include a 400m all-weather running track, an 800-seater stand, floodlighting and an indoor training area. In summary, there is sufficient supply of athletics facilities in Ashford Borough. There is an option to improve the leisure offer at the site with improved health and fitness facilities and further linkages to Conningbrook Lakes that could provide running trails way marked and providing km markers.

3.75 There are many different types of athletic activity. The growth area in the sport is in recreational road and off-road running that has resulted in significant new runners into the sport over the past few years and evidence strongly suggest this growth will continue.

GYMNASTICS

3.76 The National Governing Body (British Gymnastics) would be keen to see the provision for more dedicated Gymnastic spaces increased, with facilities able to house gymnastic equipment permanently set up to be able to cater for the diverse range of participants that want to be involved. With over seven hundred active members taking part on a weekly basis (or more frequently) in Ashford Borough, and each of the gymnastics clubs operating in the area having a waiting list; the demand is clear for access to more time and space to enable gymnastics to grow. Dharma Gym for All specifically has grown very quickly in the few years it has been in operation; they are keen on developing low level gymnastics at grass roots level and giving opportunity for participants to progress and have the expertise to support international level competitive participants. Dharma are currently looking for a dedicated facility or space to be able to expand their programme and increase participation in gymnastics.

3.77 Kestrel Gymnastics Club at Tenterden Leisure Centre is seeking its own facilities and is in discussion with Tenterden Town Council, Tenterden Football Club and Homewood School.

3.78 There is a demand for gymnastics and an opportunity to develop the Gymnastics offer further at The Stour Centre. This if successful could be rolled out to other venues across the Ashford area.

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SQUASH AND RACQUETBALL

3.79 There are three venues for squash in Ashford Borough providing 5 courts for community use:

- **The Stour Centre – 2 courts Built 1975 refurbished 2007**
- **Biddenden Squash club – 2 courts Built 1975 refurbished 2006**
- **Elwick Club – 1 court Built 1973 refurbished 2012**

3.80 The Stour Centre is local authority owned, Biddenden Squash Club is a members club and the Elwick Club is a private members club.

3.81 There is no recognised methodology for estimating the level of demand for squash. The Active People survey, undertaken regularly by Sport England, shows there was a small increase in participation levels between 2014/15 and 2015/16. However, overall it indicates a significant drop of more than 30% in participation over the last 10 years.

3.82 Facility managers have, in some cases, echoed this downward trend. Tenterden Leisure Centre has changed its squash courts into health and fitness.

3.83 Demand for squash is generally falling and operators may wish to use space for more popular/revenue generating activities such as for dance/aerobic classes or extension of health and fitness suite, as demonstrated at Dover Leisure Centre with reduction of courts from four to three in order to accommodate more health and fitness facilities.

3.84 Biddenden Squash club has circa 150 members, operating from the clubhouse which has a bar and separate changing rooms in addition to two well-maintained, heated courts. They have three men's teams in the Kent Squash League and have a thriving junior section with 60 under 18s and run 4 teams in the Kent junior leagues.

3.85 The Elwick Club runs an internal squash league for its members and also enters a team in the Kent league. They have found that racquetball is becoming more popular.

3.86 The Stour Centre runs 4 divisions of internal league with 5 players in each league. The courts at The Stour Centre are described by England Squash as extremely important because they are the Borough's main provision available to the public and should be kept. Kent is a high performing area in terms of squash participation.

3.87 There is no requirement for additional squash provision in the Borough. If court provision is reduced this would have a negative impact on squash and current users may find it difficult to secure bookings at alternative sites during peak times.

4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.1 The Strategic Objectives are:

PROTECT:

Protect the current Ashford Borough wide infrastructure of indoor sports facilities. At the same time, work with rural communities to provide space within village/ community halls/centres for provision of sports and physical activities.

PROVIDE:

Community use agreements for continued use of school sports facilities, consider new activities at the Stour Centre to include adventure play, clip and climb, and an Older People Well Being Centre. A carbon reduction programme at the Stour Centre to reduce energy costs. Work with Tenterden Town Council to provide a stand-alone gymnastics facility for the Kestrel Gymnastics Club (releasing time for other community sports activities in the Sports Hall. Consider if required consultation and negotiation with Ashford School to open a swimming pool for community use if and when required to meet demand in the future.

ENHANCE:

Grow the existing gymnastics programme at the Stour Centre and consider rolling this out to other venues e.g. Julie Rose and Kingsnorth Recreation Centre. Work with Partners, Schools and NGBs to enhance the current programme offer and increasing participation through improved programming of sporting activities. Relocate the health and fitness at the Julie Rose Stadium and consider a health and fitness facility at Courtside to improve the Leisure offer on site. Work to increase the capacity of use at Tenterden Leisure Centre Swimming Pool between now and 2030 to assist in meeting the water space requirements for the whole Borough.

PLANNING

- 4.2 The Council's Planning Department should use the Local Plan to protect, enhance and provide sport and recreation facilities. Supplementary planning documents should be used to set out an approach that secures sport and recreational facilities through new housing developments.
- 4.3 CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) can be used to refurbish and improve existing facilities and increase participation. Section 106 funding can be used to provide new and improve facilities to meet growth.

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5. ACTION PLAN

- 5.1 The Action Plan sets out a list of requirements between now and 2030:
- 5.2 Timescales: (S) -Short (1-3 years); (M) - Medium (4-7 years); (L) - Long (7+ years)
- 5.3 The action plan will need to be updated as the recommendations are delivered

Table 5.1: Action Plan

STRATEGIC FUNCTION	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE SHORT MEDIUM LONG	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
PLANNING		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare and improve planning policies to protect existing facilities in Ashford Borough Area. 2. Consider Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy for future funding 	Short Term	Ashford Borough Council	Provide & Protect
BOROUGH WIDE PROGRAMMING	Ensure that facilities are programmed to ensure maximum participation driving up income and reduce operating costs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review current programming across the Borough. 2. Monitor membership data to ensure programme is effective to all residents and visitors. 3. Work with partners to look at offering day time activities for older people and health related activities 4. Discuss with the ASA the most appropriate pool programme for the 2 local authority Swimming pools. 	Short Term	Local leisure and sport providers Ashford Borough Council NGB Partners	Enhance

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STRATEGIC FUNCTION	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE SHORT MEDIUM LONG	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENTS	Review current community use agreements on Education sites with sports halls.	Put in place community use agreements to safeguard current and future sports club use of Education Facilities	Short Term	Schools KCC Ashford Borough Council	Provide & Enhance
SPORTS HALLS / SWIMMING POOLS / OTHER /ACTIVITY HALLS	Improving access to facilities during the day time particularly for older people. Utilise spare capacity at Tenterden Leisure Centre Sports Hall Improve capacity levels of use at Tenterden Swimming Pool.	On a site by site basis consider different sport and physical activity solutions to extending day time access. Work with Tenterden Leisure Centre to improve participation in the swimming pool and raise capacity levels of use. Work with Tenterden Town Council, Homewood School, Tenterden Tigers and Kestrel Gymnastics Club to find their own permanent homes alongside finding a home for Tenterden Boxing Club.	Medium Term	Local leisure and sport providers Ashford Leisure Trust Tenterden Leisure Trust Ashford Borough Council Schools Parish & Town Council's	Provide & Enhance
SPORTS HALLS	Ensure that there is sufficient Sports Hall space in Ashford Borough by 2030 – require additional 5.63 badminton courts (rounded to 6 crts)	New development will provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chilmington Green Discovery Park Sports Hub – 2 badminton court community centre and in Phase 2 - 4 court community sports hall. This development meets the required sports halls to 2030. The Phase 2 Chilmington Green 4crt development may not be in place until 	Long Term	Ashford Borough Council Schools	

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STRATEGIC FUNCTION	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE SHORT MEDIUM LONG	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
		early 2030. If demand requires use of additional sports hall space before 2030 then negotiations could be held with the Ashford School to open its Sports Hall facilities for community use.	Medium Term		
SWIMMING POOLS	Ensuring that there is sufficient water space in Ashford given the undersupply of water space by 2030. Requirement for an additional 4.07 (216.46m ²) additional swimming lanes. Minus the current positive balance (162.19m ²) leaves additional water space required of 54.27 sqm.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise the current under capacity at Tenterden Leisure Centre. Provide partner funding (Management Operator) through procurement to enhance existing facilities e.g. moveable floors 	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium Term</p>	<p>Tenterden Leisure Trust</p> <p>Ashford Borough Council</p> <p>Management Operator</p>	Provide & Enhance

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STRATEGIC FUNCTION	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE SHORT MEDIUM LONG	PARTNERS	OBJECTIVE
CREATE A HIERARCHY OF FACILITIES.	Ensure that there is an understanding of the hierarchy levels. Town and Rural	Consider how the programming of these facilities fits into the wider programming offer across Ashford Town and Tenterden and rural areas. Investigate how to increase programming time in facilities during the day as the population gets older.	Short Term	Ashford Borough Council Town and Parish Council's Schools Leisure and Sports Operators	Provide & Enhance
REVIEW	Keeping the Facilities Strategy relevant and up to date	Review the Strategy & Action Plan annually and that it is completely reviewed within 5 years of its implementation.	Ongoing	All Partners	Protect, Provide and Enhance

5.4 The following actions are relative to each of the Boroughs key facilities.

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Table 5.2: Boroughs Key Facilities

FACILITY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PARTNERS	AIM
STOUR LEISURE CENTRE	<p>2. Consider actions to improve the dry side offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adventure soft play • Clip and climb • Gymnastic classes 	Short Term	Ashford Leisure Trust Ashford Borough Council	Provide & Enhance
	<p>3. Reduce the Carbon footprint</p>	Medium Term		
TENTERDEN LEISURE CENTRE	<p>2. Improve the dry side offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocate the health and fitness facilities and grow the gym to cater for the anticipated growth in population. • Use the existing gym as a clip and climb facility. • Add soft play facilities 	Medium – Long Term	Tenterden Leisure Trust Management operator Tenterden Town Council Ashford Borough Council Kestrel Gymnastics Club	Protect Provide Enhance
	<p>3. Create additional capacity in the Sports Hall by working with Kestrel Gymnastics Club to find their own home.</p>	Medium to Long Term		
JULIE ROSE STADIUM	<p>4. Relocate and extend the health and fitness offer.</p>		Ashford Leisure Trust	Provide
	<p>5. Existing gym becomes club room/meeting area.</p>		Ashford Borough Council	Enhance
	<p>6. Indoor training area to provide physical activity classes.</p>			
COURTSIDE	<p>1. Improve the Leisure offer on site by providing a health and fitness facility.</p>	Short Term	Ashford Borough Council	Provide
			School	Enhance
			Management Operator	

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FACILITY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PARTNERS	AIM
INDOOR TENNIS CENTRE	Ashford Borough Council to work with Sport England and the Lawn Tennis Association to provide a 2 - 4 court indoor tennis facility in Ashford.	Short Term	Ashford Borough Council Sport England Lawn Tennis Association	Provide Enhance



Equality Impact Assessment

1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in its decision-making. Although there is no legal duty to produce an EIA, the Council must have **due regard** to the equality duty and an EIA is recognised as the best method of fulfilling that duty. It can assist the Council in making a judgment as to whether a policy or other decision will have unintended negative consequences for certain people and help maximise the positive impacts of policy change. An EIA can lead to one of four consequences:

- (a) No major change – the policy or other decision is robust with no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken;
- (b) Adjust the policy or decision to remove barriers or better promote equality as identified in the EIA;
- (c) Continue the policy – if the EIA identifies potential for adverse impact, set out compelling justification for continuing;
- (d) Stop and remove the policy where actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified.

Public sector equality duty

2. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (ie tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups).

3. These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

Protected characteristics

4. The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics for the purpose of the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

Due regard

5. Having 'due regard' is about using good equality information and analysis at the right time as part of decision-making procedures.

6. To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This can involve:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics when these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where it is disproportionately low.

7. How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances. The greater the potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. Examples of functions and decisions likely to engage the duty include: policy decisions, budget decisions, public appointments, service provision, statutory discretion, decisions on individuals, employing staff and procurement of goods and services.
 8. In terms of timing:
 - Having 'due regard' should be considered at the inception of any decision or proposed policy or service development or change.
 - Due regard should be considered throughout development of a decision. Notes shall be taken and kept on file as to how due regard has been had to the equality duty in research, meetings, project teams, consultations etc.
 - The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising this and it should inform final decision-making.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
 - The duty is a continuing one so that it needs to be considered not only when a policy, for example, is being developed and agreed but also when it is implemented.
 - It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
 - A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
 - A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

Case law principles

9. A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:
 - Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty and so EIA's must be attached to any relevant committee reports.
 - Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced helpful guidance on "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" (October 2014). It is available on the following link and report authors should read and follow this when developing or reporting on proposals for policy or service development or change and other decisions likely to engage the equality duty. [Equality Duty in decision-making](#)

Lead officer:	Ben Moyle
Decision maker:	Cabinet
Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop 	Adopt the Playing Pitch Strategy for Ashford Borough
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	11 th May 2017
Summary of the proposed decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? 	<p>To ask for Member's approval to adopt the Playing Pitch Strategy for Ashford Borough which has been compiled by external consultants Max Associates over the past 18 months to assess current and future need across the sports and recreation infrastructure and inform the Local Plan.</p> <p>The adoption of the strategy will affect the population borough-wide</p>
Information and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. 	<p>The Strategy has been formed from research in to the current shortfalls in demand for sport and recreational facilities and opportunities and the potential future shortfall through housing growth.</p> <p>Sources have included, clubs, organisations, schools and parish councils</p> <p>Key findings include potential shortfalls in pitches, sports halls and swimming lanes to 2030.</p>
Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific consultation has occurred on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? 	<p>Max Associates have consulted widely as above.</p> <p>The consultation has resulted in key findings above</p> <p>The decision will have no impact on people with different protected characteristics.</p> <p>The decision to adopt the Strategy positively affects people with different protected characteristics</p>

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.

When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Protected characteristic	Relevance to Decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of Decision Positive (Major/Minor) Negative (Major/Minor) Neutral
<u>AGE</u> Elderly	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
Middle age	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
Young adult	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
Children	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
<u>DISABILITY</u> Physical	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
Mental	MEDIUM	POSITIVE
Sensory	LOW	NEUTRAL
<u>GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>RACE</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>SEX</u> Men	NONE	NEUTRAL
Women	NONE	NEUTRAL
<u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u>	NONE	NEUTRAL

Mitigating negative impact: Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.	N/A
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Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's [Essential Guide](#), alongside fuller [PSED Technical Guidance](#).

Aim	Yes / No / N/A
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	YES
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	YES
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	YES

<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. • There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above). • Advise on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified. • How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported? 	<p>Due regard has been made to the equality duty, from start to finish of the Playing Pitch Strategy process.</p> <p>There will be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision</p> <p>The proposal meets the aims of the equality duty as all sections of the community including those with protected characteristics will benefit from the enhancements to the centre.</p> <p>Monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported will be undertaken by the partners.</p> <p><i>The council's revised policy register will assist services to meet this</i></p>
<p>EIA completion date:</p>	<p>23-3-17</p>