

**Ploszajski Lynch  
Consulting Ltd.**



**West Suffolk Council**

***Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports  
Facilities Assessment***

**February 2022**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

Ploszajski Lynch Consulting Ltd. (PLC) was commissioned by West Suffolk Council (WSC) to produce a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment and Action Plan for the district. This is part of a wider assessment of sport and leisure provision in the district which also includes a sports facilities assessment.

## 1.2 The rationale for the assessment

### 1.2.1 Background

West Suffolk Council aims to encourage people that work and or live in the district to lead active lives and strives to create ‘resilient families and communities that are healthy and active’. Since the creation of the initial West Suffolk sports facilities assessment back in 2015 the Council has adopted a framework for promoting physical activity.

In response to the anticipated growth in population across West Suffolk, an update to the Council’s Indoor Sports Facility Assessment, Playing Pitch Assessment and Open Spaces Assessment is being commissioned. The study is being commissioned now, as it is nearly five years since the last assessment was undertaken and there have been several changes since that time.

A new Local Plan for West Suffolk is being prepared, with the first ‘Issues and Options’ consultation taking place October - December 2020. The Local Plan consultations will not alter the requirement for this assessment, but the information identified from the assessment will help inform the final plan.

West Suffolk Council-owned indoor sports facilities are currently managed by Abbeycroft Leisure, a not for profit social enterprise and despite recent significant investment at the leisure centres in Brandon, Newmarket, Haverhill and Mildenhall, it is recognised that these facilities alone will not cope with the demand from the local population and anticipated future growth.

The updated assessments will also help inform the creation of a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities. This new SPD will replace the current SPD’s which the former St. Edmundsbury District Council and Forest Heath District Council had adopted.

An update to the assessments is needed to ensure that the current and future demand for sports and recreational facilities are planned for holistically and that the needs of the current and growing population of West Suffolk can be addressed. The assessments will also need to take into consideration the contribution West Suffolk’s sports facilities offer neighbouring authorities and the wider region. The proposed assessment review will also provide evidence to support funding bids from National Sports bodies like Sport England, and support requests for contributions from Section 106 Planning Obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

## 1.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of the assessment is to produce:

- A West Suffolk-wide Sports, Recreation and Open Space Assessment plus Action Plan.
- A framework to support for the short, medium, and long-term facilities planning (including capital financial planning) for the delivery of sports, leisure and open spaces in West Suffolk.
- A robust needs and evidence base to support the West Suffolk Local Plan.
- A clear framework for developers about sports and recreation needs in West Suffolk.
- A robust framework to assist the collection and allocation of CIL/Section 106 contributions for sports, recreation, and open spaces provision in West Suffolk.

## 1.2.3 Objectives

The objectives of the assessment are as follows:

- To identify supply and demand issues for sports and recreation provision across West Suffolk and the areas that the local authority serves.
- To identify priority sports for the area based on County Sports Partnership priorities, National Governing facility development plans (to assist identify facilities of regional importance) and local community needs.
- To provide evidence to guide and support bids to external funding partners to support the delivery of sports and recreation facilities in West Suffolk.
- To develop a priority list for investment and use of resources secured through CIL/Section 106.
- To identify opportunities to deliver sport and recreation facilities as part of the strategic development/regeneration of Council owned sites.
- A robust needs and evidence base to support the sport, leisure planning and open spaces policies and the allocation of sites for sports and recreation use throughout West Suffolk.
- To identify the role of the education, commercial, voluntary and third sectors in supporting the delivery of community sports.
- To identify the role that high-quality sports, recreation facilities and open spaces can play in overcoming health inequalities across West Suffolk.

## 1.3 The scope of the Assessment

The needs of the following sports are covered by the assessment:

- Football
- Cricket
- Rugby Union
- Hockey
- Tennis
- Bowls
- Netball
- Athletics
- Cycling

#### **1.4 Assessment format**

The structure of the document is as follows:

- Assessing playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities needs in West Suffolk.
- The local context for pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision.
- Strategic influences on pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision.
- Football pitches.
- Cricket pitches.
- Rugby pitches.
- Hockey pitches.
- Tennis courts.
- Bowls greens.
- Netball courts.
- Athletics tracks.
- Cycling facilities.
- Applying and reviewing the assessment.

## 2 ASSESSING PITCH AND FACILITIES NEEDS

### 2.1 Introduction

This section describes the basis on which playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities needs in West Suffolk were assessed. Two different methodologies were applied:

- Sport England's *'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'* (2013) for football, cricket, rugby and hockey.
- Sport England's *'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance'* (2014) for tennis courts, bowling greens, netball courts, athletics tracks and cycling facilities.

### 2.2 Playing Pitch Methodology

#### 2.2.1 Introduction

The methodology for the pitches follows the *'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'* (2013) developed by Sport England. The process involves five stages and ten steps as follows:

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

#### 2.2.2 Preparing and tailoring the approach

WSC convened a project steering group led by officers from Policy Planning and Sports and Communities and involving advice from Sport England and the relevant governing bodies of sport to devise:

- The vision and objectives of the review of sports facilities in the district.
- The scope of the exercise, including the types of facilities to include, the geographical scope and the overall timeframe for the assessment.
- The local and wider strategic context.
- The project management arrangements for the study, including the decision to engage assistance from external consultants.

A project brief was produced, approved and signed-off to complete Stage A of the process.

### 2.2.3 Assessing current needs

To assess whether the current provision is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site and how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate over an appropriate period of time without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent sessions’ at each site.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches and related facilities are being used during their respective peak periods.
- The key issues with and views on the provision at a site and its use.
- The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:
  - Being overplayed - where use exceeds the carrying capacity.
  - Being played to the level the site can sustain - where use matches the carrying capacity.
  - Potentially able to accommodate some additional play - where use falls below the carrying capacity.

The situation at individual sites can then be aggregated to identify the position at a wider geographical area, to identify the potential for excess demand at some sites to be accommodated by excess supply at others in the locality. Other factors can also be assessed such as:

- Any demand being accommodated on sites with unsecured community access.
- The impact of latent or displaced demand.
- The situation at priority sites.

This analysis then enables an assessment to be made of the adequacy of existing pitch and related facility provision.

### 2.2.4 Assessing future needs

The methodology applied to assess the additional future needs for pitches and related facilities arising from population growth also involves the approach advocated in Sport England’s PPS guidance, namely:

- Establishing projected population change.
- Analysing sports development proposals and participation trends.
- Considering existing deficiencies or spare capacity.

- Taking account of any forthcoming changes to facility supply.

### 2.2.5 Assessed demand parameters

Analysis of the above factors influencing the future supply and demand for playing pitches in the district has led to the following conclusions, which are reflected in the subsequent assessment of future needs:

- **Population change:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635.
- **Participation trends:** According to Sport England’s ‘Active People’ and ‘Active Lives’ surveys, participation at a national level in all the pitch sports has remained static or fallen in the period since 2005, in some cases by quite significant margins. This means that future increases in participation in the pitch sports cannot be assumed based upon historic trends and have therefore not been factored into projected needs.
- **Sports development initiatives:** A number of sports development initiatives are delivered in West Suffolk by Abbeycroft Leisure, the governing bodies of the pitch sports and their member clubs (full details are in the individual sports sections). The impact on sustained increases in participation directly attributable to these activities is unproven has therefore not been factored in to projected future needs.
- **Changes in supply:** Any known proposed gains or losses in pitches and related facilities provision will influence the ability to accommodate the additional demand arising from the increased population and this has been included in the capacity assessments (full details are in the individual sports sections).

### 2.2.6 Delivering future needs

To identify the most appropriate way to meet the additional pitch and related facilities needs arising from population growth, four sequential questions were addressed:

- **Existing deficiency or spare capacity:** To what extent do existing pitches and related facilities have any current shortfalls or any over-supply?
- **Additional needs:** What additional needs will arise from population growth?
- **Accommodating needs:** Which needs can be met in whole or part by spare capacity in existing pitches and related facilities and which will need to be met in whole or part by new provision?
- **Extra pitches:** What extra pitches and related facilities of each type are required to provide for the residual unmet demand?

### 2.2.7 Outputs

The methodology provides quantified answers to the above questions as follows:



- **Current provision:** The adequacy of current provision and any existing spare capacity was assessed using Sport England’s approved methodology, adapted where appropriate to assess informal demand and facilities.
- **Additional needs:** Additional needs were calculated by identifying the existing Team Generation Rates in the district, to identify the number of people that are currently required to form a team of various types in each of the pitch sports. These figures have then been applied to the ONS mid-2018 population projections, to calculate the gross additional team and related pitch needs arising from the additional population.
- **Net requirements:** The net requirement for additional provision was calculated by comparing the extra required capacity to the current spare capacity where appropriate, to identify the difference.
- **Location of provision:** The location of additional pitch and related facilities needs was established by comparing the respective levels of projected population growth in each part of the district.

### 2.2.8 The criteria assessed

- **Quantity:** The number of pitches and related facilities was established and cross checked against other sources provided by local stakeholders and consultees.
- **Quality:** The quality of playing pitches was assessed by visiting every pitch in the district during the respective playing seasons and assessing quality criteria using the recognised non-technical visual assessment criteria. The ratings for each aspect of each pitch were checked and challenged via the clubs’ survey and stakeholder consultation and amended where necessary.
- **Accessibility:** The accessibility of pitches, in particular the extent of secured community use and pricing was assessed, to identify any barriers to use that might impact on the capacity of local provision.
- **Strategic priority:** The assessment of need and priorities for provision was identified by the governing bodies of the respective pitch sports.
- **Used capacity:** The used capacity of existing pitches at each site was assessed using a bespoke supply-demand spreadsheet.

## 2.3 Outdoor Sports Facilities Methodology

The methodology applied to assess the needs and opportunities for sports facilities follows Sport England’s recommended approach, advocated in ‘*Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance*’ (2014).

### 2.3.1 Preparing and tailoring the approach

Advice was sought from Sport England and the relevant governing bodies of sport to devise:

- The vision and objectives of the review of sports facilities in the district.

- The scope of the exercise, including the types of facilities to include, the geographical scope and the overall timeframe for the assessment.
- The local and wider strategic context.
- The project management arrangements for the study, including the decision to engage assistance from external consultants.

A project brief was produced, approved and signed-off to complete Stage A of the process.

### 2.3.2 Assessing sports facilities supply

The assessment of sports facilities supply at Stage B of the study involved four main elements:

- **Quantity:** Establishing what facilities there are in the district, with details of their dimensions, technical information like playing surfaces and floodlighting. This included consideration of facilities not currently in use, those not available to the community and significant provision in neighbouring areas that serves some needs of West Suffolk residents.
- **Quality:** Auditing the quality of facilities. This involved assessing each facility in terms of its condition (its age, appeal, fabric and ancillary provision like changing and car parking - factors that will influence its attractiveness to users) and fitness for purpose (its technical specifications and ability to accommodate an appropriate standard of play).
- **Accessibility:** Determining spatial distribution of provision in the district by GIS mapping of each facility type, including catchment analysis appropriate to the scale and role of each facility.
- **Availability:** Identifying how much each facility is used, whether there is any existing spare capacity and if there is any scope to increase capacity. This involved consideration of programming and usage data, opening times and pricing levels, which was secured through consultation with facility providers and operators.

The information was collated and analysed in a facilities supply report, which was evaluated and approved by the project steering group.

### 2.3.3 Assessing sports facilities demand

The assessment of sports facilities demand at Stage B of the study involved five main elements:

- **Local population profile:** Establishing the local demography, including the size, age profile, affluence/deprivation, health indices and growth projections.
- **Sports participation:** Identifying local sports participation characteristics, through analysing the results of Sport England's 'Active Lives' surveys (2015 - 2021), local facilities usage figures and a survey of local clubs to establish membership patterns and trends.

- **Unmet, displaced and future demand:** In addition to current expressed demand, analysis of unmet (demand which exists but cannot currently be satisfied), displaced (demand from within the district that is satisfied elsewhere) and future demand (based on projected population and participation increases) was identified.
- **Local participation priorities:** Establishing any local priorities for the use of sports facilities, such as those relating to corporate health and well-being policies.
- **Sport-specific priorities:** Determining through consultation with Active Suffolk, the governing bodies of sport and a local sports clubs survey, whether there are any sport-specific priorities for West Suffolk.

The information was collated and analysed in a facilities demand report, which was evaluated and approved by the project steering group.

### 2.3.4 Assessing the balance between sports facilities supply and demand

To complete Stage B of the process, the supply and demand information was brought together for each type of facility to establish:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough facilities with sufficient capacity to meet needs?
- **Quality:** Are the facilities fit for purpose for the users?
- **Accessibility:** Are the facilities in the right physical location for the users?
- **Availability:** Are the facilities available for those who want to use them?

### 2.3.5 Applying the assessment - Developing the assessment

The results of the assessment was applied to produce an assessment which included:

- **Options for provision:** The options for meeting current and future facilities needs were identified under Sport England's recommended headings of 'Protect', 'Provide' and 'Enhance'.
- **Policy recommendations:** Arranged under the headings of 'Protect', 'Provide' and 'Enhance', planning policy recommendations were developed to ensure that the implementation of the assessment will be supported by the provisions of the Local Plan.

## 2.4 Stakeholder consultation

Information was gathered from a wide range of consultees including:

- **Sport England:** Guidance on the assessment methodology.
- **West Suffolk Council:** Consultation with officers from Planning and Leisure and Culture on their respective areas of responsibility.

- **Abbeycroft Leisure:** Data on usage of the key facilities run by the Council's appointed leisure management contractor.
- **Other local sports facilities providers:** Consultation with organisations such as local sports clubs and commercial health and fitness operators on usage levels and spare capacity.
- **Neighbouring local authorities:** Information on their sports facilities assessments and the impact of any cross-border issues was obtained from East Cambridgeshire District Council, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, Breckland District Council, Mid-Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, Braintree District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- **Active Suffolk:** Information on local and wider strategic priorities.
- **Governing bodies of sport:** Information on local and wider strategic priorities and local supply and demand information.
- **Sports clubs:** Information on sports facilities provision and use, current and future needs and opinions on quality, which was submitted via an on-line survey.
- **Schools:** Information on sports facilities provision and use, plus attitudes towards community use, which was submitted via an on-line survey.
- **Town and parish councils:** Information on sports facilities in their respective areas, including perceptions of local surpluses or deficiencies and any prospective changes in provision and use, which was submitted via an on-line survey.

## 2.5 Summary

Assessing playing pitch needs in West Suffolk using the approach advocated by Sport England in its *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* and outdoor sports facilities using its *Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance* has ensured that the exercise is both robust and evidence-based and as a result complies with the provisions of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework.

## 3 THE LOCAL CONTEXT

### ***Key findings:***

- ***An ageing population:*** The current demographic profile of West Suffolk is skewed toward the older end of population spectrum and according to ONS 2018 sub-national population projections, this trend is projected to continue and become even more pronounced over the period of the Plan.
- ***Population growth:*** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5% from 2019.
- ***Overall sports participation rates:*** General participation rates in sport and physical activity are above the county, regional and national averages. Demand for sports facilities is therefore high.
- ***Facilities supply:*** Sports facilities are provided by a mosaic of owners and operators from the public, voluntary and commercial sectors, which highlights the need for and benefits of a strategic approach to co-ordinating provision.

### 3.1 Introduction

This section identifies the context within which playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities provision is made in West Suffolk district.

### 3.2 Background

#### 3.2.1 Location

West Suffolk is a predominantly rural district in the heart of East Anglia. Well-connected via the A11 and A14 with London, the rest of East Anglia and the Midlands. Its neighbouring local authorities are East Cambridgeshire District Council, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, Breckland District Council, Mid-Suffolk District Council, Babergh District Council, Braintree District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. West Suffolk is a safe and comparatively prosperous place in which to live. It also has some beautiful and accessible countryside areas, including grassland, heath and forest.

#### 3.2.2 Settlement pattern

59% of all residential properties in West Suffolk are in the five largest settlements of Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Newmarket, Brandon and Mildenhall.

- Bury St Edmunds, the largest settlement in West Suffolk, has been a prosperous town for centuries. People are drawn to its market and Georgian architecture, shops, leisure and cultural facilities.
- Newmarket is known as the 'home of horseracing'. It has more racehorses, trainers, stable staff, stud farms and racing organisations in and around the town than anywhere else in the world. Racing accounts for a significant number of local jobs.

- Haverhill, Mildenhall and Brandon expanded significantly in the 1970s due to the construction of new housing to accommodate families moving as part of the Greater London Council's expansion programme.

### 3.2.3 Rural areas

West Suffolk has some extensive, sparsely populated rural areas, which include a number of habitats of conservation importance.

### 3.2.4 United States Air Force

The USAF has two major bases in West Suffolk (Mildenhall and Lakenheath) that collectively house around 12,200 US military and civilian employees. Whilst many of the personnel are transitory, they collectively contribute an estimated £700 million annually to the local economy.

### 3.2.5 Transport links

Two strategic roads run through West Suffolk, the A11 from London to Norwich and the A14 linking the Midlands with Felixstowe. A number of other 'A' roads provide radial linkages and there are rail links connect Newmarket and Bury St. Edmunds to Cambridge and Ipswich.

### 3.2.6 Relationship with neighbouring areas

West Suffolk has an unusual geography, with several key settlements on the border with other districts/counties. In particular:

- Newmarket is almost surrounded by land in East Cambridgeshire district (Cambridgeshire).
- Haverhill is on the border with Braintree district (Essex).
- Brandon is on the border with Breckland district (Norfolk).
- Bury St Edmunds is close to the border with Babergh and Mid Suffolk district.

As a result, these settlements become key service centres for people living in neighbouring areas, which leads to significant imported demand for a range of provision, including sports facilities.

## 3.3 Demography

### 3.3.1 Current population

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-2019 population estimates for West Suffolk indicate 179,245 residents. This represents an increase of 7,564 people (4.4% growth) since the 2011 Census figure of 171,481 (source Analysis of population estimate tool. Published 25 June 2021).

### 3.3.2 Age structure

The age structure of West Suffolk differs from the national average. Analysis of the ONS 2019 sub-national population projections shows that West Suffolk has:

- A slightly higher percentage of young people than the county and national averages.

- A higher percentage of older people than the national average, but lower than the proportion in Suffolk as a whole.

<b>Age</b>	<b>West Suffolk No.</b>	<b>West Suffolk %</b>	<b>Suffolk %</b>	<b>England %</b>
0-15	34,773	19.4%	18.1%	19.2%
16-64	106,254	59.3%	58.4%	62.4%
65+	38,018	21.2%	23.6%	18.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3.3.3 Population growth

Two sets of population projections have been considered:

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635. Comparison of the age group projections for 2020 and 2040 show that the proportion of people aged 65 and over will increase from 21.4% to 26.9%.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population 2020</b>	<b>% 2020</b>	<b>Population 2040</b>	<b>% 2040</b>
0 - 14	32,937.8	18%	32,632	17%
15 - 24	18,878.1	10%	20,417.4	11%
25 - 49	55,946.4	31%	54,934	29%
50 - 64	34,103.2	19%	31,495.6	17%
65+	38,579.9	21%	51,201	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>180,445</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>190,680</b>	<b>100%</b>

- The 'West Suffolk Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (2020) states that the local housing need was for an additional 824 new dwellings per annum in the district. In the 18 years to 2040, this amounts to 14,832 dwellings, with an average occupancy of 2.3 people, giving an additional population of 34,114 (a 19.1% increase).

### 3.3.4 Health

Local health indices are recorded in Public Health England's 'Health Profile for West Suffolk (2019)'. In general the health of people in the district varied compared with England as a whole:

- Life expectancy at birth in West Suffolk is 1.2 years longer for men and 1.4 years longer for women than the respective national averages. However, life expectancy is 5.4 years lower for men and 3.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of the district than in the least deprived areas.
- The prevalence of obese children aged 10 - 11 years in West Suffolk is 16.7%, compared with the national average of 20.2%.
- 62.8% of the adult population of the district is classified as overweight or obese. This is above the national average of 62.0%.

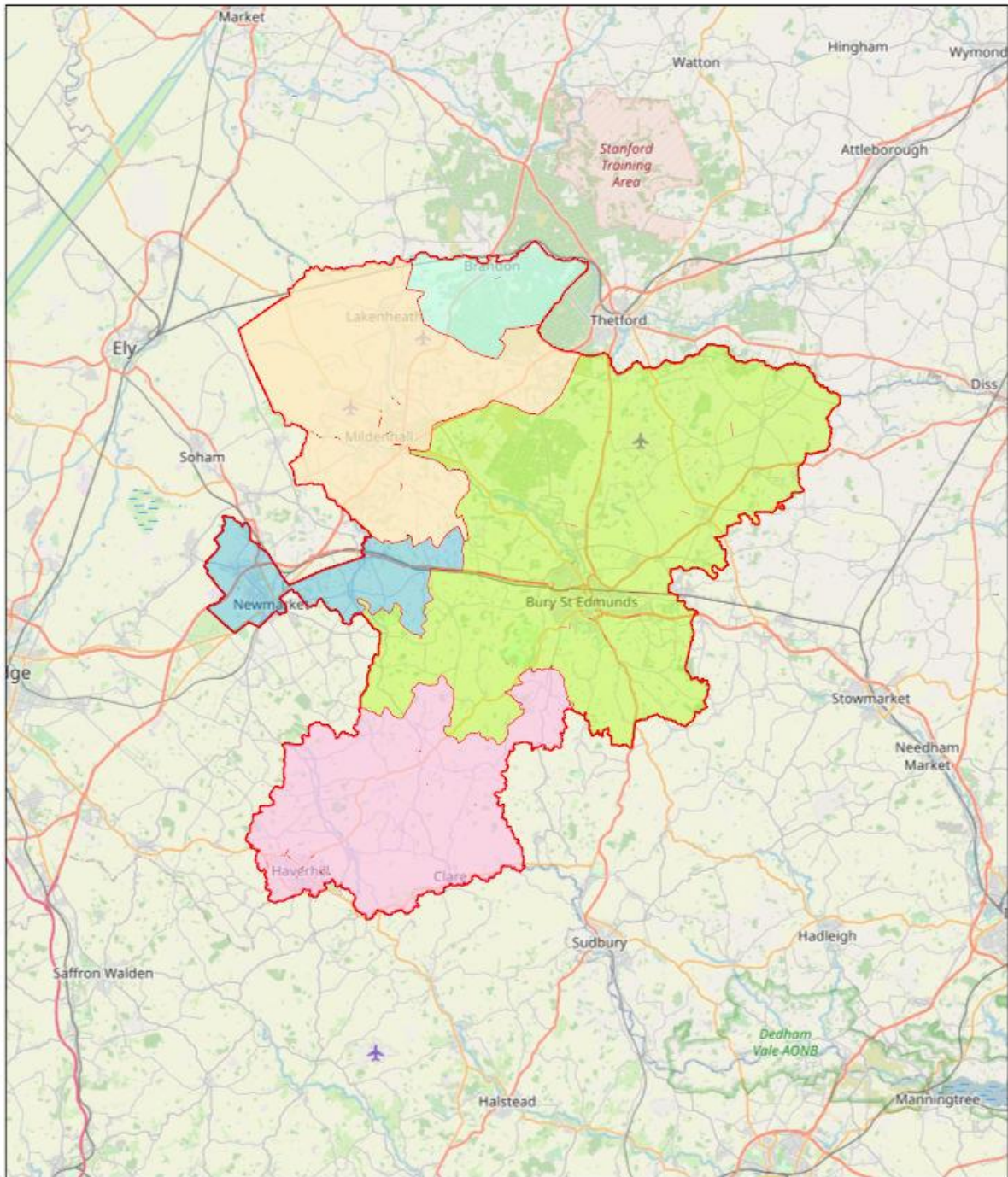
### 3.3.5 Sub-areas

The district can be divided into sub-areas, to assist with analysing provision at a more local level and in particular to assess the differential spatial impact on supply and demand for sports facilities arising from housing growth. The sub-sub areas are defined as follows. The data source is 'Table SAPE22DT8a: Mid-2019 Population Estimates for 2019 Wards in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex - Experimental Statistics'. Published 9 Sept 20.

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Area type</i>	<i>Ward Name</i>	<i>Popn. 2019</i>	<i>Popn. 2019</i>	<i>Popn. 2019</i>
Bury St. Edmunds and surrounds	Town	Abbeygate	5,281	41,554	72,832
	Town	Eastgate	2,691		
	Town	Minden	5,758		
	Town	Moreton Hall	7,994		
	Town	St Olaves	4,170		
	Town	Southgate	4,262		
	Town	Tollgate	5,892		
	Town	Westgate	5,506		
Bury St. Edmunds and surrounds	Rural	Bardwell	2,676	31,278	72,832
	Rural	Barningham	2,637		
	Rural	Barrow	2,495		
	Rural	Chedburgh & Chevington	2,572		
	Rural	Horringer	2,617		
	Rural	Ixworth	2,256		
	Rural	Pakenham & Troston	3,147		
	Rural	Risby	3,174		
	Rural	Rougham	2,374		
	Rural	Stanton	2,830		
	Rural	The Fornhams & Great Barton	4,500		
Newmarket and surrounds	Town	Newmarket East	5,593	16,599	21,332
	Town	Newmarket North	5,346		
	Town	Newmarket West	5,660		
Newmarket & surrounds	Rural	Exning	2,171	4,733	21,332
	Rural	Kentford & Moulton	2,562		
Haverhill and surrounds	Town	Haverhill Central	3,209	27,481	40,969
	Town	Haverhill East	4,635		
	Town	Haverhill North	4,101		
	Town	Haverhill South	6,966		
	Town	Haverhill South-East	2,554		
	Town	Haverhill West	6,016		
Haverhill and surrounds	Rural	Clare, Hundon & Kedington	8,553	13,488	40,969
	Rural	Whepstead & Wickhambrook	2,495		
	Rural	Withersfield	2,440		
Mildenhall and surrounds	Town	Mildenhall Great Heath	3,326	9,054	34,356
	Town	Mildenhall Kingsway & Market	2,840		
	Town	Mildenhall Queensway	2,888		
Mildenhall and surrounds	Rural	Iceni	6,338	25302	34,356
	Rural	Lakenheath	8,756		
	Rural	Manor	2,581		
	Rural	The Rows	7,627		
Brandon & surrounds	Town	Brandon Central	3,518	9,556	9,556
	Town	Brandon East	2,745		
	Town	Brandon West	3,293		
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>179,045</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>179,045</b>

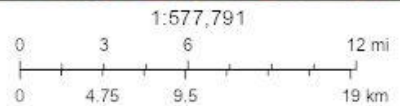


# WEST SUFFOLK - SUB AREAS



7/6/2021

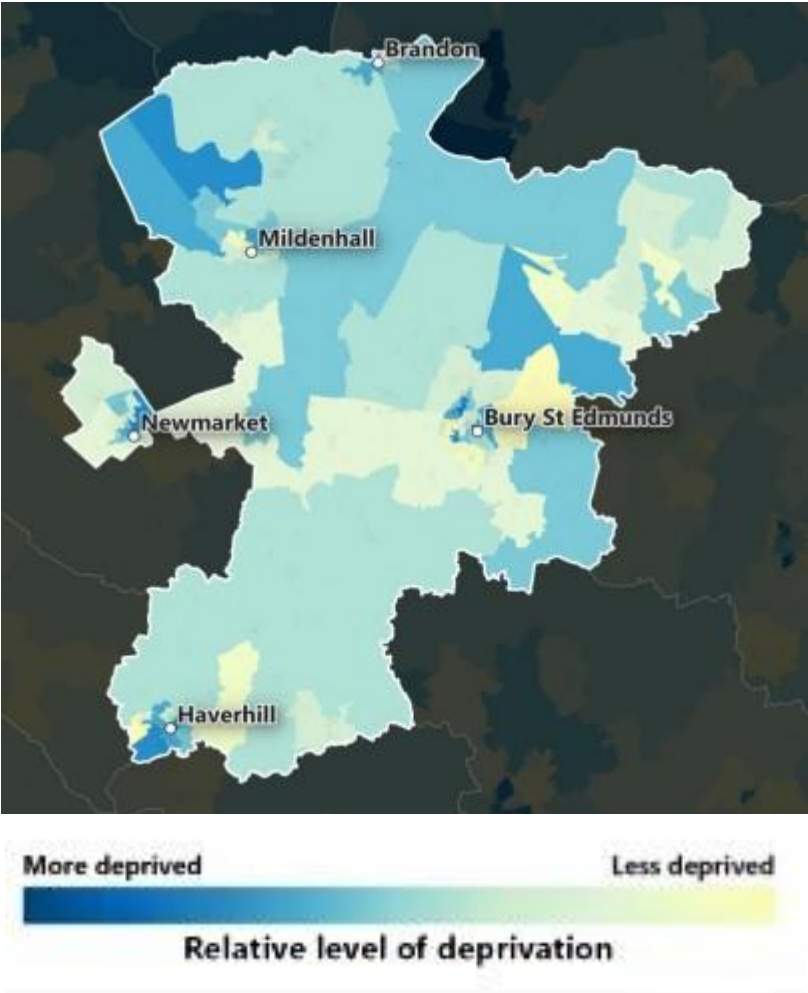
- Mildenhall Sub Area
- Bury St Edmunds Sub Area
- Brandon Sub Area
- Newmarket Sub Area
- Haverhill Sub Area
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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### 3.3.6 Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation (2019) show that the district is ranked 176 out of 317 local authority areas in England. Whilst no Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are ranked in the lowest 10% in the country, as the map below shows, around 1% of LSOAs are in the poorest 20% nationally and values vary widely across the district.



### 3.3.7 Housing need

The *West Suffolk Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment* (2020) (SHELAA) states that the local housing need was for an additional 824 new dwellings per annum in the district, equivalent to 12,360 over 15 years, which is the timeframe of the SHELAA. The projected yields from included sites in SHELAA exceeds this figure. The SHELAA identifies 223 sites capable of accommodating 27,238 dwellings in total, or 1,816 per annum. Housing need changes every year. The housing need is different to housing requirement. Housing requirement is planned for in the Local Plan and West Suffolk Council will be consulting on this at the Preferred Options stage.

### 3.4 Sport and physical activity

#### 3.4.1 Participation rates

Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey measures physical activity rates amongst people aged 16 and over at district, county, regional and national levels. The definitions used in the survey are as follows:

- **Sport and physical activity:** This includes at least 10-minutes of moderate or higher intensity sports activities, walking and cycling for leisure or travel, fitness and dance.
- **Active:** The 'Active' population is defined as those doing at least 150 minutes of the above activities per week.
- **Fairly active:** The 'Fairly active' population is defined as those doing between 30 and 149 minutes of the above activities per week.
- **Inactive:** The 'Inactive' population is defined as those doing 30 minutes or less of the above activities per week.

The key data for West Suffolk for the period 2018/19 is set out below. The results show activity levels are above the regional, county and national averages:

<i>Area</i>	<i>Active</i>	<i>Fairly active</i>	<i>Inactive</i>
West Suffolk	64.4%	11.9%	23.7%
Suffolk	64.1%	12.1%	23.8%
East	62.6%	12.3%	25.1%
England	62.8%	11.7%	25.5%

### 3.5 The local sports facilities supply network

Sports facilities provision in West Suffolk comprises a mixed economy involving the public, voluntary and commercial sectors. The key providers are as follows:

- **West Suffolk Council:** The Council provides leisure centres in Brandon, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Mildenhall and Newmarket, some of which include a range of pitches and outdoor sports facilities. They are managed by not-for-profit social enterprise Abbeycroft Leisure.
- **Schools:** Schools are significant playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities providers in the district, although not all provision is fully community accessible.
- **Sports clubs:** Voluntary sector sports clubs provide and run a range of mostly smaller facilities.
- **Parish Councils:** Parish councils are important providers of pitches and outdoor sports facilities in the rural parts of the district.

### 3.6 *The implications for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities provision*

The implications of the local context for playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision in West Suffolk are as follows:

- ***An ageing population:*** The current demographic profile of West Suffolk is skewed toward the older end of population spectrum and according to ONS 2018 sub-national population projections, this trend is projected to continue and become even more pronounced over the period of the Plan.
- ***Imported demand:*** Newmarket, Haverhill, Brandon and Bury St. Edmunds are all close to the border of West Suffolk and as a result these settlements become key service centres for people living in neighbouring areas. This leads to significant imported demand for a range of provision, including sports facilities.
- ***Population growth:*** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5% from 2019. An alternative projection, based upon provision for an additional 824 new dwellings per annum in West Suffolk, produces a population of 213,159 by the same date, a 19.1% increase. The additional population will drive demand for extra playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities.
- ***Overall sports participation rates:*** General participation rates in sport and physical activity are above the county, regional and national averages. Demand for sports facilities is therefore concomitantly high.
- ***Facilities supply:*** Playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities are provided by a mosaic of owners and operators from the public, voluntary and commercial sectors, which highlights the need for and benefits of a strategic approach to co-ordinating provision.



## 4 STRATEGIC INFLUENCES

### *Key findings:*

- **West Suffolk Strategic Framework:** Promoting healthy lifestyles is a specific priority.
- **Promoting Physical Activity Framework:** The Framework provides a powerful rationale for providing sports facilities to support wider physical activity objectives.
- **National Planning Policy Framework:** Government policy emphasises the need to ‘enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of sports facilities’.
- **West Suffolk Local Plan:** The suite of documents comprising the Local Plan are at the review stage and once adopted will comprise policies that are supportive of the provision and retention of sports facilities and their inclusion in the infrastructure to be funded by developers as part of new developments.
- **Forest Heath Open space, Sport and Recreation (October 2011 and St Edmundsbury Open space, Sport and recreation Facilities (December 2012):** These Supplementary Planning Documents set out the Council’s approach to the provision of open space and recreation facilities in conjunction with new housing development.
- **Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** The strategy recognises the role that physical activity can play in preventing long-term health and wellbeing issues.
- **Sport England:** Sport England’s strategy broadens the traditional definition of sports facilities from formal specialist provision, to include other ‘Active Environments’ that provide opportunities for informal and non-specialist activities for ‘Movement’. The West Suffolk SFS focuses on formal built facilities needs as an important sub-set within the wider definition of ‘Active Environments’.

### 4.1 Introduction

This section examines the influence of relevant policies and priorities on playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision in West Suffolk, including the impact of national strategies.

### 4.2 West Suffolk Strategic Framework

#### 4.2.1 Introduction

West Suffolk Council's strategic framework ‘sets out our vision and what the council aims to achieve together, with our partners, local businesses, communities and residents. This means focusing our efforts and resources in the areas that are the greatest priorities for West Suffolk’.

#### 4.2.2 Vision

The vision is ‘being ambitious in supporting and investing in our West Suffolk communities, businesses and the environment, to encourage and manage growth in prosperity and quality of life for all’.

### 4.2.3 Strategic Priorities

One of the three strategic priorities is ‘resilient families and communities that are healthy and active’. Delivering the priority involves a commitment to ‘use our community, leisure, public open space, countryside and heritage assets so that they give maximum benefit to West Suffolk communities’.

## 4.3 Promoting Physical Activity Framework

### 4.3.1 Introduction

The *West Suffolk - Promoting Physical Activity Framework* (2015) sets out the council’s ‘commitment to enable and encourage people to lead active lives thereby increasing activity levels across West Suffolk. This will lead to improved health and wellbeing for our communities resulting in less reliance on health care services’.

### 4.3.2 Outcomes

Social and community:

- Create an environment that provides the opportunity for physical activity for all.
- Encourage personal responsibility for wellbeing through education and the development of life skills and healthy habits.
- Improve the quality of life and the health and wellbeing of all our communities.
- Ensure that physical activity is inclusive by understanding and addressing barriers to participation.
- Maximise use of local assets including sharing assets where appropriate.
- Make connections between different communities through shared activities.

#### ***Economic:***

- Ensure we are financially efficient and responsible in a changing financial environment, in line with the councils’ Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- Understand how our impact on health and wellbeing will financially benefit the whole public sector.
- Target our financial support and subsidies to improve outcomes that support our strategic priorities.
- Create wider value for money.

### ***Personal experience:***

- Provide opportunities for physical activity that are accessible, inclusive, welcoming, nurturing and convenient.
- Acknowledge that there are a range of motivations to participating in physical activity and that some people want to be competitive, whilst others don't.
- Support the provision of facilities (including shared facilities) and opportunities in locations that encourage participation and keep active people active.

### ***Health and wellbeing:***

- Promote initiatives that will support the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Focus on activity to address preventable health issues by creating local opportunities that address local health needs.
- Ensure that active people remain active and that more people become active.
- Encourage natural exercise as a part of daily lives and acknowledge that this may not include traditional sport.

### **4.3.3 The Council's role**

The council's role in facilitating participation in physical activity is to:

- ***Plan:*** Plan for the future to ensure that we provide opportunities for people to participate in sport and physical activity at any level and maximise the impact of developer contributions
- ***Provide:*** Provide accessible parks and green spaces in the local area, creating opportunities for natural exercise.
- ***Support:*** For schemes and facilities that align with our priorities, explore funding opportunities for groups and organisations.
- ***Enable:*** Working with partners, enable local communities and individuals to participate in sport and physical activity in a way that works for them.
- ***Promote:*** Promoting opportunities at a local level through our communities and with providers.

## 4.4 West Suffolk Local Plan

### 4.4.1 Introduction

The Council has commenced work on a new West Suffolk Local Plan and at the end of 2020 undertook consultation on the Issues and Options stage. In 2021 they are working toward the Preferred Options stage. West Suffolk Council currently has two existing local plans (consisting of the former Forest Heath area and former St. Edmundsbury area Local Plan documents). These set out the long term planning and land use policies within West Suffolk. The main documents are as follows and the policies relevant to sports facilities provision are reviewed below:

- *Forest Heath Core Strategy*' (2010).
- *Forest Heath Single Issue Review*' and *Site Allocations Local Plan* (2019)
- *St. Edmundsbury Core Strategy*' (2010).
- *Vision 2031*' 2014 – for former St Edmundsbury area
- *West Suffolk Joint Development Policies Document*' (2015).
- There are made Neighbourhood Plans for Hargrave (2018), Newmarket (2020) and Great Barton (2021).

### 4.4.2 Forest Heath Core Strategy 2010

The vision includes 'all towns and villages will enjoy open spaces and a wide range of quality community, sport and recreation facilities will cater for the population and serve local community needs'.

This is supported by Spatial Objective C2 which comprises a commitment 'to promote an improvement in the health of Forest Heath's people by maintaining and providing quality open spaces, play and sports facilities and better access to the countryside'.

Policy CS13 on Infrastructure and Developer Contributions includes provision to 'provide the Open Space, Sport and Recreation need throughout the district in accordance with the Forest Heath PPG17 Audit, Built Facilities Study and Green Space Strategy'.

### 4.4.3 St. Edmundsbury Core Strategy 2010

The vision includes 'all residents of the district will have an equal opportunity to access services, jobs, housing and leisure facilities to maximise their potential to live and work in an environmentally sustainable manner'.

This is supported by Spatial Objective D which comprises a commitment 'to maintain and develop leisure, cultural, educational and community facilities, including access to green space, commensurate to the level of housing and employment growth to meet the needs of residents and visitors'.



Policy CS14 on Community Infrastructure and Tariffs lists ‘required infrastructure as ‘community facilities across the district [including] leisure, open space, recreation provision and public realm enhancements’.

#### 4.4.4 Joint Development Management Policies Document

Policy DM42 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities states that:

‘Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in this and other adopted Local Plans. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:

- a) it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirement against the local planning authority’s standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- b) replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility. Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the settlement where the development is taking place and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority’.

‘Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations. Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities must be of a high standard of design and internal layout and be in accordance with other policies in this Plan. The location of such facilities must be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals which give rise to intrusive floodlighting will not be permitted’.

#### 4.4.5 Forest Heath Open Space, Sport and Recreation Supplementary Planning Document. (October 2011). St Edmundsbury Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Supplementary Planning Document. (December 2012).

New development may require additional or improved open space. The SPDs help to ensure the development makes a positive contribution to sustainable development and contributes towards measures to mitigate any negative effects, often through planning obligations. The SPDs define different types of open spaces, sports and recreational facilities. It sets out the policy context locally and nationally. It considers open space and facility standards and the costs of providing facilities. A flow chart sets out how to assess the scale of contributions to be calculated and considers viability. The development requirements for sports and recreation are set out.

#### 4.4.6 Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan

The *Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2031* (2020) contains the following material of relevance:

‘The Town Council’s strategic priorities for Newmarket with respect to sport and recreation are:

- To encourage participation in physical activities for residents of all ages.
- To increase the number of sports pitches and facilities in Newmarket.
- To build on the success of already established youth development programmes.
- To enable sports clubs to expand and attract a larger number of participants and teams.
- To provide excellent sporting facilities to encourage our sportspeople to play in Newmarket and not have to travel elsewhere.
- To ensure the future sustainability of sports clubs through the sharing of facilities, and by providing space for their expansion.
- To improve the provision of public open space and Public Rights of Way within the town.
- To encourage elite sportsmen and women to continue playing in Newmarket.
- To provide an attractive destination and facilities for visiting sports teams and individuals’.

‘There is an identified deficit of sports facilities which was exacerbated by the recent demolition of Scaltback School and the consequent loss of the sports hall and changing rooms. A preferred location for a shared community sports and recreation area [to mitigate this loss] is the vacant St Felix School site, which is adjacent to the George Lambton Playing Fields. The combined area would be a shared space, enhanced to provide sports facilities for as many Newmarket sports clubs as possible. This site has the benefit of easy access to the A14 for visiting sports clubs and is not in a high density residential area, so that any increase in parking, noise and light pollution would have little impact. The current uses of the George Lambton Playing Fields for informal sport and recreation would be protected’.

‘There is a lack of provision for athletics in the town. Since 2011, ‘Newmarket Joggers’ has seen a 100% increase in membership and now needs better facilities to provide adequate, safe provision all year round. Currently members run around the town on shared pavements, or on roadsides if there is no pavement. Provision of dedicated facilities would alleviate these issues. Provision of an all-weather track and floodlighting would allow the club to host competitions and to provide extra training sessions for talented athletes in the town. An associated sports hall would guarantee sessions with full range of activities throughout the year; it would also allow wheelchair athletes to participate fully. Such facilities would give the club a greater ‘presence’ in the community and attract more members, and could also be used by other groups, for instance, the hall could be used for boxing or gymnastics, and the running track could be used by primary schools’.

## 4.5 Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy

### 4.5.1 Introduction

The ‘*Suffolk Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh 2019 - 2022*’ (2019) has a vision that ‘people in Suffolk live healthier, happier lives. We also want to narrow the differences in healthy life expectancy between those living in our most deprived communities and those who are more affluent through greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities’.

### 4.5.2 Principles

The four key principles are as follows:

- **Prioritising prevention:** The strategy recognises the role that physical activity can play in preventing long-term health and wellbeing issues.
- **Reducing health inequalities:** The strategy notes the current inequalities, which includes access to facilities and services such as sport and physical activity provision.
- **Promoting resilient communities:** ‘Resilient communities have the local resources, skills, expertise and ‘know-how’ to help individuals, families, and communities to flourish. Individuals and communities who are self-sufficient and able to use their own assets to meet their needs, and those of others, have better outcomes’. Providing accessible sports facilities in the right location will help to develop and sustain this.
- **Working well together:** Coordinated provision is needed to achieve maximum effectiveness.

## 4.6 The Government’s Planning Policies

### 4.6.1 Introduction

In July 2021, the Government published revisions to the ‘*National Planning Policy Framework*’ (2021), setting out its economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government’s vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations.

### 4.6.2 Sustainable development

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ and there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### 4.6.3 Promoting healthy and safe communities

Paragraph 92 states that ‘planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- 'Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other - for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages'.
- 'Are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion - for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas'.
- 'Enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling'.

#### 4.6.4 Sport and leisure facilities

Paragraph 93 states that 'to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- 'Plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- Take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.
- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
- Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services'.

#### 4.6.5 Planning Practice Guidance

The Government also issued *Planning Practice Guidance* in 2014 and the following is of particular relevance to sports facilities:

- ***Open space, sport and recreation provision:*** 'Local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields. Where there is no requirement to consult, local planning authorities are advised to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility, the creation of a site for one or more playing pitches, artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility or a residential development of 300 dwellings or more'.

- **Health and wellbeing:** ‘Local planning authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making. Development proposals should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help create healthy living environments which should, where possible, include making physical activity easy to do. Opportunities for healthy lifestyles must be considered (e.g. planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity and promotes high quality open spaces and opportunities for play, sport and recreation)’.

#### 4.7 The Government’s Sports Strategy

The Government’s sports strategy ‘*Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*’ (2015) sets the context for a national policy shift. It contains the following material of relevance to sports facilities provision in West Suffolk:

- The Strategy seeks to ‘redefine what success looks like in sport’ by concentrating on five key outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.
- The benefit of engaging those groups that typically do little or no activity is immense. Future funding will focus on those people who tend not to take part in sport, including women and girls, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people.

#### 4.8 Sport England Strategy

##### 4.8.1 Vision

Sport England’s strategy ‘*Uniting the Movement*’ (2021) contains a vision for ‘a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives’.

##### 4.8.2 Context

The strategy concludes that ‘there are deep-rooted inequalities in sport and physical activity, which mean there are people who feel excluded from being active because the right options and opportunities are not there:

- Disabled people and people with a long-term health condition are twice as likely to be physically inactive than those without a disability or health condition.
- People from a lower socioeconomic group (NS-SEC 6-8) are more likely to be inactive than people in higher social groups.
- Women are less active than men and this gender gap starts with girls being less active from a very young age.
- People from Asian and black backgrounds are far more likely to be physically inactive than people who are white’.

### 4.8.3 Advocating movement, sport and physical activity

Proposed actions include:

- ‘Continue to build, establish and grow partnerships and a common purpose across both the government and our sector to join up policies, strategies and approaches’.
- ‘Continue to develop and deliver behavioural change campaigns, building on the success of *This Girl Can*, *We Are Undefeatable* and *Join the Movement*, to put movement, sport and physical activity at the forefront of national conversations’.
- ‘Keep building evidence that shows the links between the issues we all care about as a nation and the value of movement, sport and physical activity as part of the solution’.
- ‘Grow the extent to which we communicate, both to people and organisations, the power of getting active to help strengthen public consensus around the importance of being physically active’.

### 4.8.4 Five key issues

These are identified as:

- ***Recover and reinvent:*** ‘Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people’.
- ***Connecting communities:*** Focusing on sport and physical activity’s ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- ***Positive experiences for children and young people:*** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ***Connection with health and wellbeing:*** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- ***Active environments:*** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

### 4.8.5 Active Environments

The key proposals for facilities are contained in the ‘Active Environments’ theme. This identifies three types of provision:

- ***Dedicated sport and physical activity facilities:*** ‘Dedicated sport and leisure facilities like leisure centres need to be co-created, well designed, supported and maintained to benefit the local community and their users’.

- **Other community spaces:** ‘Not usually designed exclusively for exercise, and certainly not for specific sports, these places are a vital resource for many and the activity they host provides a useful income to the venue. They may never be perfect competition or training spaces, but they attract people who might never go to a sports club, leisure centre or private gym. The development of community spaces like these is important to people who are regularly or newly active’.
- **The wider built environment:** ‘These places and spaces influence how much we move. Good design can help to increase activity levels by encouraging walking and cycling. This means connecting dedicated sport and activity facilities and community spaces, by making it easy for people to walk and cycle, by better design and by using the built and natural environments around us’.

#### 4.9 Sport England Playing Pitch Policies

Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications involving either the provision, or loss of, playing pitches. It considers proposals affecting playing fields in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular paragraph 97) and against its own playing fields policy which states the following:

‘Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development that would lead to the loss, or prejudice the use of:

- All or any part of a playing field, or
- Land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or
- Land allocated for use as a playing field.

Unless in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets one of more of the following specific exceptions:

- **Exception 1:** A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.
- **Exception 2:** The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.
- **Exception 3:** The proposal affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:
  - Reduce the size of any playing pitch.
  - Result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas).
  - Reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capacity to rotate or reposition pitches to maintain their quality.



- Result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site.
- Prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.
- **Exception 4:** The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced prior to the commencement of the development by a new area of playing field:
  - Of equivalent or better quality.
  - Of equivalent or greater quantity.
  - In a suitable location.
  - Subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.
- **Exception 5:** The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field’.

#### **4.10 The implications for playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision**

The implications of strategic influences on sports facilities provision in West Suffolk are:

- **West Suffolk Strategic Framework:** Promoting healthy lifestyles is a specific priority.
- **Promoting Physical Activity Framework:** The Framework provides a powerful rationale for providing sports facilities to support wider physical activity objectives.
- **West Suffolk Local Plan:** The suite of documents comprising the Local Plan include policies that are supportive of the provision and retention of sports facilities and their inclusion in the infrastructure to be funded by developers as part of new developments.
- **Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** The strategy recognises the role that physical activity can play in preventing long-term health and wellbeing issues.
- **Government planning policy:** Policy emphasises the need to ‘enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of pitches and outdoor sports facilities’. There is strong policy support for the provision and retention of pitches, based upon robust assessments of need.
- **Sport England policy:** Sport England’s strategy broadens the traditional definition of sports facilities from formal specialist provision, to include other ‘Active Environments’ that provide opportunities for informal and non-specialist activities for ‘Movement’. The West Suffolk PPS focuses on formal built facilities needs as an important sub-set within the wider definition of ‘Active Environments’.



## 5 FOOTBALL PITCH NEEDS

### 5.1 Introduction

The key stakeholders delivering football in West Suffolk are:

- **Suffolk FA:** All football clubs in the district affiliate to the Suffolk FA, which administers the game in the county.
- **FA-affiliated clubs:** There are 65 FA-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk, who collectively run 98 adult teams, 122 youth teams and 114 mini-soccer teams (336 teams in total).
- **Pitch providers:** A range of organisations provide football pitches in the district, in particular the council, parish councils, clubs and schools.

### 5.2 Strategic context

#### 5.2.1 The Football Association

'Time for Change: The FA Strategy 2020-2024' (2020) has a number of targets with important implications for football and its facilities needs at grassroots level (see box below).

- **Equal opportunities for every girl:** 'We will work in partnership with schools and teachers to provide tailored programmes and training. We will ensure all girls (5-16 years of age) have access to an inclusive club with an appropriate competitive pathway (including our innovative Wildcats programme)'.
- **Deliver 5,000 quality pitches:** 'The poor quality and availability of our pitches remains the number one frustration in grassroots football and an embarrassment for our country. Significantly improving the quality and durability of our grass pitches and building more artificial pitches is a necessity. To achieve this ambition by 2024, we will work through our delivery partner the Football Foundation, to build and improve 5,000 pitches across England, including using new digital methods to support ground staff up and down the country'.

The Football Association's emerging 'National Facilities Strategy' also contains a number of longer-term (10-year) facilities-related targets:

- 1,000 new '3G' football turf pitches in a mix of sizes and settings, dependent upon local needs, all aimed at enhancing the quality of the playing experience.
- 20,000 improved natural-turf pitches: to help address drop-off due to a poor playing experience.
- 1,000 new changing pavilions/clubhouses all linked to priority sites.
- Small-sided facilities to grow the small-sided game for teams and leagues, recreational and informal play.

## 5.2.2 The Local Football Facility Plan

The Football Association, Premier League and the Government via Sport England have embarked upon a process to produce a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) for each local authority area in England. The national funding partners have significantly increased investment to accelerate efforts to deliver more and better football facilities for the grassroots game. The purpose of the *West Suffolk LFFP* (2020) is to identify the priority projects for potential investment in the district. The key findings are below:

### ***Overall priorities for football in West Suffolk***

- Retain adult male participation.
- Retain and increase the local ‘Wildcats’ offer.
- Improve and increase the ladies affiliated offer.
- Continue and increase the delivery of recreational opportunities.
- Continue and enhance the delivery of Futsal opportunities.

### ***3G’ football turf pitches:***

- There are currently three full-sized (11v11) ‘3G’ football turf pitches in West Suffolk, all of which are on the FA’s Register which means that they can be used for match play:
- There are six small-sided ‘3G’ football turf pitches.
- The geographic spread of existing facilities is uneven; the majority of pitches are located in the central parts of the local area, as well as to the south. There is a need for further provision in these areas and there are also provision gaps elsewhere, despite high levels of population and demand. It is recommended that these gaps be addressed’.
- There is a current requirement for eight full-sized ‘3G’ football turf pitches in the district, which leaves an existing shortfall of four facilities. Potential sites for full-sized ‘3G’ pitches are the Victory Sports Ground Bury St. Edmunds, The New Croft, Haverhill, Remembrance Playing Field or IES School, Brandon and the Newmarket area.
- Potential sites for small-sided ‘3G’ pitches are identified as the Moreton Hall area and the Lakenheath area.

### ***Grass pitches:***

- Ten priority projects for potential investment were identified. Prioritisation was informed by local partners based on a rationale of selecting sites in the poorest condition that are currently/potentially well-utilised and which reflect the strategic focus to improve football participation.
- Potential sites are identified as Lakenheath Playing Field, Brandon Sports and Social Club, George Lambton Playing Field, Newmarket, Hardwick Heath, Horringer Court Middle School, Puddlebrook, Haverhill, Red Lodge Sports Pavilion, Mildenhall, Queen Elizabeth Field, Bardwell, Mildenhall College Academy and St. James’s Middle School, Bury St. Edmunds.

### ***Changing rooms/pavilions/clubhouses:***

Five priority projects for potential investment were identified as Victory Sports Ground, Bury St. Edmunds, The New Croft, Haverhill, Puddlebrook, Haverhill, Hundon Football Field and King Edward VI School, Bury St. Edmunds.

### ***Small-sided facilities, parks and open green spaces***

One priority project for potential investment was identified an indoor facility for Futsal and Samuel Ward Academy, plus a Multi-use Games Area at Red Lodge Sports Pavilion and an informal football facility at the Burton Centre in Newmarket.

### **5.2.3 Neighbouring local authorities**

Football needs assessments in the neighbouring local authorities highlighted the following cross-boundary issues:

#### ***East Cambridgeshire***

- The *'East Cambridgeshire Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2020) identifies that there is a current collective shortfall of all types of football pitch except mini 5v5 pitches, including 1.5 '3G' football turf pitches. A total of 20 extra grass pitches will be required by 2036 to meet the additional demand arising from population growth.
- The *'East Cambridgeshire Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of three '3G' football turf pitches, including Isleham Recreation Ground which is close to Mildenhall. Six sites have been prioritised for grass pitch and changing improvements including two sites in Burwell, which are close to Newmarket.

#### ***South Cambridgeshire***

- The *'Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031'* (2015) examines football pitch needs in South Cambridgeshire. The South-east sub-area is closest to West Suffolk and the strategy concludes that 'there is currently under play on all pitch typologies in the south-east Area'. Additional demand by 2031 can be accommodated using a combination of existing spare capacity and a new '3G' pitch at Cambridge City FC.
- The *'South Cambridgeshire Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of eight '3G' football turf pitches but no proposed facilities are located close to West Suffolk. None of the grass pitch or changing facility improvement projects are close to West Suffolk either.

#### ***Braintree***

- The *'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study'* (2017) identifies significant spare capacity for adult pitches, a shortfall of youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches, limited spare capacity for mini-soccer and a deficit of 4.7 full-sized '3G' football turf pitches.
- The *'Braintree Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of five '3G' football turf pitches. 10 sites have been prioritised for grass pitch and changing facilities improvements. None of the proposed projects to address deficiencies are close to the boundary with West Suffolk.

#### ***Babergh***

- *'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) supports the implementation of projects identified in the Local Football Facility Plan (see below).
- The *'Babergh Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of four '3G' football turf pitches, with proposed provision in Sudbury being the closest to West Suffolk. 11 sites have been prioritised for grass pitch improvements including one in Sudbury which has also been identified for changing upgrades.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

- *'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) supports the implementation of projects identified in the Local Football Facility Plan (see below).
- The *'Mid-Suffolk Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of five '3G' football turf pitches, with proposed provision at Thurston Community College being very close to Bury St. Edmunds. Four sites have been prioritised for grass pitch improvements although none is close to the boundary with West Suffolk.

### ***Breckland***

- Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of football pitch needs for the district.
- The *'Breckland Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of four '3G' football turf pitches, one of which should be provided in Thetford which is relatively close to West Suffolk. Six sites have been prioritised for grass pitch improvements, one in Thetford which is close to the boundary with West Suffolk.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

- Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of football pitch needs for the district.
- The *'Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Local Football Facility Plan'* (2020) notes a shortfall of four '3G' football turf pitches. Nine sites have been prioritised for grass pitch improvements. None of the proposed projects to address deficiencies are close to the boundary with West Suffolk.

## **5.2.4 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The *'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to football:

- The supply and demand results indicate that there is sufficient capacity across West Suffolk for football pitches of all types, both currently and projected to 2031, with limited deficiency on only a small number of sites.
- The quality of grass pitches is standard in the majority, with only a small percentage marked as good or poor. As West Suffolk is primarily made up of clay-based pitches, there are often issue of waterlogging following extreme weather.

## **5.3 Football pitch demand in West Suffolk**

### **5.3.1 Expressed demand**

The information on football clubs and teams affiliated to the Suffolk FA and based in West Suffolk was supplied by the FA. A questionnaire survey was circulated to all FA-affiliated football clubs in the district. The following clubs responded, collectively representing 215 teams, or 64.0% of all the 336 affiliated teams in the district.

- Brandon Town FC
- Bury Town FC
- Cavendish FC
- Chedburgh FC
- Exning United FC
- Haverhill Rovers FC
- Haverhill Town FC
- Lakenheath FC
- Lakenheath Youth FC
- Mildenhall Town FC
- Moreton Hall Youth FC
- Motts County Pirates FC
- Risby Greens Youth FC
- Sporting 87 FC
- Thurlow Youth FC
- West Row Gunners FC

The following clubs affiliate to the Suffolk FA and play in West Suffolk in season 2020/21. Any pitches used by West Suffolk-based clubs that are outside the district are shown in italics:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Match venue(s)</i>	<i>Training venue(s)</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11)</i>	<i>Youth (9v9)</i>	<i>Mini (7v7)</i>	<i>Mini (5v5)</i>
Abbotts 07 FC	British Sugar Sports Club	-	1	-	-	-	-
AFC Thurlow Veterans	Great Thurlow Recn. Grd.	-	1	-	-	-	-
AFC Vikings	Hepworth Recreation Grd.	-	1	-	-	-	-
Baltic United FC	Pakenham Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bardwell Sport FC	Bardwell Playing Field	-	3	-	-	-	-
Barton Mills FC	Barton Mills Village Green	Mildenhall College	1	-	-	-	-
Beck Row FC	Aspal Close Nature Reserve	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bedricks Worth FC	Great Whelnetham Ctre.	-	1	-	-	-	-
Black Boy Veterans FC	Hardwick Heath	-	1	-	-	-	-
Brandon Town Community FC	Brandon Playing Fields	Brandon Playing Fields	4	4	3	2	3
Breda FC	Oakes Road Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bury Bowl FC	Ten Acre Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bury Town FC	Bury Town FC Rougham Playing Field Culford Sports Centre Hardwick Heath Gainsborough Recn. Grd. King Edward VI School Horringer Court School	King Edward VI School	10	12	7	5	3
Bury United FC	Hardwick Heath	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bury Wanderers FC	Hardwick Heath	-	1	-	-	-	-
Cavendish FC	Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Sports Club	2	-	-	-	-
Chedburgh FC	Ten Acre Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Clare Town FC	Clare Playing Field	Clare Playing Field	2	1	1	1	1
Exning United FC	Exning Football Ground Exning Primary School	<i>Bottisham Village College</i>	-	2	1	2	2

<b>Club</b>	<b>Match venue(s)</b>	<b>Training venue(s)</b>	<b>Adult teams</b>	<b>Youth (11v11)</b>	<b>Youth (9v9)</b>	<b>Mini (7v7)</b>	<b>Mini (5v5)</b>
Great Barton FC	Great Barton Playing Field	-	1	-	1	-	-
Guildhall Feoffment FC	Howards Primary School	-	-	-	1	2	2
Hardwick Primary Sch.	Hardwick Primary School	-	-	-	-	3	3
Haverhill & Hove Albion FC	Puddlebrook	-	1	-	-	-	-
Haverhill Borough FC	The New Croft	The New Croft	1	-	-	-	-
Haverhill Rovers FC	The New Croft	The New Croft	8	13	10	14	14
Haverhill Town FC	Mottsfield Playing Field Puddlebrook	Haverhill Leisure Centre AGP	2	3	-	-	-
Honington Foxes FC	RAF Honington	-	-	-	1	-	-
Howards FC	Tollgate Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Hundon FC	The New Croft	-	2	-	-	-	-
Ickworth Park FC	Ickworth Park Primary Sch.	-	-	-	-	3	4
Ipswich Town Comm.	<i>Newmarket Town FC</i>	-	-	-	2	2	1
JB SAP United FC	Hardwick Heath	-	1	-	-	-	-
Kedington	The Great Meadow	-	2	-	-	-	-
Lakenheath Casuals FC	Lakenheath Sports Pavilion	-	3	-	-	-	-
Lakenheath FC	Lakenheath FC Hardwick Heath	<i>Bottisbam Village College</i>	3	-	-	-	-
Lakenheath Youth FC	Lakenheath Sports Pavilion Eriswell Road Playing Field	Lakenheath Sports Pavilion	-	3	2	2	3
Match Day FC	Culford Sports Centre Hardwick Heath	-	-	-	-	-	3
Mildenhall Town FC	Mildenhall Town FC	Mildenhall Town FC	3	-	-	-	-
Mildenhall Town YFC	Jubilee Playing Fields West Row Playing Fields Mildenhall Town FC	Mildenhall Town FC	-	3	1	2	1
Moreton Hall Youth FC	Great Barton Playing Field Morton Hall Comm. Ctre. Hardwick Heath Nowton Park Heldhaw Road Playing Field	Bury St. Edmunds RFC Skyliner Sports Centre	2	3	2	2	2
Motts County Pirates FC	Puddlebrook	-	1	-	-	-	-
Moulton Veterans FC	Moulton Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Newmarket Town FC	<i>Newmarket Town FC</i>	<i>Newmarket Town FC</i>	4	12	6	4	5
Newmarket Veterans FC	<i>Dullingham Playing Field</i>	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pakenham Youth FC	Pakenham Playing Field	-	-	1	-	-	-
Prince of Wales FC	George Lambton Pl. Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Puddlebrook 68 FC	Puddlebrook	-	1	-	-	-	-
Red Lodge Youth FC	Red Lodge Pavilion	Red Lodge Pavilion	-	1	-	1	-
Risby Greens Youth FC	Risby Playing Field	Risby Playing Field	-	2	-	-	-
Sebert Wood FC	Sebert Wood Primary Sch.	-	-	-	2	3	3
Smiler FC	Oakes Road Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sporting 87 FC	Victory Sports Ground Nowton Park Hardwick Heath	Skyliner Sports Centre Nowton Park	10	13	4	10	4
St. Edmundsbury FC	King Edward VI School	-	-	-	-	2	1
Stanton FC	Stanton Recreation Ground	-	3	-	-	-	-
Stoke-by-Clare FC	Church Lane Recn. Ground	-	1	-	-	-	-

<i>Club</i>	<i>Match venue(s)</i>	<i>Training venue(s)</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11)</i>	<i>Youth (9v9)</i>	<i>Mini (7v7)</i>	<i>Mini (5v5)</i>
Suffolk FA Walking Football	Brandon Sports & Soc Club Bury Leisure Centre The New Croft Newmarket Leisure Centre Victory Sport Ground	-	-	-	-	4	1
The Exchange FC	Puddlebrook	-	1	-	-	-	-
Thurlow Youth FC	Great Thurlow Recn. Grd.	The Croft, Haverhill Haverhill Leisure Centre	1	3	1	2	1
Tollgate FC	Tollgate Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Tuddenham FC	Tuddenham Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
Wamil Wasps FC	West Row Playing Field	-	1	-	-	-	-
West Row Gunners FC	West Row Playing Field	<i>Linton Village College</i>	1	-	-	-	-
West Suffolk College FC	Victory Sports Ground Hardwick Heath	-	2	-	-	-	-
West Suffolk Wolves FC	Fornham All Saints Rec.	-	1	-	-	-	-
Wickhambrook YFC	Wickhambrook Recn. Grd.	-	1	-	1	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	-	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>

**Sub-area analysis:** Teams are distributed by sub-area as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	46	31	18	31	26
Newmarket	14	16	8	6	7
Haverhill	24	20	12	17	15
Mildenhall	10	6	5	1	6
Brandon	4	4	3	2	3
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>57</b>

The key expressed demand issues are as follows:

- **Team numbers:** 92 men's teams, six women's teams, 73 youth male (11v11) teams, three youth female (11v11) teams, 44 youth male (9v9) teams, two youth female (9v9) teams, 55 mixed mini-soccer (7v7) teams, two female mini-soccer 7v7 teams and 57 mixed mini-soccer (5v5) teams play in West Suffolk.
- 30 clubs in West Suffolk have achieved the FA's quality-assured Charter Standard status. This is 46.1% which compares with the national average of 27%. In terms of teams, 79.2% (266 out of 226) play for a Charter Standard club in West Suffolk, compared with the national average of 81.1%. This means that the benefits of belonging to an accredited club with formalised safeguarding procedures and qualified coaches is enjoyed by all youth and mini-soccer players in the district.
- **Women and girl's football:** Football for women and girls is relatively well-developed in West Suffolk, with six adult women's teams, three youth 11v11 teams and two youth 9v9 teams.



### 5.3.2 Expressed demand trends

Overall football participation by adults is falling across the country. The 'Active Lives' survey shows that participation has fallen from 5.2% of adults in 2015/16 to 4.4% in 2018/19.

### 5.3.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams or other users of football pitches from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. The net effect of displaced demand in West Suffolk is 27 exported teams.

- **Imported demand from external clubs:** Five teams from outside the district play their 'home' games at pitches in West Suffolk.
- **Exported demand from internal clubs:** 32 teams from 'West Suffolk play their 'home' games at pitches outside the district, primarily Newmarket Town FC. Furthermore, 35 teams access floodlit training facilities elsewhere.

### 5.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Pitches of a particular size or type may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

Three local clubs have waiting lists which provides clear evidence of unmet demand.

- **Waiting list:** Five clubs have a membership waiting list, whilst 12 do not.
- **Extra pitch needs:** Eight clubs have unmet demand for additional match pitches.
- **Extra training needs:** All clubs have unmet demand for additional floodlit, all-weather training pitches.

### 5.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to exist, latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from a population if they had access to more or better provision. Consultation with local clubs indicated that in their judgement the following additional teams could be accommodated in West Suffolk if the quality and quantity of pitch provision was improved.



<i>Club</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11)</i>	<i>Youth (9v9)</i>	<i>Mini (7v7)</i>	<i>Mini (5v5)</i>
Brandon Town FC	0	0	0	0	0
Bury Town FC	0	0	0	0	0
Cavendish FC	0	0	0	0	0
Chedburgh FC	0	0	0	0	0
Exning United FC	1	0	0	0	0
Haverhill Rovers FC	5	5	5	10	10
Haverhill Town FC	3	5	0	0	0
Lakenheath FC	1	4	0	0	0
Lakenheath Youth FC	1	0	1	0	1
Mildenhall Town FC	0	0	0	0	0
Moreton Hall Youth FC	0	1	1	1	1
Motts County Pirates FC	0	0	0	0	0
Risby Greens Youth FC	0	0	0	0	0
Sporting 87 FC	0	0	0	0	0
Thurlow Youth FC	0	0	0	0	0
West Row Gunners FC	1	1	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

### 5.3.5 The impact of covid-19

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of teams they expect to field in the next full season, compared with the 2019/20 season. The responses indicate a net increase of seven teams, an increase of 4.0% from the number of existing teams.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11)</i>	<i>Youth (9v9)</i>	<i>Mini (7v7)</i>	<i>Mini (5v5)</i>
Brandon Town FC	0	-	-	-	-
Bury Town FC	+1	+3	0	-1	0
Cavendish FC	0	-	-	-	-
Chedburgh FC	0	-	-	-	-
Exning United FC	0	+1	0	0	0
Haverhill Rovers FC	0	0	+3	+3	+3
Haverhill Town FC	0	+2	-	-	-
Lakenheath FC	0	+1	-	-	-
Lakenheath Youth FC	-	+3	-1	+1	0
Mildenhall Town FC	-	+1	-	0	-1
Moreton Hall Youth FC	0	+1	-1	+1	+1
Motts County Pirates FC	0	-	-	-	-
Sporting 87 FC	0	0	0	0	0
Risby Greens Youth FC	-	0	-1	-	-
Thurlow Youth FC	0	+2	0	+2	-1
West Row Gunners FC	0	-	-	-	-
<b>NET TOTALS</b>	<b>+1</b>	<b>+11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+2</b>	<b>+2</b>

## 5.4 Football pitch supply in West Suffolk

### 5.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the detail of football pitch supply in West Suffolk. The pitches included in the analysis are defined as natural or artificial turf areas permanently laid out with regulation markings, with the following dimensions as specified in the FA's 'Guide to Pitch Dimensions' (2013):

<i>Pitch Type</i>	<i>Pitch length</i>	<i>Pitch width</i>	<i>Size including run-offs</i>
Adult football	100m	64m	106m x 70m
Youth football 11v11 (U17-U18)	100m	64m	106m x 70m
Youth football 11v11 (U15-U16)	91m	55m	97m x 61m
Youth football 11v11 (U13-U14)	82m	50m	88m x 56m
Youth football 9v9 (U11-U12)	73m	46m	79m x 52m
Mini-soccer 7v7 (U9-U10)	55m	37m	61m x 43m
Mini-soccer 5v5 (U7-U8)	37m	27m	43m x 33m
'3G' Football Turf Pitch	100m	64m	106m x 70m

The categories assessed are as follows:

- Pitches available for community use and used.
- Pitches available for community use but not used.
- Pitches not available for community use.

### 5.4.2 Full-sized '3G' football turf pitches

All pitches are on the FA Register and can therefore be used for competitive matches. The Newmarket pitch is just outside the district boundary and is therefore shown in italics:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
<i>Newmarket Town FC</i>	<i>Cricket Field Road, Newmarket CB8 8BT</i>	<i>106m x 70m</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>Newmarket</i>
King Edward VI School	Grove Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3BH	105m x 70m	Yes	2019	Bury St. Edmunds
Mildenhall Hub	Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall IP28 7JX	105m x 70m	Yes	2021	Mildenhall
Skyliner Sports Centre	Rougham Tower Avenue, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7QB	105m x 68m	Yes	2017	Bury St. Edmunds
The New Croft	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0BW	105m x 70m	Yes	2016	Haverhill

### 5.4.3 Small-sided '3G' football turf pitches

The following small-sided pitches are available for community use. None of the pitches is on the FA's '3G' Pitch Register and therefore they can only be used for training purposes:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
County Upper School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RF	35m x 17m 35m x 17m	Yes	2016	Bury St. Edmunds
Mildenhall College Academy	Bury Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HT	48m x 34m	No	2000	Mildenhall
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0LD	35m x 20m	Yes	2012	Haverhill
Sexton's Manor Academy	Greene Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3HG	35m x 18m	No	2017	Bury St. Edmunds
St. Benedict's Catholic School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RH	36m x 17m	Yes	2000	Bury St. Edmunds
The Haberden (Bury St. Edmunds Rugby Club)	Rougham Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2RN	60m x 38m	Yes	2017	Bury St. Edmunds

#### 5.4.4 Other full-sized artificial turf pitches used for football

The following all-weather pitches are all available for community use and used and have some football use:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Surface</i>	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Built</i>
Haverhill Leisure Centre	Lordscroft Lane, Haverhill CB9 0ER	102m x 62m	Sand-filled	Yes	2014
Nowton Park	Bury Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP29 5BD	110m x 66m	Sand-filled	Yes	2009

#### 5.4.5 Grass football pitches

Provision of grass pitches with regulation line markings and goalposts for organised football are as follows. Pitches overmarked on other pitches are shown in brackets:

- **Available for community use and used:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Aspal Close Nature Reserve	Oak Drive, Beck Row IP28 8AF	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Bardwell Playing Field	Spring Road, Bardwell IP31 1AB	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Barrow Playing Field	The Street, Barrow IP25 5AN	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Barton Mills Village Green	Mildenhall Road, Barton Mills IP28 6BD	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Brandon Playing Fields	Church Road, Brandon IP27 0JB	2	1	1	2	1	Brandon
Bury Town Football Club	Cotton Lane, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 1XP	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
British Sugar Sports Club	Hollow Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7BB	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Cavendish Sports Club	Lower Street, Cavendish CO10 8AD	1	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
Church Lane Playing Field	Church Park, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8JB	1	-	-	-	-	Haverhill

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Clare Playing Field	Cavendish Road, Clare CO10 8PH	1	-	1	1	1	Haverhill
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	2	2	1	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Exning Football Ground	Lacey's Lane Exning CB8 7HL	1	-	1	-	1	Newmarket
Exning Primary School	Oxford Street, Exning CB8 7EW	-	-	-	1	-	Newmarket
Fornham All Saints Community Centre	Tut Hill, Fornham All Saints IP28 6JZ	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Gainsborough Recreation Ground	Grafton Close, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3QQ	2	1	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
George Lambton Playing Fields	Fordham Road, Newmarket CB8 7BE	2	-	1	-	-	Newmarket
Great Barton Playing Field	East Barton Road, Great Barton IP31 2RF	1	-	1	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	Wrating Road, Great Thurlow CB9 7LJ	1	-	1	1	1	Haverhill
Great Whelnetham Community Centre	Stanningfield Road, Great Whelnetham IP30 0TX	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Hardwick Heath	Hardwick Lane, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2RB	1	1	1	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Hardwick Primary School	Steward Road, Bury St, Edmunds IP33 2PW	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	Symonds Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7EE	1	-	(1)	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Hepworth Recreation Ground	The Street, Hepworth IP22 2PS	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Horringer Court Middle School	Glastonbury Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2EX	-	1	1	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Howard Primary School	Beard Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6SA	-	-	1	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Ickworth Park Primary School	Meadow Drive, Horringer IP29 5SB	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Jubilee Playing Fields	Recreation Way, Mildenhall IP28 7HG	1	-	1	1	1	Mildenhall
King Edward VI Sports College	Grove Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3BH	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Lakenheath Football Club	Back Street, Lakenheath IP27 9HB	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Eriswell Road, Lakenheath IP27 9AF	1	1	1	1	1	Mildenhall
Mildenhall Town FC	Recreation Way, Mildenhall IP28 7HG	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Moreton Hall Community Centre	Symonds Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7EE	-	-	-	1	2	Bury St. Edmunds

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Mottsfeld Playing Field	Charrington Close, Haverhill CB9 0PL	2	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
Moulton Playing Field	Bridge Street, Moulton CB8 8SP	1	-	-	-	-	Newmarket
Nowton Park Sports Field	Bury Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP29 5BD	-	2	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Oakes Road Playing Field	Oakes Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6PU	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Pakenham Playing Field	The Owell, Pakenham IP31 2LB	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	Homefield Road, Haverhill CB9 8QP	3	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
RAF Honington	Green Lane, Honington IP31 1EE	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Hundred Acre Way, Red Lodge IP28 8XR	1	1	-	1	-	Mildenhall
Risby Playing Field	Aylmer Close, Risby IP28 6RT	-	1	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Rougham Playing Field	Almshouse Road, Rougham IP30 9JN	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Sebert Wood Primary School	Sebert Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7EG	-	-	1	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Stanton Recreation Ground	Old Bury Road, Stanton IP31 2BX	2	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Ten Acre Field	Mount Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7EE	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
The Great Meadow	Arms Lane, Kedington CB9 7QQ	1	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
The New Croft	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0BW	2	3	1(1)	1(1)	(1)	Haverhill
Tollgate Playing Field	Northumberland Avenue, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6LS	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Tuddenham Playing Field	High Street, Tuddenham IP28 6SL	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Victory Sports Ground	Nowton Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2BT	2	1	2	2	2	Bury St. Edmunds
West Row Playing Field	Beeches Road, West Row IP28 8NY	1	-	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	Cemetery Road, Wickhambrook CB8 8XR	1	-	1	-	-	Newmarket
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>51</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17(2)</b>	<b>18(1)</b>	<b>17(1)</b>	-

- **Pitches not available for community use:** The following grass pitches on school sites are not available for community use:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Abbotts Green Primary Academy	Airfield Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7PJ	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Barningham Primary School	Church Road, Barningham IP31 1DD	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Barrow Primary School	Colethorpe Lane, Barrow IP29 5AU	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Burton End Primary Academy	School Lane, Haverhill CB9 9DE	-	-	1	1	-	Haverhill
Castle Manor Academy	Eastern Avenue, Haverhill, CB9 9JE	2	2	-	-	-	Haverhill
Cavendish Primary School	The Green, Cavendish CO10 8BA	-	-	-	-	1	Haverhill
Clare Primary Academy	Erbury Place, Clare CO10 8PZ	-	-	-	1	-	Haverhill
Coupals Primary Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0LB	-	-	-	1	-	Haverhill
Forest Primary Academy	Bury Road, Brandon IP27 0FP	-	-	-	-	1	Brandon
Great Heath Academy	Girton Close, Mildenhall IP28 7PT	-	-	-	-	4	Mildenhall
Great Whelnetham Primary School	Stanningfield Road, Great Whelnetham IP30 0UA	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Honington Primary School	Malting Row, Honington IP31 1RE	-	-	-	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Hopton Primary School	Thelnetham Road, Hopton IP22 2QY	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Houldsworth Valley Primary school	Rowley Drive, Newmarket CB8 0PU	-	-	-	1	-	Newmarket
IES Breckland	Crown Street, Brandon, IP27 0PE	1	2	-	-	-	Brandon
Ixworth Primary School	Crown Lane, Ixworth IP31 2EL	-	1	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Kedington Primary Academy	Church Walk, Kedington CB9 7QZ	-	-	-	1	1	Haverhill
Lakenheath Primary School	Mill Road, Lakenheath IP27 9DU	-	-	-	1	-	Mildenhall
Mildenhall College Academy	Bury Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HT	1	1	1	-	-	Mildenhall
Mildenhall College (Sheldrick Site)	Sheldrick Way, Mildenhall IP28 7JX	-	1	-	-	-	Mildenhall
Moulton Primary School	School Road, Moulton CB8 8PR	-	-	1	1	-	Newmarket
New Cangle Primary School	Chapple Drive, Haverhill, CB9 0DU	-	-	1	-	-	Haverhill
Newmarket Academy	Exning Road, Newmarket, CB8 0EB	2	1	-	-	-	Newmarket

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Place Farm Primary School	Camps Road, Haverhill CB9 8HF	-	-	-	1	1	Haverhill
Priory School	Mount Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7BH	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Risby Primary School	Aylmer Close, Risby IP28 6RT	-	-	-	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Rougham Primary School	Church Road, Rougham IP30 9JJ	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
SET Ixworth School	Walsham Road, Ixworth 1P31 2HS	1	-	2	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LD	2	1	-	-	1	Haverhill
St. Benedict's Catholic School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RH	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
St. Christopher's Primary School	Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge IP28 8XQ	-	-	-	1	-	Mildenhall
St. Felix Primary School	School Lane, Haverhill CB9 9DE	-	-	1	-	-	Haverhill
St Mary's Primary Academy	Trinity Avenue, Bury St. Edmunds IP28 7LR	-	-	-	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Sexton's Manor Primary School	Greene Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3HG	-	-	-	1	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Stanton Primary School	Upthorpe Road, Stanton IP31 2AW	-	-	-	2	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Stoke College	Ashen Lane, Stoke-by- Clare CO10 8JE	1	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
Stour Valley Community School	Cavendish Road, Clare CO10 8PJ	-	2	-	-	-	Haverhill
Tollgate Primary School	Tollgate Lane, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6DG	-	-	-	1	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Westfield Primary Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0BW	-	-	1	-	-	Haverhill
Westley Middle School	Oliver Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3JB	-	-	2	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>

- ***Pitches with community access where use has been discontinued:*** The following sites had pitches where use has been discontinued in the past five years:



<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Chedburgh Playing Field	Chevington Road, Chedburgh IP29 4UL	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Coney Weston Playing Field	Thetford Road, Coney Weston IP31 1DN	1	-	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Elveden Playing Field	Brandon Road, Elveden IP24 3TW	1	-	-	-	-	Brandon
Euston Park	Thetford Road, Euston IP24 2QW	2	-	1	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Hundon Football Field	Upper North Street, Hundon CO10 8EE	1	-	-	-	-	Haverhill
King George's Playing Field	Thetford Road, Fornham St. Martin IP31 1SW	-	1	-	-	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Ousden Playing Field	Front Street, Ousden CB8 8TW	1	-	-	-	-	Newmarket
Stansfield Playing Field	Stansfield Hall Road, Stansfield CO10 8LP	-	1	-	-	-	Haverhill
Stradishall Playing Field	Cricket Meadow, Stradishall CB8 8YX	1	-	-	-	-	Newmarket
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	-

#### 5.4.6 Provision by sub-area

Pitches with community use and used by sub-area are as follows:

- **Full-sized '3G' Football Turf Pitches:**

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Pitches</i>	<i>Pitches per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	2	1: 37,336
Newmarket	22,141	(1)	1: 22,141
Haverhill	38,032	1	1: 38,032
Mildenhall	34,260	1	1: 34,260
Brandon	9,941	0	-
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1: 35,809</b>

- **Grass pitches:** Over-marked pitches are shown in brackets:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	24	9	7(1)	8	10
Newmarket	5	0	3	1	1
Haverhill	12	3	4(1)	4(1)	3(1)
Mildenhall	8	2	2	3	2
Brandon	2	1	1	2	1
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17(2)</b>	<b>18(1)</b>	<b>17(1)</b>



#### 5.4.7 Artificial turf pitch quality

The quality of the ‘3G’ football turf pitches in the district was assessed from site visits, to apply the Non-technical Visual Assessment criteria developed for use in conjunction with the *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance*. The assessment generates an overall ‘score’ by evaluating the playing surface, fencing, floodlighting, disability access and changing provision.

- **Full-sized ‘3G’ Football Turf Pitches:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
Newmarket Town FC	Good	Good
King Edward VI School	Good	Standard
Mildenhall Hub	Good	Good
Skyliner Sports Centre	Good	Standard
The New Croft	Good	Good

- **Small-sided ‘3G’ football turf pitches:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
County Upper School	Good	Standard
Mildenhall College Academy	Standard	Standard
Samuel Ward Academy	Good	Standard
Sexton’s Manor Academy	Good	Standard
St. Benedict’s Catholic School	Standard	Standard
The Haberden	Good	Good

#### 5.4.8 Grass pitch quality

The quality of all grass football pitches in West Suffolk with community use and used was assessed from site visits during the playing season, to apply the Non-technical Visual Assessment criteria developed by the FA for use in conjunction with the *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance*. The criteria assessed are as follows. A percentage score and associated ratings are generated as an overall measure of quality:

- **The playing surface:** This includes grass cover, pitch dimensions, gradient, evenness, length of grass, drainage and evidence of any unauthorised use.
- **The changing facilities:** This includes the availability of changing rooms, kitchen and/or bar, the interior and exterior appearance, showering and toilet provision, medical room, disability access and parking arrangements.
- **Grounds maintenance:** This includes the frequency of grass cutting, seeding, aeration, sand-dressing, fertilising, weed killing and chain harrowing.

The ratings for each grass football pitch in West Suffolk are below. The percentage scores generated equate to ratings of ‘Good’ for scores of 100% - 75% (highlighted in green below), ‘Standard’ for scores of 74.9% - 50% (highlighted in yellow below), ‘Poor’ for scores of 49.9% - 25% (highlighted in red below) and ‘Unsuitable’ below 25%:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Aspal Close Nature Reserve	Adult pitch	Good	Good	'Good' quality fenced pitch with 'good' quality changing.
Bardwell Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Good	'Standard' quality pitch with 'good' quality changing.
Barrow Playing Field	Adult pitch	Poor	None	'Poor' quality pitch (goalmouth wear and uneven). No changing.
Barton Mills Village Green	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch surface (not marked out at the time of the site visit). 'Standard' quality changing.
Brandon Playing Fields	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth 11v11 pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch 1 Mini 7v7 pitch 2 Mini 5v5 pitch	Good Standard Standard Standard Poor Poor Poor	Standard	Pitch quality varies across the site. The fenced adult pitch is 'good' quality, but the smaller pitches to the rear have very 'poor' quality surfaces. Changing provision is 'standard' quality.
Bury Town Football Club	Adult pitch	Good	Good	'Good' quality stadium pitch and changing.
British Sugar Sports Club	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch with some undulations and 'standard' changing.
Cavendish Sports Club	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard' quality and 'standard' changing.
Church Lane Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	None	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard' quality. No changing facilities.
Clare Playing Field	Adult pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Good Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality pitches and 'good' quality Football Foundation-funded changing facilities.
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth 11v11 pitch 1 Youth 11v11 pitch 2	Good Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality pitches and changing facilities.
Exning Football Ground	Adult pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitches, with 'standard' changing and limited on-site parking.
Exning Primary School	Mini 7v7 pitch	Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitch. No changing for community hirers.
Fornham All Saints Community Centre	Adult pitch	Poor	Standard	'Poor' quality pitch (goalmouth wear and uneven). Changing 'standard'.
Gainsborough Recreation Ground	Adult pitch Youth 11v11 pitch	Standard Standard	Good	Pitches at the lower end of 'standard' quality (sloping and worn). 'Good' quality changing
George Lambton Playing Fields	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth 9v9 pitch	Standard Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitches (although the youth 9v9 pitch has a heavily-used footpath diagonally across it). 'Standard' changing.
Great Barton Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Pitch at the higher end of 'standard' quality and 'standard' changing.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	Adult pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Good Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality pitches and changing facilities.
Great Whelnetham Community Centre	Adult pitch	Good	Standard	'Good' quality pitch with a small covered spectator area and 'standard' changing.
Hardwick Heath	Adult pitch Youth 11v11 pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitches, with 'standard' changing
Hardwick Primary School	Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	Adult pitch (Youth 9v9 pitch)	Standard Standard	Poor	'Standard' quality pitches (youth 9v9 overmarked) and 'poor' quality container-type changing facility.
Hepworth Recreation Ground	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	Pitch at the lower end of 'standard' quality and 'standard' changing.
Horringer Court Middle School	Youth 11v11 pitch Youth 9v9 pitch	Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Howards Primary School	Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Ickworth Park Primary School	Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Jubilee Playing Fields, Mildenhall	Adult pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Poor Poor Poor Poor	None	Much of the site was flooded at the time of the site visit. The only marked pitch (7v7) was 'poor' quality (sloping and grass cover). No on-site changing.
King Edward VI Sports College	Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Lakenheath Football Club	Adult pitch	Good	Good	'Good' quality stadium pitch and changing.
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Adult pitch Youth 11v11 pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard Good Good Good	Good	Larger pitches at the lower end of 'standard' quality, although mini pitches on the cricket outfield are 'good'. 'Good quality changing.
Mildenhall Town FC	Adult pitch	Good	Good	'Good' quality stadium pitch and changing.
Moreton Hall Community Centre	Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch 1 Mini 5v5 pitch 2	Standard Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitches and changing.
Mottsfield Playing Field	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2	Poor Poor	Standard	'Poor' quality pitches (undulations and grass cover) and 'standard' changing.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Moulton Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Good	'Standard' quality pitch with 'good' quality changing.
Nowton Park Sports Field	Youth 11v11 pitch 1 Youth 11v11 pitch 2	Standard Standard	Good	Pitches at the higher end of 'standard' quality. 'Good' quality changing.
Oakes Road Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Poor	'Standard' quality pitch. 'Poor' quality changing in container unit.
Pakenham Playing Field	Adult pitch	Poor	Poor	'Poor' quality pitch (uneven and worn) and 'poor' changing.
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Adult pitch 3	Standard Standard Standard	Poor	Pitches at the lower end of 'standard' quality. 'Poor' quality changing in two container units.
RAF Honington	Mini 7v7 pitch	Good	None	'Good' quality pitch. No changing for community hirers.
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Adult pitch Youth 11v11 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch	Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality, well-drained pitches and 'good' quality changing.
Risby Playing Field	Youth 11v11 pitch	Standard	None	Pitch at the higher end of 'standard'. No changing.
Rougham Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch and changing.
Sebert Wood Primary School	Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Standard Standard Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches. No changing for community hirers.
Stanton Recreation Ground	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2	Good Standard	Standard	'Good' quality fenced match pitch, 'standard' quality training pitch with floodlights and 'standard' changing.
Ten Acre Field	Adult pitch	Standard	None	'Standard' quality pitches and no changing.
The Great Meadow	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch and changing in the adjacent community centre.
The New Croft/Chalkstone Playing Field	Adult pitch 1 Adult pitch 2 Youth 11v11 pitch 1 Youth 11v11 pitch 2 Youth 11v11 pitch 3 Youth 9v9 pitch 1 (Youth 9v9 pitch 2) Mini 7v7 pitch 1 (Mini 7v7 pitch 2) (Mini 5v5 pitch)	Good Good Good Good Good Good Good Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality stadium pitch and changing. 'Good' quality pitches on the adjacent Chalkstone Playing Field (some overmarked) and 'good' quality Football Foundation-funded changing facilities.
Tollgate Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality fenced pitch with 'standard' changing.
Tuddenham Playing Field	Adult pitch	Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitch (sloping) and 'standard' changing.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Victory Sports Ground	Adult pitch Youth 11v11 pitch Youth 9v9 pitch Mini 7v7 pitch Mini 5v5 pitch	Good Good Good Good Good	Good	'Good' quality pitches and changing.
West Row Playing Field	Adult pitch	Good	Poor	'Good' quality fenced pitch, but 'poor' quality changing.
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	Adult pitch Youth 9v9 pitch	Standard Standard	Standard	'Standard' quality pitches and changing.

#### 5.4.9 Summary of grass pitch quality

The number and percentage of pitches in each quality band is tabulated below. Almost 10% of pitches in the district are rated as 'poor' quality, with consequent reductions in carrying capacity. Many more suffer from poor drainage and have significant slopes so are rated at the lower end of 'standard' quality.

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Good</i>		<i>Standard</i>		<i>Poor</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adult 11v11	15	36.6%	30	58.8%	6	11.8%
Youth 11v11	7	46.7%	8	53.3%	0	0.0%
Youth 9v9	6	31.6%	12	63.2%	1	5.2%
Mini-soccer 7v7	7	36.8%	9	47.4%	3	15.8%
Mini-soccer 5v5	5	26.3%	11	57.9%	2	10.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32.8%</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9.8%</b>

#### 5.4.10 Summary of changing facilities quality

24.6% of pitches are served by 'poor' quality or no changing facilities and the adverse impact on such a high proportion of pitch users makes it more difficult to recruit and retain new players, particularly women and girls.

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adult 11v11	10	19.6%
Youth 11v11	2	13.3%
Youth 9v9	4	21.1%
Mini-soccer 7v7	8	42.1%
Mini-soccer 5v5	6	33.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24.6%</b>

#### 5.4.11 Grass pitch maintenance

Football pitch maintenance in the district is organised as follows:

- **Club-managed pitches:** Bury Town FC, Lakenheath FC and Mildenhall Town FC all maintain the pitches they use. This involves a combination of external contractors and volunteer help.

- **Council-owned pitches:** The council has an in-house grounds maintenance team to undertake grass football pitch maintenance.
- **Pitches on education sites:** The school sites with community use all employ or contract their pitch maintenance staff.

#### 5.4.12 Pitch hire charges

The cost of hiring grass football pitches in West Suffolk in season 2020/2021 and comparisons with other areas are as follows:

<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Cost per match (£)</i>
<b>West Suffolk Council</b>	
Adult pitch	£44
Youth pitch	£25
Mini pitch	£20
<b>East Cambridgeshire District Council</b>	
<i>Bottisbam Village College</i>	
Adult, youth and mini pitches	£25
<i>Burwell Recreation Ground</i>	
Adult and youth pitches	£40
<b>Braintree District Council</b>	
Adult pitch	£65
Youth pitch	£31
<b>Babergh District Council</b>	
Adult pitch	£40
Youth pitch	£33
<b>Mid Suffolk District Council</b>	
Adult pitch	£40
Youth pitch	£30
<b>Breckland District Council</b>	
Adult pitch (with changing)	£45
Adult pitch (without changing)	£25

The cost of hiring artificial grass football pitches in West Suffolk in season 2020/2021 and comparisons with other areas are as follows:

<b>Pitch</b>	<b>Cost per match (£)</b>
<b>West Suffolk Council</b> <i>Skyliner Sports Centre</i> Whole pitch	£80
<b>East Cambridgeshire District Council</b> <i>The Hive, Ely</i> Full pitch (Adult peak) Full pitch (Adult off-peak) Full pitch (Junior peak) Full pitch (Junior off-peak) Half pitch (Adult peak) Half pitch (Adult off-peak) Half pitch (Junior peak) Half pitch (Junior off-peak)	£55 £40 £30 £20 £27.50 £20 £15 £10
<i>Bottisbam Village College</i> Full pitch Half-pitch One-quarter pitch	£65 £40 £20
<b>Braintree District Council</b> <i>Notley Sports Centre</i> Adult pitch Youth pitch <i>Witham Sports Centre</i> Full pitch (adult) Full pitch (junior)	£45 £40 £78.50 £58.75
<b>Breckland District Council</b> <i>Dereham Neatherd High School</i> Full pitch (adult) Full pitch (junior)	£80 £53
<b>Kings Lynn and West Norfolk</b> <i>Lynnsport</i> Full pitch Half pitch	£55 £28

The comparison of prices shows that grass pitches in West Suffolk are comparable to those in neighbouring areas. Conversely, '3G' pitch hire charges in West Suffolk are higher than in the surrounding areas.

#### 5.4.13 Ownership, management and security of access

The ownership, management and security of community access of football pitch sites is detailed below. Security of access refers to the extent to which community use is protected (through public ownership, community use agreements etc.), rather than the security of tenure of specific club users.



<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Access</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	Bardwell Parish Council	Bardwell Parish Council	Secured
Barrow Playing Field	Barrow Parish Council	Barrow Parish Council	Secured
Barton Mills Village Green	Barton Mills Parish Council	Barton Mills Parish Council	Secured
Beck Row Playing Field	Beck Row Parish Council	Beck Row Parish Council	Secured
Brandon Playing Fields	Brandon Playing Fields Trust	Brandon Playing Fields Ctte.	Secured
Bury Town Football Club	West Suffolk Council	Bury Town Football Club	Secured
British Sugar Sports Club	British Sugar Sports Club	British Sugar Sports Club	Secured
Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Sports Club	Secured
Church Lane Playing Field	Stoke-by-Clare Parish Council	Stoke-by-Clare Parish Council	Secured
Clare Playing Field	Clare Town Council	Clare Town Council	Secured
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School	Culford School	Unsecured
Exning Football Ground	Exning Estate	Exning Football Club	Secured
Exning Primary School	Suffolk County Council	Exning Primary School	Unsecured
Fornham All Saints Com. Ct.	Fornham All Saints PC	Fornham All Saints PC	Secured
Gainsborough Recn Ground	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
George Lambton Pl. Field	Lambton Trust	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Great Barton Playing Field	Great Barton Parish Council	Great Barton Parish Council	Secured
Great Thurlow Recn Ground	Thurlow Estate	Thurlow Sports Club	Secured
Gt. Whelnetham Comm Ctre	Great Barton Parish Council	Great Barton Parish Council	Secured
Hardwick Heath	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Hardwick Primary School	Hardwick Primary School	Hardwick Primary School	Unsecured
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Hepworth Recn Ground	Hepworth Parish Council	Hepworth Parish Council	Secured
Horringer Court Middle Sch	Unity Schools Partnership	Horringer Court Middle Sch	Unsecured
Howards Primary School	Anglian Learning	Howards Primary School	Unsecured
Ickworth Park Primary Sch	Suffolk County Council	Ickworth Park Primary Sch	Unsecured
Jubilee Playing Fields	Mildenhall Town Council	Mildenhall Town Council	Secured
King Edward VI Sp. College	King Edward VI Foundation	King Edward VI Sp. College	Unsecured
Lakenheath Football Club	Lakenheath Football Club	Lakenheath Football Club	Secured
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Lakenheath Pl. Fields Assoc.	Lakenheath Pl. Fields Assoc.	Secured
Mildenhall Town FC	Mildenhall Town FC	Mildenhall Town FC	Secured
Moreton Hall Comm. Centre	Moreton Hall Comm. Assoc.	Moreton Hall Youth FC	Secured
Ten Acre Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Mottsfield Playing Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Moulton Playing Field	Moulton Parish Council	Moulton Parish Council	Secured
Nowton Park Sports Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Oakes Road Playing Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Pakenham Playing Field	Pakenham Parish Council	Pakenham Parish Council	Secured
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	West Suffolk Council	Abbeycroft Leisure	Secured
RAF Honington	Ministry of Defence	RAF Honington	Unsecured
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Red Lodge Parish Council	Red Lodge Parish Council	Secured
Risby Playing Field	Risby Village Comm. Trust	Risby Greens Youth FC	Secured
Rougham Playing Field	Rougham Parish Council	Rougham Parish Council	Secured
Sebert Wood Primary School	Suffolk County Council	Sebert Wood Primary School	Unsecured
Stanton Recreation Ground	Stanton Parish Council	Stanton Parish Council	Secured
Ten Acre Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Access</i>
The Great Meadow	Kedington Parish Council	Kedington Parish Council	Secured
The New Croft	Haverhill Comm. Sports Ass.	Haverhill Comm. Sports Ass.	Secured
Tollgate Playing Field	West Suffolk Council	West Suffolk Council	Secured
Tuddenham Playing Field	Tuddenham Parish Council	Tuddenham Parish Council	Secured
Victory Sports Ground	Victory Sports Ground CIC	Sporting 87 FC	Secured
West Row Playing Field	West Row Parish Council	West Row Village Hall Ctte.	Secured

The number and proportion of football pitches in West Suffolk with community use and used that have secured access is as follows.

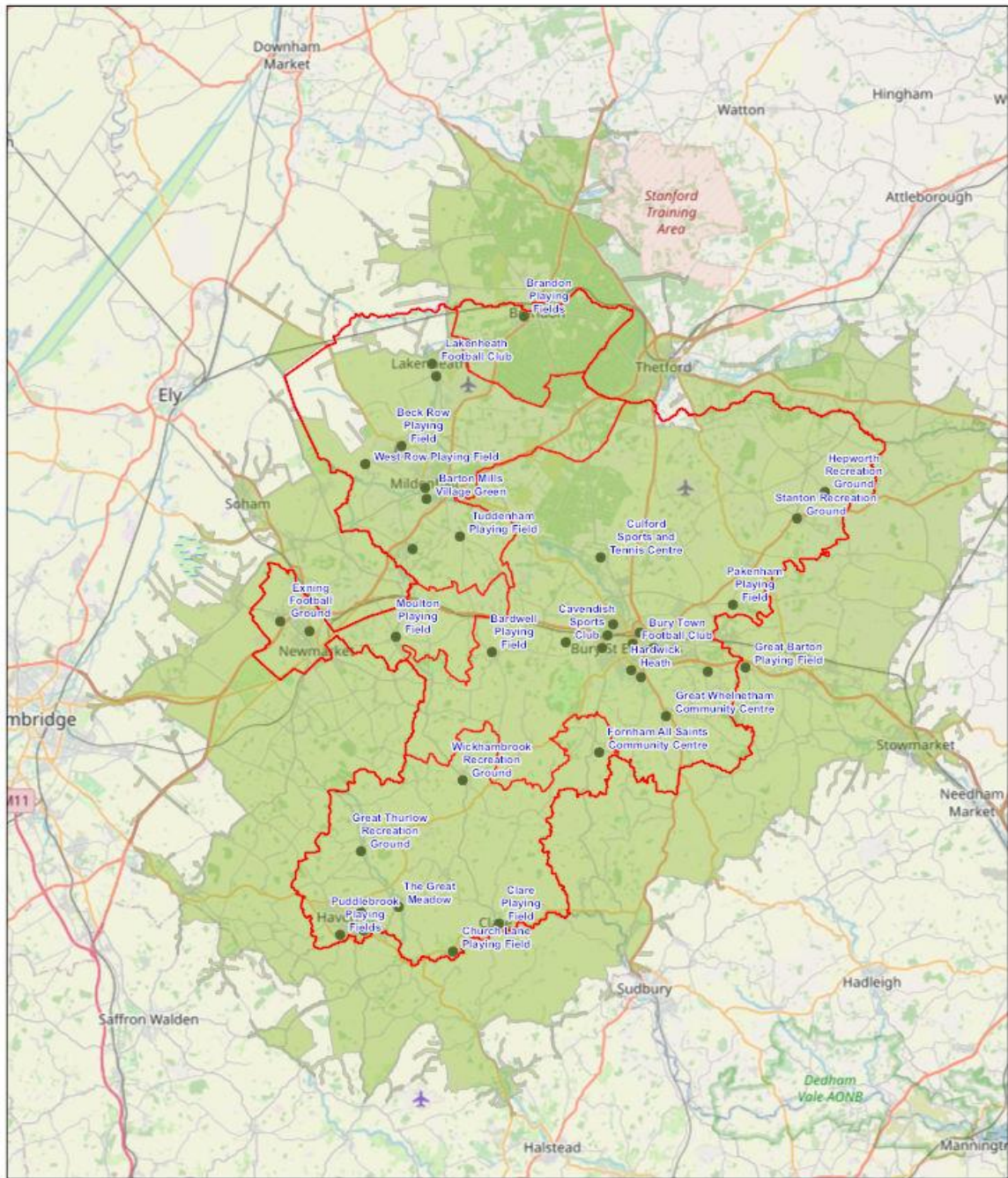
<i>Pitch Type</i>	<i>Secured</i>		<i>Unsecured</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Adult football	49	96.1%	2	3.9%
Youth football (11v11)	12	80.0%	3	20.0%
Youth football (9v9)	15	78.9%	4	21.1%
Mini-soccer (7v7)	14	73.7%	5	26.3%
Mini-soccer (5v5)	13	72.2%	5	27.8%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>84.4%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15.6%</b>

## 5.5 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of football pitches in West Suffolk has been assessed by identifying catchments to illustrate local level accessibility. This is based on the results of the clubs' survey, which identifies 15-minutes travel time as the typical maximum for grass pitches and 20 minutes for '3G' football turf pitches. The position in terms of geographical coverage of the district is as follows:

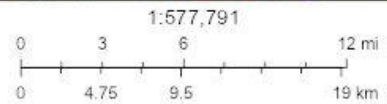
- **Adult football pitches:** The whole population is within 15-minutes' drive time of at least one adult football pitch, with the exception of a small, sparsely populated area to the north of Lakenheath.
- **Youth 11v11 pitches:** The whole of West Suffolk is within 15-minutes' drive time of at least one youth 11v11 pitch, with the exception of rural areas to the north of Lakenheath, north and east of Haverhill and north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.
- **Youth 9v9 pitches:** The whole of West Suffolk is within 15-minutes' drive time of at least one youth 9v9 pitch, with the exception of rural areas to the north of Lakenheath, north and east of Haverhill and north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.
- **Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:** The whole of West Suffolk is within 15-minutes' drive time of at least one mini 7v7 pitch, with the exception of rural areas to the north of Lakenheath.
- **Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:** The whole of West Suffolk is within 15-minutes' drive time of at least one mini 5v5 pitch, with the exception of rural areas to the north of Lakenheath, north and east of Haverhill and north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.
- **'3G' football turf pitches:** The whole of West Suffolk is within 20-minutes' drive time of at least one '3G' football turf pitch, with the exception of a small, sparsely populated area to the north of Lakenheath east of Haverhill and north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.

# WEST SUFFOLK - Adult Football Pitches within 15 Minutes Drives



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- ADULT FOOTBALL PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY

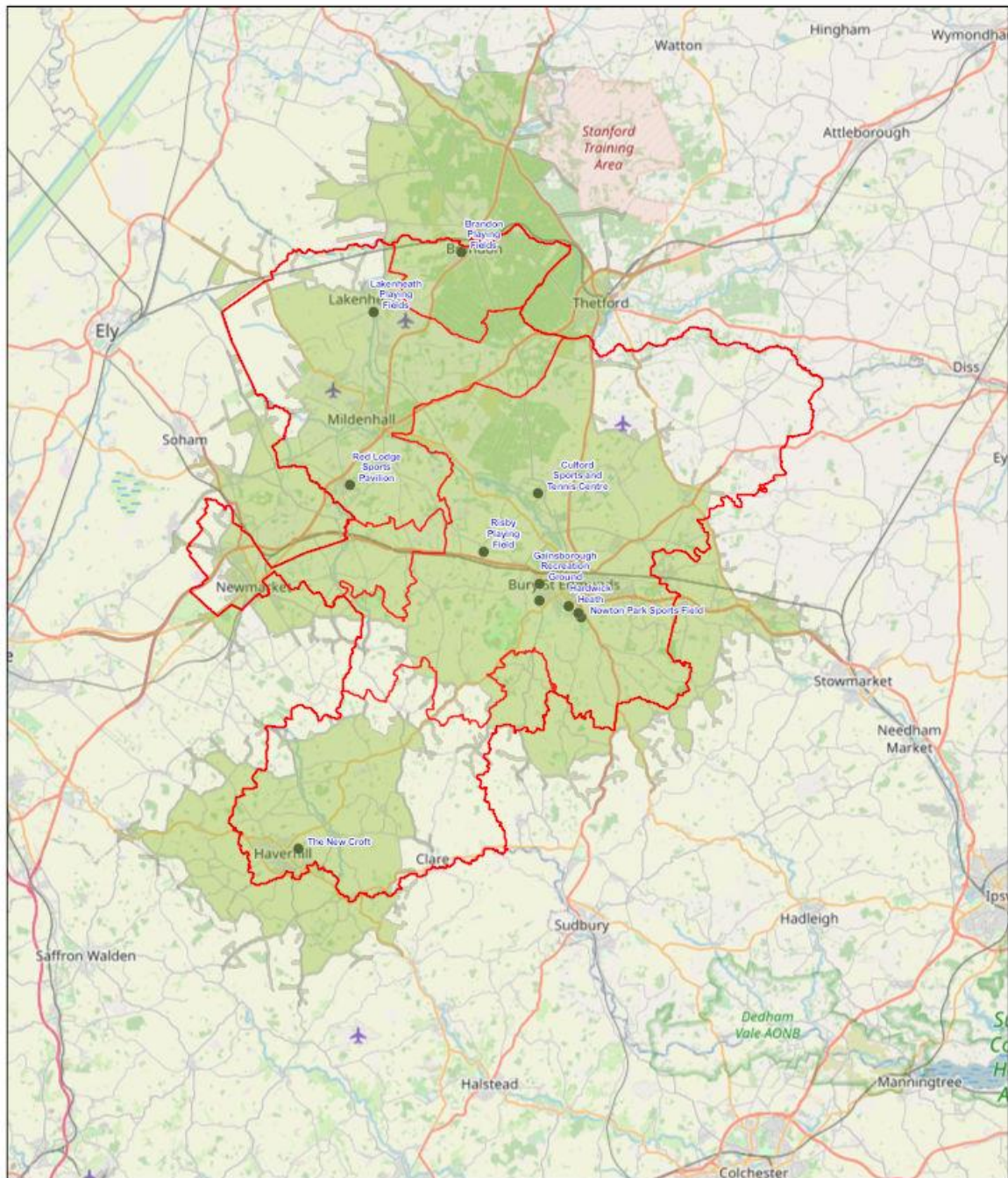


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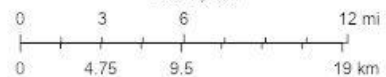
# WEST SUFFOLK - Youth 11v11 Football Pitches within 15 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

1:577,791

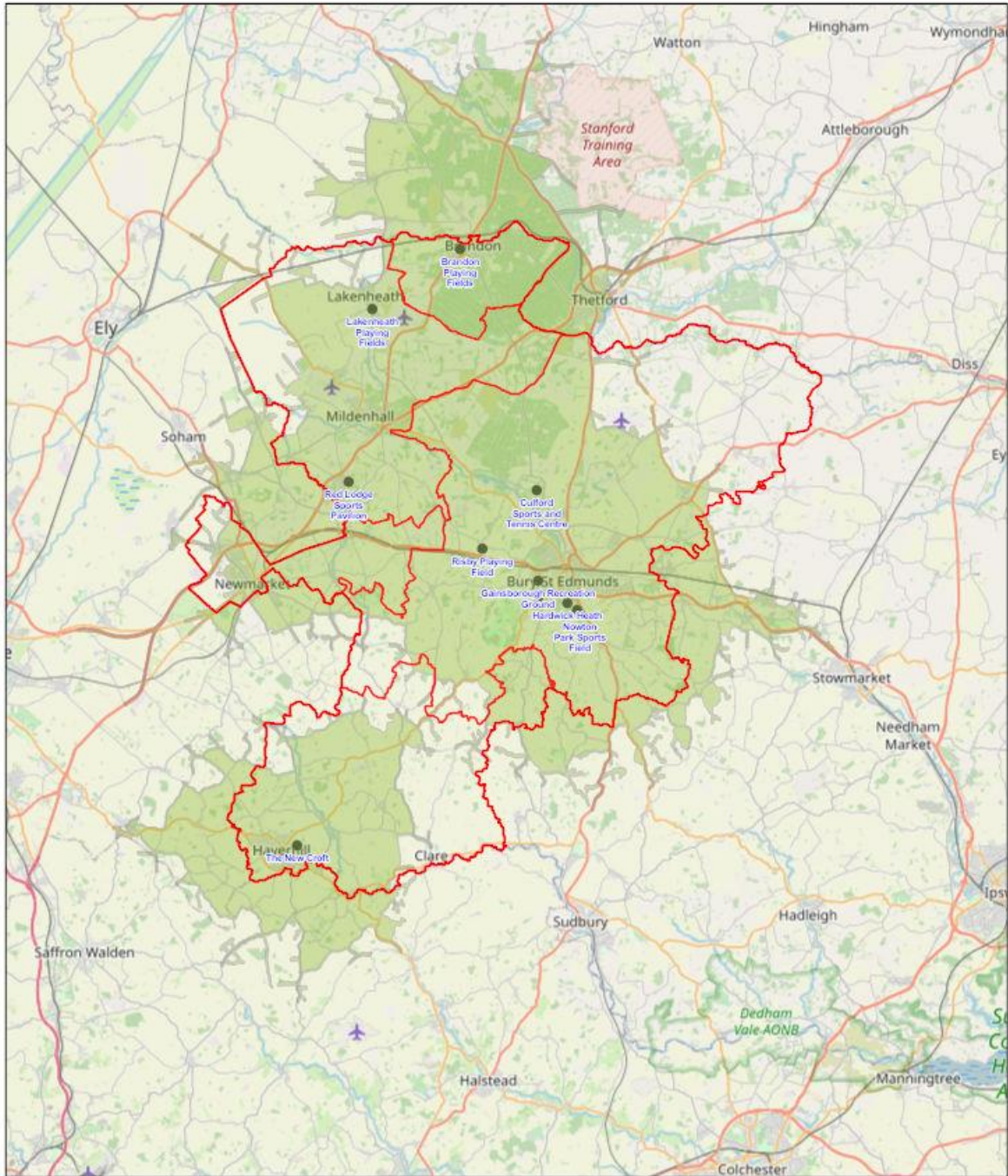
- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- YOUTH 11V11 FOOTBALL PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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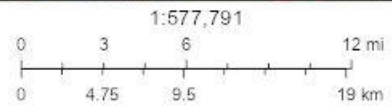


# WEST SUFFOLK - Youth 9v9 Football Pitches within 15 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

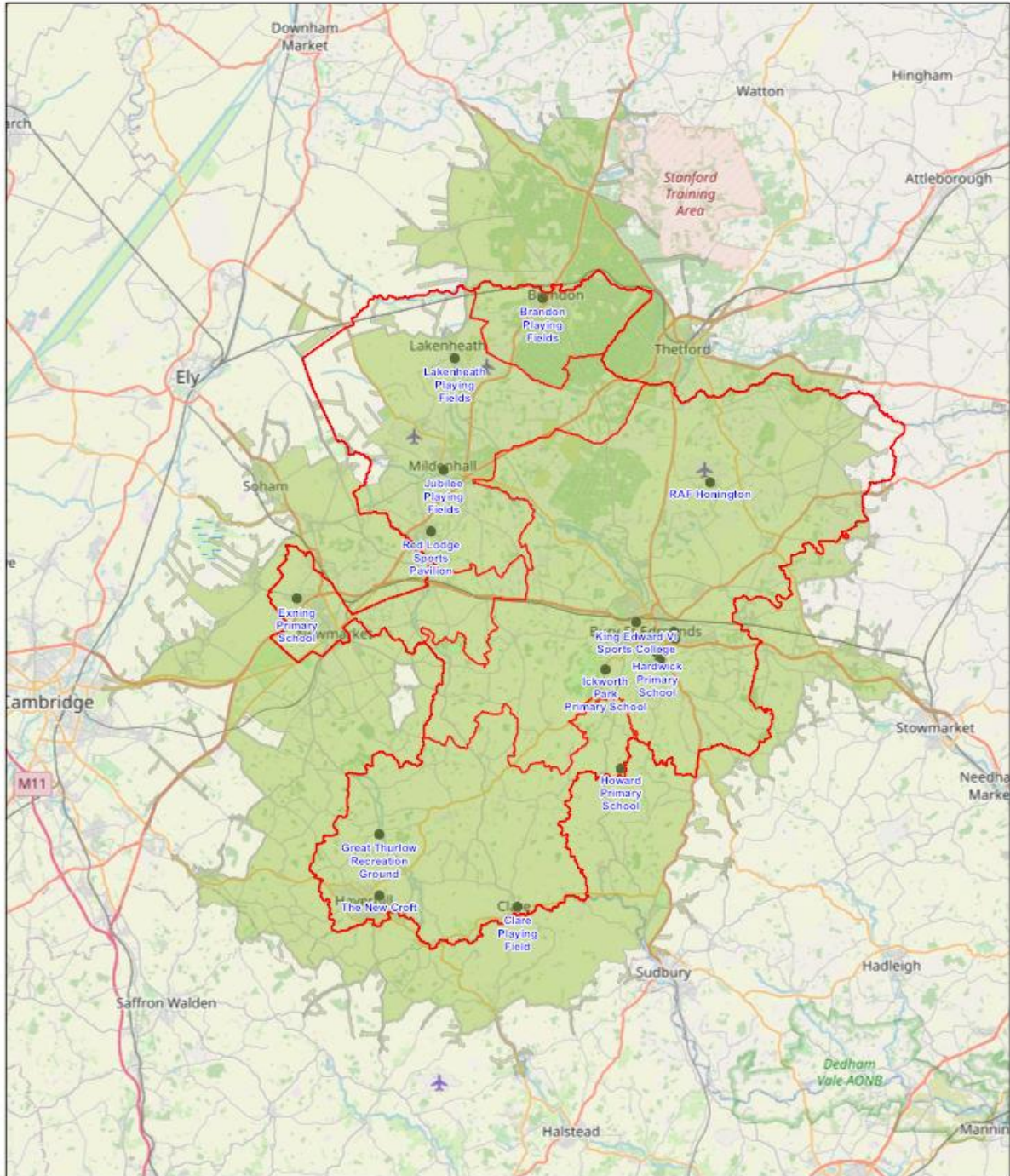
- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- YOUTH 9V9 FOOTBALLS PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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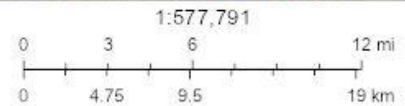


# WEST SUFFOLK - Mini Soccer 7v7 Pitches within 15 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

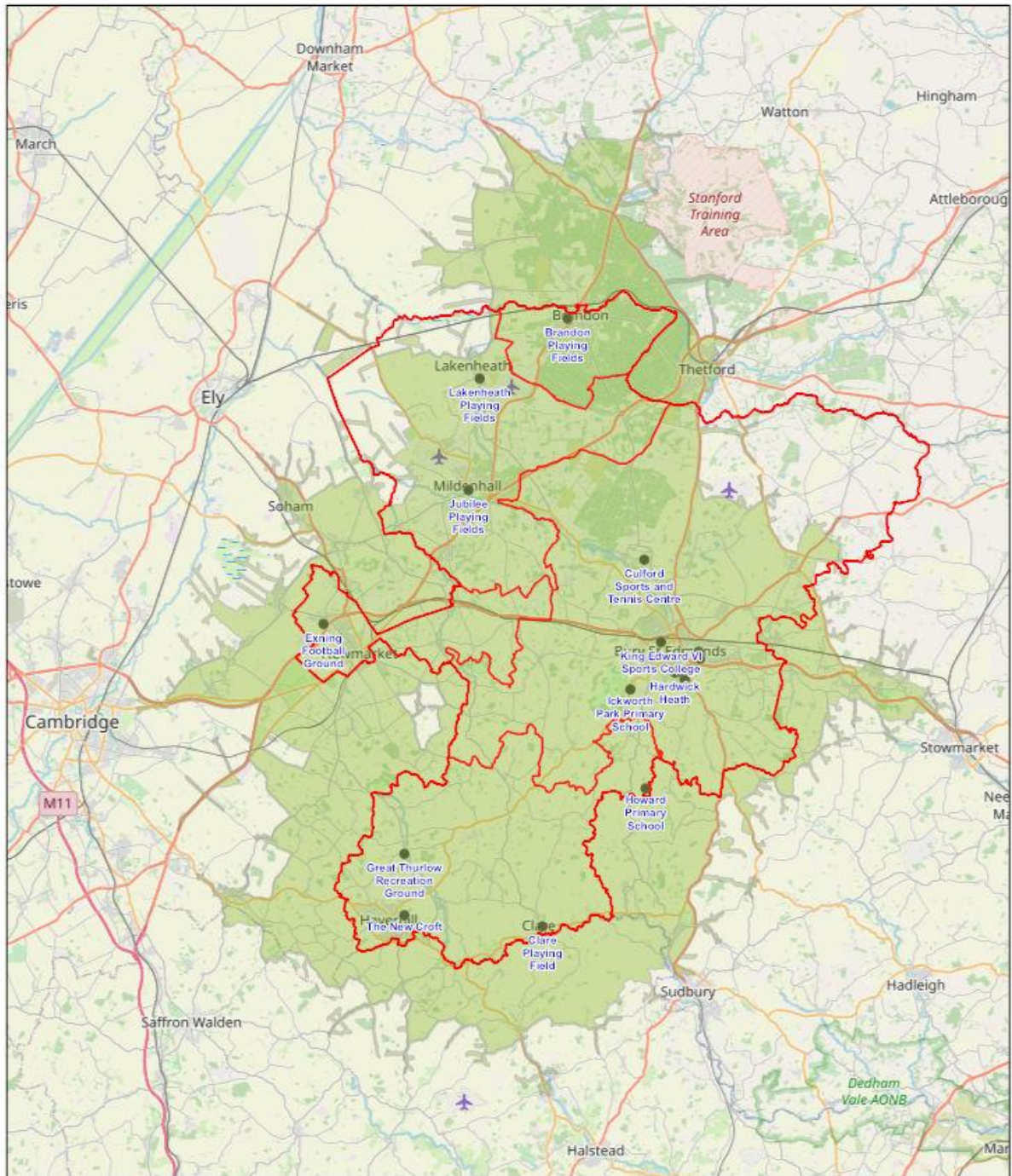
- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- MINI SOCCER 7V7 PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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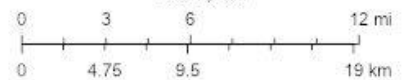
# WEST SUFFOLK - Mini Soccer 5v5 Pitches within 15 Minutes Drive



7/21/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- MINI SOCCER 5V5 PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY

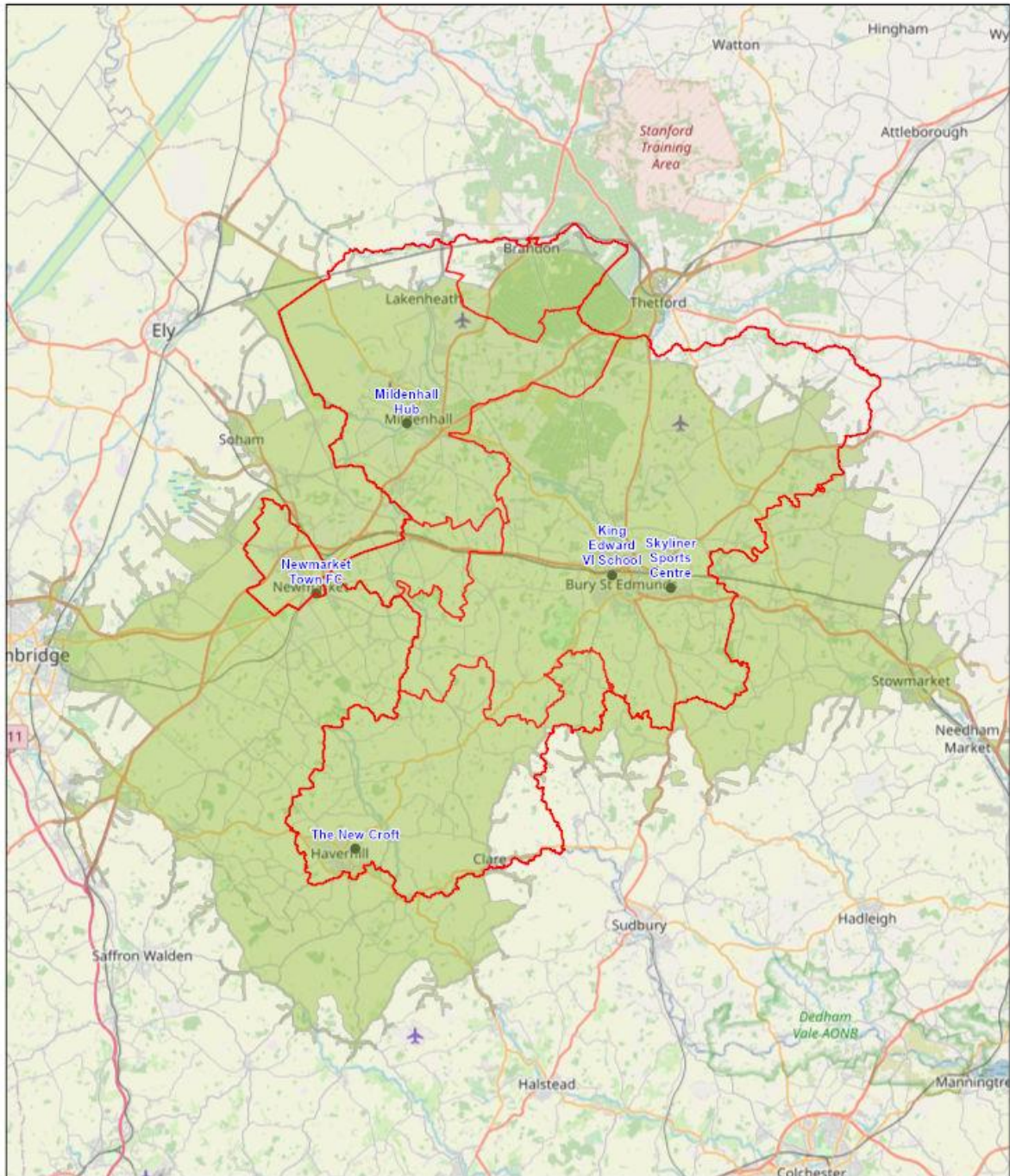
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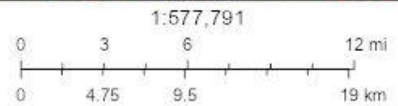


# WEST SUFFOLK Full-sized '3G' Football Turf Pitches 20 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 20.0 Minutes
- FULL SIZED 3G FOOTBALL TURF PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## 5.5 The views of local stakeholders

### 5.6.1 Suffolk FA

Consultation with the Suffolk FA highlighted that:

- **'3G' football turf pitches:** 'A key local issue is the shortage of '3G' football turf pitches. There is a shortfall of five full-sized '3G' pitches in the West Suffolk area'.
- **Grass pitch quality:** 'Grass pitches have common issues with poor quality, low availability and overuse'.
- **Provision in Mildenhall:** Grass pitch provision in Mildenhall is poor in quantitative and qualitative terms. Developing grass pitches at the Mildenhall Hub would help to address this.
- **Funding:** 'There has been limited investment from the Football Foundation into West Suffolk in recent years, although other partners have delivered capital projects which benefit football participation.
- **Fixture timings:** 'There is no Saturday male football league provision in West Suffolk'.
- **Disability football:** 'There is limited disability football provision'.
- **Hub sites:** Some of West Suffolk's largest football clubs have aspirations to further develop hub sites for themselves.

### 5.6.2 Local football clubs

**Brandon Town FC:** The club commented that 'we have played here [at Remembrance Playing Field] for many years without a formal agreement/lease - for access to grants, we have recently completed a lease which will come into effect as of 1st April 2021'.

**Haverhill Rovers FC:** The club made the following comments:

- 'We need a new 3G Facility due to growing demand within the club and external area. huge need for community football for all opportunities as well as health and wellbeing activities'.
- 'Whilst we have a waiting list it's for a short time until we can filter into current or new teams'.
- 'The 3G is fantastic and the grass pitches have had more investment but are overused which is why an additional 3G is needed to cope with the load'.
- 'Covid has been challenging financially due to loss of sponsorship revenue and lack of fundraising opportunities. Finances have impacted on participation growth and opportunities available'.

**Haverhill Town FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We are in consultation with a developer that wants to support us to obtain a pitch facility, with floodlighting and pavilion but is looking for some financial support’.
- ‘We need floodlit and training pitches on ‘3G’ especially for winter as it’s impossible to get anything locally at reasonable times between 6pm and 9pm and if they were available the prices are extremely high compared to anywhere else’.
- ‘There is inadequate provision for all the clubs outside of the New Croft facility where Haverhill Rovers have a monopoly’.

**Lakenheath FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘The senior members of the club are forced to train in Bottisham - a 50+ mile round trip as there is nowhere closer for hire. The U18's are similarly forced to train in Red Lodge on a poor quality MUGA surface’.
- ‘We need more ‘3G’s, especially for training provision’.

**Lakenheath Youth FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We currently are undertaking a pitch improvement plan alongside Suffolk FA and the Football Foundation. Our current playing surface soil is poor and therefore we are looking to improve this’.
- ‘As a club we seek to make football as affordable as possible and we pride ourselves on being the least expensive club to provide football for our members. We work hard on trying to improve the current facilities but if there were future plans for providing better training surfaces then we would be interested on the provision that they are financially viable’.

**Mildenhall FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘The mini soccer play on the Jubilee Fields this is often flooded or unplayable and has no facilities, no toilets’.
- ‘A dearth of available, affordable, grass pitches in Mildenhall is limiting the growth of the club with teams having to play at venues in Red Lodge, West Row and surrounding areas’.

**Moreton Hall Youth FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We can only have extra teams if we have more volunteers to run those side but it is increasingly difficult to attract help’.
- ‘It would be nice if all our sides could train at one venue on the same night’.
- ‘Most pitches are of poor quality and poorly maintained and artificial training pitches within the council are difficult to book with unhelpful staff when trying to book’.

**Risby Greens Youth FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We are wishing to work closely with the village cricket club to gain funding and village committee agreement to a shared large log cabin style club house [at Risby Playing Field]’.
- ‘Would prefer all matches at Risby for both teams but due to lack of space (due to cricket square and size of field) we are unable. Barrow is also a single pitch and no further room’.
- ‘On the whole it is quite poor in West Suffolk/BSE area. As a small club we are low down in the queue with bigger clubs like Sporting 87, Bury Town FC taking many of the venues and with more money can block-book or take the majority of those venues available and cherry pick. Whilst we have access to our own playing field in the village, it is very restrictive and as is our second venue at Barrow. For sure we could do with a bigger playing field venue to cater for the west-laying villages of BSE and indeed the large new housing estates being built at Marham Park nearby where again there is no west-side BSE provision for a large park to cater for leisure and outdoor sports/pitches etc’.

**Sporting ‘87 FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We hope to be able to put a ‘3G’ pitch at the Victory Ground to enable us to progress, our u18's to play in Bury St Edmunds and have more training facilities’.
- ‘Training facilities are limited, plus the pitches are not to the required standard. Our u18's currently have to hire pitch in Sudbury (40-minutes away and costing over £2,000) because there is nowhere that meets the standard to play’.
- ‘The number of Senior teams folding in the area is far higher than other councils, so that we now have the fewest senior clubs in West Suffolk area, compared with any other in Suffolk per population’.

**Thurlow Youth FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We would like to enlarge our changing facilities, improve access, improve parking areas and implement girls football’.
- ‘There is restricted Parking on roads. Parking on bank areas of pitches but not in wet weather as cars can get stuck. Therefore we have to reduce the amount of home games or fall foul of the parish council. All pitches are slightly undersized to allow us to accommodate all pitch sizes’.
- ‘Thurlow Sports Club has a long team lease and we have rented the pitches since 2007. The pitches are marked out by the youth football club and we also provide the paint’.
- ‘Thurlow Sports Club has signed up to the pitch improvement scheme and recently a lot of work has been done by Parkers Pitches’.

**West Row Gunners FC:** The club made the following comments:

- ‘We need new facilities. They don't meet current FA guidelines for us to progress as they don't have any facilities for a Referee’.



- ‘Every week I nearly have enough players available to run two sides but you can’t take the risk with a second side as I’ve been in the game long enough to know how big of a squad you need at this level. We do have plans to work with a youth manager to bring through their team to create a reserve team in the future. The problem is that the pitch and facilities would struggle to meet regulations’.
- ‘The changing facility consists of one small kitchen, two changing rooms that can fit 13 seated shoulder-to-shoulder, communal shower in each changing that can fit up to three people at a time and two toilets’.
- ‘Our current pitch is run by West Row Village Hall association and they have multiple teams play and train including outside youth setup from Mildenhall Town all year round. They also have an annual cycling event on the pitch in the summer. This is all to make money but destroys the playing surface. They also converted what was used as a referee changing room into an additional toilet for the cycling event’.
- ‘Goalposts at our venue should be rounded and not squared. Also the goalposts have stantions which we have had to remove due to the net not fitting when they are on there. The pitch hire price should be lowered as when you add on the cost of the referee for a home game, the clubs are then having to fork out close to £100 which could have a detrimental impact on some clubs’ financial situations’.
- ‘We currently have a desperate need for training facilities that are affordable to use. We understand that the Mildenhall Hub is to be completed but the local clubs have been told that Mildenhall clubs have priority plus the prices we are hearing about to use facilities are way too high for a non-profit grass roots club that has growing costs every year. There is only so much you can keep asking players to pay before more clubs will fold’.
- ‘We are regularly approached by other clubs asking to use our pitches. In summer months other clubs have come to the venue and trained on the pitches without permission which indicates a lack of available options for them within the district’.

## 5.7 **The implications for football in West Suffolk**

Analysis of local supply of football pitches in West Suffolk indicates the following:

- **Local clubs:** There is a strong network of FA Charter Standard football clubs in West Suffolk, providing high quality coaching and playing opportunities.
- **Unmet demand:** Consultation with local clubs indicated that a total of 11 additional teams of all age groups could be accommodated in West Suffolk if the quality and quantity of pitch provision was improved, an increase of 3.3% from the number of existing teams.
- **Exported demand:** There is some exported demand in West Suffolk involving 32 teams. This comprises 9.5% of all football teams that play in the district.
- **The effects of covid-19:** Clubs were asked to indicate the number of teams they expect to field in the next full season, compared with the 2019/20 season. The responses indicate a net increase of three teams, an increase of 0.9% from the number of existing teams.

- **Grass pitch supply:** An examination of grass pitch supply suggests that in quantitative terms there is little if any local spare capacity.
- **Grass pitch quality:** Almost 10% of pitches in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality, with consequent reductions in carrying capacity. Several more suffer from poor drainage and are rated at the lower end of ‘standard’ quality.
- **Changing facilities quality:** 24.6% of pitches are served by ‘poor’ quality or no changing facilities and the adverse impact on such a high proportion of pitch users makes it more difficult to recruit and retain new players, particularly women and girls.
- **‘3G’ football turf pitches:** There are five full-sized ‘3G’ pitch in West Suffolk, but many local clubs have identified the lack of floodlit, all-weather pitches as an impediment to the development of the game locally. Based upon the FA calculation that there should be one full-sized ‘3G’ pitch per 38 teams, there should be 8.79 pitches in West Suffolk.
- **Other artificial turf pitches:** Given the shortfall in ‘3G’ football turf pitches, several football clubs in the district train on sand-dressed artificial turf pitches, whose primary use is for hockey. This reduces the time available for hockey play and causes additional wear and tear on the pitches.
- **Secured community use:** 15% of the pitches with community use and used are on sites without secured use, meaning that in theory community use of around one in six pitches could be rescinded at any time. Measures to secure community use at education sites, such as formal Community Use Agreements, would therefore be advisable.

## 5.8 Assessment of current needs

### 5.8.1 Introduction

To assess whether the current supply of pitches is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site with how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent sessions’ at each site. A ‘match equivalent session’ represents the wear and tear on a pitch equivalent to a formal match, so the impact of training sessions and unauthorised use can also be accounted for.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

- **Being overplayed:** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity (highlighted in red in the tables below).
- **Being played to the level the site can sustain:** Where use matches the carrying capacity (highlighted in yellow in the tables below).

- **Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:** Where use falls below the carrying capacity (highlighted in green in the tables below).

In line with FA guidance, the following assumptions have been made in relation to the number of weekly match equivalents that can be accommodated by different quality pitches:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Good quality</i>	<i>Standard quality</i>	<i>Poor quality</i>
Adult	3	2	1
Youth 11v11	4	2	1
Youth 9v9	4	2	1
Mini-soccer 7v7	6	4	2
Mini-soccer 5v5	6	4	2

## 5.8.2 Adult pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Aspal Close Nat. Res.	1	Beck Row FC	3.0	1.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Bardwell Playing Field	1	Bardwell Sport FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Barrow Playing Field	1	Barrow FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Barton Mills Village Green	1	Barton Mills FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Brandon Playing Fields	2	Brandon Town FC	5.0	4.0	+1.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Bury Town Football Club	1	Bury Town FC	3.0	4.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
British Sugar Sports Club	1	Abbots 07 FC Eastbury Eagles FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Cavendish Sports Club	1	Cavendish FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Church Lane Playing Field	1	Stoke-by-Clare FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Clare Playing Field	1	Clare Town FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	2	Bury Town FC Culford School	6.0	4.0	+2.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Exning Football Ground	1	Exning United FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Fornham All Saints Community Centre	1	West Suffolk Wolves FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Gainsborough Recreation Ground	2	Bury Town FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
George Lambton Playing Fields	2	Prince of Wales FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
Great Barton Playing Field	1	Great Barton FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	1	AFC Thurlow Vets	3.0	1.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Great Whelnetham Community Centre	1	Bedricks Worth FC Hardwick FC	3.0	2.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Heath	1	Black Boy Veterans FC Bury Town FC Bury United FC Bury Wanderers FC JB SAP United FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0



<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	1	Moreton Hall Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hepworth Recreation Ground	1	AFC Vikings	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Fields	1	No recorded use	1.0	0.0	+1.0	1.0	0.0	+1.0
Lakenheath Football Club	1	Lakenheath FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Lakenheath Playing Fields	1	Lakenheath Casuals FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Mildenhall Town FC	1	Mildenhall Town FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Mottsfeld Playing Field	2	Haverhill Town FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Moulton Playing Field	1	Moulton Veterans FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Oakes Road Playing Field	1	Breda FC Smiler FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Pakenham Playing Field	1	Baltic United FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	3	Haverhill & Hove Albion FC Motts County Pirates FC Puddlebrook 68 FC The Exchange FC	6.0	4.0	+2.0	3.0	3.0	Balanced
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	1	No recorded use	3.0	0.0	+3.0	1.0	0.0	+1.0
Rougham Playing Field	1	Bury Town FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Stanton Recreation Ground	2	Stanton FC	5.0	3.0	+2.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Ten Acre Field	1	Bury Bowl FC Chedburgh FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Great Meadow	1	Kedington FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The New Croft	2	Haverhill Borough FC Haverhill Rovers FC Hundon FC	6.0	5.0	+1.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Tollgate Playing Field	1	Howards FC Tollgate FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Tuddenham Playing Field	1	Tuddenham FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Victory Sports Ground	2	Sporting 87 FC West Suffolk College FC	6.0	6.0	Balanced	2.0	3.0	-1.0
West Row Playing Field	1	Wamil Wasps FC West Row Gunners FC	3.0	3.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	1	Wickhambrook Youth FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>114.0</b>	<b>85.0</b>	<b>+29.0</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>-3.0</b>

The supply-demand balance for adult pitches by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	53.0	44.0	+9.0	24.0	29.0	-5.0
Newmarket	10.0	4.0	+6.0	5.0	4.0	+1.0
Haverhill	26.0	20.0	+6.0	12.0	13.0	-1.0
Mildenhall	20.0	13.0	+7.0	8.0	6.0	+2.0
Brandon	5.0	4.0	+1.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>114.0</b>	<b>85.0</b>	<b>+29.0</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>-3.0</b>

The key findings are:

- Adult demand is supplemented by 13 youth (11v11) teams using adult pitches at Ashcombe School, Ashted Recreation Ground, Aviva Sports Ground, Chrystie Recreation Ground, Fortyfoot Recreation Ground, Pixham Sports Ground and Westhumble Playing Field.
- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at six sites, is balanced at 31 sites and shows spare capacity at four sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the district amounts to 3.0 match equivalent sessions. This figure becomes a deficit of 6.0 match equivalent session if the education sites without secured community access are excluded.
- The sub-area analysis shows that the pitch capacity deficit is greatest in the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area.

### 5.8.3 Youth 11v11 pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Brandon Playing Fields	1	Brandon Town FC	2.0	4.0	-2.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	2	Bury Town FC Culford School	8.0	4.0	+4.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Gainsborough Recreation Ground	1	Bury Town FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Heath	1	Bury Town FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Horringer Court Middle School	1	Bury Town FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Lakenheath Playing Fields	1	Lakenheath Youth FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Nowton Park Sports Field	2	Moreton Hall Youth FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	1	Red Lodge Youth FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Risby Playing Field	1	Risby Greens Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The New Croft	3	Haverhill Rovers FC	12.0	8.0	+4.0	3.0	4.0	-1.0
Victory Sports Ground	1	Sporting 87 FC	4.0	7.0	-3.0	1.0	4.0	-3.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>+8.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>-6.0</b>

The supply-demand balance for youth 11v11 pitches by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	24.0	20.0	+4.0	9.0	12.0	-3.0
Newmarket	0.0	0.0	Balanced	0.0	0.0	Balanced
Haverhill	12.0	8.0	+4.0	3.0	4.0	-1.0
Mildenhall	6.0	4.0	+2.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Brandon	2.0	4.0	-2.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>+8.0</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>-6.0</b>

The key findings are:

- Peak time use shows an overall deficit at five sites and balanced provision at six sites.
- The collective peak time supply-demand position in the district is a deficit of 6.0 match equivalent sessions. The deficit increases to 10.0 match equivalent sessions if the education sites without secured community access are excluded.

#### 5.8.4 Youth 9v9 pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Brandon Playing Fields	1	Brandon Town FC	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Clare Playing Field	1	Clare Town Lions YFC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	1	Bury Town FC Culford School	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Exning Football Ground	1	Exning United FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
George Lambton Playing Fields	1	No recorded use	2.0	0.0	+2.0	1.0	0.0	+1.0
Great Barton Playing Field	1	Great Barton Youth FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	1	Thurlow Youth FC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Heath	1	Bury Town FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	(1)	Moreton Hall Youth FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Horringer Court Middle School	1	Bury Town FC Howard Primary School	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Howard Primary School	1	Guildhall Feoffment FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Fields	1	Mildenhall Town FC	1.0	1.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Lakenheath Playing Fields	1	Lakenheath Youth FC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Sebert Wood Primary School	1	Sebert Wood FC Sebert Wood Primary Sch.	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The New Croft	1(1)	Haverhill Rovers FC	8.0	10.0	-2.0	2.0	5.0	-3.0
Victory Sports Ground	2	Sporting 87 FC	8.0	6.0	+2.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	1	Wickhambrook Youth FC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17(2)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>+10.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>-4.0</b>

The supply-demand balance for youth 9v9 pitches by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	26.0	20.0	+6.0	10.0	11.0	-1.0
Newmarket	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Haverhill	16.0	12.0	+4.0	5.0	7.0	-2.0
Mildenhall	3.0	3.0	Balanced	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Brandon	2.0	3.0	-1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>+10.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>-4.0</b>

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and a balance at 13 sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the district amounts to 4.0 match equivalent sessions. The deficit increases to 8.0 match equivalent sessions if the education sites without secured community access are excluded.
- The sub-area analysis shows that the pitch capacity deficit is greatest in the Haverhill sub-area.

### 5.8.5 Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Brandon Playing Fields	2	Brandon Town FC	8.0	2.0	+6.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
Clare Playing Field	1	Clare Town Lions FC	6.0	1.0	+5.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Exning Primary School	1	Exning United FC Exning Primary School	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Great Thurlow Recn Grd	1	Thurlow Youth FC	6.0	2.0	+4.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Primary School	1	Bury Town FC Hardwick Primary Sch.	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Howard Primary School	1	Guildhall Feoffment FC Howard Primary School	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Ickworth Park Primary School	1	Ickworth Park FC Ickworth Park Primary School	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Jubilee Playing Fields	1	Mildenhall Town YFC	2.0	2.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
King Edward VI Sports College	1	St. Edmundsbury FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Lakenheath Playing Fields	1	Lakenheath Youth FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Moreton Hall Comm Ctre	1	Moreton Hall FC	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
RAF Honington	1	Honington Foxes YFC	4.0	1.0	+3.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	1	Red Lodge Youth FC	6.0	1.0	+5.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Sebert Wood Primary School	1	Sebert Wood FC Sebert Wood Primary School	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	2.0	-1.0
The New Croft	1(1)	Haverhill Rovers FC	12.0	12.0	Balanced	2.0	4.0	-2.0
Victory Sports Ground	2	Sporting 87 FC	12.0	6.0	+6.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18(1)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>88.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>+38.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>-6.0</b>

The supply-demand balance for mini-soccer 7v7 pitches by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	40.0	26.0	+14.0	9.0	14.0	-5.0
Newmarket	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Haverhill	24.0	15.0	+9.0	4.0	6.0	-2.0
Mildenhall	12.0	5.0	+7.0	3.0	3.0	Balanced
Brandon	8.0	2.0	+6.0	2.0	1.0	+1.0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>88.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>+38.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>-6.0</b>

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows a deficit at six sites and is balanced at nine sites and there is spare capacity at one site.
- The collective peak time supply-demand position in the district is a deficit of 6.0 match equivalent sessions. The deficit increases to 17.0 match equivalent sessions if the sites without secured community access are excluded.
- The sub-area analysis shows that the pitch capacity deficit is greatest in the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area.

#### 5.8.6 Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Brandon Playing Fields	1	Brandon Town FC	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
Clare Playing Field	1	Clare Town Lions FC	6.0	1.0	+5.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	1	Bury Town FC Matchday FC	6.0	2.0	+4.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Exning Football Ground	1	Exning United FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Great Thurlow Recn Grd	1	Thurlow Youth FC	6.0	1.0	+5.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Heath	1	Bury Town FC Matchday FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Hardwick Primary School	1	Hardwick Primary School	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Howard Primary School	1	Guildhall Feoffment FC Howard Primary School	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Ickworth Park Primary School	1	Ickworth Park FC Ickworth Park Prim. Sch.	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Jubilee Playing Fields	1	Mildenhall Town YFC	2.0	1.0	+1.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
King Edward VI Sports College	1	Bury Town FC St. Edmundsbury FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Lakenheath Playing Fields	1	Lakenheath Youth FC	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Moreton Hall Comm Ctre	2	Moreton Hall FC	8.0	3.0	+5.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Sebert Wood Primary School	1	Sebert Wood FC Sebert Wood Prim. Sch.	4.0	4.0	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The New Croft	(1)	Haverhill Rovers FC	12.0	11.0	+1.0	1.0	6.0	-5.0
Victory Sports Ground	2	Sporting 87 FC	12.0	7.0	+5.0	2.0	3.0	-2.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17(1)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>+27.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>-7.0</b>

The supply-demand balance for mini-soccer 5v5 pitches by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Weekly capacity</i>	<i>Weekly demand</i>	<i>Weekly balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	40.0	30.0	+10.0	11.0	12.0	-1.0
Newmarket	4.0	2.0	+2.0	1.0	1.0	Balanced
Haverhill	24.0	13.0	+11.0	3.0	8.0	-5.0
Mildenhall	6.0	3.0	+3.0	2.0	2.0	Balanced
Brandon	4.0	3.0	+1.0	1.0	2.0	-1.0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>51.0</b>	<b>+27.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>-7.0</b>

The key findings are:

- Peak time utilisation shows an overall deficit at three sites and a balance at 13 sites.
- The collective peak time deficit in the district amounts to 7.0 match equivalent sessions. The deficit increases to 13.0 match equivalent sessions if the education site without secured community access is excluded.
- The sub-area analysis shows that the pitch capacity deficit is greatest in Haverhill.

### 5.8.7 '3G' football turf pitches

There are five full-sized '3G' pitches in West Suffolk (including the Newmarket Town FC facility) which provide collectively the equivalent of 190 team training sessions per week. However, many local clubs have identified the lack of floodlit, all-weather pitches as an impediment to the development of the game locally. Based upon the FA calculation that there should be one full-sized '3G' pitch per 38 teams, there should be 8.84 pitches in West Suffolk. If the 58 additional teams identified by local clubs as representing latent demand are included, the requirement increases to 10.37 pitches. The net shortfall is therefore 3.84 pitches or 5.37 pitches if latent demand is included.

## 5.9 Assessment of future needs

### 5.9.1 Population growth

Two scenarios are considered:

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
- A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

### 5.9.2 Potential changes in demand

Consultation with local clubs indicated that the following additional teams could be accommodated in West Suffolk if the quality and quantity of pitch provision was improved. The projected increase is equivalent to a 17.3% rise in current team numbers.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Adult teams</i>	<i>Youth (11v11)</i>	<i>Youth (9v9)</i>	<i>Mini (7v7)</i>	<i>Mini (5v5)</i>
Exning United FC	1	0	0	0	0
Haverhill Rovers FC	5	5	5	10	10
Haverhill Town FC	3	5	0	0	0
Lakenheath FC	1	4	0	0	0
Lakenheath Youth FC	1	0	1	0	1
Moreton Hall Youth FC	0	1	1	1	1
West Row Gunners FC	1	1	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

### 5.9.3 Site-specific pressures

West Suffolk Council needs to identify sites upon which it can deliver its housing targets. Whilst planning policy offers protection to playing pitches, some sites may be vulnerable unless it can be proved that they are needed to accommodate existing or future shortfalls in supply or serve some other green space functions. At present, the analysis in section 5.8 above shows that all types of pitch are collectively used to over-capacity, so the case for retention is strong.

### 5.9.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known potential changes in pitch supply in West Suffolk at present.

### 5.9.5 Existing spare capacity

The existing position for grass football pitch peak-time capacity has been calculated in terms of ‘match equivalent sessions in section 5.8 above and is as follows, for all sites and for sites with secured community access only. It is important to note that the shortfalls cannot be met by improvements to pitch quality (and related capacity), because they relate to peak period demand, which is defined by the number of pitches:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>All sites</i>	<i>Secured sites</i>
Adult	-3.0	-6.0
Youth 11v11	-6.0	-10.0
Youth 9v9	-4.0	-8.0
Mini-soccer 7v7	-6.0	-17.0
Mini-soccer 5v5	-7.0	-13.0

### 5.9.6 Future grass pitch needs

Future formal grass pitch needs to 2040 are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’ (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the district are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future. Unmet demand has been included, based upon the number of teams that local clubs believe could currently be formed if more pitch provision was available. Two population growth scenarios are assessed:



- **ONS projections:**

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult male football	17-45	33,081	92	6	1: 338	33,751	100	+2
Adult female football	17-45	29,276	6	6	1: 2,440	29,258	12	0
Boys youth 11v11 football	12-16	5,179	73	6	1: 66	5,322	81	+2
Girls youth 11v11 football	12-16	4,940	3	10	1: 382	4,879	13	0
Boys youth 9v9 football	10-11	2,383	44	2	1: 52	2,161	42	-4
Girls youth 9v9 football	10-11	2,138	2	5	1: 305	2,007	7	0
Mini-soccer 7v7 (mixed)	8-9	4,526	57	11	1: 67	4,234	63	-5
Mini-soccer 5v5 (mixed)	6-7	4,322	57	12	1: 63	4,375	69	0

- **Housing projections:**

<i>Sport</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult male football	17-45	33,081	92	6	1: 338	39,399	117	+19
Adult female football	17-45	29,276	6	6	1: 2,440	34,868	14	+2
Boys youth 11v11 football	12-16	5,179	73	6	1: 66	6,168	93	+14
Girls youth 11v11 football	12-16	4,940	3	10	1: 382	5,884	15	+2
Boys youth 9v9 football	10-11	2,383	44	2	1: 52	2,838	56	+10
Girls youth 9v9 football	10-11	2,138	2	5	1: 305	2,546	8	+1
Mini-soccer 7v7 (mixed)	8-9	4,526	57	11	1: 67	5,390	80	+12
Mini-soccer 5v5 (mixed)	6-7	4,322	57	12	1: 63	5,148	82	+13

### 5.9.7 Future '3G' pitch needs

Based upon the FA calculation that there should be one full-sized '3G' pitch per 38 teams;

- **ONS projections:** There will be 387 teams requiring 10.18 pitches in West Suffolk by 2040.
- **Housing projections:** There will be 465 teams requiring 12.24 pitches in West Suffolk by 2040.

## 5.10 Key findings and issues

### 5.10.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Local clubs:** There is a strong network of FA Charter Standard football clubs in West Suffolk, providing high quality coaching and playing opportunities.
- **Unmet demand:** Consultation with local clubs indicated that a total of 58 additional teams of all age groups could be accommodated in West Suffolk if the quality and quantity of pitch provision was improved, an increase of 17.3% from the number of existing teams.
- **Exported demand:** There is some exported demand in West Suffolk involving 32 teams. This comprises 9.5% of all football teams that play in the district.

- ***The effects of covid-19:*** Clubs were asked to indicate the number of teams they expect to field in the next full season, compared with the 2019/20 season. The responses indicate a net increase of three teams, an increase of 0.9% from the number of existing teams.
- ***Grass pitch supply:*** An examination of grass pitch supply suggests that in quantitative terms there is little if any local spare capacity.
- ***Grass pitch quality:*** Almost 10% of pitches in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality, with consequent reductions in carrying capacity. Several more suffer from poor drainage and are rated at the lower end of ‘standard’ quality.
- ***‘3G’ football turf pitches:*** There are five full-sized ‘3G’ pitch in West Suffolk, but many local clubs have identified the lack of floodlit, all-weather pitches as an impediment to the development of the game locally. Based upon the FA calculation that there should be one full-sized ‘3G’ pitch per 38 teams, there should be 8.79 pitches in West Suffolk.
- ***Other artificial turf pitches:*** Given the shortfall in ‘3G’ football turf pitches, several football clubs in the district train on sand-dressed artificial turf pitches, whose primary use is for hockey. This reduces the time available for hockey play and causes additional wear and tear on the pitches.
- ***Secured community use:*** 15% of the pitches with community use and used are on sites without secured use, meaning that in theory community use of around one in six pitches could be rescinded at any time. Measures to secure community use at education sites, such as formal Community Use Agreements, would therefore be advisable.

#### 5.10.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand? **NO** - there is a significant deficit for all pitch types in the peak period

- ***Adult grass pitches:*** There is a collective peak deficit of 6.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at accessible, community-secured sites.
- ***Youth 11v11 pitches:*** There is a collective peak deficit of 10.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at the community-secured sites.
- ***Youth 9v9 pitches:*** There is a collective peak deficit of 8.0 weekly match equivalent session at community-secured sites.
- ***Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:*** There is a collective peak deficit of 17.0 weekly match equivalent session at community-secured sites.
- ***Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:*** There is a collective peak deficit of 13.0 weekly match equivalent sessions at the community-secured sites.
- ***‘3G’ football turf pitches:*** Based on the FA’s calculation of training needs, there should be an extra 3.84 ‘3G’ pitches in West Suffolk. If the 58 additional teams identified by local clubs as representing unmet demand are included, the requirement increases to 5.37 pitches.

5.10.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained? **NO** - Almost one-third of pitches are either ‘poor’ quality or in danger of becoming so

- **Quality:** Almost 10% of pitches in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality, with consequent reductions in carrying capacity. Many more suffer from poor drainage and are rated at the lower end of ‘standard’ quality.
- **Maintenance:** Improved maintenance at ‘poor’ quality and low rated ‘standard’ quality pitches in West Suffolk would improve their carrying capacity.

5.10.4 What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- **Population growth:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%. A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.
- **Changes in demand:** Projecting future need based on current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.
- **Changes in supply:** The proposed ‘3G’ football turf pitch at IES Breckland School in Brandon has been submitted to the Football Foundation for funding.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is no current space capacity in the peak period, rather a significant deficit in all pitch types.
- **Future needs:** The Team Generation Rate calculations indicate two scenarios. The ONS projections forecast a decrease of 5 teams by 2040 based on projected reductions in the populations in the younger age groups, whilst the housing projections suggest an increase of 73 teams. On the basis of the ONS projections, no additional pitch provision will be required, provided that existing deficiencies are met. On the basis of the housing projections, the following additional provision will be needed:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Extra pitches</i>
Adult	11
Youth 11v11	8
Youth 9v9	6
Mini-soccer 7v7	3
Mini-soccer 5v5	4
‘3G’	3.39

5.10.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand? **No** - there is a current deficit for all pitch types.

The current deficit in pitch provision will need to be met, prior to making additional provision to ensure that future needs can be accommodated.

## Scenario Testing

### 5.11.1 Introduction

Based upon the key findings and issues identified above, a number of scenarios have been examined, to identify the optimum approach to addressing needs.

### 5.11.2 Scenario 1: Accessing pitches on education sites

- **Rationale:** The following pitches on school sites have no community use at present:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Abbotts Green Primary Academy	-	-	-	1	1
Barningham Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Barrow Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Burton End Primary Academy	-	-	1	1	-
Castle Manor Academy	2	2	-	-	-
Cavendish Primary School	-	-	-	-	1
Clare Primary Academy	-	-	-	1	-
Coupals Primary Academy	-	-	-	1	-
Forest Primary Academy	-	-	-	-	1
Great Heath Academy	-	-	-	-	4
Great Whelnetham Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Honington Primary School	-	-	-	-	1
Hopton Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Houldsworth Valley Primary school	-	-	-	1	-
IES Breckland	1	2	-	-	-
Ixworth Primary School	-	1	-	-	-
Kedington Primary Academy	-	-	-	1	1
Lakenheath Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Mildenhall College Academy	1	1	1	-	-
Mildenhall College (Sheldrick Site)	-	1	-	-	-
Moulton Primary School	-	-	1	1	-
New Cangle Primary School	-	-	1	-	-
Newmarket Academy	2	1	-	-	-
Place Farm Primary School	-	-	-	1	1
Priory School	-	-	-	1	1
Risby Primary School	-	-	-	-	1
Rougham Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
SET Ixworth School	1	-	2	-	-
Samuel Ward Academy	2	1	-	-	1
St. Benedict's Catholic School	1	-	-	-	-
St. Christopher's Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
St. Felix Primary School	-	-	1	-	-
St Mary's Primary Academy	-	-	-	-	1
Sexton's Manor Primary School	-	-	-	1	-
Stanton Primary School	-	-	-	2	-
Stoke College	1	-	-	-	-
Stour Valley Community School	-	2	-	-	-
Tollgate Primary School	-	-	-	1	1
Westfield Primary Academy	-	-	1	-	-
Westley Middle School	-	-	2	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>

- The tables below models the effect of gaining access to school pitches to meet future community demand. It shows that for the lower population estimates, all pitch needs could be met, for the higher estimates additional provision would still be needed for all but mini 7v7 pitches. Whilst pitch capacity is reduced by the education use, it would nevertheless make sense to consider negotiating the use of these pitches to address some current shortfalls and additional future demand, rather than making entirely new provision.

- **Lower population estimates:**

<b>Pitch type</b>	<b>Current School pitches</b>	<b>Peak match equivalent capacity</b>	<b>Unmet current and future peak demand (match equivalents)</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Adult football	10	10.0	-6.0	+4.0
Youth 11v11	11	11.0	-10.0	+1.0
Youth 9v9	10	10.0	-8.0	+2.0
Mini 7v7	20	20.0	-17.0	+3.0
Mini 5v5	15	15.0	-13.0	+2.0

- **Higher population estimates:**

<b>Pitch type</b>	<b>Current School pitches</b>	<b>Peak match equivalent capacity</b>	<b>Unmet current and future peak demand (match equivalents)</b>	<b>Balance</b>
Adult football	10	10.0	-17.0	-3.0
Youth 11v11	11	11.0	-18.0	-7.0
Youth 9v9	10	10.0	-14.0	-4.0
Mini 7v7	20	20.0	-20.0	Balanced
Mini 5v5	15	15.0	-17.0	-2.0

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - The pitches already exist and therefore could be brought into use at little or no additional cost, depending on the current quality of the respective pitches.
  - There would be opportunities to establish closer school-club links if community-based clubs were playing on school sites.
  - The pitches should be available during the peak demand periods for community-based teams at weekends.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - None of the schools has community use at present and there is no obvious mechanism for securing it, so there is no guarantee that they would be prepared to commence such an arrangement.
  - No assessment has been made of the quality of schools pitches without community use, so the extent of their capacity to accommodate additional use is unknown.

- **Conclusions:** This scenario offers some advantages for enhancing local pitch capacity on a cost-effective basis and should therefore be examined further on a site-by-site basis.

### 5.11.3 Scenario 2: Improve existing grass pitch carrying capacity

- **Rationale:** The following football pitches in West Suffolk are either ‘standard’ or ‘poor’ quality and as such their carrying capacity is compromised. Pitches shown in brackets are over-marked:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch rating</i>	<i>Adult 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 11v11</i>	<i>Youth 9v9</i>	<i>Mini 7v7</i>	<i>Mini 5v5</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Barrow Playing Field	Poor	1	-	-	-	-
Barton Mills Village Green	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Brandon Playing Fields	Standard	1	1	1	2	1
British Sugar Sports Club	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Cavendish Sports Club	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Church Lane Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Exning Football Ground	Standard	1	-	1	-	1
Exning Primary School	Standard	-	-	-	1	-
Fornham All Saints Community Centre	Poor	1	-	-	-	-
Gainsborough Recreation Ground	Standard	1	1	-	-	-
George Lambton Playing Fields	Standard	2	-	1	-	-
Great Barton Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Hardwick Heath	Standard	1	1	1	-	1
Hardwick Primary School	Standard	-	-	-	1	1
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	Standard	1	-	(1)	-	-
Hepworth Recreation Ground	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Horringer Court Middle School	Standard	-	1	1	-	-
Howards Primary School	Standard	-	-	1	1	1
Ickworth Park Primary School	Standard	-	-	-	1	1
Jubilee Playing Fields	Poor	1	-	1	1	1
King Edward VI Sports College	Standard	-	-	-	1	1
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Standard	1	1	-	-	-
Moreton Hall Community Centre	Standard	-	-	-	1	2
Mottsfeld Playing Field	Poor	2	-	-	-	-
Moulton Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Nowton Park Sports Field	Standard	-	2	-	-	-
Oakes Road Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Pakenham Playing Field	Poor	1	-	-	-	-
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	Standard	3	-	-	-	-
Risby Playing Field	Standard	-	1	-	-	-
Rougham Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Sebert Wood Primary School	Standard	-	-	1	1	1
Stanton Recreation Ground	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Ten Acre Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
The Great Meadow	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Tollgate Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Tuddenham Playing Field	Standard	1	-	-	-	-
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	Standard	1	-	1	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9(1)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>

- The table below models the effect of improving the pitches to ‘good’ quality and subsequently maintaining them as such.

- **Lower population estimates:**

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Improved pitch capacity (match equivalents)</i>	<i>Unmet current and future demand (match equivalents)</i>	<i>Balance (match equivalents)</i>
Adult football	39.0	-6.0	+33.0
Youth 11v11	16.0	-10.0	+6.0
Youth 9v9	20.0	-8.0	+12.0
Mini 7v7	22.0	-17.0	+5.0
Mini 5v5	24.0	-13.0	+11.0

- **Higher population estimates:**

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Improved pitch capacity (match equivalents)</i>	<i>Unmet current and future demand (match equivalents)</i>	<i>Balance (match equivalents)</i>
Adult football	39.0	-17.0	+22.0
Youth 11v11	16.0	-18.0	-2.0
Youth 9v9	20.0	-14.0	+6.0
Mini 7v7	22.0	-20.0	+2.0
Mini 5v5	24.0	-17.0	+7.0

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Overall usage capacity would be improved, the districtwide collective weekly capacity deficiencies would be eliminated (with the exception of youth 11v11 pitches under the higher population scenario) and the distribution of the sites gives good geographical coverage across the whole district.
  - This would be a cost-effective option compared with the expense of providing new pitches, particularly if land acquisition costs are factored in.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Whilst the capital cost of pitch improvements may be supported by the Football Foundation grants programmes, the main financial challenge to many pitch providers would be meeting the revenue cost implications of the enhanced works associated with maintaining the pitch quality as ‘good’.
  - The major benefit of capacity improvements are on weekly capacity and would have very limited impact on the peak period shortfalls.
- **Conclusions:** Improving the pitches at Brandon Playing Fields, Lakenheath Playing Fields and Jubilee Playing Fields would have the greatest impact on current deficiencies.



### 5.11.4 Scenario 3: The impact of current '3G' pitch proposals

- **Rationale:** There are the following active proposals for '3G' pitch provision in West Suffolk:
  - IES Brandon, which has been submitted to the Football Foundation for funding.
  - Victory Sports Ground Bury St. Edmunds, which is proposed in the Local Football Facility Plan.
  - The New Croft, Haverhill, which would be a second pitch alongside the existing facility.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows.
  - Assuming that all pitches are provided with full community access, they will be capable of accommodating an additional 114 training slots per week, so the proposed facilities would most of the current shortfall.
  - In addition to the extra training capacity, assuming the permissibility of staggered kick-off times and the accreditation of each pitch on the FA Register, the pitches could collectively provide for 9 adult or youth 11v11, or 12 youth 9v9 or mini 7v7 or 18 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per weekend, thus eliminating peak demand deficits on grass pitches.
  - The location of the proposed facilities would give good geographical coverage.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantage of this scenario is that only the provision of the pitch at IES Brandon has planning consent, so the provision of the other facilities is currently uncertain.
- **Conclusions:** The current '3G' pitch proposals in West Suffolk have the potential to provide for most current football training needs and match play deficits, but further feasibility work will need to be undertaken to determine that all the proposals are financially viable and can be managed to accommodate all needs.

## 5.12 Policy recommendations

### 5.12.1 Introduction

The West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment is a robust and evidence-based assessment of the current and future needs for football in the borough. The recommendations in relation to football are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- 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 sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

The following recommendations are arranged under the three main headings of ‘protect’, ‘enhance’ and ‘provide’.

### 5.12.2 Protect

**Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The Assessment identifies a need for all current and disused football pitch sites to be retained, on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport and/or other wider open space functions in West Suffolk both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that existing planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Assessment. If any pitch sites do become the subject of development proposals, this will only be permissible if they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must 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’.

**Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure:** 15% of the pitches in West Suffolk with community use and used are on education or MoD sites without secured use, meaning that in theory community use of around one in six pitches could be rescinded at any time. The absence of Community Use Agreements makes it impossible to assume the continued availability of the pitches for the community. It is therefore recommended that efforts are made to achieve security of Community Use Agreements at sites without them at present.

### 5.12.3 Enhance

**Recommendation 3 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision, including disused sites:** 12 pitches (9.8%) in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality and several more are rated at the lower end of ‘standard’ quality. Additionally, 24.6% of pitches are served by ‘poor’ quality or no changing facilities. This reduces the quality of playing experience and may deter some potential participants. Subject to security of tenure issues, it is recommended that:

- The site owners concerned should be supported to apply for external funding for facility enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below) where the usage capacity would be enhanced.
- Sites with poor playing surfaces should apply to be part of the FA Pitch Improvement Programme, which will offer a programme to improve the short, medium and long-term maintenance of pitches to improve pitch quality.

**Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (enhancements):** Some of the additional demand for football arising from the proposed housing development in West Suffolk to 2040, should be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

## 5.12.4 Provide

**Recommendation 5 - ‘3G’ football turf pitches:** Based upon the FA’s guide figure, there is a current shortfall of 3.84 full-sized ‘3G’ pitches in the district (including an allowance for the capacity of the existing small-sided pitches), with additional demand equivalent to 3.39 full-sized pitches being generated by the higher estimates of population growth by 2040. ‘3G’ pitches are an important component of provision because their all-weather nature and floodlights enable a high volume of play to be accommodated on good quality playing surfaces. The provision of additional ‘3G’ pitches to meet needs identified in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment should be supported as a priority in appropriate locations. Sites currently under active consideration could collectively meet most needs if provided include IES Brandon, The New Croft, Haverhill and the Victory Sports Ground, Bury St. Edmunds.

**Recommendation 6 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Most of the extra demand for football in particular arising from the proposed housing development in West Suffolk to 2040, will need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that agreement be concluded with developers to provide grass and ‘3G’ football pitches to meet the specific future needs identified in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the new provision.

## 5.13 Action Plan

### 5.13.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the suggested football site-specific action plan to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The abbreviations stand for WSC - West Suffolk Council, FA - Football Association, FF - Football Foundation and PP - Pitch Power (the Football Foundation’s pitch improvement tool). The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021), but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 5.13.2 Key strategic actions

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Community access to public and private education pitches	Consider the merits of formal Community Use agreements at all existing and any future proposed pitches on public and private education sites.	Club users	Academies and schools	Possible funding for improvements to physical accessibility.	High
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved football facilities.	WSC	Developers	Determined by Sport England’s Playing Pitch Calculator	High
Identification of sites for additional ‘3G’ football turf pitches	Examine the feasibility of providing additional ‘3G’ pitches at the identified key sites.	WSC	Potential host sites FF S106 funding	£10,000 for feasibility studies £960,000 per pitch	High
Site specific grounds maintenance needs	Review site specific grounds maintenance needs through the FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	FA	PP	£100 per site annually for assessment and advice.	High

### 5.13.3 Site specific opportunities for consideration

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Aspal Close Nature Reserve	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Bardwell Playing Field	Adult pitch used to over capacity at peak times and overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> </ul>	Bardwell Parish Council	Bardwell Sports FC PP	TBC	Medium
Barrow Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Poor' quality pitch.</li> <li>No changing facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance.</li> </ul>	Barrow Parish Council	Barrow FC PP	TBC	Medium
Barton Mills Village Green	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Brandon Playing Fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Poor' quality youth 7v7 and 5v5 pitches.</li> <li>Youth 11v11 and 9v9 pitches used to over capacity at peak times and overall.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> </ul>	Brandon Playing Fields Trust	Brandon Town FC PP	TBC	High
Bury Town Football Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
British Sugar Sports Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Cavendish Sports Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Church Lane Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Clare Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult pitch used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>Unsecured access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>Negotiate Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Culford School	Bury Town FC PP	TBC	High
Exning Football Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Exning Primary School	Unsecured access	Negotiate Community Use Agreement	Exning Prim Sch	Exning United FC	-	Medium
Fornham All Saints Community Centre	'Poor' quality pitch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance.</li> </ul>	Fornham All Saints Parish Council	West Suffolk Wolves FC PP	TBC	Medium
Gainsborough Recn. Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
George Lambton Playing Fields	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-

<b>Site</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Great Barton Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Great Thurlow Recn. Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Gt Whelnetham Comm. Centre	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Hardwick Heath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult pitch used to over capacity at peak times and overall.</li> <li>• Mini 7v7 pitch used to over capacity at peak times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Reschedule fixtures.</li> </ul>	WSC	User clubs PP	TBC	High
Hardwick Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini 7v7 used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>• Unsecured access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Negotiate Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Hardwick Primary School	Bury Town FC PP	TBC	Medium
Heldhaw Road Playing Field	'Poor' quality changing facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>• Provide new changing facilities if needed.</li> </ul>	WSC	-	£265,000 for changing facilities if needed	Medium
Hepworth Recn. Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Horringer Court Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth 11v11 pitch used to over capacity at peak times and overall.</li> <li>• Unsecured access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Negotiate Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Horringer Court Middle School	Bury Town FC PP	TBC	Medium
Howard Primary School	Unsecured access	Negotiate Community Use Agreement	Howard Primary School	Bury Town FC	-	Medium
Ickworth Park Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini 7v7 pitch used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>• Unsecured access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Negotiate Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Ickworth Park Primary School	Ickworth Park FC PP	TBC	Medium
Jubilee Playing Fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Poor' quality pitches.</li> <li>• No on-site changing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Review the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>• Provide new changing facilities if needed.</li> </ul>	Mildenhall Town Council	Mildenhall Town YFC PP	£265,000 for changing facilities if needed	High
King Edward VI School	Unsecured access	Complete negotiations on Community Use Agreement for '3G' pitch and athletics facility.	King Edward VI Sports College	WSC	-	High

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Lakenheath Football Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Youth 11v11 pitch used to over capacity at peak times and overall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> </ul>	Lakenheath Playing Fields Assoc	Lakenheath Youth FC PP	TBC	Medium
Mildenhall Hub	Shortage of pitch capacity in Mildenhall	Provide a youth 11v11 pitch at Mildenhall Hub	WSC	Abbeycroft Leisure	£20,000	High
Mildenhall Town FC	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Moreton Hall Community Centre	Mini 7v7 pitch used to over capacity at peak times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> </ul>	Moreton Hall Community Assoc.	Moreton Hall Youth FC PP	TBC	Medium
Mottsfeld Playing Field	'Poor' quality adult pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> </ul>	WSC	Haverhill Town FC PP	TBC	Medium
Moulton Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Nowton Park	Viability of the artificial grass pitch.	If a '3G' pitch is provided at the Victory Sports ground, assess the feasibility of converting the artificial grass pitch for other uses.	WSC	-	£10,000 for feasibility study.	High
Oakes Road Playing Field	'Poor' quality changing facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>Provide new changing facilities if needed.</li> </ul>	WSC	-	£265,000 for changing facilities if needed	Medium
Pakenham Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Poor' quality pitch.</li> <li>'Poor' quality changing facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess pitch using Pitch Power.</li> <li>Implement improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> <li>Review the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>Provide new changing facilities if needed.</li> </ul>	Pakenham Parish Council	PP	£265,000 for changing facilities if needed	Medium
Puddlebrook Playing Fields	'Poor' quality changing facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>Provide new changing facilities if needed.</li> </ul>	WSC	FF	£265,000 for changing facilities if needed	High
RAF Honington	Unsecured access	Negotiate Community Use Agreement	MoD	Honington Foxes YFC	-	Medium
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Risby Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Rougham Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Sebert Wood Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini 7v7 pitch used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>• Unsecured access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess pitches using Pitch Power.</li> <li>• Implement improved maintenance.</li> <li>• Negotiate Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Sebert Wood Primary School	Sebert Wood FC PP	TBC	Medium
Stanton Recreation Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Ten Acre Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
The Great Meadow	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
The New Croft/ Chalkstone Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All pitches used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>• Potential location for an additional '3G' pitch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility study for '3G' pitch.</li> <li>• Provide pitch.</li> <li>• Reschedule grass pitch matches to '3G'.</li> </ul>	Haverhill Community Sports Assoc.	FF	£10,000 for feasibility study. £960,000 for a '3G' pitch	High
Tollgate Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Tuddenham Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Victory Sports Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All pitches used to over capacity at peak times.</li> <li>• Potential location for an additional '3G' pitch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility study for '3G' pitch.</li> <li>• Provide pitch.</li> <li>• Reschedule grass pitch matches to '3G'.</li> </ul>	Victory Sports Ground CIC	FF Sporting '87 FC	£10,000 for feasibility study. £960,000 for a '3G' pitch	High
West Row Playing Field	'Poor' quality changing facilities.	Provide new changing facilities.	West Row Parish Council	West Row Gunners FC	£265,000 for changing	High
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-



## 6 CRICKET PITCH NEEDS

### 6.1 Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders delivering cricket in West Suffolk are:

- **Suffolk Cricket:** Suffolk Cricket manages and promotes recreational cricket in the county.
- **Suffolk Cricket-affiliated clubs:** There are 20 affiliated clubs in West Suffolk, who collectively run 56 adult and 45 junior teams, with 243 participants in the ‘All Stars’ cricket initiative for 5 - 8 year olds and the ‘Dynamos’ programme for 8 - 11 year olds. Two teams from outside the district (Burwell) also play their ‘home’ games at pitches in West Suffolk.
- **Pitch providers:** Pitches are owned, managed and maintained by parish councils, major landowners like the National Trust and the Elveden and Exning Estates and clubs.

### 6.2 Strategic context

#### 6.2.1 National cricket strategy

The England and Wales Cricket Board’s (ECB) strategy for 2020 -2024 ‘Inspiring Generations’ (2019) contains the following priorities and activities:

**Grow and nurture the core:** The following will be prioritised:

- A new investment fund for County Cricket Boards.
- Investment in club facilities.
- Further investment in county competitions.

**Make cricket accessible:** The following will be prioritised:

- Creating a new digital community for cricket.
- Installing non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas.
- Continuing to deliver the South Asian Action Plan.
- Launching a new participation product linked to the new 100-ball competition.

**Engage children and young people:** The following will be prioritised:

- Doubling cricket participation in primary schools.
- Delivering a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards.
- Developing safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people.

**Transform women and girl’s cricket:** There will be a structured pathway for women and girls in both softball and hardball cricket that will include:

- Growing the base through participation and facilities investment.
- Launching centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure.
- Investing in girls’ county age group cricket.
- Delivering a girls’ secondary school programme.

**Support our communities:** The following will be prioritised:

- Doubling the number of volunteers in the game.
- Creating a game-wide approach to Trusts and Foundations through the cricket network.
- Developing a new wave of officials and community coaches.
- Increasing participation in disability cricket.

## 6.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Pitch needs assessments in neighbouring local authorities highlighted the following:

### ***East Cambridgeshire***

The *'East Cambridgeshire Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2020) identifies that there is seasonal spare capacity of 107 match equivalent sessions. However, if weekly peak time capacity is considered, supply and demand is balanced, which confirms that there is no effective spare capacity as present'.

### ***South Cambridgeshire***

The *'Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031'* (2015) identifies that there will be insufficient cricket pitches in South Cambridgeshire by 2031 that are in secured community use. There is a need to address the quality issues of facilities particularly pavilions and changing facilities.

### ***Braintree***

The *'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study'* (2017) identifies significant spare capacity of cricket pitches in the district, with sufficient provision to meet all future needs.

### ***Babergh***

The *'Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that there is 'sufficient capacity for current and future growth'.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

The *'Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that there is 'sufficient capacity for current and future growth' but notes demand for 'specialist indoor cricket facilities/ winter nets along the A14 west of Ipswich'.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of cricket pitch needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of cricket pitch needs for the district.

## 6.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy

The *'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to cricket:

'There is a general surplus of cricket wickets across the West Suffolk and there is still a surplus even with future demand taken into account. Balance figures for 2012 show a surplus of 298 wickets. Projected balance figures for 2031 show a surplus of 267 wickets'.

## 6.3 Cricket demand in West Suffolk

### 6.3.1 Affiliated clubs and teams

The information on cricket clubs and teams based in West Suffolk was supplied by the ECB through its 'Play Cricket' database, cross-referenced to a local clubs survey. A questionnaire survey was circulated to all Suffolk Cricket-affiliated clubs in the district. The following clubs responded, collectively representing 62 teams, or 60.2% of the 103 affiliated teams in the district.

- Barrow CC
- Brockley CC
- Bury St. Edmunds CC
- Cavendish CC
- Elveden CC
- Haverhill CC
- Mildenhall CC
- Newmarket CC
- Risby CC
- Stansfield CC
- Worlington CC

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home Ground(s)</i>	<i>Adult male teams</i>	<i>Adult female teams</i>	<i>Junior male teams</i>	<i>Junior female teams</i>	<i>All Stars/ Dynamos (players)</i>
Bardwell Cricket Club	Bardwell Playing Field	2	1	5	0	3
Barrow Cricket Club	Ickworth Park	1	0	0	0	17
Brockley Cricket Club	Brockley Cricket Club	3	0	1	0	0
Bury St. Edmunds CC	The Victory Ground	6	1	4	0	15
Cavendish Cricket Club	Cavendish Sports Club	1	0	0	0	37
Elveden Cricket Club	Elveden Sports Field	2	0	1	0	6
Exning and <i>Burwell</i> CC	Exning Park <i>Mingay Park</i>	4	0	4	0	36
Haverhill Cricket Club	Haverhill Cricket Club Withersfield Sports Ground	5	1	3	0	0
Horringer Cricket Club	Ickworth Park	1	0	0	0	0
Hundon Cricket Club	Hundon Cricket Club	1	0	2	1	0
Lakenheath Cricket Club	Lakenheath Playing Fields	3	0	0	0	20
Lidgate and Ousden CC	Ousden Playing Field	1	0	0	0	0
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Mildenhall Cricket Club	6	2	8	1	43
Newmarket Cricket Club	Newmarket Cricket Club	3	0	3	0	0
Nowton Cricket Club	Nowton Cricket Club	3	0	5	0	15
Risby Cricket Club	Risby Playing Field	2	0	0	0	0
Stansfield Cricket Club	Stansfield Recreation Ground	1	0	0	0	0
Tuddenham St. Mary CC	Tuddenham Playing Field	2	0	3	0	21
Whepstead Cricket Club	Whepstead Community Centre	1	0	0	0	0
Worlington CC	Worlington Cricket Club	4	1	4	0	30
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>52</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>243</b>

The number of teams and individual All Stars/Dynamos players by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Adult male teams</i>	<i>Adult female teams</i>	<i>Junior male teams</i>	<i>Junior female teams</i>	<i>All Stars/Dynamos (players)</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	15	2	14	0	50
Newmarket	8	0	7	0	36
Haverhill	12	1	6	1	37
Mildenhall	17	3	16	1	120
Brandon	0	0	0	0	0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>243</b>

### 6.3.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams or other users of playing pitches from within the study area which takes place outside of the area and vice versa:

- **Imported demand from external clubs:** Two teams from outside the district (Burwell) play their 'home' games at pitches in West Suffolk.
- **Exported demand from internal clubs:** No teams from 'West Suffolk play their 'home' games at pitches outside the district.
- **Net displaced demand:** There is therefore net imported demand of two teams to West Suffolk. This is equivalent to 1.9% of all the teams that currently play in the district.

### 6.3.3 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some pitches may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

Consultation with local clubs indicated that there is no unmet demand for cricket pitches in the district at present.

### 6.3.4 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist, latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from a population if they had access to more or better provision. Local clubs estimates of additional team formation potential indicate overall levels of latent demand of 10 teams, representing a 9.9% increase over actual team numbers.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Adult male teams</i>	<i>Adult female teams</i>	<i>Junior male teams</i>	<i>Junior female teams</i>
Barrow Cricket Club	1	0	0	0
Brockley Cricket Club	0	0	1	0
Bury St. Edmunds Cricket Club	0	1	1	1
Cavendish Cricket Club	0	0	0	0
Elveden Cricket Club	0	0	1	0
Haverhill Cricket Club	1	0	0	0
Mildenhall Cricket Club	0	0	0	0
Newmarket Cricket Club	1	1	1	0
Risby Cricket Club	0	0	0	0
Stansfield Cricket Club	0	0	0	0
Worlington Cricket Club	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

#### 6.4 Cricket supply in West Suffolk

Provision of cricket pitches in West Suffolk is set out below. The pitches included in the analysis are defined as natural grass or artificial turf wickets (shown in brackets).

- *Available for community use and used:*

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Wickets</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	Spring Road, Bardwell IP31 1AB	1	10	Bury St. Edmunds
Brockley Cricket Club	Bury Road, Brockley IP29 4AH	1	10(1)	Haverhill
Cavendish Sports Club	Lower Street, Cavendish CO10 8AD	1	6(1)	Haverhill
Elveden Sports Field	Brandon Road, Elveden IP24 3TW	1	8	Mildenhall
Exning Cricket Club	Cotton End Road, Exning CB8 7NN	1	10	Newmarket
Haverhill Cricket Club	Manor Road, Haverhill CB9 0AP	1	9	Haverhill
Hundon Cricket Club	Lower North Street, Hundon CO10 8ED	1	4	Haverhill
Ickworth Park	The Rotunda, Horringer IP29 5QE	1	6	Bury St. Edmunds
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Eriswell Road, Lakenheath IP27 9AF	1	10	Mildenhall
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Wamil Way, Mildenhall IP28 7JU	2	21(1)	Mildenhall
<i>Mingay Park</i>	<i>Reach Road, Burnwell CB25 0AH</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>11</i>	-
Newmarket Cricket Club	Bury Road, Newmarket CB8 7BP	1	6	Newmarket
Nowton Cricket Club	Overway Meadow, Nowton IP29 5NB	1	16	Bury St. Edmunds
Ousden Playing Field	Front Street, Ousden CB8 8TW	1	3	Newmarket
Risby Playing Field	Aylmer Close, Risby IP28 6RT	1	4	Bury St. Edmunds
Stansfield Recn. Ground	Lower Street, Stansfield CO10 8LP	1	4	Haverhill
The Victory Ground	Nowton Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2BT	2	23(1)	Bury St. Edmunds
Tuddenham Playing Field	High Street, Tuddenham IP28 6SL	1	12	Mildenhall



<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Wickets</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Whepstead Comm. Centre	Bury Road, Whepstead IP29 4TA	1	4	Haverhill
Withersfield Sports Ground	Withersfield Road, Withersfield CB9 7SF	1	5	Haverhill
Worlington Cricket Club	The Street, Worlington IP28 8RU	1	12(1)	Mildenhall
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>22(1)</b>	<b>183(5)</b>	-

- **Available for community use and not used:** No pitches are available for community use but not used.
- **Not available for community use:**

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Wickets</i>
Barnardiston Prep School	Barnardiston, Haverhill CB9 7TG	1	(1)
Castle Manor Academy	Eastern Avenue, Haverhill, CB9 9JE	2	(2)
County Upper School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RQ	1	(1)
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	1	12(1)
IES Breckland	Crown Street, Brandon, IP27 0PE	1	(1)
King Edward VI Sports College	Grove Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3BH	1	(1)
Mildenhall College Academy	Bury Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HT	1	(1)
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LD	1	(1)
SET Ixworth School	Walsham Road, Ixworth IP31 2HS	1	(1)
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>10</b>	<b>12(10)</b>

- **Pitches decommissioned in the past five years:** These are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitches</i>	<i>Wickets</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Hundred Acre Way, Red Lodge IP28 8XR	1	8(1)	Mildenhall
Rougham Playing Field	Almshouse Road, Rougham IP30 9JN	1	6	Bury St. Edmunds
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	-

- **Provision by sub-area:** Pitches with community use and used by sub-area are as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Pitches</i>	<i>Pitches per capita</i>	<i>No. wickets</i>	<i>Wickets per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	7	1: 8,297	60	1: 9,956
Newmarket	22,141	3	1: 7,380	19	1: 1,165
Haverhill	38,032	7	1: 7,606	44	1: 1,311
Mildenhall	34,260	5	1: 8,565	65	1: 603
Brandon	9,941	0	-	0	-
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1: 8,138</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1: 952</b>

#### 6.4.1 Cricket facilities quality

The qualitative analysis of cricket pitches and facilities in West Suffolk involved visits to all cricket pitches during the playing season, to undertake the non-technical visual inspections produced by the ECB for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment evaluated the condition of:

- **Grass wickets:** This includes presence of line markings, evidence of rolling, grass cut and height, repaired wickets, grass coverage and ball bounce.
- **Outfield:** This includes grass coverage, length of grass, evenness and evidence of unofficial use or damage to the surface.
- **Non-turf wickets:** This includes integration with the surrounding grass, evenness, stump holes any evidence of moss, tears or surface lifting and ball bounce.
- **Changing facilities:** This includes the presence or absence of umpires' provision, toilets, hot/cold water, heating and an assessment of the condition of the building.
- **Non-turf practice nets:** This includes integration with the surrounding grass, surface quality, ball bounce, safety and integrity of the steel frame and nets and safety signage.

The assessment generates a 'score' for each site. The percentage scores generated equate to ratings of 'Good' for scores of 81% or more (shaded green in the table below) 'Standard' for scores of 80% - 51% (shaded yellow in the table below) and 'Poor' for scores of 50% or below (denoted by shaded red in the table below). Blank cells in the table mean that the feature concerned is absent from the site in question. The scores are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Wicket</i>	<i>Non-turf</i>	<i>Outfield</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Practice nets</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	Good	None	Good	Good	Standard
Brockley Cricket Club	Good	Standard	Good	Good	Standard
Cavendish Sports Club	Good	Standard	Good	Good	Poor
Elveden Sports Field	Standard	None	Good	Good	Poor
Exning Cricket Club	Good	None	Good	Good	None
Haverhill Cricket Club	Good	None	Good	Good	Standard
Hundon Cricket Club	Poor	None	Poor	Poor	Poor
Ickworth Park	Good	None	Good	Poor	None
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Good	None	Standard	Good	Poor
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Newmarket Cricket Club	Standard	None	Standard	Good	None
Nowton Cricket Club	Good	None	Good	Standard	None
Ousden Playing Field	Poor	None	Standard	Poor	None
Risby Cricket Club	Standard	None	Standard	None	None
Stansfield Recreation Ground	Standard	None	Poor	Poor	Poor
The Victory Ground	Good	Good	Good	Good	Poor
Tuddenham St. Mary Green	Good	None	Good	Good	None
Whepstead Comm. Centre	Standard	None	Standard	Poor	Poor
Withersfield Sports Ground	Standard	None	Standard	Poor	None
Worlington Cricket Club	Good	Good	Good	Standard	None

## 6.4.2 Pitch carrying capacity

The carrying capacity of pitches is related to their quality and is expressed as the number of 'match equivalents' that can be accommodated each season. The *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance* indicates the following seasonal carrying capacities for cricket pitches:

- A ‘good’ quality wicket will accommodate five matches per season, a ‘standard’ quality wicket will accommodate four and a ‘poor’ quality wicket will accommodate none.
- ‘Good’ and ‘Standard’ quality artificial turf wickets accommodate 60 matches per season and a ‘poor’ quality wicket will accommodate none.
- The seasonal pitch carrying capacity of each cricket site in West Suffolk is as follows:

The pitch carrying capacity of each site with cricket pitches with community use in West Suffolk, expressed in seasonal match equivalents, is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Grass wickets</i>	<i>Artificial wickets</i>	<i>Total capacity</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	10	0	50
Brockley Cricket Club	10	1	110
Cavendish Sports Club	6	1	90
Elveden Sports Field	8	0	32
Exning Cricket Club	10	0	50
Haverhill Cricket Club	9	0	45
Hundon Cricket Club	4	0	0
Ickworth Park	6	0	30
Lakenheath Playing Fields	10	0	50
Mildenhall Cricket Club	21	1	165
Newmarket Cricket Club	6	0	24
Nowton Cricket Club	16	0	80
Ousden Playing Field	3	0	0
Risby Playing Field	4	0	16
Stansfield Recreation Ground	4	0	16
The Victory Ground	23	1	175
Tuddenham Playing Field	12	0	60
Whepstead Community Centre	4	0	16
Withersfield Sports Ground	4	0	16
Worlington Cricket Club	12	1	120
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1,145</b>

### 6.4.3 Pitch maintenance

Grass Cricket pitch maintenance in the district is organised by the managers of the facilities as follows:

- **Club-managed pitches:** The pitches owned and managed by local sports clubs are all maintained by the clubs themselves. This involves a combination of paid grounds staff, external contractors and volunteer help.
- **Parish Council pitches:** The councils contract external contractors to undertake cricket pitch maintenance.

#### 6.4.4 Ownership, management and security of access

The ownership, management and security of community access of all cricket pitch sites in West Suffolk is detailed below. Security of access refers to the extent to which community use of the site is protected (through public ownership, planning policy ownership covenants etc.), rather than the security of tenure of specific club users.

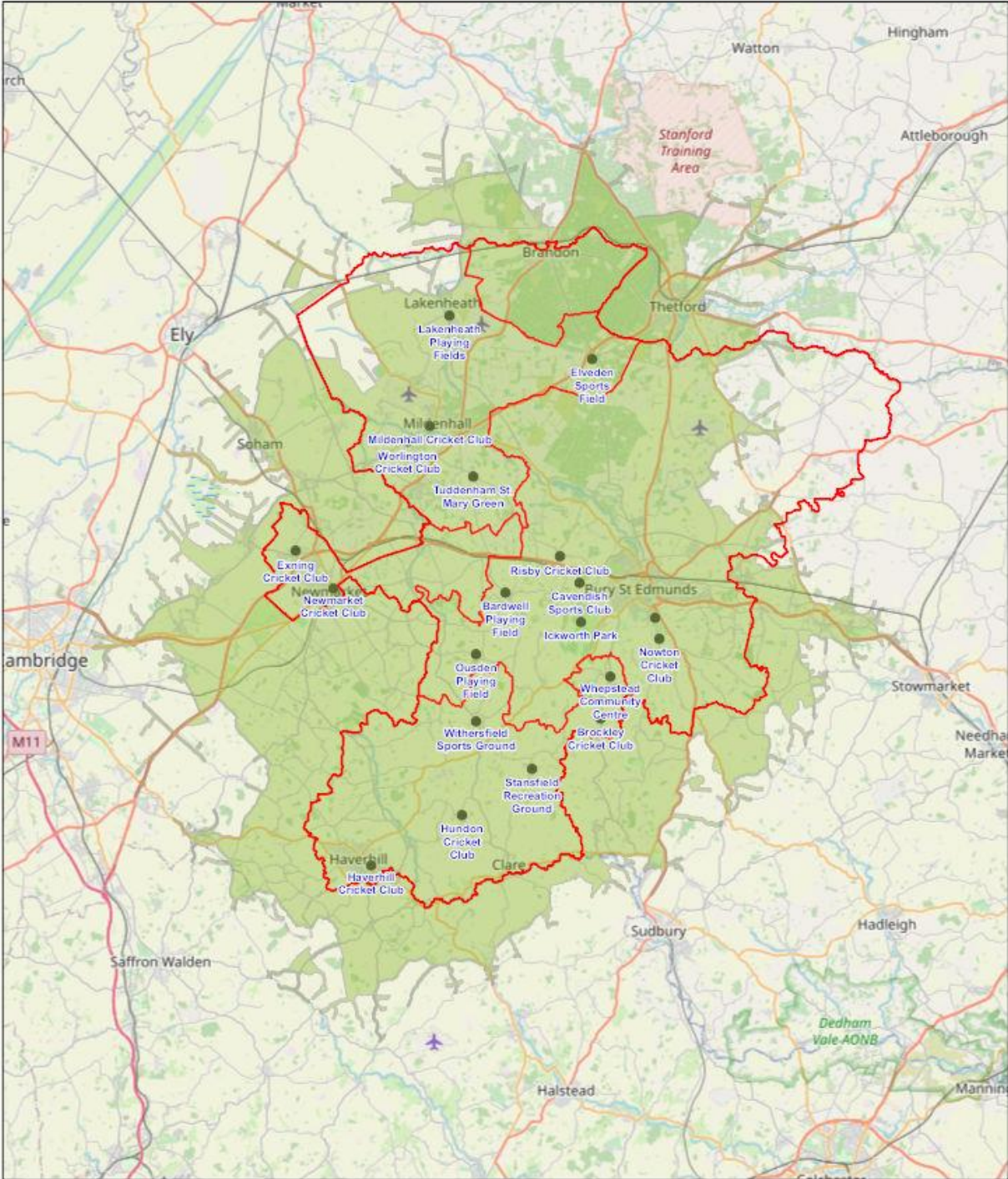
<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Bardwell Playing Field	Bardwell Parish Council	Bardwell Parish Council	Secured
Brockley Cricket Club	Brockley Cricket Club	Brockley Cricket Club	Secured
Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Sports Club	Secured
Elveden Sports Field	Elveden Estate	Elveden Cricket Club	Secured
Exning Cricket Club	Exning Estate	Exning and Burwell CC	Secured
Haverhill Cricket Club	Haverhill Comm. Sports Assoc.	Haverhill Cricket Club	Secured
Hundon Cricket Club	Hundon Cricket Club	Hundon Cricket Club	Secured
Ickworth Park	National Trust	Barrow Cricket Club	Secured
Lakenheath Playing Fields	Lakenheath Pl. Fields Assoc.	Lakenheath Pl. Fields Assoc.	Secured
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Mildenhall Cricket Club	Mildenhall Cricket Club	Secured
Newmarket Cricket Club	Newmarket Cricket Club	Newmarket Cricket Club	Secured
Nowton Cricket Club	Nowton Cricket Club	Nowton Cricket Club	Secured
Ousden Playing Field	Ousden Parish Council	Lidgate and Ousden CC	Secured
Risby Playing Field	Risby Village Comm. Trust	Risby Cricket Club	Secured
Stansfield Recn. Ground	Stansfield Parish Council	Stansfield Cricket Club	Secured
The Victory Ground	Victory Sports Ground CIC	Sporting 87 FC	Secured
Tuddenham Playing Field	Tuddenham Parish Council	Tuddenham Parish Council	Secured
Whepstead Comm. Centre	Whepstead Community Assoc.	Whepstead Cricket Club	Secured
Withersfield Sports Ground	Withersfield Parish Council	Haverhill Cricket Club	Secured
Worlington Cricket Club	Worlington Cricket Club	Worlington Cricket Club	Secured

#### 6.4.5 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of cricket pitches in West Suffolk has been assessed by identifying catchments to illustrate local level accessibility. This is based on the results of the clubs' survey, which identifies 15-minutes travel time as the typical maximum. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one pitch, with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall and north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.

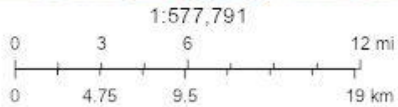


# WEST SUFFOLK - Cricket Pitches within 15 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 15.0 Minutes
- CRICKET PITCHES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## **6.5 The views of local stakeholders**

### **6.5.1 Suffolk Cricket**

Consultation with Suffolk Cricket highlighted that:

- There are 18 clubs with a good geographical spread in the district.
- Cricket for women and girls is fairly well developed in the district. With six and two teams respectively and a number of mixed teams in the younger age groups.
- There are dual use issues at some sites with football at Lakenheath, the Victory Ground and Cavendish Sports Club.

### **6.5.2 Barrow Cricket Club**

The club made commented that ‘outdoor cricket nets in Barrow Recreation Ground would be lovely in the Summer’.

### **6.5.3 Bury St. Edmunds Cricket Club**

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Covid has been a disaster. we provide a community facility which has been closed for months so no hire income, no par income, reduced income from members and sponsors’.
- ‘We are desperate to improve facilities but have used all our financial resources and donations to keep afloat’.

### **6.5.4 Mildenhall Cricket Club**

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We started a 5th XI in 2020 and only have two home pitches so currently playing home matches is problematic to some degree’.
- ‘There are no specific male/female changing rooms. If senior teams are mixed, typically ladies use toilets or a separate room’.

### **6.5.5 Newmarket Cricket Club**

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We need net facilities and more wickets to accommodate the need for more teams, plus a fence to protect the ground’.
- ‘Our current location is compromising the standard of play and we need to identify a site for a new ground in a more appropriate location’.



### 6.5.6 Worlington Cricket Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We as a club have improved so much with the competitive environment from neighbouring clubs and have to continually improve all round otherwise club membership will quickly disappear. We require further funding and events at the club to assist with this matter. At present our clubhouse does not provide the facilities for sourcing other income whereas other clubs are able to use their facilities to assist with income and improve the playing standard at their club’.
- ‘We require a new pavilion if possible with the funding to allow this to happen. As we have seen in the past with Exning Cricket Club if we do not continue to improve our facilities and membership the club can soon have to make dramatic changes to remain competitive which we believe we can continue to sustainably do ourselves if we are provided the right funding and facilities’.

### 6.6 The implications for cricket in West Suffolk

Analysis of local supply of cricket pitches in West Suffolk indicates the following:

- **Participation rates:** Team numbers within existing clubs have remained broadly static in the past five years, which accords with national trends.
- **Displaced demand:** There is limited evidence of any imported or exported cricket demand between West Suffolk and its neighbouring areas.
- **Unmet/latent demand:** Local clubs believe that there is latent demand for a further ten teams in West Suffolk (an increase of 9.9% on the current team numbers).
- **Pitch quality:** Two pitches in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality, along with six pavilions and seven practice nets.
- **Shared usage:** Several sites with cricket pitches are also used for football and this causes problems for both sports in the seasonal overlap periods (April-May and August-September).

### 6.7 Assessment of current needs

#### 6.7.1 The basis of the assessment

To assess whether the current supply of pitches is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site with how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent sessions’ per season at each site.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

- **Being overplayed:** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity (highlighted in red in the tables below).
- **Being played to the level the site can sustain:** Where use matches the carrying capacity (highlighted in yellow in the tables below).
- **Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:** Where use falls below the carrying capacity (highlighted in green in the tables below).

In line with ECB guidance, the following assumptions have been made in relation to the number of weekly match equivalents that can be accommodated by different quality pitches:

- Overall capacity is expressed as match equivalents per **season**, as opposed to per **week** for all other pitch types.
- The number of wickets at each site is shown below.
- The supply-demand balance for grass and artificial turf wickets respectively have been assessed separately because there is little or no use of artificial wickets by adult teams, with use confined to junior teams.
- In line with the guidance it has been assumed that a ‘good’ quality grass wicket will accommodate five matches per season, a ‘standard’ quality wicket will accommodate four and a ‘poor’ quality wicket will accommodate no play.
- ‘Good’ and ‘standard’ quality artificial turf wickets will accommodate 60 matches per season and the additional capacity that they provide is analysed in a separate table.
- Adult teams typically play ten home games per season and junior teams typically play eight home games per season.
- Aspects of each site shaded in red indicate a deficiency, those shaded in yellow indicate that supply and demand are balanced and those shaded in green have some spare capacity.

## 6.7.2 Grass wickets

Site	Users	Seasonal demand	Seasonal capacity	Seasonal balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Bardwell Playing Field	Bardwell Cricket Club	65	50	-15	1	1	Balanced
Brockley Cricket Club	Brockley Cricket Club	40	50	+10	1	1	Balanced
Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Cricket Club	10	30	+20	1	1	Balanced
Elveden Sports Field	Elveden Cricket Club	20	32	+12	1	1	Balanced
Exning Cricket Club	Exning and <i>Burwell</i> CC	40	50	+10	1	1	Balanced
Haverhill Cricket Club	Haverhill Cricket Club	50	45	-5	1	1	Balanced
Hundon Cricket Club	Hundon Cricket Club	31	0	-31	0	1	-1
Ickworth Park	Barrow Cricket Club Horringer Cricket Club	20	30	+10	1	1	Balanced
Lakenheath Pl. Fields	Lakenheath Cricket Club	30	50	+20	1	1	Balanced
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Mildenhall Cricket Club	100	105	+5	2	2	Balanced

Site	Users	Seasonal demand	Seasonal capacity	Seasonal balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Newmarket Cricket Club	Newmarket Cricket Club	51	24	-27	1	1	Balanced
Nowton Cricket Club	Nowton Cricket Club	65	80	+15	1	1	Balanced
Ousden Playing Field	Lidgate & Ousden CC	10	0	-10	0	1	-1
Risby Playing Field	Risby Cricket Club	24	16	-8	1	1	Balanced
Stansfield Recreation Ground	Stansfield Cricket Club	10	16	+6	1	1	Balanced
The Victory Ground	Bury St. Edmunds CC	105	115	+10	2	2	Balanced
Tuddenham Playing Field	Tuddenham St. Mary CC	41	60	+19	1	1	Balanced
Whepstead Community Centre	Whepstead Cricket Club	10	16	+6	1	1	Balanced
Withersfield Sports Ground	Haverhill Cricket Club	28	16	-12	1	1	Balanced
Worlington Cricket Club	Worlington Cricket Club	50	60	+10	1	1	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>+55</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>-2</b>

The supply-demand balance of grass cricket pitches by sub-area is as follows:

Sub-area	Seasonal demand	Seasonal capacity	Seasonal balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Bury St. Edmunds	319	367	+48	8	8	Balanced
Newmarket	101	74	-27	2	3	-1
Haverhill	129	97	-32	4	5	-1
Mildenhall	241	307	+66	6	6	Balanced
Brandon	0	0	Balanced	0	0	Balanced
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>+55</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>-2</b>

The key findings are as follows:

- There is collective seasonal spare capacity of 55 match equivalent sessions.
- Seven sites show a seasonal deficit and peak usage in the district as a whole shows a shortfall of two pitches because in line with the PPS Guidance for cricket, as 'poor' quality surfaces the wickets at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field are counted as having no capacity.
- The sub-area analysis shows that seasonal demand exceeds supply in the Newmarket and Haverhill sub-areas.

### 6.7.3 Artificial turf wickets

Site	Users	Seasonal demand	Seasonal capacity	Seasonal balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Brockley Cricket Club	Brockley Cricket Club	10	60	+50	1	1	Balanced
Cavendish Sports Club	Cavendish Cricket Club	5	60	+55	1	1	Balanced
Mildenhall Cricket Club	Mildenhall Cricket Club	60	60	Balanced	1	1	Balanced
The Victory Ground	Bury St. Edmunds CC	60	60	Balanced	1	1	Balanced
Worlington Cricket Club	Worlington Cricket Club	40	60	+20	1	1	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>+125</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Balanced</b>

The supply-demand balance of artificial turf cricket wickets by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Seasonal demand</i>	<i>Seasonal capacity</i>	<i>Seasonal balance</i>	<i>Peak capacity</i>	<i>Peak demand</i>	<i>Peak balance</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	70	120	+50	2	2	Balanced
Newmarket	0	0	Balanced	0	0	Balanced
Haverhill	5	60	+55	1	1	Balanced
Mildenhall	100	120	+20	2	2	Balanced
Brandon	0	0	Balanced	0	0	Balanced
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>+125</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Balanced</b>

The key findings are as follows:

- There is collective seasonal spare capacity of 125 match equivalent sessions.
- Peak usage is balanced in the district as a whole.

## 6.8 Assessment of future needs

### 6.8.1 Population growth

Two scenarios are considered:

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
- A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

### 6.8.2 Potential changes in demand

Changes in demand for cricket in the future can be modelled on a trend-based projection.

- **National cricket playing survey:** The ECB's most recent *National Cricket Playing Survey* (2019), which reflects club and league cricket only (for example it does not include Women's Soft Ball Cricket, or junior cricket) identified:
  - A 1.2% increase in player numbers between 2018 and 2019.
  - Of the 822,000 players nationally, 229,000 are 'core' players (playing at least 12 weeks per season), 353,000 are 'occasional' players (playing between three and 11 weeks per season) and 238,000 are 'cameo' players (playing one or two weeks per season).
  - 81.4% of completed fixtures were played in 2019, 5.4% of completed fixtures were abandoned and 7.5% of completed fixtures were cancelled.
  - Compared to 2018, conceded fixtures decreased by 15% to 5.7% of completed fixtures and short-sided game cancellations also decreased by 11% in 2019 to 11.7% of completed fixtures.

- **Local demand:** Local clubs estimates of additional team formation potential indicate overall levels of latent demand of 10 teams, representing a 9.9% increase over actual team numbers.

### 6.8.3 Site-specific pressures

West Suffolk Council needs to identify sites upon which it can deliver its housing targets. Whilst planning policy offers protection to playing pitches, some sites may be vulnerable unless it can be proved that they are needed to accommodate existing or future shortfalls in supply or serve some other green space functions. At present, the analysis in section 6.7 above shows that all sites are used to capacity in the peak periods, so the case for retention is strong.

### 6.8.4 Potential changes in supply

There are no known potential changes to cricket pitch supply.

### 6.8.5 Existing spare capacity

There is no effective spare capacity at peak times based on the assessment.

### 6.8.6 Future cricket pitch needs

Future cricket pitch needs to 2040 are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’ (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the district are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future. Unmet demand has been included, based upon the number of teams that local clubs believe could currently be formed if more pitch provision was available. Two population growth scenarios are assessed:

- **ONS projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult males	16-55	45,259	52	3	1: 823	45,382	55	0
Adult females	16-55	41,667	6	2	1: 5,208	40,886	8	0
Junior males	10-15	6,599	43	4	1: 141	6,421	44	-3
Junior females	10-15	6,167	2	1	1: 2,056	5,624	3	0

- **Housing projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult males	16-55	45,259	52	3	1: 823	53,903	65	+10
Adult females	16-55	41,667	6	2	1: 5,208	49,625	10	+2
Junior males	10-15	6,599	43	4	1: 141	7,859	56	+9
Junior females	10-15	6,167	2	1	1: 2,056	7,345	4	+1

## 6.8 Key findings and issues

### 6.9.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Participation rates:** Team numbers within existing clubs have remained broadly static in the past five years, which accords with national trends.
- **Displaced demand:** There is limited evidence of any imported or exported cricket demand between West Suffolk and its neighbouring areas.
- **Unmet/latent demand:** Local clubs believe that there is latent demand for a further ten teams in West Suffolk (an increase of 9.9% on the current team numbers).
- **Pitch quality:** Two pitches in the district are rated as ‘poor’ quality, along with six pavilions and seven practice nets.
- **Shared usage:** Several sites with cricket pitches are also used for football and this causes problems for both sports in the seasonal overlap periods (April-May and August-September).

### 6.9.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand? **NO**

- **Seasonal pitch capacity:** There is seasonal spare capacity for grass wickets at secured sites of 55 match equivalent sessions and additional seasonal spare capacity of 125 match equivalent sessions if artificial grass pitches are included.
- **Peak time pitch capacity:** With capacity at the ‘poor’ quality pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field excluded, there is a shortfall of two pitches in the peak period.

### 6.9.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained? **MOSTLY** - The pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field are rated as ‘poor’ quality,

The pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field are rated as ‘poor’ and therefore counted as having no capacity at present. Also, changing provision is ‘poor’ at six sites and practice nets are ‘poor’ at seven sites.

### 6.9.4 What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- **Population growth:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%. A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.
- **Changes in demand:** Projecting future need based on current demand patterns is a reasonable basis for forecasting.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known proposed changes in supply.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is no peak time spare capacity as present.



- **Future needs:** There is sufficient seasonal spare capacity to meet all future needs at present, but the ‘poor’ quality pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field mean that there is a current (and potentially future) peak time deficit.

### 6.9.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand? **No** - There is no effective spare capacity at present.

There is insufficient accessible and secured provision to meet future demand at present, but additional capacity could be created in five ways:

- **New pitch provision:** Securing the provision of additional pitches at part of new housing developments in the district.
- **Pitch quality improvements:** If the ‘poor’ quality pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field were upgraded, it would add two match equivalent session to peak-time capacity and 28 seasonal match equivalent sessions to seasonal capacity.
- **Installation of non-turf wickets:** Installing non-turf wickets at sites like Bardwell Playing Field, Haverhill Cricket Club, Newmarket Cricket Club, Risby Playing Field and Withersfield Sports Ground that are currently used to over capacity would help to expand seasonal carrying capacity for junior play, although would have little impact on peak time provision if provided as part of an existing square.
- **Reinstating disused pitches:** The use of two pitches has recently been discontinued (Red Lodge Sports Pavilion and Rougham Playing Field). If these were brought back into use, it would add two match equivalent sessions to peak-time capacity and 56 seasonal match equivalent sessions to seasonal capacity.
- **Using pitches on school sites with no community use:** There are 12 grass wickets and 10 artificial turf wickets on school sites with no community at present. Gaining access to these would provide 10 further pitches and 648 seasonal match equivalent sessions to the available supply (less any use by the schools themselves), which would be particularly useful for junior cricket.

## 6.10 Scenario Testing

### 6.10.1 Introduction

Based upon the key findings and issues identified above, a number of scenarios have been examined, to identify the optimum approach to addressing needs.

### 6.10.2 Scenario 1: Increasing capacity by improving the ‘poor’ quality pitches to ‘standard’ quality.

- **Rationale:** The pitches at Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field are rated as ‘poor’ quality and therefore have no effective capacity at present. Upgrading the pitches to ‘good’ quality would enable each wicket to accommodate up to five matches per season and would collectively provide an extra 35 seasonal match equivalent sessions and two peak-time match equivalent sessions.

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Two additional peak time match equivalent sessions would be created, to eliminate the current peak deficit.
  - The improvements to the pitches could be achieved at relatively low cost.
- **Disadvantages:** The only disadvantage of this scenario is that additional investment would be required to improve maintenance standards.
- **Conclusions:** This scenario offers an attractive solution to meeting additional cricket pitch demand in West Suffolk.

### 6.10.3 Scenario 2: Installation of additional non-turf wickets

- **Rationale:** Installing non-turf wickets at sites like Bardwell Playing Field, Haverhill Cricket Club, Newmarket Cricket Club, Risby Playing Field and Withersfield Sports Ground that are currently used to over capacity would help to expand seasonal carrying capacity for junior play.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - The pitches can be installed at relatively low cost (£8,000 - £10,000 per pitch).
  - They have the potential to accommodate 60 match equivalent sessions per season.
  - Pitch maintenance costs are relatively low compared with natural turf.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Non-turf wickets are used primarily for junior matches, so they would have limited impact on addressing capacity issues in relation to adult play.
  - Unless there is space to accommodate non-turf pitches away from the main square, they would not address peak-time deficiencies because they could not be used simultaneously with the grass wickets.
- **Conclusions:** This scenario should be examined further on a site-by-site basis.

### 6.10.4 Scenario 3: Negotiating access to school pitches

- **Rationale:** There are 12 grass wickets and 10 artificial turf wickets on school sites with no community use at present. Gaining access to these would provide 10 further pitches and 648 seasonal match equivalent sessions to the available supply (less any use by the schools themselves), which would be particularly useful for junior cricket.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Sites that are currently used to over-capacity could schedule matches on school pitches subject to availability.

- Up to ten additional peak time match equivalent sessions would be created, to cater for additional future demand.
- The pitches already exist and therefore could be brought into use at little or no additional cost.
- There would be opportunities to establish closer school-club links if community-based clubs were playing on school sites.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - The standard of pitch maintenance is appropriate for schools use but is not of a high enough standard for most club cricket.
  - The pitches are already used by the schools so the overall capacity is reduced.
  - None of the sites has a formal Community Use Agreement, so continued access would not be secured.
- **Conclusions:** This scenario offers limited possibilities for meeting additional cricket pitch demand in West Suffolk from junior teams.

#### 6.10.5 Scenario 4: Reinstating disused pitches.

- **Rationale:** The use of two pitches has recently been discontinued (Red Lodge Sports Pavilion and Rougham Playing Field). If these were brought back into use, it would add two match equivalent sessions to peak-time capacity and 56 seasonal match equivalent sessions to seasonal capacity.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Two additional peak time match equivalent sessions would be created, to eliminate the current peak deficit.
  - The improvements to the pitches could be achieved at relatively low cost.
- **Disadvantages:** The only disadvantage of this scenario is that additional investment would be required to improve maintenance standards.
- **Conclusions:** This scenario offers an attractive solution to meeting additional cricket pitch demand in West Suffolk.

### 6.11 Policy recommendations

#### 6.11.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to cricket are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;

- 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 sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

### 6.11.2 Protect

**Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for cricket in the district. The Assessment identifies a need for all current cricket pitch sites to be retained on the basis of the specific identified roles that each can play in delivering the needs of the sport in West Suffolk both now and in the future. It is therefore recommended that planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites based upon the evidence in the Assessment. If any pitch sites do become the subject of development proposals, this will only be permissible if they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must 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’.

### 6.11.3 Enhance

**Recommendation 2 - Improving existing ‘poor’ quality provision:** Hundon Cricket Club and Ousden Playing Field have ‘poor’ quality grass pitches and Hundon CC, Ickworth Park, Ousden Playing Field, Stansfield Recreation Ground, Whepstead Community Centre and Withersfield Sports Ground all have ‘poor’ quality changing facilities. This reduces the quality of playing experience and may deter some potential participants. It is recommended that the site owners should be supported to apply for external funding for facility enhancements, including the receipt of developer contributions (see below) where the usage capacity would be enhanced.

**Recommendation 3 - Developer contributions (enhancements):** Some of the additional demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in West Suffolk to 2040 can be accommodated through enhancements to existing pitches and facilities. It is recommended that the site-specific action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for determining facility enhancements that demonstrably relate to the scale and location of specific developments and that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

### 6.11.4 Provide

**Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions (new provision):** Some of the extra demand for cricket arising from the proposed housing development in West Suffolk to 2040, may need to be accommodated through the provision of new pitches and facilities. It is recommended that agreement be concluded with the developers of larger sites to provide cricket facilities to meet the specific future needs identified in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment.

## 6.12 Action Plan

### 6.12.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the suggested cricket action plan to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The abbreviations stand for WSC - West Suffolk Council, ECB - England and Wales Cricket Board and SC - Suffolk Cricket. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions..

### 6.12.2 Key strategic actions

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved cricket facilities.	WSC	Developers Local clubs	Determined by Sport England's New Development Calculator	High
Access to school sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approach schools regarding access</li> <li>Consider the merits of formal Community Use Agreements</li> </ul>	Schools	Local clubs	Possible funding for improvements to physical accessibility.	Medium

### 6.12.3 Site specific opportunities for consideration

<b>Site</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Bardwell Playing Field	Used to over-capacity on a seasonal basis	Investigate non-turf pitch provision	Bardwell CC	-	£10,000 for non-turf pitch	Medium
Brockley Cricket Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Cavendish Sports Club	'Poor' quality practice nets.	Provide new nets	Cavendish CC	-	£20,000	Medium
Elveden Sports Field	'Poor' quality practice nets.	Provide new nets	Elveden CC	-	£20,000	Medium
Exning and Burwell Cricket Club	No current issues.	-	-	-	-	-
Haverhill Cricket Club	Used to over-capacity on a seasonal basis	Investigate non-turf pitch provision	Haverhill CC	-	£10,000 for non-turf pitch	High
Hundon Cricket Club	'Poor' quality wicket, outfield, changing facilities and practice nets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment by ECB adviser.</li> <li>Improve pitch quality</li> </ul>	Hundon CC	-	Additional maintenance	Medium
Ickworth Park	'Poor' quality changing.	Assess the potential for improved provision.	National Trust	Barrow CC	TBC	Medium
Lakenheath Playing Fields	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Mildenhall Cricket Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Newmarket Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used to over-capacity on a seasonal basis</li> <li>Current location is unsuitable</li> </ul>	Examine options for a new ground	Newmarket CC	WSC Newmarket Town Council	TBC	High

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Nowton Cricket Club	No current issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action required.</li> </ul>	-	-	-	-
Ousden Playing Field	'Poor' quality wicket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment by ECB adviser.</li> <li>• Improve pitch quality</li> </ul>	Lidgate and Ousden CC	-	Additional maintenance	Medium
Risby Playing Field	Used to over-capacity on a seasonal basis	Investigate non-turf pitch provision	Risby CC	-	£10,000 for non-turf pitch	Medium
Stansfield Recn. Ground	'Poor' quality outfield, changing facilities and practice nets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve changing facilities</li> <li>• Provide new nets</li> </ul>	Stansfield CC	Stansfield Parish Council	£265,000 for changing £20,000 for nets	Medium
The Victory Ground	'Poor' quality practice nets.	Provide new nets	Bury St. Edmunds CC	-	£20,000	Medium
Tuddenham Playing Field	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-
Whepstead Comm. Centre	'Poor' quality changing facilities and practice nets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve changing facilities</li> <li>• Provide new nets</li> </ul>	Whepstead CC	Whepstead Community Assoc.	£265,000 for changing £20,000 for nets	Medium
Withersfield Sports Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used to over-capacity on a seasonal basis.</li> <li>• 'Poor' quality changing facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate non-turf pitch provision</li> <li>• Improve changing facilities</li> </ul>	Withersfield Parish Council	Haverhill CC	£10,000 for non-turf pitch £265,000 for changing	Medium
Worlington Cricket Club	No current issues.	No action required.	-	-	-	-



## 7 RUGBY UNION PITCH NEEDS

### 7.1 Organisational context

- **Rugby Football Union:** The RFU is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **RFU-affiliated Rugby Clubs:** There are four clubs in the district which collectively provide eight men's teams, two women's teams, 11 boy's teams, five girl's teams and 13 mini-rugby teams.

### 7.2 Strategic context

#### 7.2.1 National rugby facilities strategy

The RFUs 'England Rugby Strategy' (2021) contains priorities and objectives of relevance to facilities provision:

**Enjoyment:** The objective underpinning this priority is to 'enable positive player experiences on and off the field'. Sub-objectives include:

- 'Improve accessibility for women and girls across the game'.
- 'Make the game inclusive and attractive for 14 to 18 year olds'.
- 'Redefine playing opportunities, structures and competitions for current and future players, recognising the strategic importance of the adult male game'.
- 'Develop match officials and coaches in the community game to enhance player enjoyment'.

**Flourishing rugby communities:** The objective underpinning this priority is to 'support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflects society'. Sub-objectives include:

- 'Provide support to club and constituent body volunteers so they can attract new, diverse volunteers and help clubs to be fit for the future and self-sustaining'.
- 'Provide support to help clubs maximise the benefit from their facilities and assets'.
- 'Help clubs manage their risk and liabilities'.

**Diversity and inclusion:** The objective underpinning this priority is to 'drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society'. The sub-objective is **to** 'improve the diversity of all facets of our game and continue to create an inclusive environment for all'.

#### 7.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Playing pitch strategies in neighbouring local authority areas identify cross-boundary issues:

### ***East Cambridgeshire***

The 'East Cambridgeshire Playing Pitch Strategy' (2020) identifies that there is a current and future shortfall in rugby pitch provision.

### ***South Cambridgeshire***

The 'Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031' (2015) examines rugby pitch needs in South Cambridgeshire. The South-east sub-area is closest to West Suffolk and the strategy concludes that there is a need for a rugby-compliant artificial grass pitch at Sawston Rugby Club to meet current and future unmet demand.

### ***Braintree***

The 'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study' (2017) identifies that one club site has spare capacity, whilst the other is used to over-capacity. Neither has a catchment that overlaps the West Suffolk boundary.

### ***Babergh***

'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update' (2021) identifies that there is 'no deficit in Sudbury but a two adult pitch deficit in Hadleigh'.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update' (2021) identifies that there is 'no deficit in either Stowmarket or Thurston'.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of rugby pitch needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of rugby pitch needs for the district.

## **7.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The 'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy' (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to rugby:

'The supply and demand results for rugby pitches indicate that there is a shortfall in pitch capacity at Newmarket RFC and Haverhill RFC, with spare capacity at Bury St. Edmunds RFC and Mildenhall and Red Lodge RFC'.

## 7.3 Rugby demand

### 7.3.1 RFU-affiliated clubs and teams

The information on rugby clubs and teams based in West Suffolk was supplied by the RFU, cross-referenced to a local clubs survey. A questionnaire survey was circulated to all RFU-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk. All responded, collectively representing all 39 teams in the district.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home Ground</i>	<i>Men's teams</i>	<i>Women's teams</i>	<i>Boy's teams</i>	<i>Girl's teams</i>	<i>Mini teams</i>
Bury St. Edmunds RFC	The Haberden	5	1	5	1	7
Haverhill and District RFC	Castle Playing Field	2	1	1	1	1
Mildenhall Red Lodge RFC	Red Lodge Pavilion	1	0	0	0	0
Newmarket RFC	NSDA Pavilion	2	0	5	1	6
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>

The number of teams by sub-area is as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Men's teams</i>	<i>Women's teams</i>	<i>Boy's teams</i>	<i>Girl's teams</i>	<i>Mini teams</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	5	1	5	1	7
Newmarket	2	0	5	1	6
Haverhill	2	1	1	1	1
Mildenhall	1	0	0	0	0
Brandon	0	0	0	0	0
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>

### 7.3.2 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. Based upon the results of the clubs' survey, around 15% of members from West Suffolk-based rugby clubs are resident outside the district.

### 7.3.3 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some pitches may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There is some evidence of unmet demand for rugby in West Suffolk at present:

- Haverhill RFC has a membership waiting list, whilst the other clubs do not.
- Newmarket RFC has unmet demand for match pitches.

- Haverhill RFC and Newmarket RFC both have inadequate changing facilities.

### 7.3.4 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. Consultation with local clubs indicated that a total of four additional teams of all age groups could be accommodated in West Suffolk if the quality and quantity of pitch provision was improved, a 10.3% increase on the current team numbers.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Men's teams</i>	<i>Women's teams</i>	<i>Boy's teams</i>	<i>Girl's teams</i>	<i>Mini teams</i>
Bury St. Edmunds RFC	0	0	0	0	0
Haverhill and District RFC	0	1	1	1	0
Mildenhall Red Lodge RFC	0	0	0	0	0
Newmarket RFC	1	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

## 7.4 Rugby pitch supply

### 7.4.1 Quantity

This section summarises the detail of rugby pitch supply in West Suffolk. The pitches included in the analysis are defined as natural turf areas permanently laid out with regulation markings. The categories assessed are as follows:

- **Available for community use and used:** These are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Floodlit pitches</i>	<i>Non-floodlit pitches</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Castle Playing Field	School Lane, Haverhill CB9 9DE	0*	3	Haverhill
NSDA Pavilion	Elizabeth Avenue, Newmarket CB8 0DJ	1.5*	1	Newmarket
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Hundred Acre Way, Red Lodge IP28 8FQ	0	1	Mildenhall
The Haberden	Southgate Green, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2BL	2.5**	0.5	Bury St. Edmunds
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5.5</b>	

\* Includes one partially floodlit grass training area.

\*\* In addition to the floodlit grass pitches, there is a floodlit all-weather training area.

- **Small-sided artificial grass pitches with community use and used:** The following pitch is World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Built</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
The Haberden (Bury St. Edmunds Rugby Club)	Rougham Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2RN	60m x 38m	Yes	2017	Bury St. Edmunds

- **Available for community use and not used:** There are no rugby pitches available for community use that are not used.
- **Not available for community use:** The following pitches are not available for community use. All are non-floodlit:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Pitches</i>
Castle Manor Academy	Eastern Avenue, Haverhill CB9 9JE	1
County Upper School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RF	1
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	1
Horringer Court Middle School	Glastonbury Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2EX	1
IES Breckland	Crown Street, Brandon, IP27 0PE	1
King Edward VI Sports College	Grove Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3BH	1
Mildenhall College Academy	Bury Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HT	1
Moreton Hall Prep School	Mount Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7BJ	2
RAF Honington	Green Lane, Honington IP31 1EE	1
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill, CB9 0LD	1
St. Benedict's Catholic School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RH	1
Stoke College	Ashen Lane, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8JE	1
Stour Valley Community School	Cavendish Road, Clare CO10 8PJ	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>19</b>

- **Not available as disused:** There are no rugby pitches that are available for community use that are disused.
- **Provision by sub-area:** Pitches with community use and used by sub-area are as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Pitches</i>	<i>Pitches per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	3	1: 24,890
Newmarket	22,141	2.5	1: 8,856
Haverhill	38,032	3	1: 12,677
Mildenhall	34,260	1	1: 34,260
Brandon	9,941	0	-
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>1: 18,847</b>

## 7.4.2 Quality

The qualitative analysis involved a visit to all rugby pitches in West Suffolk with community use and used during the playing season, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by the RFU for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment generated 'scores' for each pitch by evaluating the condition of:

- **Pitch drainage:** Inadequately naturally drained (scores D0), adequately naturally drained (scores D1) pipe drained (scores (D2) and pipe and slit drained pitches (scores D3).
- **Grounds maintenance:** Frequency of aeration, sand-dressing, fertilising, weed killing and chain harrowing. This generates scores of 'Poor' (M0), 'Adequate' (M1) and 'Good' (M2).

The scores for each pitch in West Suffolk are as follows. ‘Good’ ratings are highlighted in green, ‘standard’ in yellow and ‘poor’ in red. Floodlit pitches are asterisked.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>	<i>Drainage</i>
Castle Playing Field pitch one	M2	D3
Castle Playing Field pitch two	M1	D0
Castle Playing Field pitch three	M1	D0
NSDA Pavilion training pitch*	M1	D1
NSDA Pavilion pitch one*	M1	D1
NSDA Pavilion pitch two	M1	D1
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	M2	D1
The Haberden pitch one*	M2	D1
The Haberden pitch two*	M2	D1
The Haberden pitch three*	M2	D0

The pitches were assessed after a period with no match play during the covid-19 pandemic. Although the ratings took account of the information provided by clubs on their long-term performance, they will be reviewed at ‘Stage D’ of the PPS process.

### 7.4.3 Grass pitch carrying capacity

The carrying capacity of grass pitches is related to their quality and is expressed as the number of ‘match equivalent sessions’ that can be accommodated each week. The *Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance*’ indicates the following weekly carrying capacities for rugby union pitches:

<i>Drainage</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>		
	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Good</i>
Natural inadequate	0.5	1.0	2.0
Natural adequate	1.5	2.0	3.0
Pipe drained	1.75	2.5	3.25
Pipe and slit drained	2.0	3.0	3.5

The weekly collective carrying capacity of the rugby pitch sites with community use and used in West Suffolk, expressed as ‘match equivalents’ is therefore as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Midweek capacity</i>	<i>Weekend capacity</i>	<i>Total capacity</i>
Castle Playing Field	1.0*	5.5	6.5
NSDA Pavilion	2.0	3.0	5.0
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	0.0	1.5	1.5
The Haberden	15.0**	3.0	18.0

\* A floodlit training area next to the pavilion provides some midweek training capacity.

\*\* Midweek training capacity is supplemented by a World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant small-sided floodlit artificial grass pitch which provides 10.0 midweek match equivalent sessions.



#### 7.4.4 Artificial grass pitch carrying capacity

The carrying capacity of artificial grass pitches is based upon their availability in the peak period (Monday to Thursday 18.00 - 22.00) and is expressed as the number of 'match equivalent sessions' that can be accommodated each week. The small-sided pitch at the Haberden accommodates 10.0 midweek training sessions per week.

#### 7.4.5 Changing quality

The quality of the changing facilities at each of the rugby pitch sites with community use and used in West Suffolk is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Castle Playing Field	Standard
NSDA Pavilion	Poor
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Good
The Haberden	Good

#### 7.4.6 Pitch maintenance

Each site owner employs a grounds maintenance contractor to maintain their pitches.

#### 7.4.7 Ownership, management and security of access

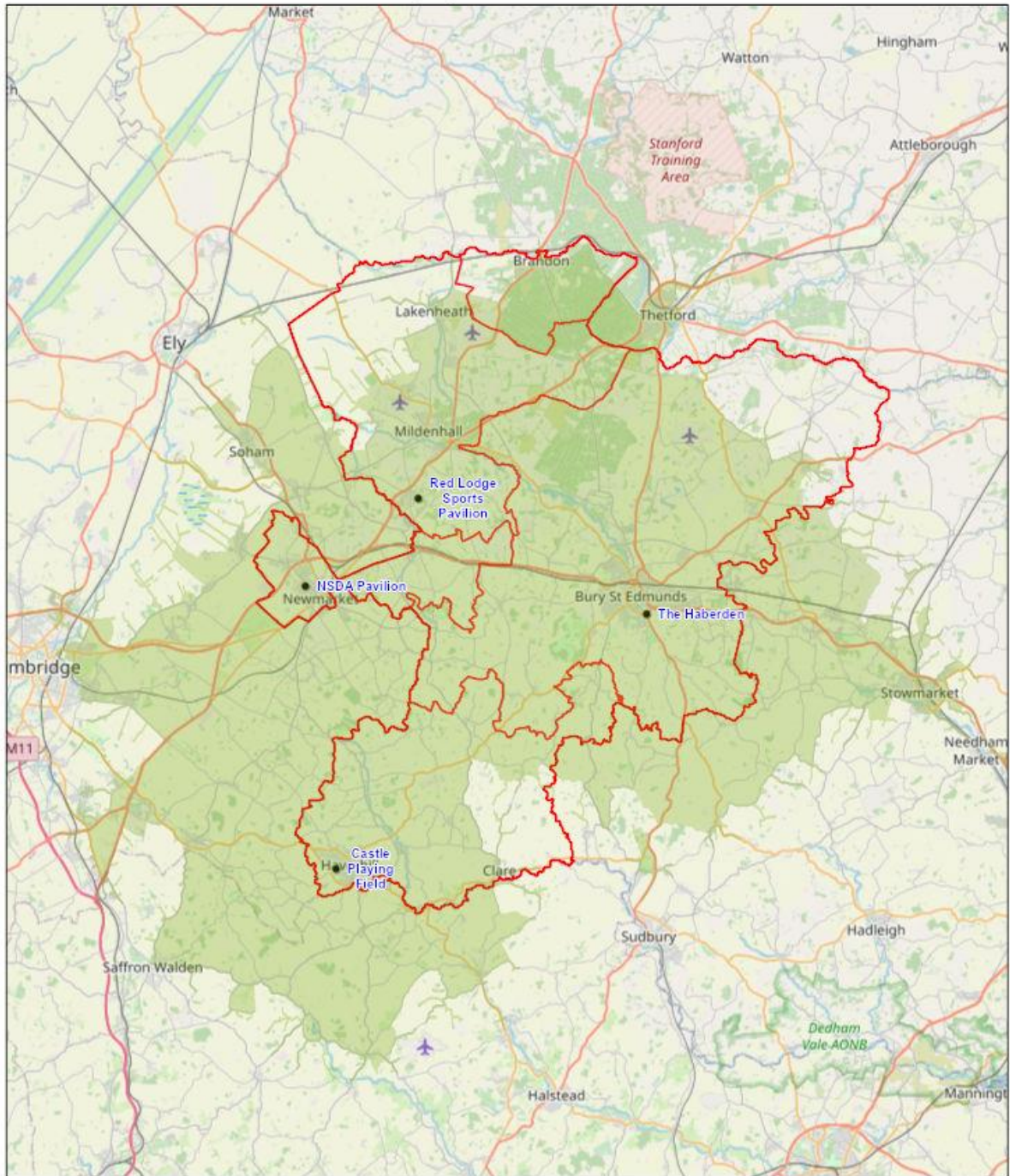
The ownership, management and security of community access of rugby pitch sites is detailed below. Security of access refers to the extent to which community use of the site is protected (through public ownership, planning policy ownership covenants etc.), rather than the security of tenure of specific club users.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Access</i>
Castle Playing Field	West Suffolk Council	Haverhill & District RFC	Secured
NSDA Pavilion	West Suffolk Council	Newmarket RFC	Secured
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Red Lodge Parish Council	Red Lodge Parish Council	Secured
The Haberden	Bury St. Edmunds RFC	Bury St. Edmunds RFC	Secured

#### 7.4.8 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of rugby pitches in West Suffolk has been assessed by identifying catchments to illustrate local level accessibility. This is based on the results of the clubs' survey, which identifies 20-minutes travel time as the typical maximum. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one pitch, with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall, to the east of Haverhill and to the north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.

## WEST SUFFOLK - Rugby Pitches within 20 Minutes Drive



9/27/2021

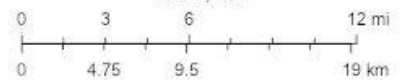
1:577,791

20.0 Minutes

• RUGBY PITCHES

▭ SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill

▭ WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## **7.5 The views of local stakeholders**

### **7.5.1 The Rugby Football Union**

Consultation with the RFU highlighted that:

- There are four clubs in the district.
- Bury St. Edmunds RFC is the largest club in the district. Its 1<sup>st</sup> XV plays in the National League South (the fourth tier of the English League system). Its ground is at The Haberdern and it is looking to lease additional land to accommodate a growth in teams, including girls’.
- Haverhill and District RFC is based at Castle Playing Fields in Haverhill.
- Mildenhall Red Lodge RFC is a single adult team club that plays at Red Lodge Pavilion.
- Newmarket RFC is based at the Newmarket Sports Development Association Pavilion in Newmarket.

### **7.5.2 Bury St. Edmunds RFC**

The key comments were as follows:

- ‘We only have three pitches where a club of our size and success (National League 2 South) would normally have five pitches to cater for game time demand’.
- ‘We need an extra two pitches or we need one of our pitches to be 4G. We hope to extend our clubhouse to cater for more hospitality on match and large event days’.
- ‘We also have 7 acres on a flood plain we use for training and minis when it is not flooded. When the Minis pitches are flooded we get excessive wear on the competition pitches which we often find difficult to manage’.
- During the week through our Community coaching section we often host a number of local schools and colleges for training purposes mainly’.

### **7.5.3 Haverhill RFC**

The key comments were as follows:

- ‘We don’t currently have enough Under 17 year old girls/boys coming through the club to create a colts team which means we are losing local players to the bigger clubs in the area (e.g. Shelford & Bury St. Edmunds)’.
- ‘We are looking to put a fence around the main pitch to keep it secure, fresh, dog walkers off and keeps it safe for the players’.

- ‘We have three changing rooms. Room 1 is the home team room which is almost big enough for a full team. Rooms 2 and 3 are very small and don’t quite fit a whole team into these. We don’t have segregated changing rooms for men and women and youth. Generally the men women and youth do not play or train on the same days. There is one shower room used by both teams at a time. There is a separate room with shower for the ref and officials’.

#### 7.5.4 Newmarket RFC

The key comments were as follows:

- ‘The Rugby Club is the only member club of the Newmarket Sports Development Association (NSDA). The NSDA lease off the County Council and we are around 3 years into a 25 year lease’.
- ‘We have short term plans to replace and improve the old floodlights from MH to LEDs in the next 6 months for our 2nd XV and training pitch. We are able to fund a considerable amount ourselves however, are currently applying for planning and other funding streams. Our clubhouse facility is poor and is in desperate need of improvement. We have medium term plans to extend and refurbish the existing facility however, uncertainty from the local council over future use of the school site (demolished adjacent to our pitches) makes progress very difficult’.
- ‘Midi rugby is usually allocated adult pitch space on Sundays. We are lucky that the majority of our pitch space is very well-draining and doesn't require much extra management’.
- ‘We have four changing rooms (plus one for one official) which are not big enough for a normal size adult team therefore we often use two changing rooms per team. The showering and bathroom facilities are inadequate. Bar and kitchen often under strain on busy events. The car park is not big enough for many events’.
- ‘It was identified that there is a lack of some sporting provision in recent local plans however, engagement to this point has been poor. We are very lucky to have low maintenance pitches which stand up well to most others in the region but a lack of clarity about the future of the site has been detrimental to our ability to grow and improve the club’.

#### 7.6 The implications for rugby in West Suffolk

Analysis of local supply of rugby union pitches in West Suffolk indicates the following:

- **Local clubs:** There are four local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- **Unmet demand and latent demand:** There is some evidence of unmet demand for rugby in the district, with Haverhill RFC having a waiting list. Clubs believe that there is latent demand for an additional four teams in the district if pitch capacity was improved.
- **Pitch supply:** There are shortfalls in pitches for match play at Newmarket RFC.



- **Pitch quality:** There are some pitch quality issues relating to poor drainage at Haverhill RFC and Bury St. Edmunds RFC.
- **Changing facilities:** Haverhill RFC and Newmarket RFC both have inadequate changing facilities.

## 7.7 Assessment of current needs

To assess whether the current supply of pitches is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site and how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent’ sessions at each site.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

- **Being overplayed:** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity (highlighted in red in the table below).
- **Being played to the level the site can sustain:** Where use matches the carrying capacity.
- **Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:** Where use falls below the carrying capacity.

As per RFU guidance, rugby union pitch capacity, demand and the resultant balance are expressed as ‘match equivalent sessions’, both weekly and at peak times.

Site	Pitches	Users	Weekly capacity	Weekly demand	Weekly balance	Peak capacity	Peak demand	Peak balance
Castle Playing Field	3	Haverhill RFC	6.5*	6.5	Balanced	3.0	2.0	+1.0
NSDA Pavilion	2.5	Newmarket RFC	5.0	5.0	Balanced	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	1	Mildenhall and Red Lodge RFC	1.5	1.5	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Haberdern	3	Bury St. Edmunds RFC	18.0**	18.0	Balanced	3.0	3.0	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>Balanced</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>Balanced</b>

\* Includes one partially floodlit grass training area.

\*\* In addition to the floodlit grass pitches, the small-sided artificial grass pitch provides 10.0 midweek match equivalent sessions.

The split between midweek training supply and demand and weekend match supply and demand on match pitches is tabulated below, to highlight the main capacity pinch points. The figures were calculated as follows:

- Overall demand is based upon adult and youth teams requiring an average of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week for training and matches and mini teams requiring 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week.
- The sites without floodlit pitches have no midweek training capacity, but demand for training from the clubs who play their 'home' matches there is still shown, even though it is either exported to pitches outside the district or to non-specialist rugby facilities within West Suffolk.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Midweek training capacity</i>	<i>Midweek training demand</i>	<i>Midweek training balance</i>	<i>Weekend match capacity</i>	<i>Weekend match demand</i>	<i>Weekend match balance</i>
Castle Playing Field	3.5*	4.5	-1.0	3.0	2.0	+1.0
NSDA Pavilion	3.0	2.0	+1.0	2.0	3.0	-1.0
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	0.5	0.5	Balanced	1.0	1.0	Balanced
The Haberdern	15.0**	15.0	Balanced	3.0	3.0	Balanced
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>Balanced</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>Balanced</b>

The key findings are that:

- There is sufficient capacity to meet current match needs, although there is a peak time deficit at Newmarket RFC.
- Midweek training supply and demand are balanced at all sites, with no spare capacity.

## 7.8 Assessment of future needs

### 7.8.1 Population growth

Two scenarios are considered:

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
- A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

### 7.8.2 Potential changes in demand

Local clubs have collectively indicated that there is scope to create an additional four teams over the next five years, an increase of 10.4% on current numbers and subject to pitch capacity availability.

### 7.8.3 Site-specific pressures

All sites are used to full capacity.

### 7.8.4 Potential changes in supply



There are no known potential changes in pitch supply.

### 7.8.5 Existing spare capacity

There is no current spare capacity in the district.

### 7.8.6 Future rugby pitch needs

Future rugby pitch needs are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’ (TGRs), which identify how many people in a specified age group in the district are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of teams in the future. Unmet demand has been included, based upon the number of teams that local clubs believe could currently be formed if more pitch provision was available. Two population growth scenarios are assessed:

- **ONS projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult males	19-45	31,212	8	1	1: 3,468	31,648	9	0
Adult females	19-45	27,481	2	1	1: 9,160	27,340	3	0
Junior males	13-18	6,014	11	1	1: 501	6,363	13	1
Junior females	13-18	5,654	5	1	1: 943	5,807	6	0
Mini-rugby (mixed)	7-12	13,421	13	0	1: 1,032	12,623	12	-1

- **Housing projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>Unmet demand</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult males	19-45	31,212	8	1	1: 3,468	37,173	11	2
Adult females	19-45	27,481	2	1	1: 9,160	32,730	4	1
Junior males	13-18	6,014	11	1	1: 501	7,163	14	2
Junior females	13-18	5,654	5	1	1: 943	6,734	7	1
Mini-rugby (mixed)	7-12	13,421	13	0	1: 1,032	15,984	16	3

## 7.9 Key findings and issues

### 7.9.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Local clubs:** There are four local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- **Unmet demand and latent demand:** There is some evidence of unmet demand for rugby in the district, with Haverhill RFC having a waiting list. Clubs believe that there is latent demand for an additional four teams in the district if pitch capacity was improved.
- **Pitch supply:** There are shortfalls in pitches for match play at Newmarket RFC.
- **Pitch quality:** There are some pitch quality issues relating to poor drainage at Haverhill RFC and Bury St. Edmunds RFC.

- **Changing facilities:** Haverhill RFC and Newmarket RFC both have inadequate changing facilities.

#### 7.9.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand? **NO** - There is some unmet and latent demand

There is some evidence of unmet demand for rugby in the district, with Haverhill RFC having a waiting list. Clubs believe that there is latent demand for an additional four teams in the district if pitch capacity was improved.

#### 7.9.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and appropriately maintained? **NO** - All pitches in the district are affected by drainage issues

Improvements in drainage to the grass pitches at Bury St. Edmunds RFC could potentially increase their capacity by 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Improvements in maintenance at Haverhill RFC could potentially increase their capacity by 4.0 match equivalent sessions per week. Capacity could also be increased in other ways, such as an Artificial Grass Pitch or hybrid pitch improvements.

#### 7.9.4 What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- **Population growth:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%. A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.
- **Changes in demand:** Projecting future need based on current demand patterns is the most appropriate basis for forecasting.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known potential changes in supply.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is no effective spare capacity at present.
- **Future needs:** Because of demographic change and in particular an ageing population, Team Generation Rates suggest an increase of nine teams by 2040.

#### 7.9.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand? **NO**

There is some evidence of unmet demand for rugby in the district, with Haverhill RFC having a waiting list. Clubs believe that there is latent demand for an additional four teams in the district if pitch capacity was improved. Additional capacity could be created in two ways:

- **Pitch quality improvements:** Improvements in drainage to the grass pitches at Bury St. Edmunds RFC could potentially increase their capacity by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This could be expanded further with the provision of a rugby-compliant artificial grass pitch. Improvements in maintenance at Haverhill RFC could potentially increase their capacity by 4.0 match equivalent sessions per week.
- **Installation of floodlights:** The provision of full floodlighting to one or more pitches at Haverhill RFC would improve the potential for additional midweek use but would only be effective with improvements in pitch drainage and maintenance to expand capacity.

## 7.10 Scenario testing

### 7.10.1 Introduction

Based upon the key findings and issues identified above, some scenarios examining the effect of securing additional pitch capacity have been rehearsed to identify the optimum approach to addressing needs.

### 7.10.2 Scenario 1: Enhancing grass pitch carrying capacity with maintenance and drainage improvements

- **Rationale:** Improving the drainage and maintenance of the pitches at the sites where the drainage and/or maintenance is sub-optimal at present would add the following capacity (in match equivalent sessions) at each site:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Current capacity</i>	<i>Extra capacity</i>	<i>Total capacity</i>
Castle Playing Field	6.5	4.0	10.5
NSDA Pavilion	5.0	5.5	10.5
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	1.5	2.0	3.5
The Haberdern	18.0	2.5	20.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31.0</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>45.0</b>

- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - The additional capacity would theoretically be sufficient to meet all overall projected extra pitch capacity needs to 2040.
  - The extra capacity could be achieved at existing sites without the need for additional land acquisition costs.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are that:
  - The main limiting factor for midweek training is the absence of floodlights, with only three fully-lit pitches in the district, plus two partially lit training areas. Whilst pitch quality improvements would add capacity, without additional floodlights there would be limited impact on midweek usage.
  - The cost of grounds maintenance to sustain the enhanced pitch capacity may be problematic for some clubs.
- **Conclusions:** There would be merit in exploring the potential for drainage and maintenance improvements at each site. However, to maximise the benefits of this, the review will also need to consider the issue of floodlighting to maximise the benefits in the midweek evening period (see below).

### 7.10.3 Scenario 2: Enhancing grass pitch carrying capacity by providing floodlights

- **Rationale:** Whilst improved maintenance and drainage would add overall capacity, to achieve the maximum benefits floodlighting will be required to facilitate use during midweek evenings. The current floodlighting arrangements are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Adult pitches</i>			<i>Training areas</i>		
	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Partially floodlit</i>	<i>Non-floodlit</i>	<i>Floodlit</i>	<i>Partially floodlit</i>	<i>Non-floodlit</i>
Castle Playing Field	-	-	3	-	1	-
NSDA Pavilion	1	-	1	-	1	-
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	-	-	1	-	-	-
The Haberden	2	1	-	1	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

- **Advantage:** The advantage of this scenario is that floodlighting additional pitches will increase their availability on midweek evenings when training sessions take place. This will have the greatest benefits at Castle Playing Field has an existing shortfall in midweek pitch capacity.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Its effectiveness is contingent upon the pitch capacity enhancements achievable through the drainage and maintenance improvements, so it needs to be considered in conjunction.
  - On its own, it would have negligible impact upon the existing and projected deficits.
- **Conclusions:** The greatest benefits of floodlighting will be where it is combined with an improvement in pitch maintenance or drainage ratings. Floodlighting an additional pitch at Castle Playing Field would address midweek capacity shortfalls.

### 7.10.4 Scenario 3: Enhancing pitch carrying capacity by providing a rugby-compliant artificial grass pitch at The Haberden

- **Rationale:** Providing an artificial grass pitch at Bury St. Edmunds RFC (or alternative mechanism for enhancing the pitch capacity in addition to drainage e.g. hybrid technology) would increase capacity for midweek training sessions (including the potential for hire to other local clubs) and in the peak match play period for adults (Saturday afternoons) and Juniors/Minis (Sunday mornings).
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
  - Bury St. Edmunds RFC has long-term aspirations to install a World Rugby regulation 22-compliant artificial grass pitch.
  - The pitch would add 10.0 midweek match equivalent sessions and 4.0 weekend match equivalent sessions (offset by the loss of the grass pitch upon which it would be sited) which would meet all current and future needs.

- Subject to any spare rugby capacity, the pitch could additionally contribute to meeting identified deficiencies in '3G' Football Turf Pitches in West Suffolk.
- **Disadvantage:** The only disadvantage of this scenario is that to achieve maximum peak-time benefits will involve scheduling matches at non-traditional kick-off times which is a relatively new concept for many teams.
- **Conclusions:** Bury St. Edmunds RFC's long-term aspirations for a World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant artificial grass pitch (or alternative mechanism for enhancing the pitch capacity in addition to drainage e.g. hybrid technology) should be supported.

## 7.11 Policy recommendations

### 7.11.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to rugby union are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 98, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- 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 sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

### 7.11.2 Protect

**Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for rugby union in the district. The Assessment has identified a need to increase local rugby pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for all current community used rugby pitch sites to be retained. It is therefore recommended that planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Assessment. If proposals to redevelop rugby pitches do come forward, this will only be permissible they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy. This states that 'the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must 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'.

### 7.11.3 Enhance

**Recommendation 2 - Improving existing pitch capacity:** Additional pitch capacity would best be developed at existing pitches by improving the quality of pitch drainage and maintenance at Castle Playing Field, Haverhill with related floodlighting provision, but other sites would also benefit. It is recommended that the action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for seeking an appropriate level of financial contributions under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

## 7.11.4 Provide

**Recommendation 3 - Developer contributions:** All the additional demand for rugby arising from the proposed housing development in West Suffolk to 2040, should be accommodated through the developments outlined above. It is recommended that the action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for seeking an appropriate level of financial contributions under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of the enhancements.

## 7.12 Action Plan

### 7.12.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the rugby union action plan to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The abbreviations stand for WSC - West Suffolk Council, RFU - Rugby Football Union, BSERFC - Bury St. Edmunds RFC, HRFC - Haverhill RFC and NRFC - Newmarket RFC. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 7.12.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved rugby facilities.	WSC	Developers	Determined by Sport England's New Development Calculator	High

### 7.12.3 Site specific opportunities for consideration

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Castle Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Midweek capacity shortfall.</li> <li>• Dog fouling on the main pitch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve drainage and maintenance.</li> <li>• Provide full floodlighting to one additional pitch.</li> <li>• Seek approval and funding to fence the main pitch.</li> </ul>	HRFC	RFU	£40,000 for drainage £50,000 for floodlighting £30,000 for fencing	High
NSDA Pavilion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Peak' time capacity deficit</li> <li>• 'Poor' quality changing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve drainage and maintenance.</li> <li>• Extend and improve the current clubhouse</li> </ul>	NRFC	RFU WSC	£40,000 for drainage £690,000 for clubhouse	High
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
The Haberden	Need additional pitch capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility study for an artificial grass pitch.</li> <li>• Provide artificial grass pitch</li> </ul>	BSERFC	RFU	£1,335,000	Medium



## 8 HOCKEY PITCH NEEDS

### 8.1 Organisational context

- **England Hockey:** England Hockey is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **England Hockey-affiliated club:** There are three affiliated clubs in West Suffolk who collectively provide 12 men's teams, 10 women's teams, three boy's teams and three girl's teams.

### 8.2 Strategic context

#### 8.2.1 National hockey strategy

England Hockey's strategic plan 2017 - 2027 '*A Nation Where Hockey Matters*' (2017) contains the following priorities of relevance to West Suffolk:

The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'.

**Adults:** The number playing regularly in the club network will be increased by:

- Working with universities, schools and colleges to deliver quality playing experiences and clear pathways to club hockey.
- Working with regional and local leagues and affiliated clubs, to deliver the highest quality playing experience and appropriate competition frameworks.
- Developing more opportunities for over 40s to play hockey.
- Delivering a quality programme of competitions that meet the needs of players and clubs.

**Young people:** The number playing hockey in schools and clubs will be increased by:

- Developing more relationships between clubs and primary and secondary schools.
- Working with clubs to increase the number of junior hockey sessions being provided.
- Delivering a quality programme of competitions that meet the needs of players, schools and clubs.
- Developing an ability-based pathway for children aged 5-12 for adoption in clubs, schools and youth organisations.

**Informal hockey:** The numbers of people playing informal hockey will be increased by:

- Setting up opportunities to play Quicksticks in community sites.
- Increasing the opportunities to play Small-sided Hockey at schools, colleges, universities, clubs and community sites.
- Increasing the opportunity for women to take part in Back to Hockey sessions at clubs and community sites.

#### 8.2.2 Hockey facilities strategy

England Hockey's '*Facilities Strategy*' (2016) contains the following key elements:

**Vision:** For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

**Mission:** 'More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities'. The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

- **Protect - To conserve the existing hockey provision:** There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities.) The current provision must be retained where appropriate, to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.
- **Improve - To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively):** The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. There needs to more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers and education around owning an asset.
- **Develop - To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain:** The research has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable Hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

### 8.2.3 Neighbouring local authorities

Playing pitch strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

#### **East Cambridgeshire**

The 'East Cambridgeshire Playing Pitch Strategy' (2020) identifies that there that there sufficient hockey pitch capacity to meet all current and future needs in the district.

#### **South Cambridgeshire**

The 'Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031' (2015) examines hockey pitch needs in South Cambridgeshire. There are no clubs in the district, with demand being met by three clubs in Cambridge City.

#### **Braintree**

The 'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study' (2017) identifies a deficit in artificial grass pitch provision for hockey.

#### **Babergh**

'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update' (2021) identifies that there is 'sufficient capacity for current and future growth if the current AGP retained. There is no requirement for additional AGPs due to availability in West Suffolk'.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update' (2021) identifies that there is 'sufficient capacity for current and future growth if the current AGP retained. There is no requirement for additional AGPs due to availability in West Suffolk'.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of hockey pitch needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of hockey pitch needs for the district.

## **8.2.4 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The 'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy' (2015) concludes the following in relation to hockey:

'There is spare capacity at Newmarket, Haverhill and Bury St. Edmunds, but overuse of the pitches at Culford School'.

## **8.3 Hockey demand**

### **8.3.1 England Hockey-affiliated club and teams**

The following clubs play in the district:

<b><i>Club</i></b>	<b><i>Home Ground</i></b>	<b><i>Men's teams</i></b>	<b><i>Women's teams</i></b>	<b><i>Boy's teams</i></b>	<b><i>Girl's teams</i></b>
Bury St. Edmunds HC	Culford Sports Centre	9	5	2	2
Haverhill HC	Haverhill Leisure Centre	0	2	1	1
Newmarket HC	Newmarket Leisure Centre	3	3	0	0
<b><i>TOTALS</i></b>	<b><i>-</i></b>	<b><i>12</i></b>	<b><i>10</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>	<b><i>3</i></b>

The membership figures for each club in West Suffolk are tabulated below:

- ***Category 1:*** Typical club players who compete regularly in league hockey.
- ***Category 2:*** Informal members who play social hockey and 'Back to Hockey' etc.

<b><i>Age group</i></b>	<b><i>Bury St. Edmunds HC</i></b>		<b><i>Haverhill HC</i></b>		<b><i>Newmarket HC</i></b>	
	<b><i>Category 1</i></b>	<b><i>Category 2</i></b>	<b><i>Category 1</i></b>	<b><i>Category 2</i></b>	<b><i>Category 1</i></b>	<b><i>Category 2</i></b>
Male aged 5 - 10	18	0	21	0	5	0
Female aged 5 - 10	35	0	31	0	5	0
Male aged 11 - 16	58	1	18	0	7	0
Female aged 11 - 16	81	0	25	0	19	0
Male aged 17 - 45	92	8	31	0	0	0
Female aged 17 - 45	67	4	32	0	34	0
Male aged 46+	67	0	11	0	0	0
Female aged 46+	26	0	8	0	6	0
<b><i>TOTALS</i></b>	<b><i>444</i></b>	<b><i>13</i></b>	<b><i>177</i></b>	<b><i>0</i></b>	<b><i>66</i></b>	<b><i>0</i></b>

### 8.3.2 Demand trends

National affiliation data for hockey club members provided by England Hockey reveals successive increases in the period since 2010 as follows:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. players</i>	<i>Annual % increase</i>
2010/11	102,313	-
2011/12	106,665	4.3%
2012/13	114,642	7.5%
2013/14	113,575	-0.9%
2014/15	120,404	6.0%
2015/16	129,857	7.9%
2016/17	138,915	6.6%
2017/18	143,762	3.6%

### 8.3.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. Thetford HC is based at Breckland Leisure Centre just north of the district and draws 10% its membership from the Brandon sub-area.

### 8.3.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some pitches may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

Consultation with the local clubs identified no unmet demand at present.

### 8.3.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. No latent demand was identified in West Suffolk.

## 8.4 Hockey pitch supply in West Suffolk

### 8.4.1 Quantity

This section summarises the detail of the supply of artificial turf pitches suitable for hockey (sand-dressed and sand-filled) in West Suffolk.

- Water-based pitches are the preferred surface for elite-level hockey. The sports turf uses a denser pile than other surface types which, combined with the water layer, provides the truest ball roll of any artificial turf system. There are no pitches of this type in the district.

- Sand-dressed artificial turf is a higher specification surface designed specifically for fast-paced hockey.
- With sand-filled pitches, the playing surface is only partially filled (usually about two-thirds of the pile height) so the game is played on the sports carpet, not the sand infill.
- Both types of sand-based pitches can also be used for football, but the rubber crumb-filled, long-pile surface of '3G' football turf pitches and/or World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant pitches are not suitable for hockey use. The peak demand period for hockey is Saturday for match play and midweek 6.00pm to 10.00pm for training.
- Full-sized (91.4m x 55m plus 4m run-offs) and small-sided pitches are both listed, because whilst the latter have limited applications for hockey, they may provide some limited options for coaching and hockey development sessions.
- ***Pitches with community use and used:***

<b><i>Site</i></b>	<b><i>Address</i></b>	<b><i>Dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Surface</i></b>	<b><i>Floodlit</i></b>	<b><i>Built</i></b>	<b><i>Sub-area</i></b>
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	98m x 61m	Sand-dressed	Yes	2001	Bury St.
		97m x 59m	Sand-filled	Yes	2016	Edmunds
Haverhill Leisure Centre	Lordscroft Lane, Haverhill CB9 0ER	102m x 62m	Sand-filled	Yes	2014	Haverhill
Newmarket Leisure Centre	Exning Road, Newmarket CB8 0EA	100m x 62m	Sand-dressed	Yes	2009	Newmarket

- ***Pitches with community access but not used for hockey:*** There are no pitches with community access that are not used for hockey by external hirers.

<b><i>Site</i></b>	<b><i>Address</i></b>	<b><i>Dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Surface</i></b>	<b><i>Floodlit</i></b>	<b><i>Built</i></b>	<b><i>Sub-area</i></b>
Nowton Park Sports Field	Bury Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP29 5BD	100m x 66m	Sand-dressed	Yes	2007	Bury St. Edmunds

- ***Pitches not available for community use:***

<b><i>Site</i></b>	<b><i>Address</i></b>	<b><i>Dimensions</i></b>	<b><i>Surface</i></b>	<b><i>Floodlit</i></b>	<b><i>Built</i></b>
RAF Honington	Green Lane, Honington IP31 1EE	101m x 62m	Sand-filled	Yes	1995

#### 8.4.2 Use of hockey pitches for football

With a shortage of '3G' football turf pitches in West Suffolk, two pitches are also used for football training, which reduces their capacity to cater for hockey. The usage figures represent hours per week in the peak periods for community use:

<b><i>Site</i></b>	<b><i>Hockey use</i></b>	<b><i>Hockey use (%)</i></b>	<b><i>Football use</i></b>	<b><i>Football use (%)</i></b>	<b><i>Unused</i></b>	<b><i>Unused (%)</i></b>
Culford Sports Centre	24 hours	60%	0 hours	0%	16 hours	40%
Haverhill Leisure Centre	4 hours	20%	10 hours	50%	6 hours	30%
Newmarket Leisure Centre	9 hours	45%	9 hours	45%	2 hours	10%

The split between midweek and weekend use at each pitch is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Midweek used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>	<i>Saturday used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>	<i>Sunday used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>
Culford Sports Centre	12.0	37.5%	12.0	100.0%	2.0	25%
Haverhill Leisure Centre	12.0	80%	2.0	33.3%	0.0	0%
Newmarket Leisure Centre	13.5	90%	4.5	60.0%	0.0	0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

### 8.4.3 Quality

The qualitative analysis of pitches and related facilities in West Suffolk involved a visit to all hockey pitches, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by England Hockey for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment generates an overall 'score' for each pitch by evaluating the condition of the playing surface, fencing, floodlighting, disability access and changing provision. The scores for each artificial grass pitch for hockey with community use and used are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Pitch</i>	<i>Changing</i>
Culford Sports Centre (sand-dressed)	Standard	Good
Culford Sports Centre (sand-filled)	Good	Good
Haverhill Leisure Centre	Good	Standard
Newmarket Leisure Centre	Standard	Standard

### 8.4.4 Pitch maintenance

All hockey pitch maintenance in the district is carried out by the pitch owners.

### 8.4.5 Ownership, management and security of access

The ownership, management and security of community access of hockey pitch sites is detailed below. Security of access refers to the extent to which community use is protected.

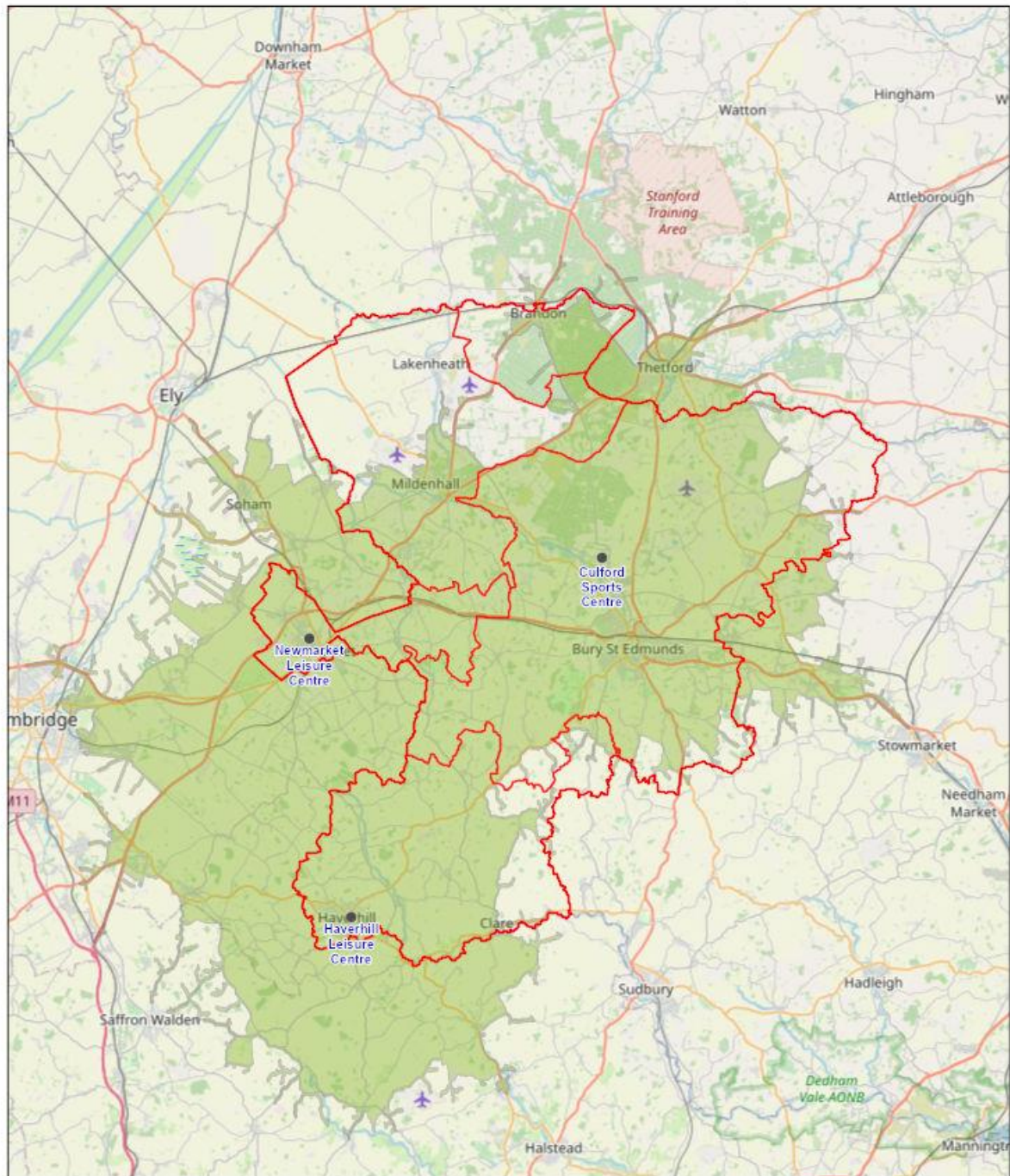
<i>Site</i>	<i>Ownership</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Security of access</i>
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School	Culford School	Unsecured
Culford Sports Centre	Culford School	Bury St Edmunds HC	Secured
Haverhill Leisure Centre	West Suffolk Council	Abbeycroft Leisure	Secured
Newmarket Leisure Centre	Newmarket Academy	Abbeycroft Leisure	Unsecured

### 8.4.6 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of artificial grass pitches in West Suffolk has been assessed by identifying catchments to illustrate local level accessibility. This is based on the results of the clubs' survey, which identifies 20-minutes travel time as the typical maximum. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one pitch, with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall, to the east of Haverhill and to the north-east of Bury St. Edmunds.

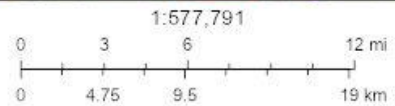


# WEST SUFFOLK - Artificial Grass Pitches - Hockey -20 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES FOR HOCKEY
- 20.0 Minutes
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## 8.5 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply and demand

**England Hockey:** Consultation with England Hockey raised the following issues:

- Bury St. Edmunds Hockey Club is the main club in the district. It is based on a school site at Culford Sports Centre but owns one of the two pitches on the site.
- Haverhill Hockey Club and Newmarket Hockey Club are smaller clubs and are both based at pitches at leisure centres (the latter on the adjacent Newmarket Academy site).

### ***Bury St. Edmunds Hockey Club:***

The key comments were as follows:

- ‘The club, through its associated company, East Anglian Sports Centre Ltd (EASCL) established a new permanent home for the Club’s sporting and social activities at Culford School in 2016’.
- ‘Together with the pre-existing school pitch, this two pitch facility enables us to achieve our long-term vision to be a dynamic, vibrant and successful club for all’.

### ***Haverhill Hockey Club:***

The key comments were as follows:

- ‘Some of the floodlight bulbs need replacing but the pitch itself is good’.
- ‘We have gained more senior players since the start of the pandemic. We hope to retain them and gain more because it’s a sociable way to exercise’.

### ***Newmarket Hockey Club:***

The club commented that ‘we would like to develop a clubhouse facility alongside the pitch we use on the Newmarket Academy site but need to resolve some issues relating to community access and security of tenure’.

## 8.6 The implications for hockey in West Suffolk

Analysis of local supply and demand for hockey pitches in West Suffolk indicates the following:

- **Local clubs:** There are three clubs serving West Suffolk.
- **Exported demand:** Some demand from the Brandon sub-area is exported to Thetford HC.
- **Pitch supply:** There is spare capacity of hockey pitches in the Saturday peak-period.
- **Pitches without community use:** There are two pitches in Bury St. Edmunds that are available for community use, but not used.

- **Pitch quality:** The carpet at the sand-dressed pitch at Culford Sports Centre will need replacing within the next three years.
- **Security of tenure:** One pitch at Culford School and the pitch at Newmarket Academy are not subject to a formal Community Use Agreement.

## 8.7 Assessment of current needs

To assess whether the current supply of pitches is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site and how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of ‘match equivalent’ sessions at each site.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

- **Being overplayed:** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity.
- **Being played to the level the site can sustain:** Where use matches the carrying capacity.
- **Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:** Where use falls below the carrying capacity.

As per England Hockey guidance, pitch capacity is expressed as weekly peak time hours of availability, demand as actual hours of use and the resultant balance is expressed as hours of availability at peak times. The actual used capacity of artificial turf pitches is based upon their hours of use in the peak period supplied by the pitch operators.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Users</i>	<i>Saturday capacity</i>	<i>Saturday demand</i>	<i>Saturday balance</i>	<i>Sunday capacity</i>	<i>Sunday demand</i>	<i>Sunday balance</i>
Culford Sports Centre	Bury St. Edmunds HC	12.0	12.0*	Balanced	6.0	2.0	+4.0
Haverhill Leisure Centre	Haverhill HC	8.0	2.0	+6.0	6.0	0.0	+6.0
Newmarket Leisure Centre	Newmarket HC	7.5	4.5	+3.0	6.0	0.0	+6.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>27.5</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>+9.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>+16.0</b>

\* Includes 4 hours of Saturday use by the school.

The split between midweek and weekend use at each pitch is as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Midweek used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>	<i>Saturday used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>	<i>Sunday used hours</i>	<i>% capacity</i>
Culford Sports Centre	12.0	37.5%	12.0*	100.0%	2.0	25%
Haverhill Leisure Centre	12.0**	80%	2.0	33.3%	0.0	0%
Newmarket Leisure Centre	13.5**	90%	4.5	60.0%	0.0	0%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>37.5**</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>12.5%</b>

\* Includes 4 hours of Saturday use by the school.

\*\* Includes some football use.

The assessment shows that:

- There is a spare capacity during the Saturday peak period, totalling nine hours or 6.0 match equivalent sessions, although supply and demand at Culford Sports Centre are balanced.
- Midweek used hours average 62.5% utilisation across the three pitches, including 19 hours of football usage.

## **8.8 Assessment of future needs**

### **8.8.1 Population growth**

Two scenarios are considered:

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
- A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

### **8.8.2 Potential changes in demand**

Local clubs have not indicated any prospective increases in team numbers.

### **8.8.3 Site-specific pressures**

There is extensive football use of the Haverhill and Newmarket pitches but this does not displace any hockey demand.

### **8.8.4 Potential changes in supply**

There are no known potential changes in pitch supply.

### 8.8.5 Existing spare capacity

There is a spare capacity during the Saturday peak period totalling nine hours or 6.0 match equivalent sessions. However, supply and demand are balanced at the Culford pitches and therefore if the Nowton Park pitch in Bury St. Edmunds was converted for other uses, there would be no local spare capacity to accommodate any future additional demand.

### 8.8.6 Future hockey pitch needs

Future hockey pitch needs are modelled below using ‘Team Generation Rates’, which identify how many people in a specified age group in the district are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of future teams. Two population growth scenarios are assessed:

- **ONS projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult male hockey	18-45	32,125	12	1: 2,677	32,693	12	0
Adult female hockey	18-45	28,315	10	1: 2,832	28,284	10	0
Boys junior hockey	8-17	10,933	3	1: 3,641	10,717	3	0
Girls junior hockey	8-17	10,254	3	1: 3,418	9,920	3	0

- **Housing projections:**

<i>Team type</i>	<i>Age range</i>	<i>Current population</i>	<i>Current teams</i>	<i>TGR</i>	<i>Population 2040</i>	<i>Teams 2040</i>	<i>Extra teams</i>
Adult male hockey	18-45	32,125	12	1: 2,677	38,261	14	2
Adult female hockey	18-45	28,315	10	1: 2,832	33,723	12	2
Boys junior hockey	8-17	10,933	3	1: 3,641	13,021	4	1
Girls junior hockey	8-17	10,254	3	1: 3,418	12,216	4	1

## 8.9 Key findings and issues

### 8.9.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Local clubs:** There are three clubs serving West Suffolk.
- **Exported demand:** Some demand from the Brandon sub-area is exported to Thetford HC.
- **Pitch supply:** There is spare capacity of hockey pitches in the Saturday peak-period.
- **Pitches without community use:** There are two pitches in Bury St. Edmunds that are available for community use, but not used.
- **Pitch quality:** The sand-dressed pitch at Culford Sports Centre will need replacing within the next three years.



- **Security of tenure:** One pitch at Culford School and the pitch at Newmarket Academy are not subject to a formal Community Use Agreement.

### 8.9.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand? **YES**

There is a spare capacity during the Saturday peak period, totalling nine hours or 6.0 match equivalent sessions, although supply and demand at Culford Sports Centre are balanced. If access to the unsecured pitch at Culford Sports Centre was rescinded, there is sufficient spare capacity at other pitches to accommodate the displaced demand.

### 8.9.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and properly maintained? **YES**

The carpet at the sand-dressed pitch at Culford Sports Centre will need replacing within the next three years.

### 8.9.4 What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- **Population growth:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%. A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.
- **Changes in demand:** Projecting future need based on current demand patterns is the most appropriate basis for forecasting.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is collective spare capacity of nine hours per week in the peak period on Saturdays, equivalent to 6.0 match equivalent session.
- **Future needs:** All future needs can be accommodated by spare capacity at the existing pitches.

### 8.9.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand? **YES**

All future needs can be accommodated by spare capacity at the existing pitches.

- **Changes in demand:** The projected increase in population will generate six additional teams by 2040.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known potential changes in pitch supply.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is peak time spare capacity equivalent to 6.0 match equivalent sessions, which can accommodate all additional future demand.



## 8.10 Policy recommendations

### 8.10.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to hockey are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 98, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- 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 sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

### 8.10.2 Protect

**Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision:** The West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for hockey in the district. The Assessment has identified a need for all current community used hockey pitch sites to be retained. It is therefore recommended that planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the Assessment. If proposals to redevelop hockey pitches do come forward, this will only be permissible if they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy. This states that ‘the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must 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’.

**Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure:** Two of the artificial grass pitches used for hockey in the district do not have secured community use and it is therefore recommended that external clubs’ use is secured through a formal Community Use Agreement at all sites.

### 8.10.3 Enhance

**Recommendation 3 - Maintaining existing pitch capacity:** One of the pitches at Culford School will need to be resurfaced in the next three years to ensure that it remains usable.

### 8.10.4 Provide

**Recommendation 4 - Developer contributions:** It is recommended that the action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for seeking an appropriate level of financial contributions under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of providing additional hockey pitches to meet the needs of the additional population arising from housing growth by 2040.

## 8.11 Action Plan

### 8.11.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the suggested hockey action plan to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The abbreviation stands for WSC - West Suffolk Council, EH - England Hockey and EN - England Netball. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 8.11.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards new and improved hockey facilities.	WSC	Developers	Determined by Sport England's New Development Calculator	High

### 8.11.3 Site specific opportunities for consideration

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Culford Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sand-dressed pitch needs resurfacing</li> <li>• No secured community use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resurface pitch</li> <li>• Consider the merits of a formal Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Culford School	WSC	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing	High
Haverhill Leisure Centre	No current issues	No action required	-	-	-	-
Newmarket Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspiration for an on-site clubhouse</li> <li>• No secured community use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue clubhouse project</li> <li>• Consider the merits of a formal Community Use Agreement</li> </ul>	Newmarket HC	Newmarket Academy	£265,000 for the clubhouse	Medium
Nowton Park	Pitch has no hockey usage and could be converted into a netball centre	Seek approval from England Hockey that the proposed pitch conversion is acceptable.	WSC	EH EN	-	High

## 9 TENNIS COURT NEEDS

### 9.1 Organisational context

- **Lawn Tennis Association:** The Lawn Tennis Association is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **Affiliated Clubs:** There are nine LTA-affiliated tennis clubs in West Suffolk.

### 9.2 Strategic context

#### 9.2.1 National tennis strategy

The LTA's Vision is: 'Tennis Opened Up'. Its Mission is 'to make Tennis relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable'. Its Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023 '*Tennis for Britain*' (2019) contains the following priorities:

- **Visibility:** Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
- **Innovation:** Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
- **Investment:** Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play.
- **Accessibility:** Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone.
- **Engagement:** Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers, to attract and maintain more people in the game.
- **Performance:** Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
- **Leadership:** Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

#### 9.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Outdoor sports facilities strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

##### **East Cambridgeshire**

The '*East Cambridgeshire Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy*' (2020) identifies that 'current tennis courts are assessed to be operating with significant spare capacity and should be able to accommodate all additional future demand'.

##### **South Cambridgeshire**

The '*Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031*' (2015) does not include an assessment of outdoor tennis needs.

##### **Braintree**

The '*Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study*' (2017) does not identify any shortfall but notes that 'the majority of the provision is located in the south of the local authority'.

### ***Babergh***

'*The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update*' (2021) identifies that there are eight registered LTA clubs, but does not assess the adequacy of court supply.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

'*The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update*' (2021) identifies that there are seven registered LTA clubs, but does not assess the adequacy of court supply.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy so there is no detailed analysis of tennis needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of tennis needs for the district.

## **10.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The '*West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to tennis:

- 'There is a relatively poor level of provision with only 29 courts across the two local authorities. This ensures a low (unfavourable) ratio of courts to residents, compared with neighbouring authorities'.
- 'There is poor accessibility to tennis courts in West Suffolk, especially in Forest Heath where there are only two clubs available across the entire area. A strength of the tennis provision is the amount of pay per play or casual provision, which ties in with the LTA's objective of creating facilities with low barriers to entry and high flexibility'.

## **9.3 Stakeholder consultation**

### **9.3.1 Lawn Tennis Association**

Consultation with the Lawn Tennis Association highlighted the following issues:

- The LTA's vision for tennis which has recently been introduced following a major consultative process. The vision is 'Tennis Opened Up' and the mission is to grow tennis by making it more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable. Strategic initiatives at county and national level aim to support this.
- The LTA's will invest £125 million over 10-years to improve local tennis facilities, with a target to double the number of children and casual adults playing tennis. It wants to work with local networks, to promote a joined up, transformational improvement to existing facilities, largely through increasing the number of courts that are floodlit and covered but also courts that can be booked online.

- The LTA has grant funding for Gate Access technology for courts in identified parks and clubs that can demonstrate high levels of potential users within a 10min drive time. Abbey Gardens in Bury St. Edmunds is currently the only site in the district that uses the system.
- The LTA also runs the ClubSpark/LTA Rally online booking system, which enables players to book local courts. Most clubs are using ClubSpark to support member bookings but only a few clubs currently offer non-member ('pay-and-play' bookings via ClubSpark) including Newmarket LTC, Newmarket URC and Abbey Gardens).
- Most clubs in the district have some spare capacity, particularly the larger ones.
- The Government and Lawn Tennis Association have announced a £30 million package to refurbish more than 4,500 public tennis courts in the most deprived parts of the UK and support a new generation of players to get into the sport. However, it is likely to have a minimal impact in the West Suffolk area, primarily due to the demographics and current demand position.

### 9.3.2 Local tennis clubs

A questionnaire survey was circulated to all LTA-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk. Five of the ten clubs responded. Demand for tennis locally shows a slight increase over the past three years, with four clubs reporting increased membership numbers, three static membership and one a decrease in members.

### 9.3.3 Exning Tennis Club

The club commented that 'it has been difficult to retain members because of the pandemic and also difficult getting new members for the same reason'.

### 9.3.4 Haverhill Tennis Club

The club commented that 'a significant number of Members did not renew their Membership 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions and we have lost even more for the new 2021/22 season, particularly good male players as the Halstead League is not operating this summer so external competition has been lost. We have also had to restrict operation of club nights. It will take time to rebuild numbers and attract new team players. Also, courts are closed to non-members so the general public no longer has access to our courts area particularly among the young as local schools do not offer this opportunity'.

### 9.3.5 Newmarket Tennis Club

The club made the following comments:

- 'Our car parking is poor, as is disabled access to our clubhouse'.
- 'Our membership has increased significantly in all age groups over the past five years'.

### 9.3.6 Newmarket URC Tennis Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘There seems to be lack of awareness of existing clubs locally. There are no public courts in Newmarket (Newmarket Academy has tennis courts but the sports centre on the same site has none for the public to use)’.
- ‘We have lost about 50% (about 40 members) last two years’.
- ‘There is as shortage of coaches especially for Juniors’.

### 9.3.7 Stoke-by-Clare Club

The club commented that ‘our membership has remained static for the past five years’.

## 9.4 Tennis Court Demand

### 9.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the demand for tennis in West Suffolk and includes:

- National tennis demand patterns.
- LTA-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk.
- Displaced demand.
- Latent and unmet demand.
- Future demand.

### 9.4.2 National demand patterns

LTA data on national tennis playing demand patterns is instructive for anticipating activity patterns in West Suffolk, although there are relatively few parks courts in the district:

- **Location of play:** The importance of parks courts is emphasised by the following data on where people play tennis:

<i>Location</i>	<i>% players</i>
Parks	32%
Education sites	21%
Tennis clubs	14%
Leisure centres	10%
Gyms/health clubs	7%
Private courts	5%
Indoor tennis centres	5%
Elsewhere	5%

- **Organised play:** Parks players are less reliant on organised tennis activity:



<i>Type of tennis</i>	<i>% parks players</i>	<i>% club players</i>
Social tennis with friends/family	90%	74%
Informal tennis	15%	18%
Individual tennis competition	2%	17%
Group coaching/lessons	2%	15%
Team tennis competition	1%	13%
Private lessons	1%	11%
Cardio tennis	3%	8%

- **Satisfaction levels with courts:** The % of players of each type who are ‘very satisfied’ are:

<i>Aspects of courts</i>	<i>% parks players</i>	<i>% club players</i>
Safety of courts	28%	49%
Proximity to home	31%	45%
Condition of courts	13%	39%
Ease of booking	16%	35%
Cost of courts	36%	31%
Availability of courts	19%	30%
Number of courts	13%	30%
Customer service	10%	27%
Ancillary facilities	5%	26%

- **Awareness of local tennis courts:** Awareness levels are as follows:

<i>Type of court</i>	<i>% people aware</i>
Parks courts	31%
Tennis club courts	28%
Leisure centres	27%
Education courts	15%
Indoor tennis centres	10%
Gyms/health clubs	12%
Other courts	9%
No facilities nearby	11%
No known facilities nearby	25%

### 9.4.3 West Suffolk Clubs

Tennis clubs in West Suffolk and the outdoor courts where they play are as follows.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Home courts</i>	<i>No. members</i>
Culford Tennis Centre	Culford Tennis Centre	200
Exning Tennis Club	Exning Tennis Club	75
Haverhill Tennis Club	Haverhill Tennis Club	142
Newmarket Tennis Club	Newmarket Tennis Club	316
Newmarket URC Tennis Club	Newmarket URC Tennis Club	32
Risbygate Tennis Club	Risbygate Sports and Social Club	119
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	88
ThurLOW Tennis Club	Great ThurLOW Recreation Ground	20
Victory Ground Tennis Players	Victory Sports Ground	78
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,070</b>

#### 9.4.4 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. Based upon the results of the clubs' survey, there is no evidence of any displaced demand for tennis.

#### 9.4.5 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a court for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some courts may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and limited capacity of facilities and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There is no evidence of unmet demand for tennis courts in West Suffolk at present.

#### 9.4.6 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand for tennis in West Suffolk at present with no clubs operating waiting lists.

#### 9.4.7 Future demand

This has been assessed as follows:

- **Participation rates:** Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for tennis at national level since 2015:

<i>Nov 2015- Nov 2016</i>	<i>May 2016- May 2017</i>	<i>Nov 2016- Nov 2017</i>	<i>May 2017- May 2018</i>	<i>Nov 2017- Nov 2018</i>	<i>May 2018- May 2019</i>	<i>Nov 2018- Nov 2019</i>	<i>May 2019- May 2020</i>	<i>% Change</i>
2.0%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	-0.4%

- **Population growth:** Two scenarios are considered:
  - The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
  - A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

#### 9.4.8 Key findings on demand

The key findings on demand are as follows:

- There are nine local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- Future demand patterns are likely to match current levels, based on participation trends but population projections will create a requirement for 6% additional capacity by 2040.

## 9.5 Tennis Court Supply

### 9.5.1 Introduction

This section details the outdoor tennis court supply in West Suffolk. The courts included in the analysis are defined as hard courts permanently laid out with regulation markings for tennis.

### 9.5.2 Courts with community use and used

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Floodlit courts</i>	<i>Non-floodlit courts</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Abbey Gardens	Angel Hill, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 1EX	-	2 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Bardwell Playing Field	Spring Road, Bardwell IP31 1AB	-	1 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Barrow Playing Field	The Street, Barrow IP25 5AN	-	2 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Brandon Playing Fields	Church Road, Brandon IP27 0JB	-	1 tarmac	Brandon
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	5 tarmac	-	Bury St. Edmunds
Exning Tennis Club	Cotton End Road, Exning CB8 7NN	2 tarmac	1 tarmac	Newmarket
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	Wrattling Road, Great Thurlow CB9 7LJ	-	1 tarmac	Haverhill
Haverhill Tennis Club	Ehringshausen Way, Haverhill CB9 0BB	4 tarmac	-	Haverhill
Hundon Tennis Courts	North Street, Hundon CO10 8EE	2 artificial grass	-	Haverhill
Newmarket Tennis Club	Hamilton Road, Newmarket CB8 0NQ	3 synthetic clay 1 tarmac	3 tarmac	Newmarket
Newmarket URC Tennis Club	Duchess Drive, Newmarket CB8 8AJ	-	1 tarmac	Newmarket
Risby Playing Field	Aylmer Close, Risby IP28 6RT	-	1 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Risbygate Sports Club	Westley Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3RR	2 tarmac	2 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Skyliner Sports Centre	Rougham Tower Avenue, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7QB	-	2 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Stanton Recreation Ground	Old Bury Road, Stanton IP31 2BX	-	1 tarmac	Bury St. Edmunds
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	Barn Lane, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8JA	-	2 artificial grass	Haverhill
Victory Sports Ground	Nowton Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2PT	2 tarmac		Bury St. Edmunds
West Row Playing Field	Beeches Road, West Row IP28 8NY	-	1 tarmac	Mildenhall
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	Cemetery Road, Wickhambrook CB8 8XR	-	2 tarmac	Haverhill
<b>TOTALS</b>	-	<b>21 courts</b>	<b>23 courts</b>	-

### 9.5.3 Courts by sub-area

Courts with community use and used by sub-area are as follows. It shows that there contrasts in per capita levels of provision across the district:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Courts</i>	<i>Courts per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	17	1: 4,392
Newmarket	22,141	15	1: 1,476
Haverhill	38,032	10	1: 3,803
Mildenhall	34,260	1	1: 34,260
Brandon	9,941	1	1: 9,941
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1: 4,069</b>

### 9.5.4 Courts with no community use

The following courts are not available for community use:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Courts</i>
Castle Manor Academy	Eastern Avenue, Haverhill, CB9 9JE	3 tarmac
Center Parcs (Elveden Forest)	Brandon Road, Elveden IP24 3TZ	9 tarmac
County Upper School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RF	6 tarmac
Former St. Felix Middle School	Fordham Road, Newmarket CB8 7BE	2 tarmac
IES Breckland	Crown Street, Brandon, IP27 0PE	3 tarmac
Ickworth Hotel	Ickworth IP29 5QE	1 tarmac
Mildenhall College Academy	Bury Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HT	1 artificial grass
Moreton Hall Prep School	Mount Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7BJ	2 artificial
Newmarket Academy	Exning Road, Newmarket, CB8 0EB	4 tarmac
SET Ixworth School	Walsham Road, Ixworth IP31 2HS	4 tarmac
St. Benedict's Catholic School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RH	4 tarmac
St. Christopher's Primary School	Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge IP28 8XQ	1 tarmac
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0LD	2 tarmac
Stoke College	Ashen Lane, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8JE	2 tarmac
Stour Valley Community School	Cavendish Road, Clare CO10 8PJ	4 tarmac
Westley Middle School	Oliver Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3JB	4 tarmac
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52 courts</b>

## 9.6 Quality

### 9.6.1 The criteria assessed for tennis courts

The quality of tennis courts was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit to all facilities. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The court:** Court surface, line markings and fitness for purpose.
- **Fencing:** Condition and appearance.
- **Disability access:** Provision for disabled access to the courts.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.

- **Lighting:** The quality, illumination levels and evenness of floodlights.

## 9.6.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ (highlighted in red below) and 1 to ‘very poor’ (also highlighted in red below).

## 9.6.3 Tennis court assessment

The ratings for tennis courts in West Suffolk are shown in the table below.

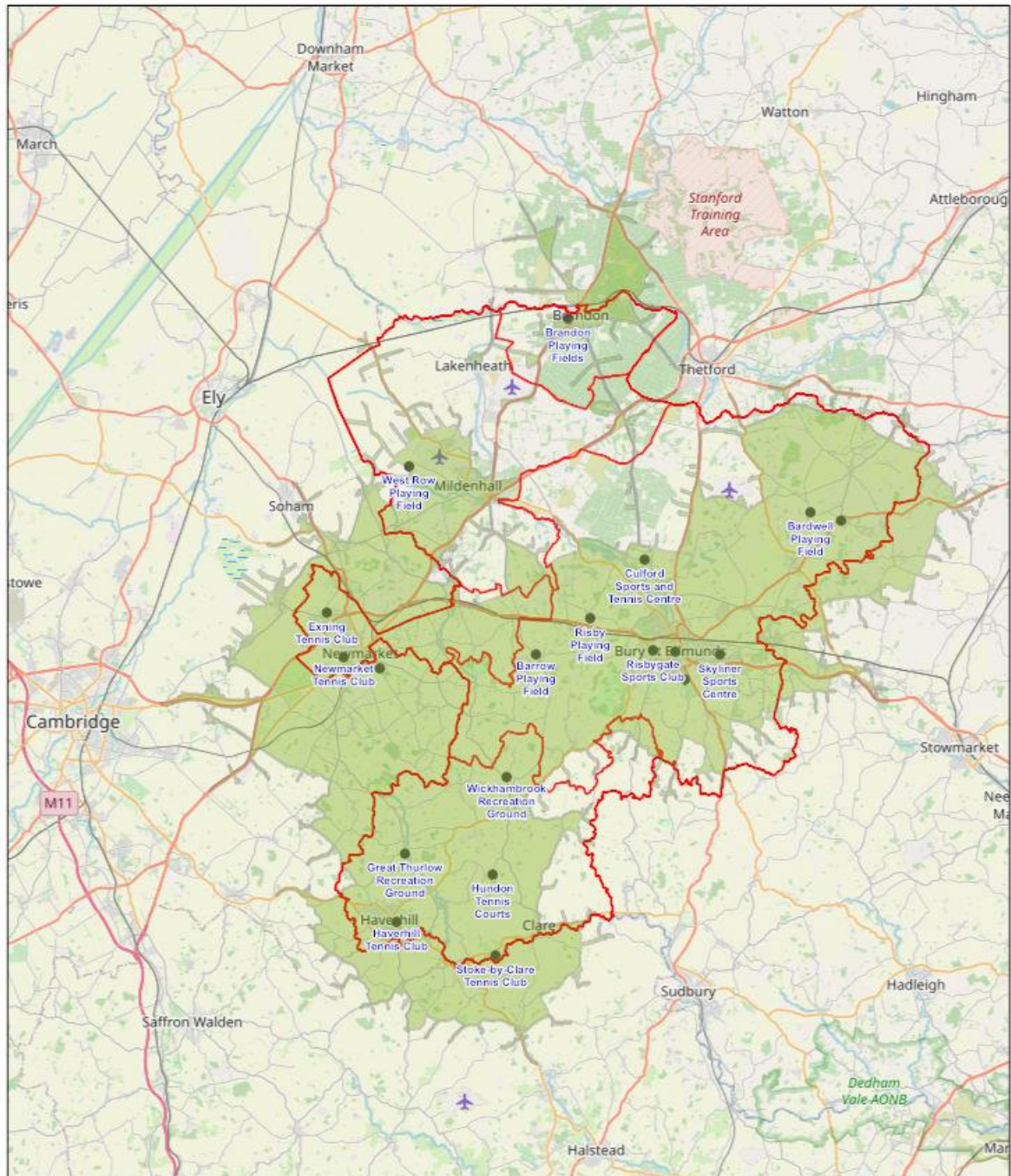
<i>Facility</i>	<i>Court</i>	<i>Fencing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Lighting</i>
Abbey Gardens	5	5	4	-	-
Bardwell Playing Field	4	5	4	5	4
Barrow Playing Field	5	4	2	-	-
Brandon Playing Fields	3	3	4	-	4
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	5	5	5	5	5
Exning Tennis Club	5	5	5	4	5
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	5	5	4	-	-
Haverhill Leisure Centre	5	5	5	4	5
Hundon Tennis Courts	3	4	5	-	4
Newmarket Tennis Club	5	5	3	4	5
Newmarket URC Tennis Club	4	4	3	4	-
Risby Playing Field	5	5	3	-	-
Risbygate Sports Club	5	4	4	4	5
Skyliner Sports Centre	4	4	4	5	-
Stanton Recreation Ground	4	4	4	-	-
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	3	4	4	-	-
Victory Sports Ground	5	5	4	5	5
West Row Playing Field	5	5	4	-	4
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	5	5	4	-	-

## 9.7 Accessibility

The LTA applies a 10 minute drivetime catchment to define accessibility. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that most of the local population is within the catchment of at least one court, with the exception of much of the Mildenhall sub-area, the rural northern part of the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area and to the east and north-east of the Haverhill sub-area Haverhill.

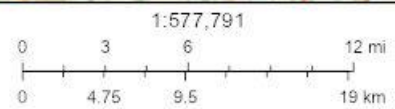


# WEST SUFFOLK - Outdoor Tennis Facilities within 10 Minutes Drive



7/23/2021

- 10.0 Minutes
- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- OUTDOOR TENNIS
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## 9.8 Availability

The table below identifies the basis of use and cost of tennis court usage in West Suffolk:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Abbey Gardens	'Pay-and-play' £5 per court per hour bookable via 'ClubSpark'
Bardwell Playing Field	Open access, no usage charges.
Barrow Playing Field	Open access, no usage charges.
Brandon Playing Fields	Open access, no usage charges.
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Members only. Adult £250 annually, Junior £125 per annum.
Exning Tennis Club	Members only. Adult £91.50 annually, Junior £39 per annum.
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	Thurlow TC members only. Adult £28.75 annually.
Haverhill Tennis Club	Members only. Adult £132 annually, Junior £48 per annum.
Newmarket Tennis Club	Members only. Adult £295 annually, Junior £52 per annum.
Hundon Tennis Courts	Open access, no usage charges.
Newmarket URC TC	Club members Adult £95 annually, Junior £40 per annum. Guests £5 per court per hour.
Risby Playing Field	Open access, no usage charges.
Risbygate Sports Club	Membership. Adult £166 annually, Junior £49.80 per annum. Non-members 12pm-2pm weekdays £10 per court per hour.
Skyliner Sports Centre	'Pay-and-play' £5 per court per hour.
Stanton Recreation Ground	Open access, no usage charges.
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	Members only. Adult £50 annually, Junior £15 per annum.
Victory Sports Ground	Members only. Adult £85 annually, Junior £25 per annum.
West Row Playing Field	Open access, no usage charges.
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	Open access, no usage charges.

## 9.9 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are 44 tennis courts with community access in West Suffolk, 21 of which are floodlit.
- The quality of tennis courts is generally good, but five courts have 'poor' quality playing surfaces and there are issues with disabled access and changing facilities at three and two sites respectively.
- Accessibility of courts is generally good, most of the local population is within the catchment of at least one court, with the exception of much of the Mildenhall sub-area, the rural northern part of the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area and to the east and north-east of the Haverhill sub-area Haverhill.
- 16 courts are available on an open access basis, some of which would benefit from the LTA's Gate Access technology. Abbey Gardens in Bury St. Edmunds is currently the only site in the district that uses the system.

## 9.10 The balance between tennis court supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between tennis court supply and demand in West Suffolk:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough courts with sufficient capacity to meet needs now and in the future?
- **Quality:** Are the courts fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the courts in the right physical location for the users now and in the future?
- **Availability:** Are the courts available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

## 9.11 Quantity

### 9.11.1 Current needs

The LTA calculates the indicative capacity of tennis courts in relation to 'Estimated Membership Capacity'. This is applied to all club courts, on the basis that:

- A floodlit outdoor court has a capacity of 60 members.
- A non-floodlit outdoor court has a capacity of 40 members.

The results of applying this to courts in West Suffolk is tabulated below. Capacity shortfalls are shown in brackets and the analysis shows that only one site (Stoke-by-Clare Tennis club) is operating at over capacity. Membership numbers have been adversely affected by the covid pandemic, so some of the apparent spare capacity is likely to be reduced when players return.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>No. courts</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>No. members</i>	<i>Balance</i>
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	5	300	200	100
Exning Tennis Club	3	160	75	85
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	1	40	20	20
Haverhill Tennis Club	4	240	142	98
Newmarket Tennis Club	7	360	316	44
Newmarket URC TC	1	40	32	8
Risbygate Sports Club	4	200	119	81
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	2	80	88	(8)
Victory Sports Ground	2	120	78	42
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>470</b>

### 9.11.2 Future needs

Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends.

- The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%. This is equivalent to two extra non-floodlit courts.

- A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%. This is equivalent to six extra non-floodlit courts.

## **9.12 Quality**

### **9.12.1 Current quality**

The quality of tennis courts is generally good, but five courts have ‘poor’ quality playing surfaces and there are issues with disabled access and changing facilities at three and two sites respectively.

### **9.12.2 Future quality**

All court providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

## **9.13 Accessibility**

### **9.13.1 Current accessibility**

Most of the local population is within the 10-minute drivetime catchment of at least one court, with the exception of much of the Mildenhall sub-area, the rural northern part of the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area and to the east and north-east of the Haverhill sub-area Haverhill.

### **9.13.2 Future accessibility**

Providing locally accessible outdoor tennis courts as part of the housing developments would be consistent with meeting health and well-being objectives in the new developments.

## **9.14 Availability**

### **9.14.1 Current availability**

16 courts are available on an open access basis, some of which would benefit from the LTA’s Gate Access technology. Abbey Gardens in Bury St. Edmunds is currently the only site in the district that uses the system.

### **9.14.2 Future availability**

Provision should be made for ‘pay and play’ access to all new courts.

## **9.15 The options for securing additional tennis court capacity**

The options for securing existing and additional tennis court capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

### **9.15.1 Protect**

Protecting existing tennis courts through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility. This should include the tennis courts at the former St. Felix School site in Newmarket, which is subject to a housing development.

### 9.15.2 Provide

It is recommended that the action plan in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment be used as the basis for seeking an appropriate level of financial contributions under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of providing tennis courts to meet the needs of the additional population arising from housing growth by 2040. There is a need to provide six additional courts to meet demand arising from the higher population growth projections and there is a case for making locally-accessible provision in any major new housing developments.

### 9.15.3 Enhance

Enhancing existing tennis court capacity by:

- Addressing the disabled access issues at the three sites where this is rated as ‘poor’.
- Ensuring that the courts and ancillary facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements, funded by developer contributions where appropriate.
- Considering the addition of floodlights at appropriate sites, particularly in conjunction with netball developments at shared use sites.
- Installing the LTA’s Gate Access technology at courts with high levels of potential users within a 10min drive time.

## 9.16 Action Plan

### 9.16.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the suggested action plan for tennis courts to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 9.16.2 Key strategic actions

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Protection of existing tennis courts.	Consider the inclusion of a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing tennis courts.	WSC	-	-	High
Funding for future tennis court needs.	Ensure that S106 contributions are collected from developers.	WSC	Developers	-	High
Gate Access Technology.	Review the potential for introducing Gate Access Technology at courts in parks and recreation grounds.	WSC	LTA Parish Councils	-	High

### 9.16.3 Site-specific opportunities for consideration

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Abbey Gardens	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Bardwell Playing Field	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Barrow Playing Field	Poor disability access	Provide a tarmac path from the access point	Barrow Parish Council	-	£3,000	Medium
Brandon Playing Fields	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Courts slippery when wet	Investigate nonslip surfacing options	Culford School	-	£5,000	High
Exning Tennis Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Great Thurlow Recreation Ground	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Haverhill Tennis Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Hundon Tennis Courts	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Newmarket Tennis Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Newmarket URC Tennis Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Risby Playing Field	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Risbygate Sports Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Skyliner Sports Centre	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Stanton Recreation Ground	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club	Courts used to over-capacity	Investigate additional court provision	Stoke-by-Clare TC	-	£45,000	-
Victory Sports Ground	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
West Row Playing Field	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Wickhambrook Recreation Ground	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-

## 10 BOWLS GREEN NEEDS

### 10.1 Organisational context

- **Bowls England:** Bowls England is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **Affiliated Clubs:** There are 18 affiliated bowls clubs in West Suffolk.

### 10.2 Strategic context

#### 10.2.1 Bowls England Strategic Plan

Bowls England's strategic plan 2021 - 2025 is currently being finalised, but the following priorities emerged from consultation with members and stakeholders:

- To deliver a structure that supports bowlers, clubs and county associations.
- To develop the National Membership Register.
- To invest in member services.
- To develop stronger internal communication channels and share best practice.
- To raise the profile of the sport with external stakeholders.

#### 10.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Outdoor sports facilities strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

##### ***East Cambridgeshire***

The *'East Cambridgeshire Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2020) identifies that 'current bowls facilities in East Cambridgeshire are assessed to be at operating with significant spare capacity'.

##### ***South Cambridgeshire***

South Cambridgeshire does not have a strategic assessment of bowls needs in the district.

##### ***Braintree***

The *'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study'* (2017) notes that 'there does not appear to be a need for additional outdoor bowls facilities'. Clubs in Steeple Bumpstead and Birdbrook are close to the southern boundary of West Suffolk so may cater for some demand from the Haverhill sub-area.

##### ***Babergh***

*'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that there are 13 affiliated clubs but does not assess the adequacy of facility supply.

##### ***Mid-Suffolk***

*'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that there are 29 affiliated clubs but does not assess the adequacy of facility supply.



**Breckland:** Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of bowls needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of bowls needs for the district.

## **10.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The *West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to bowls:

- ‘There is strong level of supply across West Suffolk, with a large concentration of bowls clubs in Bury St Edmunds. There is good accessibility to bowls clubs’.
- ‘It is recommended that West Suffolk continues to provide some financial support for bowls clubs, which are struggling to raise money to cover their costs, but where it is clear that membership is declining significantly and there is no sustainable future then West Suffolk should review its investment commitments’.

## **10.3 Stakeholder consultation**

### **10.3.1 Suffolk County Bowls Association**

Clubs in West Suffolk affiliate to a range of county governing bodies of bowls, including:

- Suffolk County Bowling Association.
- Bowls Cambridgeshire.
- North Essex County Bowls Federation.

Consultation with the governing bodies identified the following issues:

- There are 18 outdoor bowls clubs in the district.
- None of the governing bodies has any strategic facilities priorities for the West Suffolk area.

### **10.3.2 Local bowls clubs**

A questionnaire survey was circulated to all affiliated clubs in West Suffolk. Five of the clubs responded. Demand for bowls locally shows a decrease over the past three years with one club reporting static membership and four a decrease in members. No clubs have a waiting list. British Sugar Bowls Club closed in the past five years due to declining membership.

### **10.3.3 Brandon Town Bowls Club**

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Brandon Town Bowling Club is part of the Brandon Remembrance playing fields. Clubs that use facilities pay an annual rent’.
- ‘Our fixed costs during Covid did not reduce. The lack of income meant we suffered a loss. The loss was mitigated by the covid grants from West Suffolk Council’.

#### 10.3.4 Cavendish Bowls Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘The club has two teams in three leagues, we play friendly matches with other clubs and hold internal competitions’.
- ‘Throughout the season we hold ‘Rollup Evenings’ when any new members can come to practice and receive tuition and guidance’.

#### 10.3.5 Great Barton Bowls Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We need car parking as we have to park on the road’.
- ‘We seem to lose a few members when they move house but usually get a few new people to make up the numbers. Hard to persuade people to take on officer and some other jobs. We have a good team who do the greenkeeping. Most people have their own transport but a few disabled people need help to get to the club. We had three coaches but two have left. We advertise every year and try to gain more members of all ages’.
- ‘There were no leagues or local/county competitions in 2020 but club members played friendly games, coaching sessions and most club competitions. We were unable to have our usual social occasions (including during the winter) but we kept in contact with most members via email and phone. The green keeping team have been working as usual. We hope that the members will return when we open the green on 24th April. Most have indicated that they are ready to play in leagues when they take place again (maybe mid-May). Therefore hopefully we will get nearly back to normal quite soon’.
- ‘We just wish we could get more and younger members as we are all getting old’.

#### 10.3.6 Risbygate Bowls Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We have an ageing population and have lost several through ill health or, sadly, passing away. Some have decided to bowl indoor all year if they have health issues’.
- ‘We have reduced from two teams on a Tuesday and Thursday to one team but retain 2 teams on a Wednesday as the format has changed from 4 blocks of triples to 3 blocks of triples’.

- Public access to our outdoor bowls green is available during the summer season between 11am and 1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays’.

## 10.4 Bowls Green Demand

### 10.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the demand for bowls in West Suffolk and includes:

- Expressed demand.
- Displaced demand.
- Latent and unmet demand.
- Future demand.

### 10.4.2 West Suffolk Clubs

Bowls clubs in West Suffolk and the outdoor greens where they play are as follows.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>No. members</i>
Brandon Town Bowls Club	Brandon Town Bowls Club	173
Cavendish Bowls Club	Cavendish Bowls Club	45
Clare Bowls Club	Clare Bowls Club	15
Coney Weston Swan BC	Coney Weston Swan BC	35
Great Barton Bowls Club	Great Barton Bowls Club	35
Greene King Bowls Club	Greene King Social Club	30
Haverhill Bowls Club	Haverhill Bowls Club	140
Hengrave Bowls Club	Hengrave Bowls Club	50
Ixworth Bowls Club	Ixworth Bowls Club	35
Mildenhall Social Bowls Club	Mildenhall Social Club	40
Newmarket Avenue BC	Newmarket Avenue BC	90
Risbygate Bowls Club	Risbygate Bowls Club	44
St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	105
Stanton Bowls Club	Stanton Bowls Club	70
Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	30
Tuddenham St. Mary’s BC	Tuddenham St. Mary’s BC	35
West Row Bowls Club	West Row Bowls Club	70
Wickhambrook Bowls Club	Wickhambrook Bowls Club	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>1,067</b>

### 10.4.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. Based upon the results of the clubs’ survey, there is no evidence of any displaced demand for bowls.

#### 10.4.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Clubs may have access to a facility for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some facilities may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and limited capacity of facilities and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There is no evidence of unmet demand for outdoor bowls greens in West Suffolk at present, with all clubs reporting spare capacity to accommodate additional members.

#### 10.4.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand for tennis in West Suffolk at present with no clubs operating waiting lists.

#### 10.4.6 Future demand

This has been assessed as follows:

- **Participation rates:** Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for bowls at national level since 2015:

<i>Nov 2015- Nov 2016</i>	<i>May 2016- May 2017</i>	<i>Nov 2016- Nov 2017</i>	<i>May 2017- May 2018</i>	<i>Nov 2017- Nov 2018</i>	<i>May 2018- May 2019</i>	<i>Nov 2018- Nov 2019</i>	<i>May 2019- May 2020</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.5%	-0.3%

- **Population projection:** Two scenarios are considered:
  - The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
  - A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

#### 10.4.7 Key findings on demand

The key findings on demand are as follows:

- There are 18 local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- There is no evidence of any displaced, unmet or latent demand.
- Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends and population projections.

## 10.5 Bowls Green Supply

### 10.5.1 Introduction

This section summarises the detail of bowls green supply in West Suffolk. The greens included in the analysis are defined as grassed permanently laid out greens.

### 10.5.2 Greens with community use and used

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Brandon Town Bowls Club	Church Road, Brandon IP27 0JB	Brandon
Cavendish Bowls Club	High Street, Cavendish CO10 8AX	Haverhill
Clare Bowls Club	Station Road, Clare CO10 8NY	Haverhill
Coney Weston Swan BC	Thetford Road, Coney Weston IP31 1DN	Bury St. Edmunds
Great Barton Bowls Club	East Barton Road, Great Barton IP30 9AB	Bury St. Edmunds
Greene King Bowls Club	Cullum Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3PB	Bury St. Edmunds
Haverhill Bowls Club	Manor Road, Haverhill CB9 0EP	Haverhill
Hengrave Bowls Club	Bury Road, Hengrave IP28 6LW	Bury St. Edmunds
Ixworth Bowls Club	Stow Road, Ixworth IP33 2HH	Bury St. Edmunds
Mildenhall Social Bowls Club	Recreation Road, Mildenhall IP28 7HG	Mildenhall
Newmarket Avenue BC	The Avenue, Newmarket CB8 9AY	Newmarket
Risbygate Bowls Club	Westley Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3RR	Bury St. Edmunds
St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	Minden Close, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 1XZ	Bury St. Edmunds
Stanton Bowls Club	Bury Lane, Stanton IP31 2DF	Bury St. Edmunds
Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	Ashen Lane, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8HW	Haverhill
Tuddenham St. Mary's BC	High Street, Tuddenham IP28 6SL	Mildenhall
West Row Bowls Club	Beeches Road, West Row IP28 8NY	Mildenhall
Wickhambrook Bowls Club	Thorn's Close, Wickhambrook CB8 8XN	Newmarket

### 10.5.3 Greens by sub-area

Greens with community use and used by sub-area are as follows. It shows that there is a geographically equitable distribution of provision across the district:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Greens</i>	<i>Greens per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	8	1: 9,334
Newmarket	22,141	2	1: 11,071
Haverhill	38,032	4	1: 9,508
Mildenhall	34,260	3	1: 11,420
Brandon	9,941	1	1: 9,941
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1: 9,947</b>

### 10.5.4 Greens where use was recently discontinued

Use of the following green was recently discontinued:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
British Sugar Sports Club	Hollow Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7BB	Bury St. Edmunds

## 10.6 Quality

### 10.6.1 The criteria assessed for bowls greens

The quality of bowls greens was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit to all facilities during the playing season. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The green:** The quality of the grass, flatness and regulation ditches.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.

### 10.6.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ (highlighted in red below) and 1 to ‘very poor’ (also highlighted in red below).

### 10.6.3 Bowls greens assessment

The ratings for bowls in West Suffolk are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>General access</i>
Brandon Town Bowls Club	5	5	4	5
Cavendish Bowls Club	5	4	4	4
Clare Bowls Club	4	2	3	3
Coney Weston Swan BC	4	3	4	4
Great Barton Bowls Club	5	4	4	2
Greene King Bowls Club	4	4	4	4
Haverhill Bowls Club	5	5	5	5
Hengrave Bowls Club	4	4	3	3
Ixworth Bowls Club	4	4	4	4
Mildenhall Social Bowls Club	4	4	4	4
Newmarket Avenue BC	5	5	4	4
Risbygate Bowls Club	5	5	4	4
St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	5	5	4	5
Stanton Bowls Club	5	5	4	4
Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	3	3	3	3
Tuddenham St. Mary's BC	3	3	3	4
West Row Bowls Club	5	5	4	4
Wickhambrook Bowls Club	2	2	3	3



## 10.7 Accessibility

Bowls England applies a 15 minute drivetime catchment to define accessibility. Based upon this, the map below shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one green, with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall.

WEST SUFFOLK - Outdoor Bowls Facilities within 15 Minutes Drive



## 10.8 Availability

The table below identifies the basis of use of bowls greens in West Suffolk:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Brandon Town Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Cavendish Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Clare Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Coney Weston Swan Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Great Barton Bowls Club	Membership only
Greene King Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Haverhill Bowls Club	Membership only
Hengrave Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Ixworth Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Mildenhall Social Bowls Club	Membership only
Newmarket Avenue BC	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Risbygate Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Stanton Bowls Club	Membership only Introductory sessions for non-members
Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	Membership only
Tuddenham Bowls Club	Membership only
West Row Bowls Club	Membership only
Wickhambrook Bowls Club	Membership only

## 10.9 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are 18 bowls greens in West Suffolk.
- The quality of greens is generally good, but the green and clubhouse at Wickhambrook BC is 'poor', as is the clubhouse at Clare Bowls Club.
- Accessibility of greens is good, with the entire population within 20 minutes driving time of the nearest facility with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall. The geographical distribution between sub-areas is equitable.
- Most greens are available to non-members for free introductory sessions.

- There is significant spare capacity at all greens.

### **10.10 The balance between bowls green supply and demand**

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between bowls green supply and demand in West Suffolk:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough greens with sufficient capacity to meet needs now and in the future?
- **Quality:** Are the greens fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the greens in the right physical location for the users now and in the future?
- **Availability:** Are the greens available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

### **10.11 Quantity**

#### **10.11.1 Current needs**

There is no evidence of a shortfall in current provision for outdoor bowls, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used capacity:** Local clubs have indicated that there is significant spare capacity.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand in the district.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known current planned changes to bowls green supply.

#### **10.11.2 Future needs**

Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends but the higher population projections will create a requirement for 19% additional capacity by 2040. Spare capacity at the existing bowls facilities will be able to accommodate all additional future demand, based upon falling participation rates.

### **10.12 Quality**

#### **10.12.1 Current quality**

The quality of greens is generally good, but the green and clubhouse at Wickhambrook BC is 'poor', as is the clubhouse at Clare Bowls Club.

#### **10.12.2 Future quality**

All bowls facility providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

## **10.13 Accessibility**

### **10.13.1 Current accessibility**

All of the population is within 20-minutes' drive of the nearest bowls green.

### **10.13.2 Future accessibility**

It is reasonable to assume that the current geographical coverage will be maintained in the future.

## **10.14 Availability**

### **10.14.1 Current availability**

Most greens are available to non-members for free introductory sessions.

### **10.14.2 Future availability**

It is reasonable to assume that similar access arrangements will be offered in the future.

## **10.15 The options for securing bowls green capacity**

The options for securing existing bowls green capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

### **10.15.1 Protect**

Protecting existing bowls greens through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

### **10.15.2 Provide**

There is no need to provide additional facilities based on current and projected future demand patterns.

### **10.15.3 Enhance**

Enhancing existing bowls green capacity by:

- Addressing the issues at the two sites where features are rated as 'poor'.
- Ensuring that the greens and ancillary facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements.

## **10.16 Action Plan**

### **10.16.1 Introduction**

The tables below set out the suggested action plan for bowls greens to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 10.16.2 Key strategic actions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Action</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Protection of existing bowls greens	Consider the inclusion of a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing bowls greens.	WSC	-	-	High

### 10.16.3 Site-specific opportunities for consideration

<i>Site</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Brandon Town Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Cavendish Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Clare Bowls Club	Poor quality clubhouse	Provide new clubhouse	Clare BC	-	£265,000	High
Coney Weston Swan Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Great Barton Bowls Club	Need for on-site car parking	Provide on-site car parking	Great Barton BC	-	£10,000	Medium
Greene King Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Haverhill Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Hengrave Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Ixworth Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Mildenhall Social Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Newmarket Avenue BC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Risbygate Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
St. Edmundsbury Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Stanton Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Stoke-by-Clare Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Tuddenham Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
West Row Bowls Club	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Wickhambrook Bowls Club	'Poor' quality green and clubhouse	Investigate the feasibility of green maintenance improvements and a new clubhouse	Wickhambrook BC	-	£5,000pa for maintenance £265,000 for clubhouse	Medium



# 11 NETBALL COURT NEEDS

## 11.1 Organisational context

- **England Netball:** England Netball is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **Affiliated Clubs:** There are five England Netball-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk.

## 11.2 Strategic context

### 11.2.1 Netball vision and goals

England Netball is committed to its 10-1-1 mission and vision to:

- Establish netball as a top ten participation sport.
- Make netball the first choice of team sport for women and girls.
- Achieve and maintain world number one status.

Its strategic goals are to:

- Grow participation by at least 10,000 participants per annum.
- Deliver a first-class member and participant experience.
- Establish England as the number one team by winning the world championships.
- Lead an effective and progressive infrastructure.

### 11.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Outdoor sports facilities strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

**East Cambridgeshire:** The 'East Cambridgeshire Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy' (2020) identifies that :

- **Used capacity:** 'Whilst all local courts have some spare capacity, many also double as tennis courts and/or multi-use games areas so demand from other sports has to be accommodated'.
- **Satisfied demand:** 'There is substantial evidence of unmet demand in the district, with no site capable of hosting a central venue league'.

#### **South Cambridgeshire**

The 'Greater Cambridge Playing Pitch Strategy 2015 - 2031' (2015) does not include an assessment of outdoor netball needs.

#### **Braintree**

The 'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study' (2017) states that:

- 'There is a lack of adult and junior netball opportunities in Braintree district. The few junior clubs that exist are at capacity'.
- 'Stakeholders indicate a potential need for additional good quality outdoor floodlit courts; and better access to quality indoor courts provided at a reasonable cost.



### ***Babergh***

*'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that there are four affiliated clubs but does not assess the adequacy of court supply.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

*'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) identifies that 'seven clubs play at Needham market courts involving 22 teams, 200 regular female players. There is a need for a 4/6 court central venue for leagues'.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of outdoor netball needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of outdoor netball needs for the district.

## **11.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The *'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to netball:

- There is insufficient supply of both outdoor netball courts across West Suffolk. All regional matches are played in Ipswich due to the lack of high-quality supply.
- The main issue with quality is the lack of floodlights, which means leagues cannot utilise outdoor courts during the winter, therefore increasing the demand for indoor facilities.

## **11.3 Stakeholder consultation**

### **11.3.1 England Netball**

Consultation with the England Netball highlighted the following issues:

- 'Bee Netball' is aimed at 5 to 11 year olds as an introduction to the sport, although there are no local opportunities in West Suffolk whilst the scheme is piloted.
- Traditional 7-A-Side Netball is played by over 180,000 women every week. All age ranges and levels of ability are catered for with traditional netball - from primary school children to people playing in local leagues, plus returning players through to regional or premier league right up to elite international athletes – anyone can play the game at the level that suits them.
- 'Back to Netball' is aimed at lapsed participants and provides a gentle reintroduction to the sport.

- Walking Netball has evolved from a growing demand for walking sports. Often, one of netball's strengths is that people never forget playing the sport and the memories as well as the love for the game never leave. Walking Netball is a slower version of the game - it is netball, but at a walking pace. The game has been designed so that anyone can play it regardless of age or fitness level.
- 'Netball Now is non-commitment turn-up and pay and play netball, no team needed, no commitment, no pressure, all standards welcome. It is usually run over the summer months when the leagues stop and aimed at League players who want their netball fix while the league has stopped'.

### 11.3.2 Suffolk Netball Association

Consultation with the Suffolk Netball Association highlighted the following issues:

- 'West Suffolk Netball League hosts a Summer league (because we have no safe facilities to run a league in the Winter) and due to the lack of facilities is operating at the maximum available capacity for teams'.
- 'Pre-covid, the League was run on Monday to Thursday, with six divisions of eight teams and two Junior Leagues of ten teams, with a waiting list of clubs and teams from both in and out of the area asking to join'.
- 'The league was run at Culford School but having only the 4 courts (which if it rains are unplayable) they are unable to expand and offer the teams places'.
- 'Ideally we would like to see a home for the WSNL and a space of 6 floodlit courts would also allow the increased participation at all levels from Juniors to Seniors, 'Bees' to Walking Netball' and allow the smaller clubs/teams a venue to train socialise and develop community links in the area. A site in or around Bury St. Edmunds would be ideal'.
- 'Currently a lot of the courts are shared with schools, so increasing participation during the day has always been problematic. Having a venue at a leisure area that is open all day to everyone, is such a better option to engage with the community'.

### 11.3.3 Breckland Netball Club

The club commented that 'we are a small, friendly club playing in the West Suffolk Netball League, a mixture of seniors and juniors playing at a range of levels. All our activities are accommodated by indoor courts'.

### 11.3.4 Haverhill Netball Club

The club commented that 'we offer a range of opportunities based at the Samuel Ward Academy including 'back to netball' and compete in the West Suffolk League'. The club is currently seeking a suitable training venue to meet its ever-growing membership. England Netball has been working with them to try and identify a suitable site as Samuel Ward remains closed to lettings due to Covid and they have had to go out of County to train.

### 11.3.5 Jetts Netball Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We offer a full programme of netball opportunities, including Bee Netball, Walking Netball, Back to Netball and competitive matches’.
- ‘We play outdoors at a number of venues including Culford Sports and Tennis Centre, Risbygate Sports Club and Risby Multi-use Games Area.

### 11.3.4 Jubilee Netball Club

The club commented that ‘we are based around Bury St. Edmunds and have two senior teams, three junior teams and a ‘Back to Netball Group’.

### 11.3.7 Newmarket Netball Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Newmarket Netball Club was set up by a number of local women who knew each through working in horse racing, who realised through discussions that they loved the sport in their school days and wanted to get back into netball for fun’.
- ‘The team is now growing with others who share the love of the game and the ethos of the club is to be as inclusive as possible, so new members are welcome regardless of how often they can commit to playing, and no matter their fitness level’.
- ‘There are opportunities to play in the West Suffolk League, in Back to Netball tournaments and charity and fun tournaments, or just come along to enjoy friendly games during practice sessions’.

## 11.4 Netball Court Demand

### 11.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the demand for netball in West Suffolk and includes:

- Expressed demand.
- Displaced demand.
- Latent and unmet demand.
- Future demand.

### 11.4.2 Expressed demand

Netball clubs in West Suffolk and the outdoor courts where they play are as follows. Courts that are outside the district are shown in italics, as are clubs from outside the district that use courts in West Suffolk:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Courts</i>	<i>Teams</i>
Breckland Netball Club	Mildenhall Hub (indoors)	1 senior 1 junior
<i>Burnwell Netball Club</i>	Newmarket Leisure Centre	1 senior
Cockfield Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	3 senior 3 junior
Havebury Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	2 senior
Haverhill Netball Club	Samuel Ward Academy	2 senior 2 junior
Jetts Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	2 senior 3 junior
Jubilee Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	2 senior 1 junior
Newmarket Netball Club	Newmarket Leisure Centre	1 senior
Moreton Hall Netball Club	King Edward V School	3 senior 2 junior
Phoenix Flames Netball Club	<i>Thurston Community College</i>	2 senior
Rougham Harriers Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	1 senior
Swifts Netball Club	Culford Sports Centre	1 senior

#### 11.4.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. Haverhill NC currently has to train on courts outside the district because the Samuel Ward courts are unavailable. Phoenix Flames NC uses courts at Thurston Community College in Mid-Suffolk.

#### 11.4.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Clubs may have access to a facility for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some facilities may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and limited capacity of facilities and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There are not enough courts to host the West Suffolk Netball League which runs over the winter in the evening so floodlights are essential. The League runs a waiting list of teams that cannot currently be accommodated.

#### 11.4.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand for netball in West Suffolk at present.

#### 11.4.6 Future demand

This has been assessed as follows:

- **Participation rates:** Sport England’s ‘Active Lives’ survey has recorded adult (16+) weekly participation rates for netball at national level since 2015:

<i>Nov 2015- Nov 2016</i>	<i>May 2016- May 2017</i>	<i>Nov 2016- Nov 2017</i>	<i>May 2017- May 2018</i>	<i>Nov 2017- Nov 2018</i>	<i>May 2018- May 2019</i>	<i>Nov 2018- Nov 2019</i>	<i>May 2019- May 2020</i>	<i>% Change</i>
0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	-0.1%

- **Population growth:** Two scenarios are considered:
  - The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
  - A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

#### 11.4.7 Key findings on demand

The key findings on demand are as follows:

- There are five local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- There is some evidence of unmet demand for netball courts in West Suffolk. There are not enough courts there to host the West Suffolk League which runs over the winter in the evening so floodlights are essential. The League runs a waiting list of teams that cannot currently be accommodated.
- Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends but the population increase will create a need for 6.5% additional capacity by 2040.

### 11.5 Netball Court Supply

#### 11.5.1 Introduction

This section details netball court supply in West Suffolk. The courts included are defined as hard courts permanently laid out with regulation markings for netball. This includes multi-use games areas also marked for other sports that are therefore not exclusively used for netball.

#### 11.5.2 Courts with community use and used

These are as follows:

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Floodlit courts</i>	<i>Non-floodlit courts</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Culford School, Culford IP28 6TX	4	-	Bury St. Edmunds
King Edward VI School	Grove Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3BH	-	3	Bury St. Edmunds
Newmarket Leisure Centre	Exning Road, Newmarket CB8 0AE	-	3	Newmarket
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Hundred Acre Way, Red Lodge IP28 8XR	-	1	Mildenhall
Risby Playing Field	Aylmer Close, Risby IP28 6RT	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Risbygate Sports Club	Westley Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3RR	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
Samuel Ward Academy	Chalkstone Way, Haverhill CB9 0LD	2	-	Haverhill
Skyliner Sports Centre	Rougham Tower Avenue, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 7QB	-	1	Bury St. Edmunds
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-</b>

### 11.5.3 Courts without community use

The following courts are not available for community use.

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Floodlit courts</i>	<i>Non-floodlit courts</i>
Castle Manor Academy	Eastern Avenue, Haverhill CB9 9JE	-	3
County Upper School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RF	-	6
IES Breckland	Crown Street, Brandon IP27 0PE	3	-
SET Ixworth School	Walsham Road, Ixworth IP31 2HS	-	4
St. Benedict's Catholic School	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP32 6RH	-	3
St. Christopher's Primary School	Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge IP28 8XQ	-	1
Stoke College	Ashen Lane, Stoke-by-Clare CO10 8JE	-	1
Stour Valley Community School	Cavendish Road, Clare CO10 8PJ	-	3
Westley Middle School	Oliver Road, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3JB	-	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>

### 11.5.4 Courts by sub-area

Courts with community use and used by sub-area are as follows. It shows that there contrasts in per capita levels of provision across the district:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Courts</i>	<i>Courts per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	10	1: 7,467
Newmarket	22,141	3	1: 7,380
Haverhill	38,032	2	1: 19,016
Mildenhall	34,260	1	1: 34,260
Brandon	9,941	0	-
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1: 11,190</b>



## 11.6 Quality

### 11.6.1 The criteria assessed for netball courts

The quality of outdoor netball courts was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit to all facilities. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The court:** Court surface, line markings and fitness for purpose.
- **Fencing:** Condition and appearance.
- **Disability access:** Provision for disabled access to the courts.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.
- **Lighting:** The quality, illumination levels and evenness of floodlights.

### 11.6.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ and 1 to ‘very poor’.

### 11.6.3 Netball court assessment

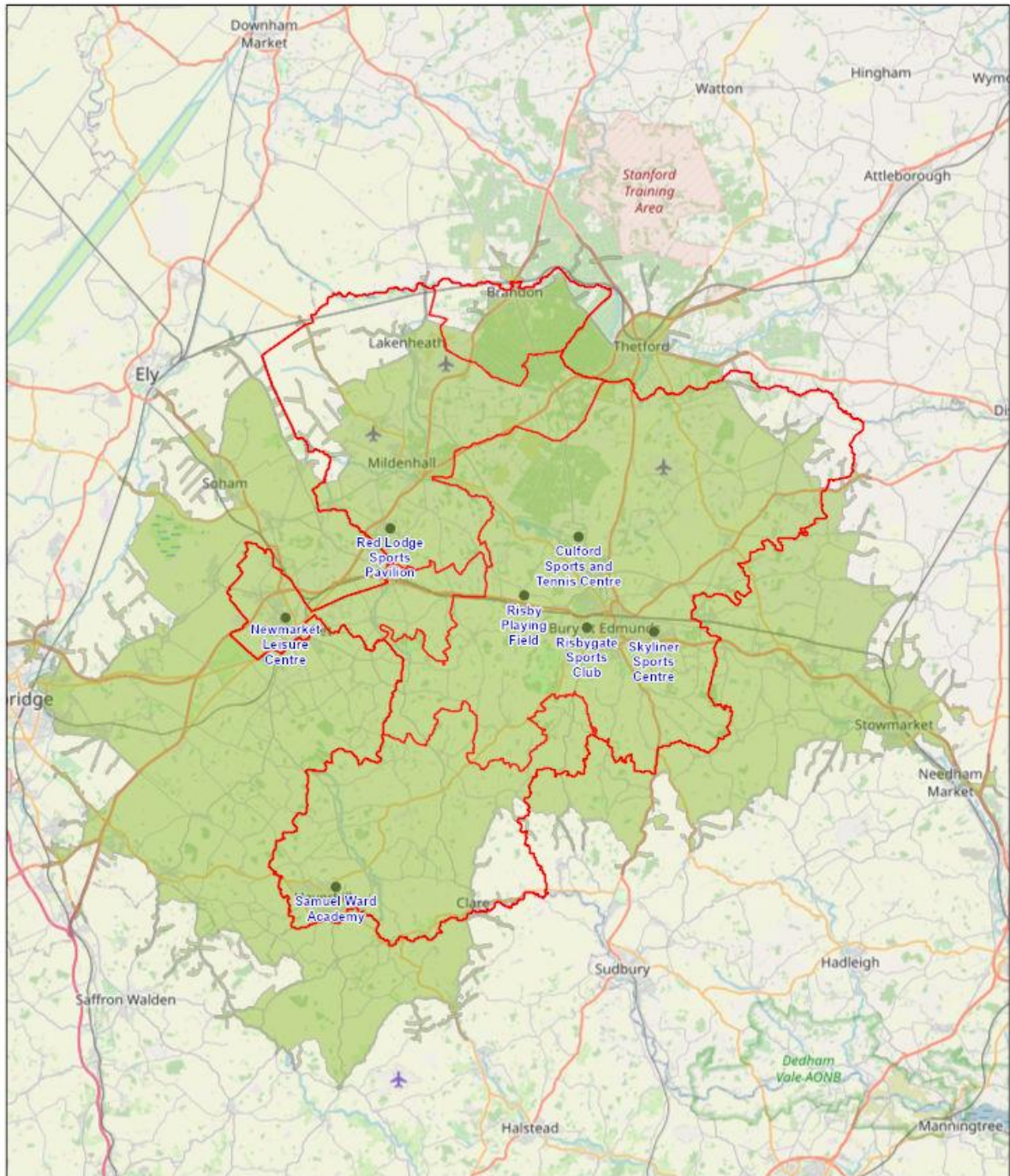
The ratings for netball courts in West Suffolk are shown in the table below.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Court</i>	<i>Fencing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Lighting</i>
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	3	5	5	5	5
King Edward VI School	4	4	4	4	-
Newmarket Leisure Centre	4	5	4	4	-
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	4	5	4	4	-
Risby Playing Field	4	5	3	-	-
Risbygate Sports Club	4	4	4	4	-
Samuel Ward Academy	4	5	4	-	4
Skyliner Sports Centre	3	5	5	5	-

## 11.7 Accessibility

England Netball applies a 20 minute drivetime catchment to define accessibility. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one court, with the exception of rural areas north of Mildenhall and east of Haverhill.

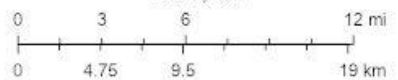
# WEST SUFFOLK -Outdoor Netball Facilities within 20 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 20.0 Minutes
- OUTDOOR NETBALL
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY

1:577,791



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## 11.8 Availability

The table below identifies the basis of use of outdoor netball courts in West Suffolk:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Block bookings only £15 per court per hour
King Edward VI School	Block bookings only £5 per court per hour
Newmarket Leisure Centre	'Pay-and-play' £5 per court per hour.
Red Lodge Sports Pavilion	Open access, no usage charges.
Risby Playing Field	Open access, no usage charges.
Risbygate Sports Club	Non-members 12pm-2pm weekdays £10 per court per hour.
Samuel Ward Academy	Block bookings only £5 per court per hour
Skyliner Sports Centre	'Pay-and-play' £5 per court per hour.

## 11.9 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are 13 outdoor netball courts with community access in West Suffolk, only six of which are floodlit. There are not enough courts there to host the West Suffolk League which runs over the winter in the evening so floodlights are essential.
- The quality of netball courts is generally good, although the Culford courts are unusable when wet and the lines on the Skyliner Sports Centre courts need re-painting.
- Accessibility of courts is good, with the entire population within 20 minutes driving time of the nearest facility.

## 11.10 The balance between netball court supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between netball court supply and demand in West Suffolk:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough courts with the capacity to meet current and future needs?
- **Quality:** Are the courts fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the courts in the right location for the users now and in the future?
- **Availability:** Are the courts available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

## 11.11 Quantity

### 11.11.1 Current needs

There is clear evidence of unmet demand for netball courts in West Suffolk. There are not enough courts there to host the West Suffolk League which runs over the winter in the evening so floodlights are essential. Suffolk Netball has identified the need for six floodlit outdoor courts at a central site in the district to host the West Suffolk Netball League and other netball development activities. The courts at Red Lodge Sports Pavilion and Skyliner Sports Centre are unused for community netball because they are not floodlit.

### 11.11.2 Future needs

Demand for additional netball courts by 2040 will need to be met by additional facility capacity, which might be provided through the provision of new courts or floodlighting existing facilities.

## 11.12 Quality

### 11.12.1 Current quality

The quality of netball courts is generally good, although the Culford courts are unusable when wet and the lines on the Skyliner Sports Centre courts need re-painting.

### 11.12.2 Future quality

All netball court providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities, so if this process can be assisted with funding from developer contributions in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that local provision will continue to be upgraded regularly.

## 11.13 Accessibility

### 11.13.1 Current accessibility

All of the population is within 20-minutes' drive of the nearest netball court.

### 11.13.2 Future accessibility

It is reasonable to assume that the current geographical coverage will be maintained in the future.

## 11.14 Availability

### 11.14.1 Current availability

Availability of outdoor netball courts is generally good, although only six courts are floodlit which reduces usage potential in the winter months.

### 11.14.2 Future availability

It is reasonable to assume that netball court availability will be similar in the future.

## 11.15 The options for securing netball court capacity

The options for securing existing netball court capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

### 11.15.1 Protect

Protecting existing netball courts through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.



### 11.15.2 Provide

It is recommended that the action plan below be used as the basis for seeking an appropriate level of financial contributions under Section 106, CIL or future equivalent arrangements, to cover the capital and revenue implications of providing netball courts to meet the needs of the additional population arising from housing growth by 2040. There is a current need for a centrally located eight floodlit netball court site, to host the West Suffolk Netball League, or a 12 floodlit netball court site to host county and regional events. Potential sites include:

- The relocated Bury St. Edmunds Leisure Centre.
- Conversion of the floodlit sand-filled artificial grass pitch in Nowton Park to a tarmac surface once the current football use moves to the proposed '3G' football turf pitch at Victory Sports Ground nearby and subject to approval by England Hockey.

### 11.15.3 Enhance

Existing netball court capacity could be enhanced by adding floodlights at sites where this is appropriate and improving court surfaces.

## 11.16 Action Plan

### 11.16.1 Introduction

The tables below set out the suggested action plan for netball courts to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's *Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021* (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 11.16.2 Key strategic actions

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Protecting existing netball courts.	Consider the inclusion of a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing tennis courts.	WSC	-	-	High
Funding for future netball court needs.	Ensure that S106 contributions are collected from developers.	WSC	Developers	-	High
Provision of a netball central venue	Investigate the feasibility of an 8-12 court centre at either the relocated Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre or resurfacing the Nowton Park AGP.	WSC	England Netball Suffolk Netball	£15,000 for feasibility study £500,000 for courts	High

### 11.16.3 Site-specific opportunities for consideration

<b>Site</b>	<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Culford Sports and Tennis Centre	Courts slippery when wet	Investigate nonslip surfacing options	Culford School	-	£5,000	High
King Edward VI Sch.	Unsecured community access	Consider the merits of a formal Community Use Agreement	WSC	King Edward VI Sch.	-	Medium
Newmarket LC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Red Lodge Pavilion	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Risby Playing Field	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Risbygate SC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-
Samuel Ward Academy	Unsecured community access	Consider the merits of a formal Community Use Agreement	WSC	Samuel Ward Academy	-	Medium
Skyliner SC	No current issues	No action	-	-	-	-

## 12 ATHLETICS TRACK NEEDS

### 12.1 Organisational context

- **England Athletics:** England Athletics is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the sport in West Suffolk.
- **Affiliated Clubs:** There are five England Athletics-affiliated clubs in West Suffolk.

### 12.2 Strategic context

#### 12.2.1 Athletics facilities strategy

England Athletics' *Facilities Strategy 2018 - 2025* contains the following material of relevance:

The strategic ambition is 'to create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletics facilities, with the capacity to meet current and future demand across England'.

England Athletics has adopted UK Athletics' Hierarchy of Facilities. This includes Compact Athletics Facilities - 'a new generation of affordable and sustainable satellite athletics facilities that provide a stepping-stone into Club Venues'.

- 'England Athletics is aware that athletics facilities have traditionally been built to a very rigid design (a 400m oval with 6-8 lanes with a natural turf infield). With the challenges faced by public sector bodies, a key driver of this strategy is to 'break the mould' and give clubs, operators and investors the ability to innovate and develop a new generation of athletics facilities that are both inspiring and viable. Not all clubs/athletes need a 400m oval track. The fundamentals of run, jump, throw can be taught on scaled down facilities that are much more appropriate and attractive for beginners/younger users and cost much less to build and maintain'.
- 'England Athletics has adopted UK Athletics' strategic position to concentrate on preserving and improving the existing stock of 400m tracks rather than seeking to build additional ones. However, there are areas in the country where journey time to the nearest full-size outdoor track is greater than ideal and there are places where good coaching has created significant demand despite the lack of a local athletics facility. The Compact Athletics concept is intended to fill this gap, providing training facilities in places where there is insufficient demand, funding or land to accommodate a full-size track. A Compact Athletics facility can take a number of forms, but essentially provides a strip of synthetic track plus some capacity for jumps and throws, enabling core athletic skills to be taught, enjoyed and developed. It can then be linked into a wider network of athletics facilities using a 'hub and spoke' approach'.
- 'Priority will be given to developing compact athletics facilities at locations where there is proven demand, a base of athletics participation and a partnership that enables the facility to be maintained, managed and financially secure. It may, for example, be a useful, first stage enabling development for clubs that do not have access to a facility or for those seeking to establish a base for the sport in a town or community that is presently not served by a standard synthetic athletics track. Suitable locations might include primary/secondary schools to complement existing sport/play provision. As additions to existing sports and leisure facilities. Aligned to tracks developed for seasonal running, such as grass marked routes at secondary schools. Compact facilities will mainly develop athletes up to the age of 16, so ideal locations will have a high under 16 population within 20 minutes'.



## 12.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Outdoor sports facilities strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

### ***East Cambridgeshire:***

The *'East Cambridgeshire Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy'* (2020) identifies that 'consideration should be given to providing a Compact Athletics Facility in the district, to address track and field needs'.

### ***South Cambridgeshire***

South Cambridgeshire does not have a strategic assessment of athletics needs in the district.

### ***Braintree***

The *'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study'* (2017) notes that 'England Athletics believes that that overall there are sufficient facilities for athletics in Braintree District', although there are some quality issues with the track at Braintree Leisure Centre.

### ***Babergh***

*'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) does not identify any athletics facilities priorities in Babergh.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

*'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) does not identify any athletics facilities priorities in Mid-Suffolk.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of athletics needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current playing pitch strategy and there is therefore no assessment of athletics needs for the district.

## 12.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy

The *'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to athletics:

- 'There are two athletics tracks in West Suffolk, one of which is available to the public'.
- 'The West Suffolk arena track is seen as a high quality facility, which is suitable for all levels of amateur athletics'.
- 'No latent demand has been identified as part of the assessment. The recommendation is therefore to maintain the current levels of supply'.

## 12.3 Stakeholder consultation

### 12.3.1 England Athletics

Consultation with England Athletics highlighted the following issues:

**England Athletics Facilities Priorities:** These are as follows:

- ‘To ensure that the allocation of resources to new and existing track and field facilities is prioritised to those that have the greatest potential to impact positively on general participation, club membership growth and retention, and improved personal performance’. To support this priority England Athletics will:
  - Encourage all tracks to seek accreditation through ‘TrackMark’.
  - ‘Help venues to identify the level in the Hierarchy of Facilities that is most appropriate for them and support clubs and operators seeking to raise funding to maintain facilities at that level’.
  - Prioritise new track and field facilities within multi-sport hubs.
  - Seek to be actively involved in the development of local planning policies wherever possible.
  - Support new 200m indoor tracks and indoor athletics training facilities where there is a proven demand and a clear geographical gap in supply.
- ‘To actively encourage athletics and running facilities to be used to their fullest possible extent by the sport and by all sections of the community in order to maximise viability’. To support this priority England Athletics will:
  - Support athletics clubs in discussions with facility operators and local authorities over the use of the track infield for other pitch sports and collate examples of good practice and design guidance.
  - Support clubs and groups to ensure the facilities they use for athletics activity are accessible to all.
  - Help clubs to develop a strong partnership with facility owners/operators and will share examples of good practice.
  - Provide advice and guidance to clubs actively pursuing an asset transfer.
  - Help athletics and running clubs to become more professional and sustainable in how they operate.
  - Encourage new partnerships between athletics clubs and schools that have available indoor facilities.

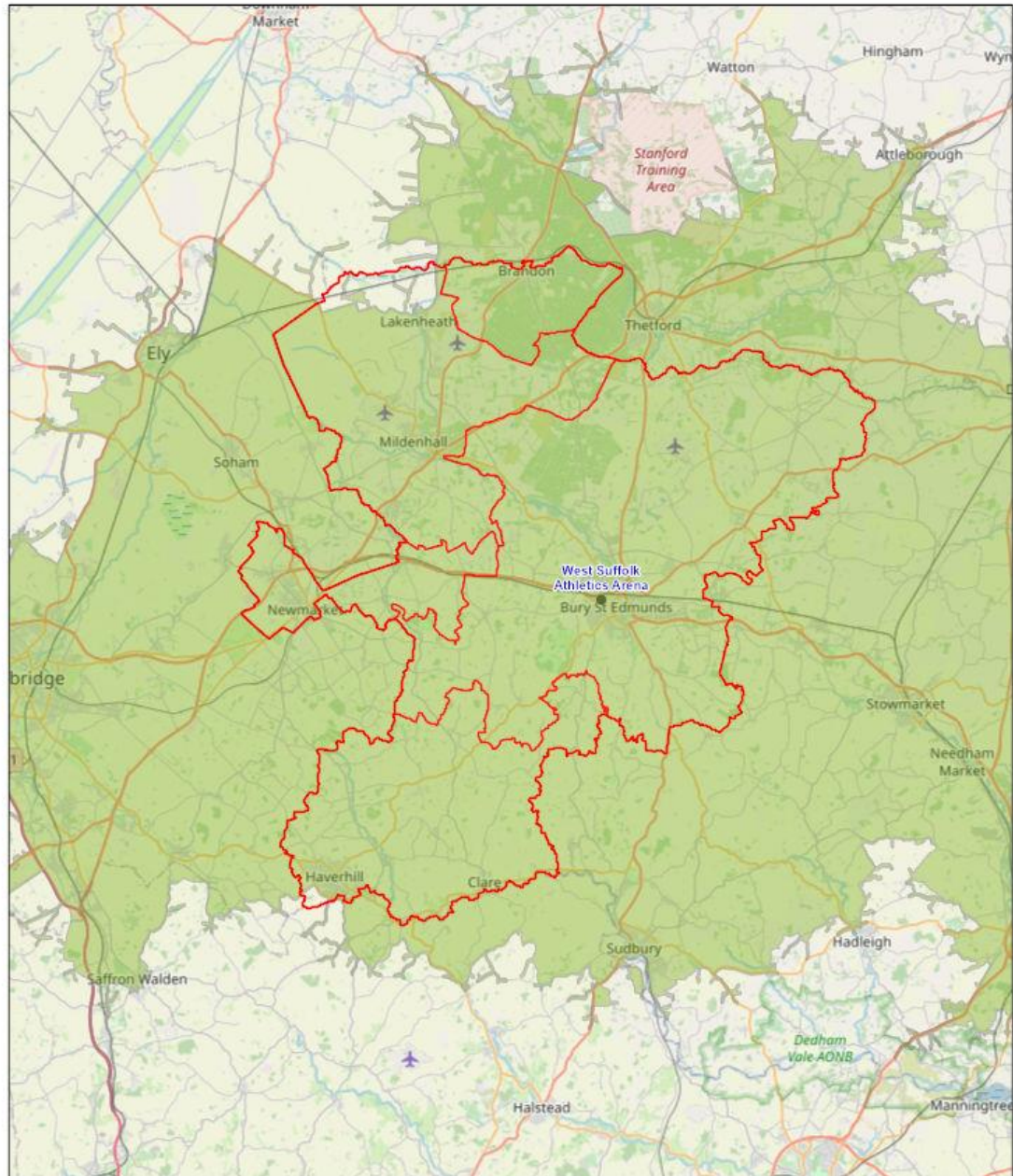
- ‘To encourage innovative approaches to the location and design of facilities for individual components of the sport in order to increase reach and create sustainability and viability’. To support this priority England Athletics will:
  - Expect all new and refurbished floodlight schemes to deliver a minimum of 100lux across the whole of the track and the infield.
  - Support clubs in exploring options for improved environmental sustainability and will share examples of good practice.
  - Support the development of MiniTracks/Compact athletics facilities where there is a viable business case based.
  - Consider supporting facility innovations involving non-standard track shapes, designs and uses providing they are backed by a sound business case.
  - Continue to lobby bodies with an influence over urban design, to ensure that the needs of runners are considered alongside those of cyclists and pedestrians.
  - Continue to lobby for the free use of public parks and open spaces by runners and voluntary running groups.
  - Assist road running clubs that are looking for somewhere to meet, by introducing them to sports clubs in their area that have suitable facilities.

***Facilities supply in West Suffolk:*** The following issues were identified:

- ***Existing provision:*** West Suffolk Arena is an important competition venue in the Eastern region and currently hosts on average 12 licence level 1 competitions (up to county standard) per year. It is not currently recognised as a top end competition venue, but facility improvements (including covered spectator seating) would enable regular Licence Level 2 events (Regional/National standard events), which would service not only the competitive requirements of West Suffolk but also the surrounding areas including: Uttlesford, Cambridge, Braintree, Babergh, South Norfolk and Mid Suffolk as well as the wider Eastern region.

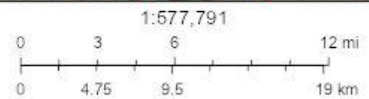
- Outdoor competition venues:** ‘In terms of Level 2 outdoor competitive track and field facilities with a 40-minute drivetime catchment, the whole of West Suffolk is within the catchment of the West Suffolk Athletics Arena track’. This is illustrated by the map below:

WEST SUFFOLK- Athletics Tracks within 40 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

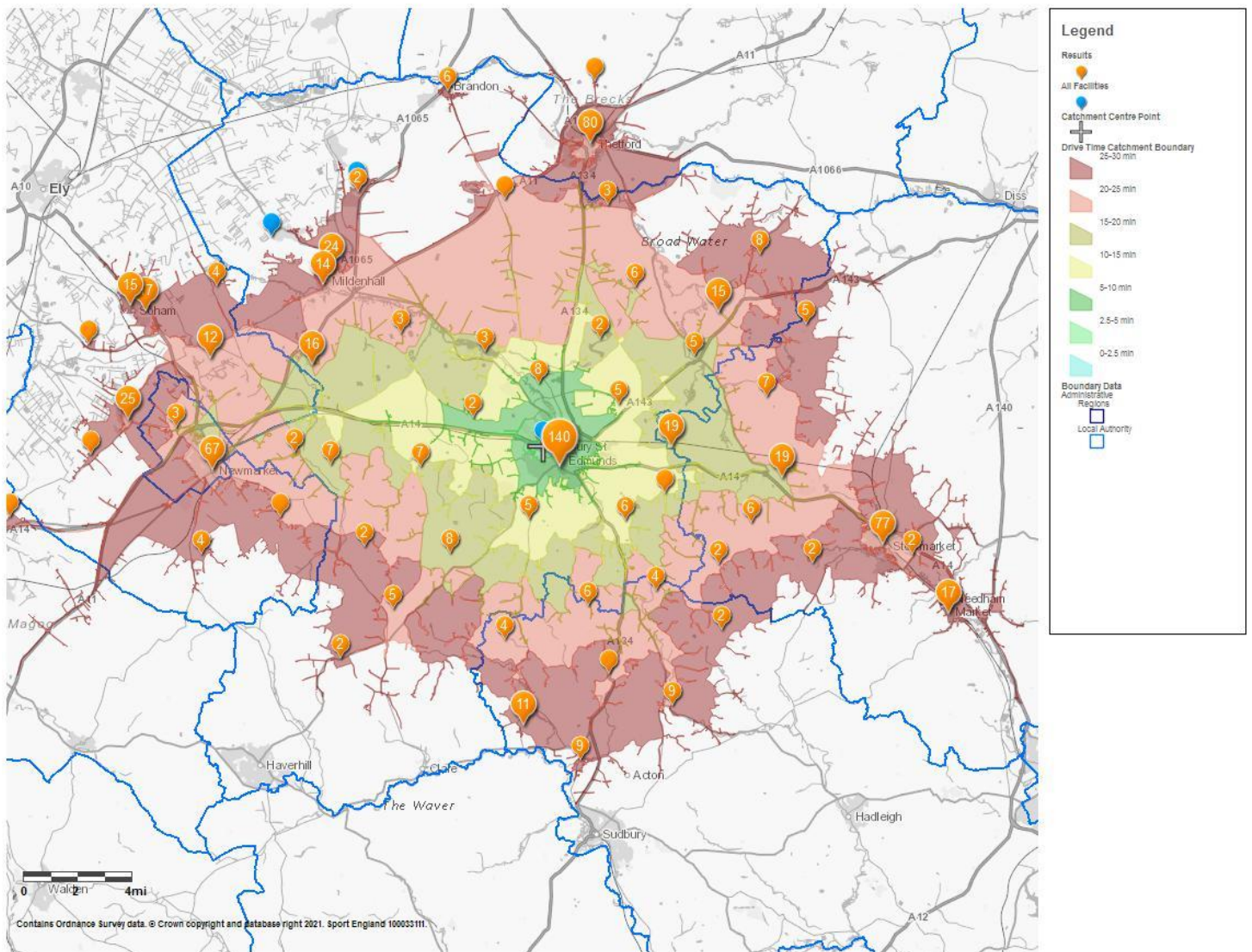
- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 40.0 Minutes
- ATHLETICS TRACKS
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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- **Outdoor training venues:** England Athletics concluded that ‘as shown below, the area around Haverhill has a significant population catchment that sits outside of the 30-minute rural drivetime catchment for an athletics training facility and EA would be supportive of additional entry level provision (MiniTrack, Compact, Endurance loop) in/around this area to service demand’.

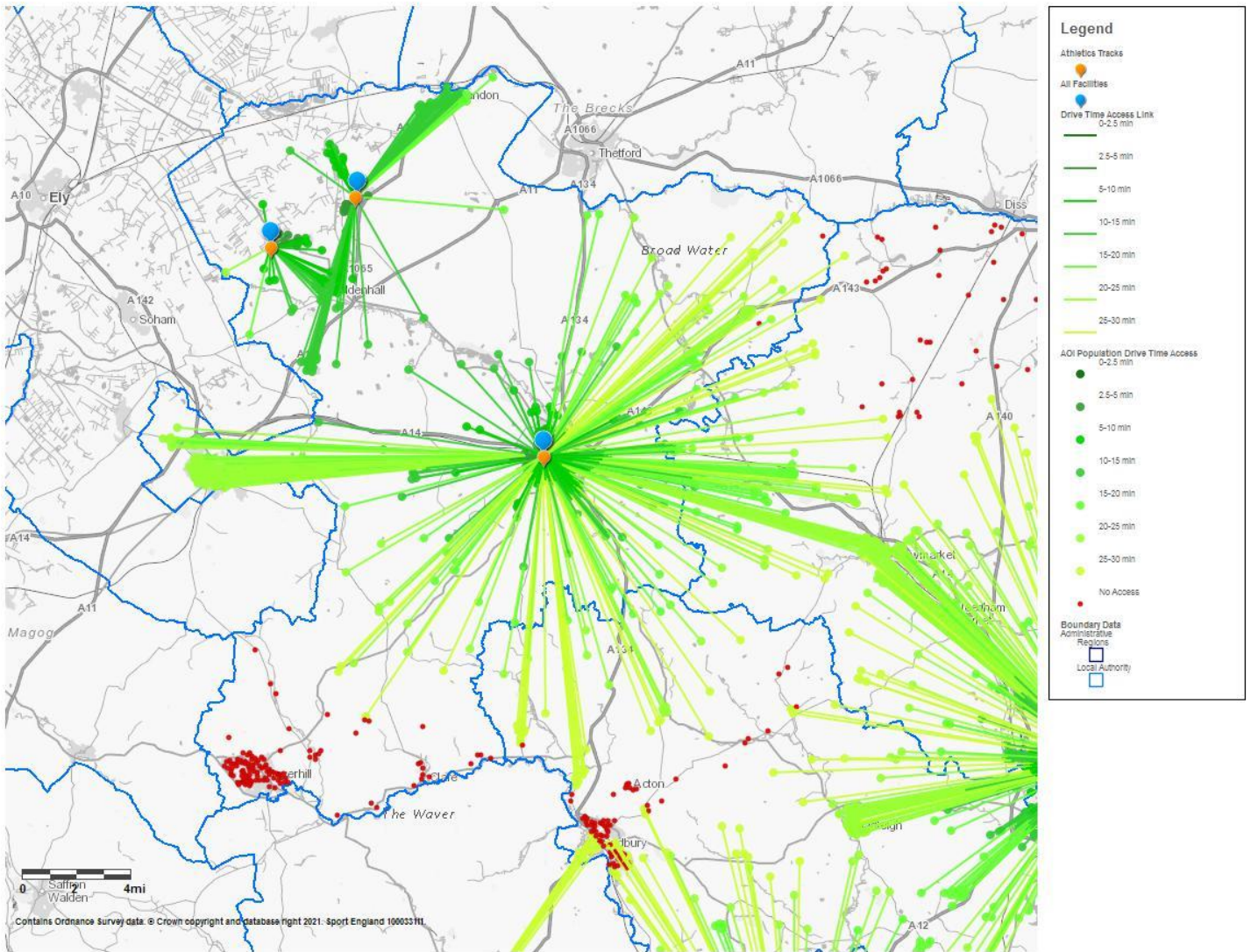


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- This conclusion is supported by the Sport England access analysis report below, which also highlights an untapped demand for an athletics facility in/around the Haverhill area?
  - The red dots on the map indicate locations that are more than 20minutes drive time from the nearest facility. These are focused around Haverhill and to a lesser extent Clare.

- The green dots of different intensity indicate locations that are respectively five, ten and fifteen minutes drivetime. Mildenhall, Brandon and Newmarket fall within these catchments.

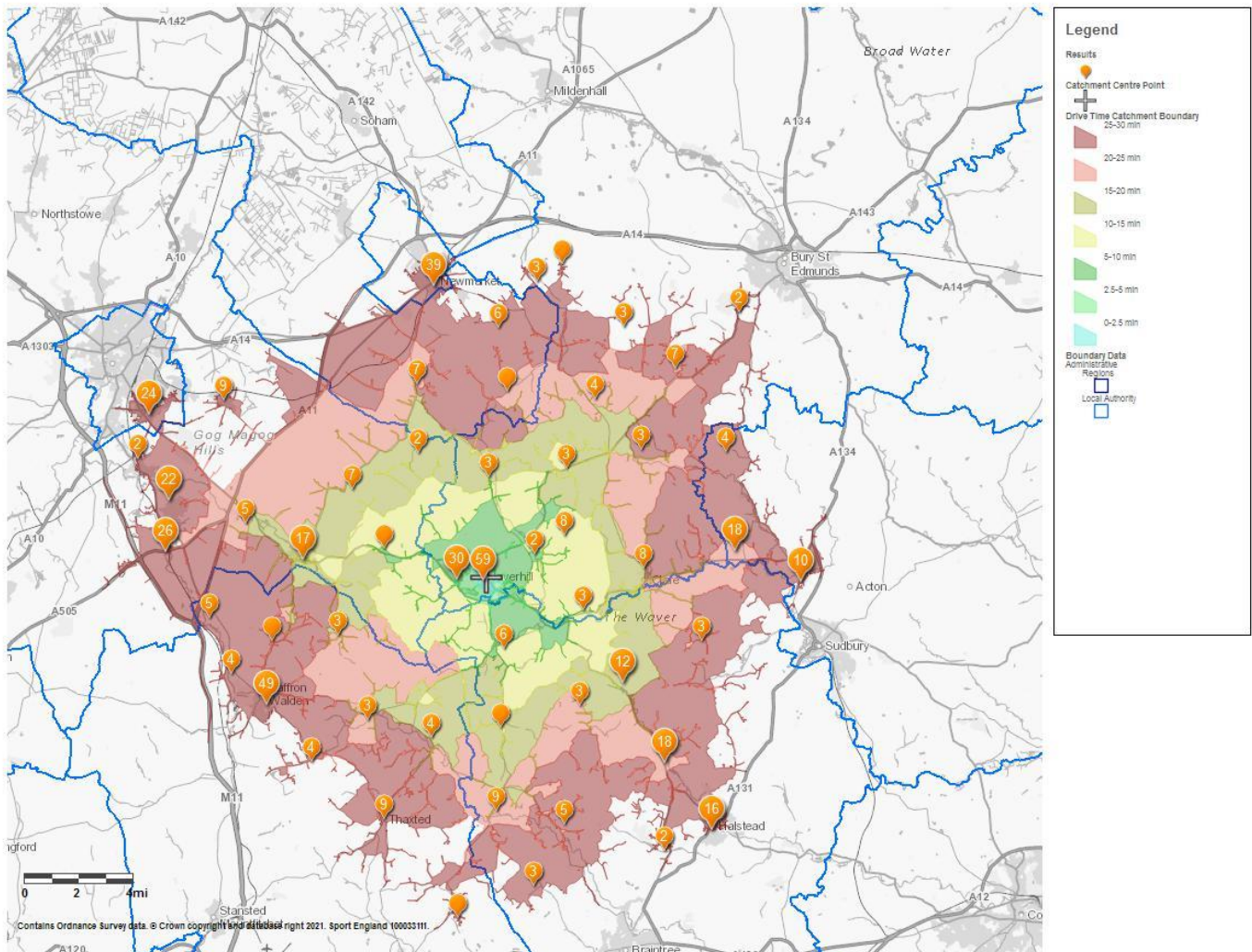


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- **The Haverhill catchment:** the map below illustrates the 30-minute catchment area for a facility based in Haverhill. England Athletics has concluded that ‘a facility in the Haverhill area would yield a total population catchment of 155,000’.



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- **Conclusions:** England Athletics has the following local priorities:
  - ‘Protect and maintain the existing provision at West Suffolk Athletics Arena’.
  - ‘Enhance the facility to enable to venue to host Licence Level 2 events’.
  - ‘Provide: Explore opportunities for an entry level facility in Haverhill’.

### 12.3.2 Brandon Fern Hoppers

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We are based at Brandon Leisure Centre, we have the luxury of the Thetford Forest right on the doorstep, so most of our club runs are off-road and on peaceful forest trails’.

- ‘We are proud of our close connection to Brandon Country Park Parkrun, with the club having been instrumental in its establishment, as well as offering ongoing financial support as it has grown’.

### 12.3.3 Haverhill Running Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Haverhill Running Club is open to all that have an interest in running, want to start running or just want to get out of the house - it’s got nothing to do with ability’.
- ‘We organise training runs from the Leisure Centre and Puddlebrook Playing Fields’.

### 12.3.4 Newmarket Joggers

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We are a running club based at Newmarket Leisure Centre that caters for a wide range of abilities’.
- ‘In normal circumstances, we offer a variety of training sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6.30pm and have a track training option on Saturday mornings’.

### 12.3.5 St Edmunds Pacers

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We are a running club for runners of all abilities’.
- ‘We have both senior and junior sessions and meet twice weekly at the West Suffolk Athletics Arena’.
- ‘We also have organised longer runs around town and the surrounding area on Sunday mornings’.

### 12.3.6 West Suffolk Athletics Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘We have 133 members and are based at the West Suffolk Athletics Arena in Bury St. Edmunds’.
- ‘The West Suffolk Arena is one of only two tracks in Suffolk and the only 8-lane track. The other, Northgate Stadium, is under threat of being sold for redevelopment. West Suffolk Arena is quite possibly the best athletics facility in Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and north Essex. Athletes from the entire South-east are attracted by workshops and competitions organised by WSAC and its coaches. As such there is enormous potential for the Arena to become an East Anglian hub and greater source of income. Provided the Arena retains and develops current facilities’.

## 12.4 Athletics Track Demand

### 12.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the demand for athletics in West Suffolk and includes:

- Expressed demand.
- Displaced demand.
- Latent and unmet demand.
- Future demand.

### 12.4.2 Expressed demand

- **Club membership:** Local club membership is currently as follows:

<i>Club</i>	<i>Members</i>
Brandon Fern Hoppers	35
Haverhill Running Club	57
Newmarket Joggers	43
St. Edmund Pacers	46
West Suffolk Athletics Club	133
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>314</b>

- **Parkruns:** Parkruns are organised on a weekly basis throughout the year, to allow all runners (whether or not they are members of affiliated clubs) to run in 5k timed races. Details of the runs in West Suffolk are below and there are aspirations to find a suitable site for one in Mildenhall.

<i>Parkrun (5k)</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Average weekly pre-covid participants</i>	<i>Site managed by</i>
Brandon	Brandon Country Park	93	West Suffolk Council
Bury St. Edmunds	Nowton Park	208	West Suffolk Council
Clare	Clare Castle Country Park	122	Clare Castle Country Park Trust
Haverhill	Puddlebrook Playing Fields	64	West Suffolk Council

- **Junior Parkruns:** A 2km Junior Parkrun is organised in Bury St. Edmunds. The details are as follows:

<i>Junior Parkrun (2.2k)</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Average weekly pre-covid participants</i>	<i>Site managed by</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	Ten Acre Field (Moreton Hall)	64	West Suffolk Council

### 12.4.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. There is no evidence of any displaced demand in West Suffolk at present.

#### 12.4.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a facility for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some facilities may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and limited capacity of facilities and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There is no evidence of any unmet demand in West Suffolk at present, although the Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan includes an aspiration to provide an athletics track to meet local needs.

#### 12.4.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is evidence of latent demand for athletics in the district at present, from England Athletics' catchment modelling which identifies latent demand in the Haverhill area.

#### 12.4.6 Future demand

This has been assessed as follows:

- **Participation rates:** One factor in considering future sports participation rates is to track historical trends, as a guide to possible future developments. Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey showed statistically significant reductions in track and field participation nationally from 0.6% of the adult population in 2016 to 0.5 (equivalent to 211,600 people) in 2018. However, this excludes under 16s, many of whom experience the sport in some form through PE programmes at school.
- **Population growth:** Two scenarios are considered:
  - The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
  - A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

#### 12.4.7 Key findings on demand

The key findings on demand are as follows:

- There are five athletics/running clubs in the district.
- All demand for track and field athletics is met by the track at the West Suffolk Athletics Arena.

- There is no evidence of any displaced or unmet demand for athletics in West Suffolk, although England Athletics' catchment modelling which identifies latent demand in the Haverhill area and the Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan includes an aspiration to provide and athletics track to meet local needs.
- Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends but the higher population projections will create a requirement for 19.1% additional capacity by 2040.

## 12.5 Athletics Track Supply

### 12.5.1 Introduction

This section summarises the detail of athletics tracks in West Suffolk. Athletics tracks are defined as 400m synthetic surfaced tracks with full field events provision.

### 12.5.2 Tracks with community use and used

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Number of lanes</i>
West Suffolk Athletics Arena	Beeton's Way, Bury St. Edmunds IP33 3TT	8 lanes

### 12.5.3 Tracks with no community use

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Number of lanes</i>
RAF Lakenheath	Lakenheath IP27 9PN	6 lanes
RAF Mildenhall	Virginia Road, Mildenhall IP28 8HF	4 lanes

## 12.6 Quality

### 12.6.1 The criteria assessed for athletics tracks

- **The competition facilities:** The quality of the track, throwing circles and cages, jumping pits and landing areas, lights and storage.
- **Changing facilities:** The capacity, condition and fitness for purpose.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility, including the provision of access ramps, dedicated changing, toilets and car parking.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to 'very good' (highlighted in green below), 4 to 'good' (also highlighted in green below), 3 to 'average', 2 to 'poor' (highlighted in red below) and 1 to 'very poor'.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Track</i>	<i>Changing</i>	<i>Disability Access</i>	<i>General access</i>
West Suffolk Athletics Arena	5	4	4	5

## 12.7 Accessibility

England Athletics applies a 40 minute drivetime catchment to define track accessibility to tracks for competitions. The whole of West Suffolk is within 40-minutes' drivetime of the track.

A 30-minute drivetime is defined for access for training purposes in rural areas and some areas in the extreme south of the district (around Haverhill and Cavendish) are outside the catchment for this.

## 12.8 Availability

The table below identifies the opening hours, usage arrangements, pricing, booking arrangements and used capacity in the peak periods of the West Suffolk Athletics Arena track.

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Opening hours and basis of use</i>	<i>Pricing and booking arrangements</i>	<i>Peak period usage levels</i>
West Suffolk Athletics Arena	Mon-Fri: 6am - 9pm Sat-Sun: 8am - 4pm Membership and 'Pay-and-play'	Club block bookings and individual casual use.	60%

## 12.9 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- The West Suffolk Athletics Arena serves track and field needs in the district.
- The quality of the track and its ancillary facilities is good.
- Accessibility of tracks for competition is good, with the entire population within 40 minutes driving time of the nearest facility.
- Accessibility of tracks for training is less comprehensive, with the areas around Haverhill more than 30-minutes drivetime from a track.
- The track is available for block bookings by clubs or casual users.
- There is significant spare capacity in the peak period.

## 12.10 The balance between athletics track supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between athletics track supply and demand in West Suffolk:

- **Quantity:** Is there enough provision with sufficient capacity to meet needs now and in the future?
- **Quality:** Are the facilities fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the facilities in the right physical location for the users now and in the future?



- **Availability:** Are the facilities available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

## 12.11 Quantity

### 12.11.1 Current needs

There is no evidence that current provision for track and field activities meets most but not all local needs, based upon the following evaluation:

- **The existing track:** The existing track meets all local competition and training needs for the district as a whole, although with an upgrade to covered seating, it could potentially host national and regional events.
- **Latent demand:** England Athletics' catchment modelling which identifies latent demand for a training facility in the Haverhill area.

### 12.11.2 Future needs

The existing track has sufficient spare capacity to meet future demand arising from population growth.

## 12.12 Quality

### 12.12.1 Current quality

The quality of all aspects of the track are rated as at least 'good'.

### 12.12.2 Future quality

Tracks require periodic re-surfacing and therefore preserving the quality of provision will be dependent on on-going investment in the facilities.

## 12.13 Accessibility

### 12.13.1 Current accessibility

The 40 minute drivetime catchment provides geographical coverage of the whole district for competitive purposes, but the 30-minute catchment for training access reveals gaps in the extreme south of the district.

### 12.13.2 Future accessibility

The existing accessibility deficiency will remain in the future if no additional facilities provision is made.

## 12.14 Availability

### 12.14.1 Current availability

The user charges at the are set at reasonable rates.

## 12.14.2 Future availability

It is reasonable to assume that similar access arrangements will be offered in the future.

## 12.15 The options for securing additional athletics facilities capacity

The options for securing existing and additional athletics facilities capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

### 12.15.1 Protect

Protecting the existing athletics track through the Local Plan will be key to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

### 12.15.2 Provide

Whilst the existing track meets all competitive needs in the district, there is an accessibility deficiency in training facilities in the south of the district, so England Athletics advocates exploring ‘opportunities for an entry level facility in Haverhill’.

### 12.15.3 Enhance

England Athletics supports the concept of enhancements to the existing track, such as covered seating, to enable it to host regional and national events.

## 12.16 Action Plan

### 12.16.1 Introduction

The table below sets out the suggested action plan for athletics facilities to guide the implementation of the Assessment. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England’s ‘*Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021*’ (2021) but actual costs will vary based on site-specific conditions.

### 12.16.2 Key strategic actions

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
West Suffolk Athletics Arena	Retain and maintain the current facilities, including the provision of toilets and storage facilities when the adjacent leisure centre is closed.	WSC	Abbeycroft Leisure	£10,000	High
Deficiency in athletics facilities provision in Haverhill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Undertake a detailed feasibility study of the case for a mini-track/compact facility in the Haverhill area</li><li>• Subject to a positive outcome to the feasibility study, provide the identified facilities.</li></ul>	WSC	England Athletics Local Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £25,000 for feasibility study.</li><li>• £175,000 for the new facilities.</li></ul>	High

## 13 CYCLING FACILITIES NEEDS

### 13.1 Organisational context

- **British Cycling:** British Cycling is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in West Suffolk.
- **Affiliated Clubs:** There are four cycling clubs in West Suffolk.

### 13.2 Strategic context

#### 13.2.1 National Cycling Strategy

British Cycling's strategy *British Cycling: Our Commitment* (2013) contains the following priorities of relevance:

- **Recreational cycling and sustainable transport:** 'British Cycling will continue to work to ensure that people benefit from participation in cycling throughout their lifetime'.
  - The promotion of lifelong participation in cycling as part of an enjoyable and healthy lifestyle among all groups.
  - A nationwide vibrant community of active recreational participants facilitated through a programme of information, education, personal challenges and opportunities.
  - The opportunity for all groups to participate in cycling as a leisure pursuit and to integrate cycling into daily life, such as riding to school, work, to the shops or socially.
  - The promotion of cycling as part of sustainable transport solutions by working with national, regional and local authorities.
- **Women and girls:** 'British Cycling is committed to shifting the culture of the sport to make it more accessible and to inspire more women to cycle more often'.
  - More women and girls involved in recreational cycling.
  - A series of entry-level races at key facility hubs in the regions.
  - Systems to capture and promote women-specific club activity, led rides and events.
  - 'Get into cycle sport' regional coaching sessions based at facilities leading to races or sportives.
  - Female-specific Go-Ride development sessions and Go-Ride Racing events.
  - Inclusive clubs activities.
- **Young people:** 'Engagement with future generations of cyclists and cycling fans is key to the continued health of British Cycling'.

- A quality-assured club development programme that supports the delivery of appropriate school and community-based opportunities for young people to participate in cycling as a sport and physical activity and to fulfil their aspirations, ambitions and potential.
- Support for the exponential growth of clubs and volunteers, enhancing the sustainable development of the sport.
- Provide a pathway into the Talent Development programme, nurturing entry-level riders and aiding their progression through the sport.
- **Facilities:** ‘A safe environment in which to participate is fundamental to a satisfactory sporting experience in any sport’.
  - A comprehensive network of accessible traffic-free multidisciplined cycling facilities enabling the effective and safe delivery of cycling activities both at a participation and excellence level.
  - Support for clubs and groups who wish to develop new, or improve existing, facilities and infrastructure.
  - A secure long-term future for sporting events on the public highway by continuing to work with the appropriate agencies.

### 13.2.2 Neighbouring local authorities

Outdoor sports facilities strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

#### ***East Cambridgeshire***

The ‘*East Cambridgeshire Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy*’ (2020) identifies that ‘current provision of cycling trails in East Cambridgeshire is assessed to be adequate to meet current needs, given that there is sufficient existing capacity to accommodate all demand’.

#### ***South Cambridgeshire***

The ‘*Greater Cambridge Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy*’ (2016) identifies that:

- There is a need for an off-road closed cycling circuit to provide a safe environment for younger cyclists learning road biking; this facility would also lend itself to club-based competitive cycling. A closed road circuit could operate well adjacent to a competition BMX track, which could be club operated.
- British Cycling is supportive of the development of a 1.6km off road circuit which could be used for competition, training and casual use. All the cycling clubs in Cambridge are road cycling clubs and such a facility would provide a safe environment for both adults and young people.
- The potential to provide a BMX track adjacent to an off-road track is also supported; the two facilities can work together in both revenue and operational terms.

### ***Braintree***

The *'Braintree Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities Study'* (2017) notes that:

- 'The further development of safe cycling routes should be considered. There is a district cycling map highlighting traffic-free cycle routes'.
- The Braintree BMX Club provides an excellent track that attracts riders from a wide catchment.

### ***Babergh***

*'The Babergh Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) does not identify any cycling facilities priorities in Babergh but notes that there is 'limited support infrastructure i.e. places to meet with bike hire, toilets, changing, cafe etc'.

### ***Mid-Suffolk***

*'The Mid-Suffolk Leisure, Sport and Recreation Strategy Update'* (2021) does not identify any cycling facilities priorities in Mid-Suffolk but notes that there is 'limited support infrastructure i.e. places to meet with bike hire, toilets, changing, cafe etc'.

### ***Breckland***

Breckland does not have a current outdoor sports facilities strategy and there is therefore no assessment of cycling needs for the district.

### ***Kings Lynn and West Norfolk***

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk does not have a current outdoor sports facilities strategy and there is therefore no assessment of cycling needs for the district.

## **13.2.3 West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy**

The *'West Suffolk Playing Pitch Strategy'* (2015) contains the following conclusions in relation to cycling:

- 'There are currently 3 cycling facilities in West Suffolk, two in Bury St Edmunds and one in Haverhill. None of these are close loop tracks, as required for road cycling'.
- 'It is recommended that West Suffolk work with British Cycling to undertake a detailed feasibility study for a closed loop cycling track near to Bury St Edmunds. This would increase provision for a growing sport, as well as achieving goals set out as part of the Local Plans'.

## **13.3 Stakeholder consultation**

### **13.3.1 British Cycling**

Consultation with British Cycling highlighted the following issues:

- There are no strategic priorities for additional cycling facilities provision in West Suffolk.

- Cycling participation rates are buoyant in the area, with Thetford Forest popular with off-road cyclists.

### 13.3.2 Haverhill Cycling Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Our current membership includes riders from many of the surrounding villages as well as the town itself. Our members range from the occasional leisure cyclist to those more of a racing disposition’.
- ‘We endeavour to hold a number of different rides on a regular basis. These include social rides as well as those which focus more on training to improve technique and time’.

### 13.3.3 Mildenhall Cycling Club

The club made the following comments:

- ‘Mildenhall CC promotes open 10 and 25 mile time-trials, cyclo-cross and, in keeping with the fashion for safer off-road events, mountain bike races’.
- ‘Our one-day grass track meeting has grown into a three-day cycling rally which attracts thousands of cyclists, of all disciplines’.
- ‘We have our own clubhouse in Wamil Way, which was recently refurbished’.

### 13.3.4 St. Edmunds Cycling Group

The club made the following comments:

- ‘St Edmunds Cycling Group is a Cycling UK affiliated group. We formed in 2016 and our rides usually start somewhere near Bury St Edmunds’.
- ‘We welcome leisure and social cyclists over the age of 18 who enjoy cycling through our region and we ride at least four times each month, weekdays and weekends, all year round’.

### 13.3.5 West Suffolk Wheelers

The club made the following comments:

- ‘The club is open to all cyclists and triathletes, whether new to the sport or a seasoned veteran’.
- ‘We are a community that encourages participation, enjoyment and development in all aspects of cycling and triathlon’.
- ‘The club provides avenues for members to race, train, and compete and works together to promote open events’.



## 13.4 Cycling facilities Demand

### 13.4.1 Introduction

This section summarises the demand for cycling in West Suffolk and includes:

- Expressed demand.
- Displaced demand.
- Latent and unmet demand.
- Future demand.

### 13.4.2 Expressed demand

Cycling clubs in West Suffolk and their membership numbers are as follows.

<i>Club</i>	<i>Facility base</i>	<i>No. members</i>
Haverhill Cycling Club	Falconer Road Industrial Estate	59
Mildenhall Cycling Club	Wamil Way Clubhouse	125
St. Edmunds Cycling Group	None	67
West Suffolk Wheelers	Priory School	296

### 13.4.3 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. The cycle trails in Thetford Forest attract significant numbers of cyclists from outside the district.

### 13.4.4 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Some facilities may be unavailable to the community.
- The poor quality and limited capacity of facilities and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

There is no evidence of unmet demand for cycling facilities in West Suffolk at present, with all local clubs reporting spare capacity to accommodate additional members.

### 13.4.5 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand for cycling in West Suffolk at present with no clubs operating waiting lists.

### 13.4.6 Future demand

This has been assessed as follows:

- **Participation rates:** Sport England’s ‘Active Lives’ survey has recorded adult (16+) participation rates for cycling of all types at least twice monthly at national level since 2015, which reveal a statistically significant decline over the period at national level, but an increase locally:

<i>Area</i>	<i>May 2016- May 2017</i>	<i>Nov 2016- Nov 2017</i>	<i>May 2017- May 2018</i>	<i>Nov 2017- Nov 2018</i>	<i>May 2018- May 2019</i>	<i>Nov 2018- Nov 2019</i>	<i>May 2019- May 2020</i>	<i>% Change</i>
England	17.6%	17.3%	16.8%	16.6%	17.0%	16.3%	16.6%	-1.0%
West Suffolk	18.8%	21.5%	18.9%	20.4%	-	19.1%	20.8%	+2.0%

- **Population growth:** Two scenarios are considered:
  - The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 190,680 by 2040, an increase of 11,635 or 6.5%.
  - A projection based on assessed housing needs predicts a population of 213,159 by 2040, an increase of 34,114 or 19.1%.

### 13.4.7 Key findings on demand

The key findings on demand are as follows:

- There are four local clubs serving West Suffolk.
- There is no evidence of any displaced or unmet demand.
- Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels, based on participation trends and population projections.

## 13.5 Cycling Facilities Supply

### 13.5.1 Introduction

This section summarises the detail of cycling facilities supply in West Suffolk.

### 13.5.2 Permanent purpose-built facilities

<i>Site</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>	<i>Sub-area</i>
Barrow BMX/Skate Park	The Street, Barrow IP25 5AN	BMX	Bury St. Edmunds
Brandon BMX/Skate Park	Church Road, Brandon IP27 0JB	BMX	Brandon
Bury St. Edmunds BMX/Skate Park	Olding Road, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3TA	BMX	Bury St. Edmunds
Cavenham Cycle Circuit	The Street, Cavenham IP28 6DA	Trail	Mildenhall
Fornham All Saints BMX/Skate Park	Tut Hill, Fornham All Saints IP28 6JZ	BMX	Bury St. Edmunds
Haverhill BMX/Skate Park	Howe Road, Haverhill CB9 9NJ	BMX	Haverhill
High Lodge Cycle Trails	Thetford Road, Brandon IP27 0AF	Trails Mountain Bike BMX	Brandon

Site	Address	Disciplines	Sub-area
Lakenheath BMX/Skate Park	Eriswell Road, Lakenheath IP27 9AF	BMX	Mildenhall
Newmarket BMX/Skatepark	George Lambton Avenue, Newmarket, CB8 7RL	BMX	Newmarket
Newmarket Dirt Trail	Hyperion Way, Newmarket CB8 7BB	Mountain Bike	Newmarket
Phoenix Cycleworks	Bury Road, Kentford CB8 7PZ	BMX Mountain Bike	Newmarket
Stanton BMX/Skate Park	Old Bury Road, Stanton IP31 2BX	BMX	Bury St. Edmunds
St. John's Recreation Ground BMX/Skate Park	St John's Close Mildenhall IP28 7NX	BMX	Mildenhall

### 13.5.3 Formally designated cycle routes

Site	Location
National Cycle Route 51	Newmarket to Bury St. Edmunds
National Cycle Route 13	Thetford to Sudbury via Bury St. Edmunds
National Cycle Route 30	Brandon area

### 13.5.4 Local cycling routes

- **Bury St. Edmunds:**

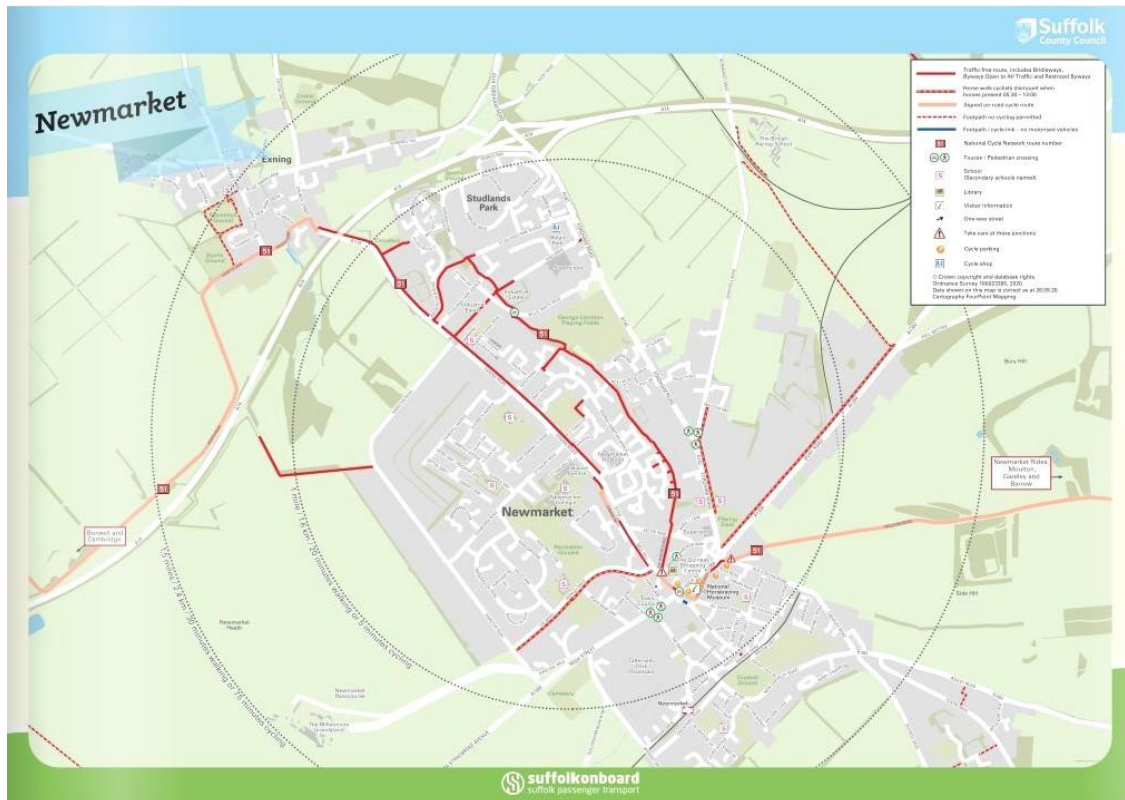




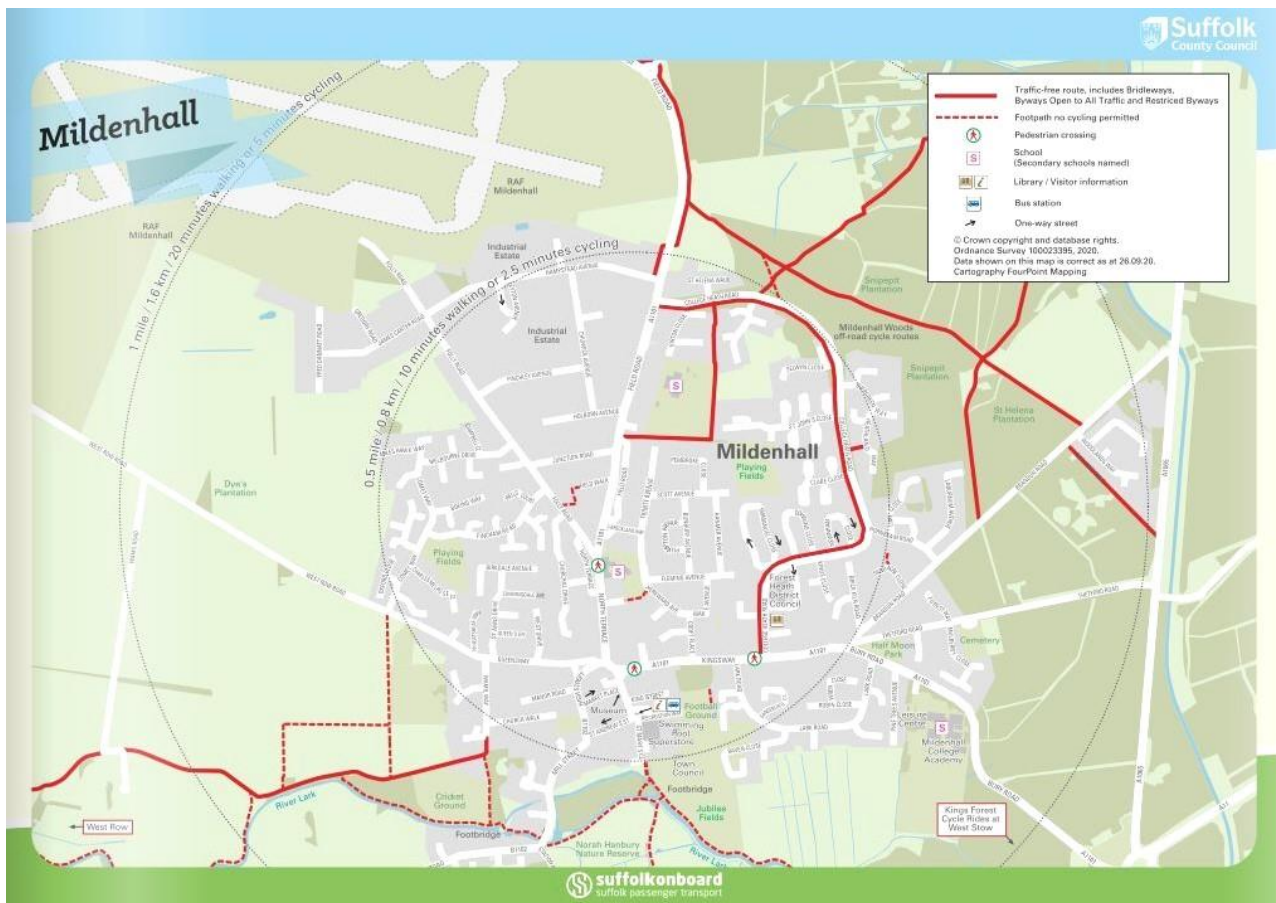
- **Haverhill:**



- **Newmarket:**



- **Mildenhall:**



### 13.5.5 Purpose-built cycling facilities by sub-area

Purpose-built cycling facilities by sub-area are as follows:

<i>Sub-area</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>No. Facilities</i>	<i>Facilities per capita</i>
Bury St. Edmunds	74,671	4	1: 18,668
Newmarket	22,141	3	1: 7,380
Haverhill	38,032	1	1: 38,032
Mildenhall	34,260	3	1: 11,420
Brandon	9,941	2	1: 4,971
<b>WEST SUFFOLK</b>	<b>179,045</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1: 13,773</b>

## 13.6 Quality

### 13.6.1 The criteria assessed for cycling facilities

The quality of purpose-built cycling facilities was assessed by a non-technical visual inspection during a site visit to all facilities during the playing season. The criteria that were assessed were as follows:

- **The track and associated features:** The quality of the course or track, including built and landscaped features.

- **Ancillary facilities:** The capacity, condition, fitness for purpose and availability of bike hire.
- **Disability access:** The extent of full disabled access to the facility.
- **General access:** Parking, signage and proximity to public transport.

### 13.6.2 The basis of the ratings

The facilities were rated on a five-point scale, where 5 equates to ‘very good’ (highlighted in green below), 4 to ‘good’ (also highlighted in green below), 3 to ‘average’ (highlighted in yellow below), 2 to ‘poor’ (highlighted in red below) and 1 to ‘very poor’ (also highlighted in red below).

### 13.6.3 Cycling facilities assessment

The ratings for purpose-built cycling facilities in West Suffolk are shown in the table below.

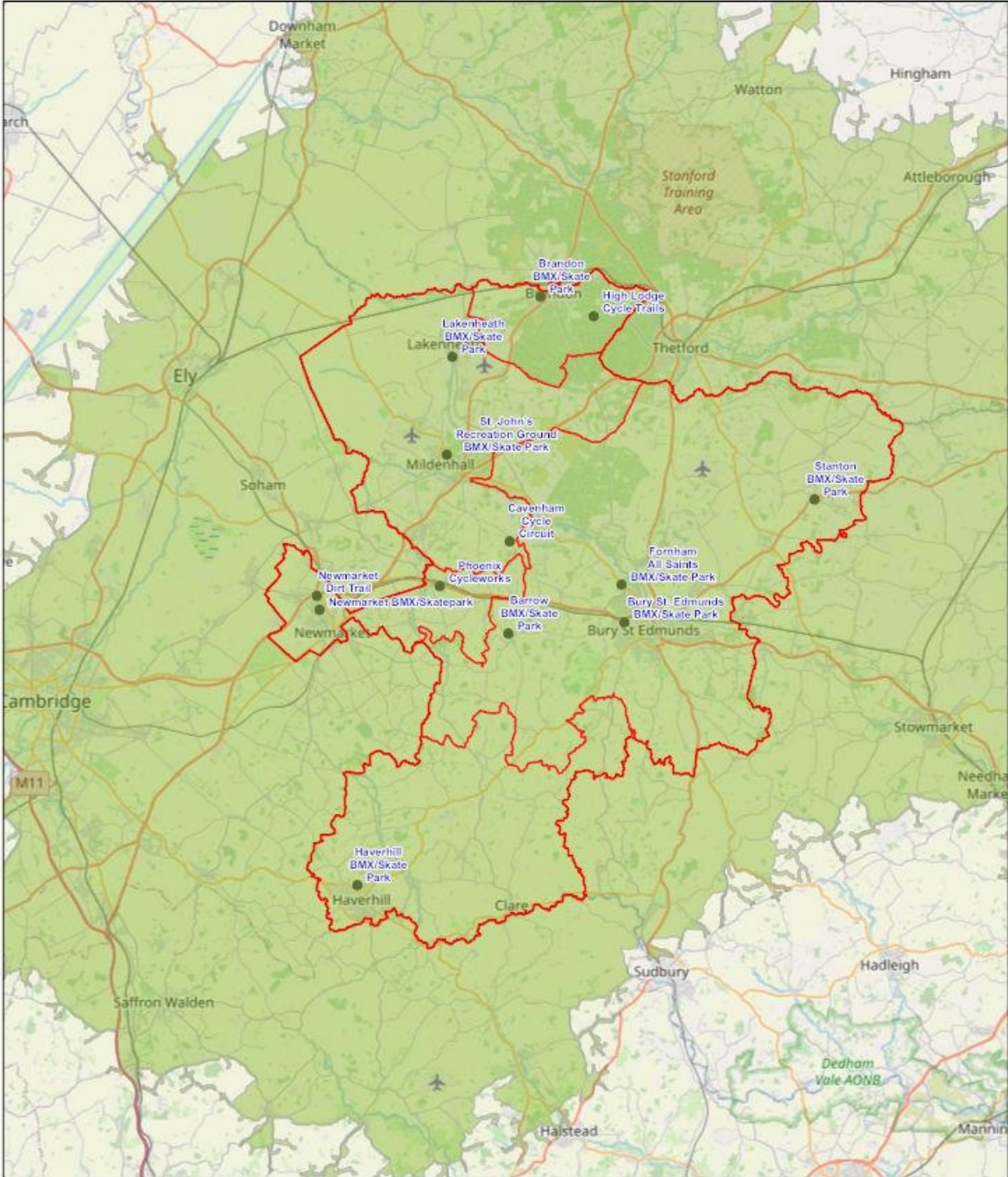
<i>Site</i>	<i>Track</i>	<i>Ancillary</i>	<i>Disabled</i>	<i>General</i>
Barrow BMX/Skate Park	4	2	2	3
Brandon BMX/Skate Park	3	2	2	3
Bury St. Edmunds BMX/Skate Park	4	3	3	4
Cavenham Cycle Circuit	3	2	3	3
Fornham All Saints BMX/Skate Park	3	2	3	3
Haverhill BMX/Skate Park	4	3	3	4
High Lodge Cycle Trails	5	5	4	3
Lakenheath BMX/Skate Park	3	2	3	3
Newmarket BMX/Skatepark	4	3	3	4
Newmarket Dirt Trail	3	2	2	3
Phoenix Cycleworks	5	5	4	4
Stanton BMX/Skate Park	3	2	3	3
St. John’s Recreation Ground BMX/Skate Park	4	3	4	3

## 13.7 Accessibility

British Cycling applies a 30 minute drivetime catchment to define accessibility to purpose-built cycling facilities. Based upon this, the map overleaf shows that the entire district population is within the catchment of at least one facility.

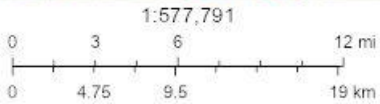


# WEST SUFFOLK - Cycling Facilities within 30 Minutes Drive



7/20/2021

- SUB AREAS Brandon, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill
- 30.0 Minutes
- CYCLING FACILITIES
- WEST SUFFOLK BOUNDARY



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## 13.8 Availability

The table below identifies the basis of use of purpose-built cycling facilities in West Suffolk:

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Basis of use</i>
Barrow BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
Brandon BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
Bury St. Edmunds BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
Cavenham Cycle Circuit	Free unsupervised usage.
Fornham All Saints BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
Haverhill BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
High Lodge Cycle Trails	Free use. Bike hire available.
Lakenheath BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
Newmarket BMX/Skatepark	Free unsupervised usage.
Newmarket Dirt Trail	Free unsupervised usage.
Phoenix Cycleworks	Sessions £10, bookable on-line or in person.
Stanton BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.
St. John's Recreation Ground BMX/Skate Park	Free unsupervised usage.

## 13.9 Key findings on supply

The key findings are as follows:

- There are 13 purpose-built cycling facilities in West Suffolk, covering a number of cycling disciplines.
- Three National Cycle Routes run through the district, supplemented by a number of local cycle path designations in the main towns.
- The quality of facilities varies, with limited ancillary facilities at most sites.
- Accessibility of facilities is good, with the entire population within 30 minutes driving time of the nearest facility. The geographical distribution between sub-areas is reasonably equitable.
- Most facilities are available free-of-charge.

## 13.10 The balance between cycling facilities supply and demand

Four criteria have been assessed to evaluate the balance between cycling facilities supply and demand in West Suffolk:

- **Quantity:** Are there enough facilities with sufficient capacity to meet needs now and in the future?
- **Quality:** Are the facilities fit for purpose for the users now and in the future?
- **Accessibility:** Are the facilities in the right physical location for the users now and in the future?

- **Availability:** Are the facilities available for those who want to use them now and in the future?

### **13.11 Quantity**

#### **13.11.1 Current needs**

There is no evidence of a shortfall in current provision for cycling facilities, based upon the following evaluation:

- **Used capacity:** There is spare capacity at all existing facilities.
- **Satisfied demand:** There is no evidence of unmet demand in the district.
- **Changes in supply:** There are no known current planned changes to facilities supply.

#### **13.11.2 Future needs**

Future demand patterns are likely to be similar to current levels. Spare capacity at the existing facilities will be able to accommodate all additional future demand, even accounting for increasing participation rates and population growth.

### **13.12 Quality**

#### **13.12.1 Current quality**

The quality of facilities varies, with limited ancillary facilities at most sites.

#### **13.12.2 Future quality**

All providers will need to continue to invest in maintaining and improving their facilities.

### **13.13 Accessibility**

#### **13.13.1 Current accessibility**

There is good geographical coverage of the whole district.

#### **13.13.2 Future accessibility**

It is reasonable to assume that the current geographical coverage will be maintained in the future.

### **13.14 Availability**

#### **13.14.1 Current availability**

Most of the facilities are available free-of-charge.

#### **13.14.2 Future availability**

It is reasonable to assume that similar access arrangements will be offered in the future.

### **13.15 The options for securing cycling facilities capacity**

The options for securing existing cycling facilities capacity to meet current and future needs are as follows:

#### **13.15.1 Protect**

Protecting existing cycling facilities through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility.

#### **13.15.2 Provide**

There is no need to provide additional facilities based on current and projected future demand patterns.

#### **13.15.3 Enhance**

Enhancing existing cycling facilities capacity by ensuring that the facilities receive regular maintenance and improvements.

### **13.16 Action Plan**

#### **13.16.1 Introduction**

The table below sets out the suggested action plan for cycling facilities to guide the implementation of the Assessment.

#### **13.16.2 Key strategic actions**

<b><i>Issues</i></b>	<b><i>Suggested Action s</i></b>	<b><i>Lead</i></b>	<b><i>Partners</i></b>	<b><i>Resources</i></b>	<b><i>Priority</i></b>
Protection of existing cycling facilities.	Consider the inclusion of a policy in the Local Plan to protect all existing cycling facilities.	WSC	-	-	High
Funding for future cycling facilities needs.	Ensure that S106 contributions are collected from developers.	WSC	Developers	-	High

## 14 SUB-AREA ASSESSMENT

### 14.1 Introduction

This section contains a collective assessment of needs in each sub-area for all types of pitch and outdoor sports facilities for both the higher and lower population projections.

### 14.2 Bury St. Edmunds sub-area

The needs assessment and suggested actions for the Bury St. Edmunds sub-area are as follows:

<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Football pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Adult pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 5 pitches.</li> <li>● <b>Youth 11v11 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 3 pitches.</li> <li>● <b>Youth 9v9 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>● <b>Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 5 pitches.</li> <li>● <b>Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>● <b>'3G' football turf pitches:</b> Shortfall of 2 pitches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>'3G' pitches:</b> Feasibility studies to identify sites for '3G' pitches.</li> <li>● <b>Bardwell Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> <li>● <b>Barrow Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase quality.</li> <li>● <b>Culford Sports Centre:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Fornham All Saints Community Centre:</b> Improved maintenance to increase quality.</li> <li>● <b>Hardwick Heath:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Reschedule fixtures.</li> <li>● <b>Heldhaw Road Playing Field:</b> Assess the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>● <b>Horringer Court Middle School:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Howard Primary School:</b> Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Ickworth Park Primary School:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>King Edward VI School:</b> Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Moreton Hall Community Centre:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> <li>● <b>Oakes Road Playing Field:</b> Assess the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>● <b>Pakenham Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Assess the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>● <b>RAF Honington:</b> Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Sebert Wood Primary School:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Secure community use.</li> <li>● <b>Victory Sports Ground:</b> Provide '3G' pitch subject to feasibility study.</li> </ul>



<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Cricket pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seasonal capacity:</b> Spare capacity of 50 seasonal match equivalent sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Balanced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bardwell Playing Field:</b> Improve capacity by providing a non-turf pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Ickworth Park:</b> Assess the potential to improve changing.</li> <li>• <b>Risby Playing Field:</b> Improve capacity by providing a non-turf pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Victory Ground:</b> Provide new practice nets.</li> </ul>
Rugby pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weekly capacity:</b> Supply and demand balanced at The Haberden, but additional capacity required for unmet demand.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Supply and demand balanced at The Haberden but additional capacity required for unmet demand.</li> </ul>	Feasibility study for a World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant artificial grass pitch.
Hockey pitches	Peak period supply and demand balanced at Culford Sports Centre. No hockey use of the Nowton Park pitch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culford Sports Centre:</b> Secure community use of the second pitch and resurface the sand-dressed pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Nowton Park:</b> Seek approval from England Hockey before commissioning a feasibility study to convert the pitch for other sports uses.</li> </ul>
Tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 17 courts in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Slippery court surfaces at Culford Sports Centre and poor disabled access at Barrow Playing Field.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culford Sports Centre:</b> Investigate nonslip surfacing options.</li> <li>• <b>Barrow Playing Field:</b> Provide a hard-surfaced path to the court.</li> </ul>
Bowls greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 8 greens in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Poor general access at Great Barton Bowls Club.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	Improve general access at Great Barton BC.
Netball courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 10 courts in the sub-area. Need for an additional facility to host a central venue league and tournaments.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Slippery court surfaces at Culford Sports Centre</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north-east of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Only 4 courts are floodlit.</li> </ul>	Investigate the feasibility of providing an 8-12 court centre at either the relocated Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre or resurfacing the Nowton Park AGP.



<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Athletics facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> One existing track meets all current and future sub-area needs.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	Retain and maintain the current facilities, including the provision of toilets and storage facilities when the adjacent leisure centre is closed.
Cycling facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 4 facilities in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Limited ancillary provision at most sites.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.

### 14.3 Haverhill sub-area

The needs assessment and suggested actions for the Haverhill sub-area are as follows:

<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Football pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 11v11 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 9v9 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 2 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 2 pitches.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 5 pitches.</li> <li>• <b>'3G' football turf pitches:</b> Shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mottsfeld Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity.</li> <li>• <b>Puddlebrook Playing Field:</b> Assess the need for on-site changing and provide if needed.</li> <li>• <b>The New Croft:</b> Provide '3G' pitch subject to feasibility study.</li> </ul>
Cricket pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seasonal capacity:</b> Shortfall of 32 seasonal match equivalent sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Shortfall of 1 weekly match equivalent session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cavendish Sports Club:</b> Provide new practice nets.</li> <li>• <b>Haverhill CC:</b> Investigate non-turf pitch provision.</li> <li>• <b>Hundon CC:</b> Improve pitch quality.</li> <li>• <b>Stansfield Recreation Ground:</b> Improve changing facilities and provide new practice nets.</li> <li>• <b>Whepstead Community Centre:</b> Improve changing facilities and provide new practice nets.</li> <li>• <b>Withersfield Sports Ground:</b> Investigate non-turf pitch provision and provide new practice nets.</li> </ul>
Rugby pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weekly capacity:</b> Supply and demand balanced at Castle Playing Field, but additional capacity required for unmet demand.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Spare capacity of 1 match equivalent session.</li> </ul>	Improve drainage and maintenance and provide full floodlighting to one additional pitch. Seek permission and raise funding for a fence round the main pitch.
Hockey pitches	Peak spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions at Haverhill Leisure Centre.	No action required.

<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 9 courts in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north and north-east of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	<b>Stoke-by-Clare Tennis Club:</b> Investigate additional court provision.
Bowls greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 5 greens in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Poor quality changing at Clare Bowls Club. Poor quality green and changing at Wickhambrook Bowls Club.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clare Bowls Club:</b> Provide new clubhouse</li> <li>• <b>Wickhambrook Bowls Club:</b> Investigate the feasibility of green maintenance improvements and a new clubhouse.</li> </ul>
Netball courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 2 courts in the sub-area.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the east of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Unsecured community access.</li> </ul>	<b>Samuel Ward Academy:</b> Secure community access.
Athletics facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> Latent demand for an athletics training facility in the sub-area.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> The area round Haverhill is outside the catchment for a training facility.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a detailed feasibility study of the case for a mini-track/compact facility in the Haverhill area.</li> <li>• Subject to a positive outcome to the feasibility study, provide the identified facilities.</li> </ul>
Cycling facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 1 facility in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Limited ancillary provision.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.

#### 14.4 Newmarket sub-area

The needs assessment and suggested actions for the Newmarket sub-area are as follows:

<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Football pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult pitches:</b> Peak surplus of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 11v11 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 9v9 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>'3G' football turf pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> </ul>	<b>Exning Primary School:</b> Secure community use.
Cricket pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seasonal capacity:</b> Shortfall of 27 seasonal match equivalent sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Shortfall of 1 weekly match equivalent session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Newmarket CC:</b> Examine options for a new ground.</li> <li>• <b>Ousden Playing Field:</b> Improve pitch quality.</li> </ul>

<b>Facility type</b>	<b>Needs assessment</b>	<b>Suggested actions</b>
Rugby pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weekly capacity:</b> Weekly supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Peak deficit of 1 match equivalent session.</li> <li>• <b>Pavilion:</b> Poor quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve drainage and maintenance.</li> <li>• Extend and improve the current clubhouse.</li> </ul>
Hockey pitches	Peak and weekly spare capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions at Newmarket Leisure Centre. Aspiration for an on-site clubhouse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue clubhouse project.</li> <li>• Negotiate Community Use Agreement.</li> </ul>
Tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 16 courts in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Bowls greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 2 greens in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Netball courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 3 courts in the sub-area.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No courts are floodlit.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Athletics facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> Bury St. Edmunds track meets all current and future sub-area needs.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Cycling facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 3 facilities in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Limited ancillary provision at most sites.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.

## 14.5 Mildenhall sub-area

The needs assessment and suggested actions for the Mildenhall sub-area are as follows:

<b>Facility type</b>	<b>Needs assessment</b>	<b>Suggested actions</b>
Football pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult pitches:</b> Peak spare capacity of 2 pitches.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 11v11 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 9v9 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>'3G' football turf pitches:</b> Supply and demand balanced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jubilee Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity. Assess the need for on-site changing.</li> <li>• <b>Lakenheath Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase quality.</li> <li>• <b>Mildenhall Hub:</b> Provide a new youth 11v11 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>West Row Playing Field:</b> Provide new changing facilities.</li> </ul>

<b>Pitch type</b>	<b>Needs assessment</b>	<b>Suggested actions</b>
Cricket pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seasonal capacity:</b> Spare capacity of 66 match equivalent sessions.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Balanced.</li> </ul>	<b>Elveden Sports Field:</b> Provide new practice nets.
Rugby pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weekly capacity:</b> Supply and demand balanced at Red Lodge Pavilion.</li> <li>• <b>Peak capacity:</b> Supply and demand balanced at Red Lodge Pavilion.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Hockey pitches	No provision, needs met in Newmarket and Bury St. Edmunds.	No action required.
Tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 1 court in the sub-area giving very limited local capacity.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Most of the sub-area is outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Open access availability.</li> </ul>	Investigate the provision of additional public courts and/or access to existing education facilities.
Bowls greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 3 greens in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Mix of open access and membership arrangements.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Netball courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 1 court in the sub-area.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the north of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Open access availability.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Athletics facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> Bury St. Edmunds track meets all current and future sub-area needs.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Cycling facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 3 facilities in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Limited ancillary provision at most sites.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.

## 14.6 Brandon sub-area

The needs assessment and suggested actions for the Brandon sub-area are as follows:

<i>Pitch type</i>	<i>Needs assessment</i>	<i>Suggested actions</i>
Football pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Adult pitches:</b> Peak supply and demand balanced.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 11v11 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Youth 9v9 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 7v7 pitches:</b> Peak shortfall of 5 pitches.</li> <li>• <b>Mini-soccer 5v5 pitches:</b> Peak spare capacity of 2 pitches.</li> <li>• <b>'3G' football turf pitches:</b> Shortfall of 1 pitch.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brandon Playing Field:</b> Improved maintenance to increase capacity.</p> <p><b>IES Brandon</b> Provide '3G pitch subject to feasibility study.</p>
Cricket pitches	No provision, needs met in adjacent sub-areas.	No action required.
Rugby pitches	No provision, needs met in adjacent sub-areas.	No action required.
Hockey pitches	No provision, needs met in adjacent sub-areas.	No action required.
Tennis courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 1 court in the sub-area.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> Rural parts in the west of the sub-area are outside the drive time catchment.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Open access availability.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Bowls greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 1 green in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Open access availability.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Netball courts	No provision, needs met in adjacent sub-areas.	No action required.
Athletics facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> Bury St. Edmunds track meets all current and future sub-area needs.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> No quality issues.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.
Cycling facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Quantity:</b> 2 facilities in the sub-area. Existing spare capacity can meet future needs, provided that facilities are maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Quality:</b> Limited ancillary provision at most sites.</li> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> No accessibility issues.</li> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> No availability issues.</li> </ul>	No action required.

# 15 APPLYING AND REVIEWING THE ASSESSMENT

## 15.1 Introduction

This section identifies the applications of the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment and the mechanisms for reviewing it to ensure that it remains robust and up-to-date.

## 15.2 Assessment applications

The success of the Assessment will be determined by how it is used. While the use of the Assessment should be led by West Suffolk Council, its application and delivery should be the responsibility of the project steering group involving other key local stakeholders including Sport England and the governing bodies of the pitch sports. The Assessment has a number of applications:

### 15.2.1 Sports development planning

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Highlight, justify and make the case for sports development activities with particular sports, groups and clubs and in particular areas.
- Identify current and future trends and changes in the demand for individual sports and how they are played.
- Inform the work, strategies and plans of sporting organisations active in the area.
- Advocate the need to work with specific educational establishments to secure community use of their site(s).
- Develop and/or enhance school club links by making the best use of school sites where they have spare capacity and are well located to meet demand.

### 15.2.2 Planning policy

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Develop new, and review the effectiveness of existing, local planning policy (e.g. Local and Neighbourhood Plans) in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The implementation of local planning policy to meet the needs of the community in line with the NPPF.

### 15.2.3 Planning applications

The Assessment can be applied to help:



- Inform the development of planning applications which affect existing and/or proposed new sports facilities provision.
- Inform pre-application discussions to ensure any subsequent planning applications maximise their benefit to sport and are developed in line with national and local planning policy.
- Sports clubs and other organisations provide the strategic need for development proposals thereby potentially adding support to their application(s) and saving them resources in developing such evidence.
- The Council to assess planning applications affecting existing and/or proposed new playing pitch provision in line with national and local planning policy.
- Sport England and other parties respond to relevant planning application consultations.

The Assessment can also be applied to help the Council to meet other relevant requirements of the NPPF including:

- Taking account of and supporting local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.
- Delivering the social, recreational, cultural facilities and services the community needs.
- Planning positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area to meet the objectives, principles and policies of the framework.
- Working with public health leads and health organisations to understand and take account of the health status and needs of the local population, including expected future changes, and any information about relevant barriers to improving health and well-being).

#### 15.2.4 Section 106

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Advocate the need for playing pitch provision to be taken into account when the local authority is developing and/or reviewing an approach to Section 106 contributions and the wider benefits of doing so (e.g. improving health and wellbeing).
- Provide prioritised infrastructure requirements for playing pitch provision including deliverable sport, area and site-specific projects with costings (where known).

#### 15.2.5 Funding bids

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base and strategic need to support funding bids by a range of parties to a variety of potential funding sources.

- Inform potential bidders of the likely strategic need for their project.

### 15.2.6 Facility and asset management

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Ensure a strategic approach is taken to the provision and management of playing pitches.
- Inform the current management, strategies and plans of playing pitch providers e.g. the Council, leisure trusts and educational establishments.
- Share knowledge of how sites are managed and maintained, the lessons learnt and good practice.
- Highlight the potential of asset transfers and ensure any proposed are beneficial to all parties.
- Provide additional protection for particular sites over and above planning policy, for example through deeds of dedication.
- Resolve issues around security of tenure.

### 15.2.7 Public health

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Understand how the community currently participates in sport, the need for playing pitches and how this may evolve.
- Raise awareness of and tackle any barriers to people maintaining and increasing their participation.
- Highlight and address any inequalities of access to provision within the study area.
- Provide evidence to help support wider health and well-being initiatives.

### 15.2.8 Co-ordinating resources and investment

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Raise awareness of the current resources and investment (revenue and capital) going into the management, maintenance and improvement of playing pitch provision.
- Co-ordinate the current and any future resources and investment to ensure the maximum benefit to sport and that value for money is secured.
- Ensure the current and any future resources and investment are complimentary and do not result in their inefficient use.

### 15.2.9 Capital programmes

The Assessment can be applied to help:

- Provide the evidence base to justify the protection and investment in playing pitch provision.
- Influence the development and implementation of relevant capital programmes (e.g. school refurbishment and new build programmes).

### 15.3 Monitoring delivery

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 West Suffolk Council and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the Assessment has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery.

### 15.4 Keeping the assessment robust and up-to-date

Along with ensuring that the Assessment is used and applied, a process should be put in place to keep it robust and up to date. This will expand the life of the Assessment, providing people with the confidence to continue to both use it and attach significant value and weight to its key findings and issues, along with its recommendations and actions.

Sport England advocates that the Assessment should 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 built up when developing the Assessment. Taking into account the time to develop the Assessment this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

The annual review 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 Assessment has been applied and the lessons learnt.
- Any changes to particularly important facilities and/or sites in the area (e.g. the most used or high-quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, 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.
- Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.

## **15.5 Assessment implementation**

To support the delivery of the actions in all the pitch sport-specific chapters, West Suffolk Council in consultation with stakeholders will prepare a short-term action plan identifying priorities and actions for year one of the Assessment delivery. The action plans in the West Suffolk Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment provide a long list of prioritised actions, but many will not be applicable, appropriate or manageable to deliver initially. This is the first stage of delivering the Assessment and essential that this is undertaken as this initiates the delivery and provides momentum following completion of the work.