

EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ASSESSMENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2016

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT REPORT**

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GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BE	Bowls England
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
ENC	East Northamptonshire Council
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
FIT	Fields in Trust
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HE	Higher Education
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LDF	Local Development Framework
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
RFC	Rugby Football Club
RFU	Rugby Football Union
S106	Section 106
TGR	Team Generation Rate

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This is the Playing Pitch Assessment Report prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) and its partners. It forms part of a wider Open Space and Playing Pitch Study (PPS) to update the previous 2006 study.

This report presents a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy. It has been followed to develop a clear picture of the balance between the local supply of, and demand for, playing pitches.

The guidance details a stepped approach to developing a PPS. These steps are separated into distinct stages:

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

Stages A to C are covered in this report.

Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach

Why the PPS is being developed?

The overall aim of the study is to provide a review of the 2006 Study and produce a detailed Study to provide a sound evidence base for the production of the Local Plan.

The key drivers for the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy in East Northamptonshire are set out below:

- ◀ To inform local planning policy in line with National Planning Policy Framework and provide an evidence base for responding to planning applications affecting playing fields.
- ◀ To establish a clear strategic pathway for improvement, investment and protection of playing pitches.
- ◀ To have a robust evidence base upon which to be able to apply for external funding such as Sport England's Protecting Playing Fields Fund.
- ◀ A recognised need to improve the quality and capacity of existing provision, regardless of ownership or management and to drive participation.
- ◀ A need to assess supply and demand issues with cross-boundary usage of sites in neighbouring local authorities.

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What is the vision of the Playing Pitch Strategy?

“To produce a robust and comprehensive Strategy which will provide the essential evidence base for informing decisions on planning and investment in the pursuit to provide appropriate outdoor sports provision for all.”

The strategy will run to 2021 (five years based on Sport England recommendations), but should be reviewed on an annual basis to keep it up-to-date and robust. The population projections will run to 2021. The review and monitoring process will be developed in accordance with Stage E of the PPS guidance and adopted with the Strategy.

Key elements of the study

- ◀ A comprehensive audit and quality assessment.
- ◀ A detailed assessment of local needs assessed through various qualitative and quantitative methods.
- ◀ Recommendations for local provision standards (quantity, quality and accessibility) for each type of facility where appropriate in accordance with local needs and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- ◀ Identification of geographical areas where specific open space types need to be protected, enhanced, relocated or areas where new provision is required and site specific recommendations.
- ◀ Recommendations for the future planning and implementation of open spaces.

Agreed scope

The following facility types are to be included in the study, as identified by East Northamptonshire Council:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Artificial grass pitches
- ◀ Outdoor tennis courts
- ◀ Outdoor bowling greens

It should be noted that for the non-pitch sports i.e. tennis and bowls, included within the scope of this study the supply and demand principals of Sport England methodology: Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG) are followed, to ensure the process is compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This is less prescriptive than the PPS guidance. Thus, where applied, the approach to assessing non-pitch sports is a supply/demand assessment based on more a ‘light touch’ approach.

Management arrangements

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

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Further to this, the Steering Group is and has been responsible for the direction of the PPS from a strategic perspective and for supporting, checking and challenging the work of the project team. The Steering Group is made up of representatives from the Council, Sport England and NGBs.

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

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

What makes East Northamptonshire different?

East Northamptonshire is located in Northamptonshire in the East Midlands. A large majority of sports pitches in the authority are located within the grounds of Oundle Independent School, which also has plans to extend the facilities further by 2020. Local authority sports, leisure and cultural facilities in the District are managed on behalf of East Northamptonshire Council by Fusion Leisure Trust.

The total population of East Northamptonshire is approximately 87,969¹. There is a lower proportion of 20-34 year olds (East Northamptonshire-14.9%, East Midlands-19.1%) than regionally. There are, however, more in the age groups from 40-49 (East Northamptonshire-15.9%, East Midlands-14.5%). In addition, 96.6%² of the population is classified as White, compared with a national rate of 85.4%.

Active People Survey (APS) 8 (October 2013-October 2014) shows that just over a third (35.1%) of adults participated in at least 1 x 30 minutes moderate intensity sport per week. This was below the national average (35.8%) and above the regional average (34.5%). According to the Department of Health's 2009 report 'Be Active Be Healthy', the annual cost to the NHS of physical inactivity in East Northamptonshire is estimated at £1,530,028.

Study area

The study area will comprise the whole of the East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) administrative area. East Northamptonshire covers almost 197 square miles and is adjoined by the authorities of Rutland, City of Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, Bedford, Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby. Main settlements include Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Oundle, Raunds, Rushden and Thrapston. Approximately 87,969³ people reside in East Northamptonshire.

¹ ONS, 2013 Mid Year Estimate

² ONS, 2011 Census

³ ONS Mid Year Estimate 2013

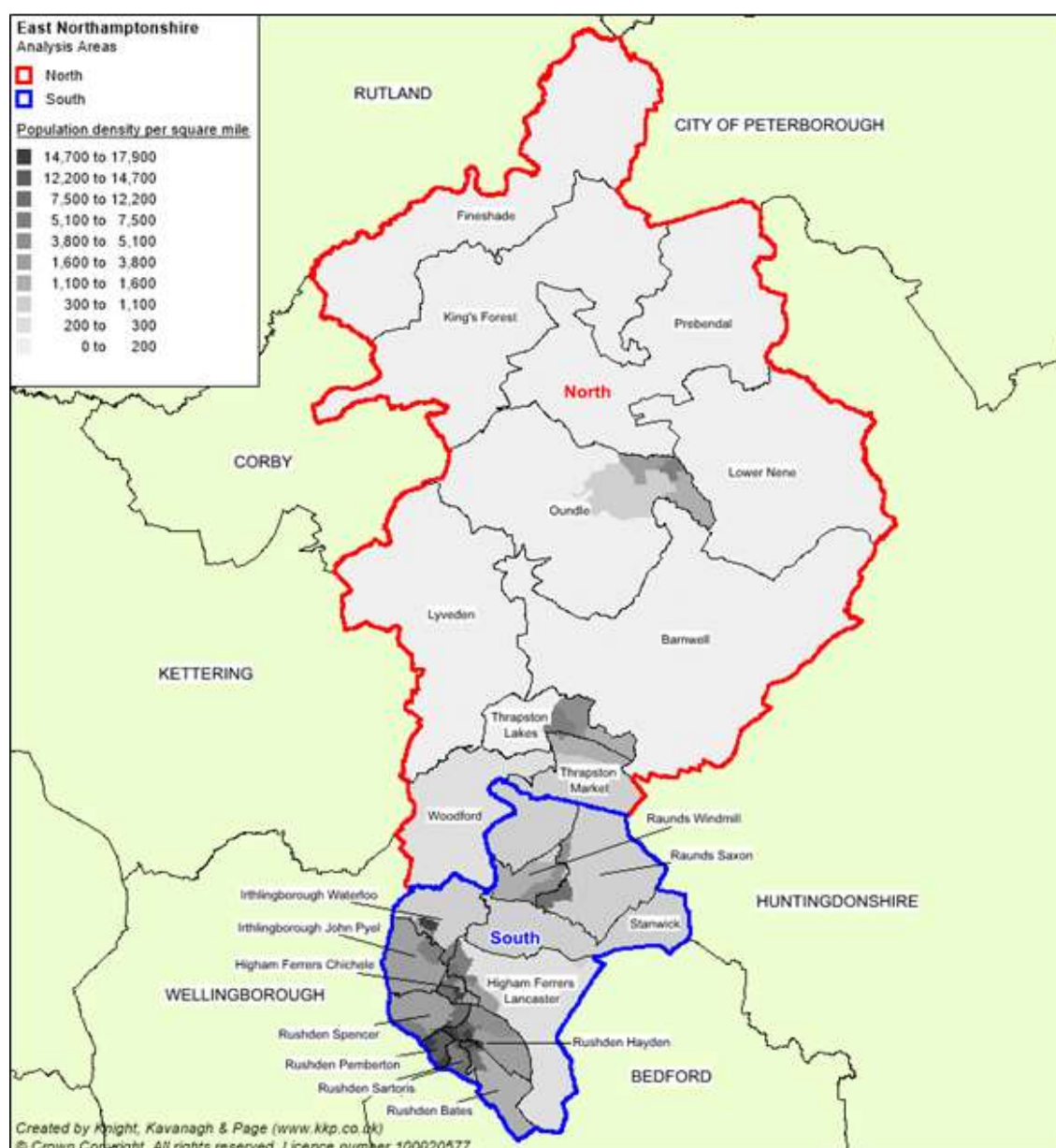
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In order to differentiate in particular between the more urban and rural areas of the District and the cross boundary issues, the area is broken down further into analysis areas as follows:

Analysis area	Wards
North	Fineshade, King's Forest, Prebendal, Oundle, Lower Nene, Lyveden, Barnwell, Thrapston Lakes, Woodford
South	Raunds Windmill, Raunds Saxon, Stanwick, Higham Ferrers Lancaster, Rushden Bates, Rushden Hayden, Rushden Sartoris, Rushden Pemberton, Rushden Spencer, Higham Ferrers Chichele, Irthlingborough John Pyel, Irthlingborough Waterloo

Thrapston Market ward has been split using Ringstead Parish boundary, as per instructions from ENC, as this is how it is split for planning purposes within the Council.

Figure 1.1: East Northamptonshire by analysis area



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

It is essential that a PPS is based on the most accurate and up-to-date information available for the supply of and demand for playing pitches. This section provides details about how this information has been gathered in East Northamptonshire.

Gather supply information and views – an audit of playing pitches

PPS guidance uses the following definitions of a playing pitch and playing field. These definitions are set out by the Government in the 2010 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order'.⁴

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

This PPS counts individual grass pitches (as a delineated area) as the basic unit of supply. The definition of a playing pitch also includes artificial grass pitches (AGPs).

Quantity

All playing pitches are included irrespective of ownership, management and use. Playing pitch sites were initially identified using Sport England's Active Places web based database. The Council and NGBs supported the process by checking and updating this initial data. This was also verified against club information supplied by local leagues. For each site the following details were recorded in the project database (which will be supplied as an electronic file):

- ✦ Site name, address (including postcode) and location
- ✦ Ownership and management type
- ✦ Security of tenure
- ✦ Total number, type and quality of pitches

Accessibility

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

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

⁴ www.sportengland.org>Facilities and Planning> Planning Applications

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- ◀ **Disused** – pitches that are not being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either. Once these sites are disused for five or more years they will then be categorised as ‘lapsed sites’.
- ◀ **Lapsed** - last known use was as a playing field more than five years ago (these fall outside of Sport England’s statutory remit but still have to be assessed using the criteria in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework).

In addition, there should be a good degree of certainty that the pitch will be available to the community for at least the following three years. A judgement is made based on the information gathered and a record of secured or unsecured community use put against each site.

Quality

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

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

The quality of all pitches identified in the audit and the ancillary facilities supporting them are assessed regardless of ownership, management or availability. Along with capturing any details specific to the individual pitches and sites, a quality rating is recorded within the audit for each pitch.

These ratings are used to help estimate the capacity of each pitch to accommodate competitive and other play within the supply and demand assessment.

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

Gather demand information and views

Presenting an accurate picture of current demand for playing pitches (i.e. recording how and when pitches are used) is important when undertaking a supply and demand assessment. Demand for playing pitches in East Northamptonshire tends to fall within the following categories:

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

In addition, unmet and displaced demand for provision is also identified on a sport by sport basis. Unmet demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of pitches (and ancillary facilities) was available.

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Displaced demand refers to teams that are generated from residents of the area but due to any number of factors do not currently play within the area.

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using population projections, and proposed housing growth (if available), an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

The resident population in East Northamptonshire is recorded as 87,969 (ONS 2013 mid-year estimates) and by 2021, the District's population is projected to increase to 91,636 (ONS 2012- based Subnational Population Projections for England, released May 2014).

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

Future demand for pitches is calculated by adding the percentage increases, to the ONS population increases in each analysis area. This figure is then applied to the TGRs and is presented on a sport by sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand include:

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

Current and future demand for playing pitches is presented on a sport by sport basis within the relevant sections of this report.

A variety of consultation methods were used to collate demand information about leagues, clubs, county associations and national/regional governing bodies of sport. Face to face consultation was carried out with key clubs from each sport. This allowed for the collection of detailed demand information and an exploration of key issues to be interrogated and more accurately assessed.

For data analysis purposes an online survey (converted to postal if required) was utilised. This was sent to all clubs not covered by face to face consultation.

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

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Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views

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

Understand the situation at individual sites

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

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

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

Develop the current picture of provision

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

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

Develop the future picture of provision - scenario testing

Modelling scenarios to assess whether existing provision can cater for unmet, displaced and future demand is made after the capacity analysis. This will also include, for example, removing sites with unsecured community use to demonstrate the impact this would have if these sites were to be decommissioned in the future.

Identify the key findings and issues

By completing Steps 1-5 it is possible to identify several findings and issues relating to the supply, demand and adequacy of playing pitch provision in East Northamptonshire. This report seeks to identify and present the key findings and issues, which should now be checked, challenged and agreed by the Steering Group prior to development of the Strategy (Section D).

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The following sections summarise the local administration of the main grass pitch sports in East Northamptonshire. Each provides a quantitative summary of provision and a map showing the distribution of facilities. It also provides information about the availability of facilities to/for the local community and, the governing body of each sport and regional strategic plan (where they exist). Local league details are provided in order to outline the competitive structure for each sport. The findings of club consultation and key issues for each sport are summarised.

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PART 2: FOOTBALL

2.1: Introduction

Northamptonshire FA is the primary organisation responsible for the development (and some elements of administration) of football in East Northamptonshire. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions and representative matches, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees, coaching courses and delivering national football schemes.

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

Consultation

In addition to face to face consultation with key football clubs, an electronic survey was sent to all clubs that consider East Northamptonshire to be their home local authority. Contact details were provided by Northamptonshire FA, and the invitation to complete the survey was distributed via email. A club response rate of 77% and a team response rate of 77% (of 77 teams) were achieved (23 of the 30 clubs). The list below highlights the clubs that were met with face to face:

- ✦ Thrapston Town FC
- ✦ Thrapston Town Juniors FC
- ✦ Rushden and Higham United FC
- ✦ Oundle Juniors FC
- ✦ Higham Town FC
- ✦ Higham Town Colts FC

The Peterborough and District Football League, the Northants Combination League and the County wide U18 League were all consulted for this study. The results of such consultation are used to inform key issues within this section of the report.

2.2: Supply

The audit identifies a current total of 66 grass football pitches within East Northamptonshire across 36 sites. Of these, 49 are available, at some level, for community use, as presented in the table below. The majority of community available pitches are found in the North (26).

Table 2.1: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community

Analysis area	Available for community use					Totals
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
North	13	2	8	2	1	26
South	15	2	6	0	0	23
East Northamptonshire	28	4	14	2	1	49

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Figure 2.1 identifies all grass football pitches within East Northamptonshire regardless of community use (see Table 2.13 for the key to the map).

The table identifies a large number of adult pitches in East Northamptonshire when compared to other pitch sizes, which reflects that the majority of teams use adult pitches. It should be noted, however, that some youth 11v11 teams are playing on adult pitches, which may in part be due to a lack of dedicated youth 11v11 pitches rather than a preference for adult pitches.

In total, 15 youth 11v11 teams (U13-16 age groups) currently use adult pitches for home matches, which is not ideal for youth players and is not in line with the FA Youth Review.

Titchmarsh Playing Fields was previously used for adult football; however, the poor quality of the pitches encouraged the adult team to find an alternative venue.

The FA's recommended pitch sizes can be seen in the table below:

Table 2.2:: FA recommended pitch sizes

Age Grouping	Type	Recommended size without run off		Recommended size including run off		Recommended size of goal posts	
		Length x width (yards)		Length x width (yards)		Height x width (ft.)	
U7/U8	5v5	40	30	46	36	6	12
U9/U10	7v7	60	40	66	46	6	12
U11/U12	9v9	80	50	86	56	7	16
U13/U14	11v11	90	55	96	61	7	21
U15/U16	11v11	100	60	106	66	8	24
U17/U18	11v11	110	70	116	76	8	24
Over 18	11v11	110	70	116	76	8	24

Source: The FA Guide to Pitch and Goalpost Dimensions

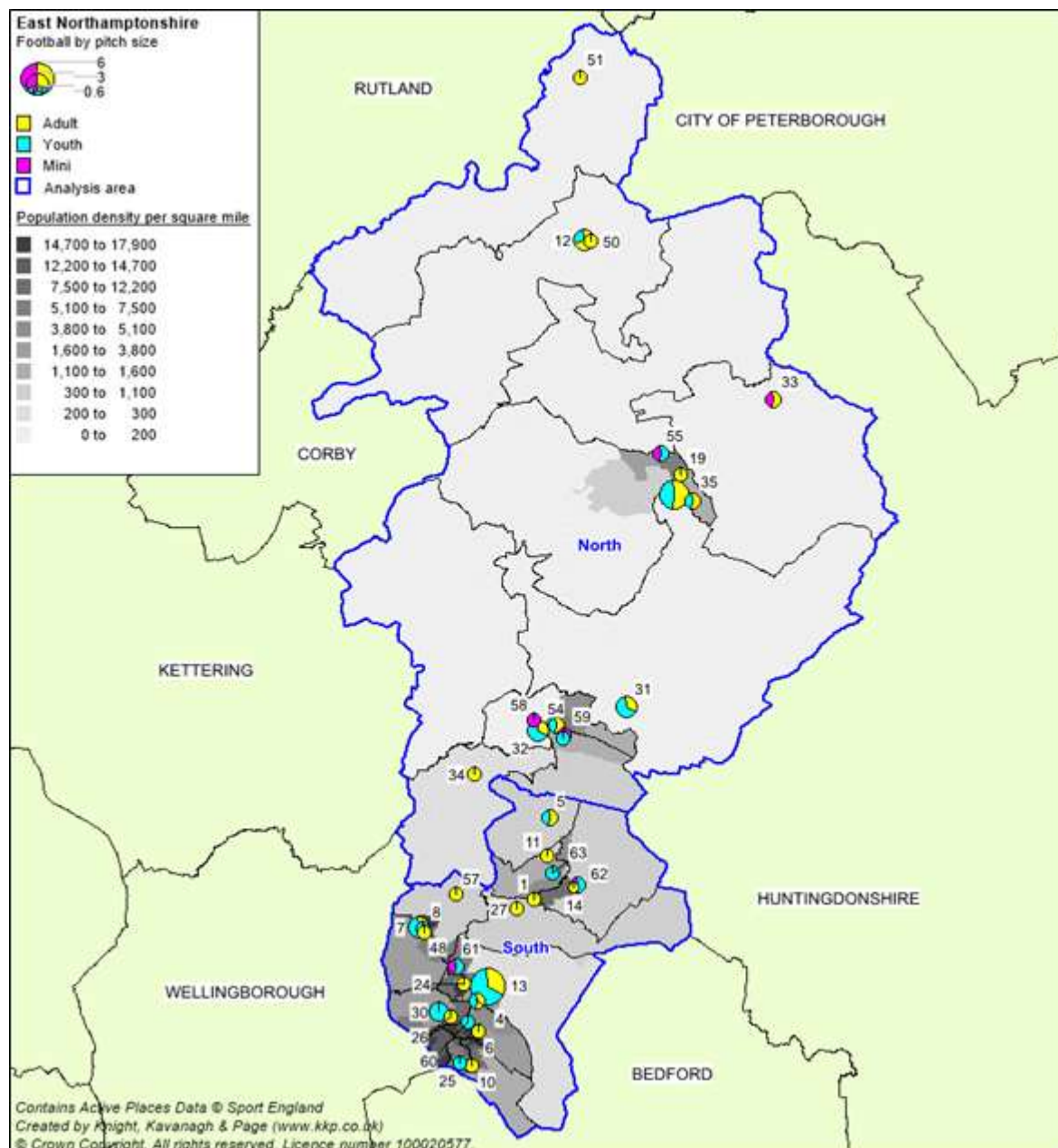
There is also a full sized 3G pitch suitable for football matches in East Northamptonshire, located at Manor School Sports College. Although FA certified pitches can host competitive matches, no teams in East Northamptonshire state that they use Manor School Sports College for competitive matches.

In addition, there is one small sized 3G pitch is located at Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active) which is good quality and although undersized, is used for training.

The Ferrers Specialist Arts College in Higham Ferrers has recently been successful in acquiring a former training pitch of another club. This surface was relaid during the writing of this report and is now an FA certified 3G pitch.

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Figure 2.1: Location of all football pitches in East Northamptonshire mapped by community use



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Accessibility

The football club survey reveals that most players travel between two and five miles to access pitches in East Northamptonshire. Clubs travelling over five miles generally participate in leagues which are of a high standard (e.g. Peterborough and District Football League) which suggests that players are willing to travel further to play a good standard of competitive football. Club consultation also suggests that in some areas clubs are willing to travel further in order to access better quality facilities.

Pitch quality

The quality of football pitches in East Northamptonshire has been assessed via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by The FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ▶ Good
- ▶ Standard
- ▶ Poor

The FA Regional Pitch Advisor from the Institute of Groundsmanship also accompanied the site assessor to some visits, in order to ensure consistency and to maintain quality of assessment.

Pitch quality is primarily influenced by the carrying capacity of the site; often pitches are over used and lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use. It is likely that pitches which receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work will be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games able to take place each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality. Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

Private sites (e.g. sports clubs) typically offer better quality facilities than parish council parks/playing fields and school pitches. In general, such sports clubs tend to have dedicated ground staff or volunteers working on pitches and the fact that they are often secured by fencing prevents unofficial use. The maintenance of parish council sites tends to be less frequent and unofficial use of these sites can further exacerbate quality issues.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%). The final quality ratings assigned to the sites also take into account the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

The table below summarises the quality of pitches that are available for community use. In total, 15 pitches are deemed to be standard quality and 34 as poor quality. There are no good quality pitches available for community use.

Table 2.3: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
0	6	22	0	7	11	0	2	1

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Sites containing poor quality pitches are as follows:

- ✦ Amos Lawrence Park
- ✦ Gladstone Street Recreation Ground
- ✦ Hayden Road
- ✦ Jubilee Park
- ✦ Kiln Park
- ✦ Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active)
- ✦ Lancaster Park
- ✦ Oundle School Playing Fields
- ✦ Thrapston Primary School
- ✦ Saffron Road Recreation Ground
- ✦ Spencer Park
- ✦ Titchmarsh Playing Fields
- ✦ Tollbar Road Playing Fields
- ✦ Warmington Fun Field
- ✦ Woodford Sports and Social Club
- ✦ Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground

In general, league and club consultation indicates pitch quality has not changed or got worse since the previous season. Whilst 11% of clubs indicate that pitch quality has improved, 28% state that quality has reduced, which is attributed to a mixture of burst water pipes (Irthlingborough Recreation Ground), drainage issues and overplay.

Kiln Park quality has got much better according to Raunds Town FC; this is due to the Club employing a groundsman this season. Oundle Town FC state that its pitch at Oundle School has improved slightly due to the installation of a drainage trench.

Specific comments relating to the pitch conditions at individual sites can be seen in the table below. The comments are a combination of club and league feedback and site assessment information.

Table 2.4: Site specific quality comments

Site	Comments
Amos Lawrence Park	Club mark out the pitches, council cut the grass. Adequate pitch quality, training areas too wet, but some unofficial use and local carnival held here in early September. Changing facilities- good quality but would like to modernise. Car parking inadequate. Fenced now, no vandalism.
Kiln Park	If there is a match on the Saturday, pitch is not always fit for the ladies match on Sunday - some postponements necessary Problem accentuated when UC League fixtures include midweek games Raunds Town FC would like all teams to be at Kiln Park but site is not large enough.
Spencer Park	Pitch located in a public recreation ground; dog fouling is a big issue. Maintenance of the pitches could be better - often having to ask the Town Council to cut the pitches; grass becomes too long, lines not clearly visible. Have asked the Town Council for removable goalposts, the existing ones are bent, damaged by youths playing on them.
Titchmarsh Playing Field	Poor quality pitch with drainage issue and moles, and poor ancillary facilities at Titchmarsh.

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Site	Comments
Central Recreation Ground	<p>Pitch is uneven - needs attention where the water pipe is and in the goalmouths. Entrance to changing facilities is on a hill, slope needs a path, becomes very muddy and slippery. Club would like to have both teams at the same venue in Irthlingborough.</p> <p>Main problem is that the pitch is becoming worse every week, the goal areas are in a very poor state and need attention, the bank to the changing rooms is very steep and gets dangerously slippery on wet days, concrete steps and a rail need putting in place or a ramp as there is no disabled access.</p>
Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active)	<p>One of the pitches is unusable due to having massive pot holes in it, leaving the one pitch, if the men's team play on a Saturday, it gets very badly cut up and unplayable for the junior teams.</p> <p>Ancillary facilities are excellent with two good rooms and a clubhouse. Only issue is the drainage of the pitches - in contact with EN Council with regards to funding applications.</p>
Stanwick Recreation Ground	<p>Good pitch but slightly sloping. Drainage good apart from in a couple of areas - only six inches of topsoil above solid rock. Land at the base of the slope originally an orchard, now built over has inhibited the drainage - ideally would like to put a couple of land drains in. Dog fouling is a problem. At the side of the pitch is a training area with lights. This is lower than the main pitch and does get wet - means training is often cancelled. (Recently no training for a month). Changing facilities built in 2000 and in need of being extended.</p>

Ancillary facilities

Changing facilities are generally viewed as being adequate by clubs with 28% rating provision as good and a further 45% rating provision as standard. However, 6% of clubs deem changing accommodation to be poor.

Oundle Town FC is one club that rate its ancillary facilities as poor quality. This site has suffered vandalism in the past year. Vandalism is also reported at Saffron Road Recreation Ground and Stanwick Recreation Ground.

Stanwick FC is currently trying to gain planning permission to develop the changing facilities on site. This would ensure the Club has the facilities required to achieve its aspiration of playing Step 7 football. The Club has recently received funding to renovate the clubhouse and kitchen area.

Security of tenure

East Northamptonshire Council do not own/manage any playing pitches, indeed most are owned by parish/town councils or private sports clubs and either leased or rented on an annual basis to clubs. Details are outlined below.

Table 2.5: Clubs leasing pitches

Name of club	Site	Leased from
Stanwick FC	Stanwick Recreation Ground	Stanwick Parish Council
Thrapston Town FC	Chancery Lane	Thrapston Town Council as part of Thrapston Sports Association 19 years remaining

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Name of club	Site	Leased from
Thrapston Town Junior FC	Toll Bar Road Playing Fields	Islip Parish Council Lease length unknown
Higham Town and Higham Town Colts FC	Lancaster Park	Duchy of Lancaster Short lease
Ringstead Rangers FC	Gladstone Street Recreation Ground	Ringstead Parish Council Length of lease unknown
Rushden Rangers and Rushden and Higham United (recently merged)	Hayden Road	Rushden Sports Association Ltd 18 years remaining
Woodford Stars FC	Woodford Sports and Social Club	Woodford Parish Council as part of Management Committee

Higham Town and Higham Town Colts FC are currently seeking a long term lease with the Duchy of Lancaster to secure funding to develop a clubhouse on site. No other concerns were raised regarding existing leases during consultation.

Table 2.6: Clubs renting pitches

Name of club	Site	Rented from
AFC Rushden & Diamonds Youth C.I.C	Manor School Sports College	School
	South End Junior School	School
Higham Ferrers F.C.	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	Higham Ferrers Town Council
Burton United FC	Toll Bar Road Playing Fields	Islip Parish Council
Irthlingborough F.C.	Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground	Irthlingborough Town Council
Irthlingborough Rangers FC	Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground	Irthlingborough Town Council
Irthlingborough Town FC	Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground	Irthlingborough Town Council
Kings Cliffe United FC	Kingsmead	Kings Cliffe Active
Kings Cliffe Youth FC	Kingsmead	Kings Cliffe Active
Oundle Junior F.C.	Oundle Primary School Field	School
	Prince William School	School
	Warmington Fun Field	Warmington Parish Council
	Oundle Town FC	Club
Thrapston Town Junior FC	Titchmarsh Playing Fields	Titchmarsh Parish Council
	Woodford Sports and Social Club	Woodford Parish Council
Raunds Town FC	Amos Lawrence Park	Raunds Town Council
	Kiln Park	Raunds Town Council as Trustees of Kiln Park
Oundle Town FC	Oundle School Playing Fields	School
Risdene Rovers FC	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	Higham Ferrers Town Council
Rushden Sargents FC	Woodford Sports and Social Club	Woodford Parish Council

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Name of club	Site	Rented from
Rushden Welcome United FC	Spencer Park	Rushden Town Council
The George Oundle FC	Warmington Fun Field	Warmington Parish Council
Thrapston Warriors FC	Toll Bar Road Playing Fields	Islip Parish Council
Woodford Wolves FC	Woodford Sports and Social Club	Woodford Parish Council

Discussions are currently taking place between Oundle Town FC and Oundle School to secure a long term future for the Club on this site, as this site is currently rented. This would secure a long term future for the Club and assist the Club in applying for funding to develop the site.

Disused/lapsed sites

In East Northamptonshire, Nene Park/Rushden Exhibition Centre is a stadium facility that was built as home to Rushden and Diamonds FC in 1992. The Club folded in 2011 and, although Kettering Town FC then used the stadium for 18 months until 2012, running costs were significant and Kettering Town were unable to make use of the facility any longer. The Club now play at Latimer Park in Kettering. Since then the stadium stands unused and unmaintained.

There is also understood to be two lapsed playing fields at the former primary school on Glapthorn Road and Laxton School on South Road.

2.3: Demand

Through the audit and assessment a total of 123 teams were identified as playing within East Northamptonshire.

Table 2.7: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in East Northamptonshire

Analysis area	No. of teams playing					Totals
	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	
North	12	13	5	6	10	46
South	22	21	13	6	15	77
East Northamptonshire	34	34	18	12	25	123

Clubs that responded to consultation were asked whether there had been a change in the number of teams over the previous three years. The response rates for those which answered those relevant questions can be seen in the table below.

Table 2.8: Change in the number of teams over the previous three years

Team type	Clubs response club (no of teams change)		
	Increased	Decreased	Stayed the same
Adult	2 clubs (3 teams)	5 clubs (5 teams)	16 clubs
Youth	2 club (4 teams)	2 clubs (4 teams)	9 clubs
Mini	2 clubs (4 teams)	1 club (1 team)	9 clubs

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Five clubs report a reduction in adult teams over the past three years. This is reportedly due to the loss of one reserves team at each club due to lack of players. Two clubs report an increase in number adult of teams, as they are both new clubs, resulting in three new teams. 16 clubs report no change in adult clubs.

There was also a loss of four youth teams from two clubs due to lack of volunteers and coaches. However, four additional youth teams have been created from two clubs in the past three seasons. Six clubs report no change in the number of youth teams.

One mini team has been lost over the past three years due to lack of players. Two clubs report an increase of four mini teams in total. Nine clubs report no change in the number of mini teams.

A decrease in adult teams coincides with a national trend of 11 aside adult men's teams decreasing due to many players opting to play small sided versions of the game instead. The way in which people, especially adult men, want to play football is changing. People want to be able to fit it into busy lifestyles and the small sided formats and shorter games allow players to do this without giving up their weekends. If this trend continues there is likely to be demand for more access to 3G pitches.

Whilst it would be expected that the decrease in adult teams would subsequently result in less need for adult pitches, it is important to safeguard the future of unused pitches in case of an increase in adult teams in the future. In the event of adult pitches being changed to suit other formats of the game, flexibility should be retained.

Football pyramid

Four clubs in East Northamptonshire play within the football pyramid:

- ◆ AFC Rushden and Diamonds (Step 4)
- ◆ Rushden and Higham (Step 6)
- ◆ Raunds Town (Step 6)
- ◆ Thrapston Town (Step 6)

Clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league/step above if the ground requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirements for Step 1 clubs. In East Northamptonshire, AFC Rushden and Diamonds play at the highest level (Step 4) and as such its home ground must adhere to the grading for that level (D). Appendix 2 highlights all requirements from Grade A to H.

Although all clubs currently meet the requirements of their leagues the majority would need to make ground improvements or potentially move sites in order to progress through the football pyramid. Furthermore, a number of the current sites require qualitative improvements to create financial sustainability.

Unmet demand

Unmet demand is existing demand that is not getting access to pitches. It is usually expressed, for example, when a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch, or when a league has a waiting list due to a lack of pitch provision. In East Northamptonshire there is no report of any unmet demand.

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Latent demand

During the consultation process a number of clubs identify that if more pitches were available at their home ground or in the local area, they could develop more teams in the future (latent demand). The table below highlights latent demand expressed by the clubs that could *potentially* be fielded if more pitches were available.

Table 2.9: Summary of latent demand expressed by clubs

Club	Latent demand	Analysis area	Pitch requirement	
			Number ⁵	Type
Higham Town/Colts FC	1 x Mini	South	0.5	Mini
	2 x Youth		1	Youth
	2 x Adult		1	Adult
Thrapston FC	2 x Adult	North	1	Adult
Rushden and Higham FC	1 x Mini	South	0.5	Mini
	1 x Youth		0.5	Youth
	1 x Adult		0.5	Adult
Thrapston Town Juniors FC	5 x Mini	North	2.5	Mini
	5 x Youth		2.5	Youth
Totals			2.5	Adult
			4	Youth
			3.5	Mini

Displaced demand

Displaced demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for their home fixtures outside of the area in which they are registered. With this definition there appears to be a large number of teams playing outside of the East Northamptonshire area.

A number of junior teams from AFC Rushden and Diamonds, including the U12 (2 teams), U13 (2 teams) and U16 (2 teams) teams use Bozeat Playing Fields/Kennedy's Sports Ground in Wellingborough as their home ground. The 1st, u21's and u18's teams all play at the Dog and Duck stadium in Wellingborough.

A large number of teams, i.e. most mini teams, play in the Weetabix Youth League. This is a central venue league and located outside of the study area at North Park, Kettering, Irchester Recreation Field, Irchester and Old Grammarians, Wellingborough.

So although there is some displaced demand being catered for outside of East Northamptonshire, this is mainly due to the location of an established central venue league.

⁵ Two teams require one pitch to account for playing on a home and away basis. Therefore 0.5 pitches can therefore be seen in the table where there is latent demand for one team.

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Future demand

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

Population increases

Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2021) based on population growth. It is predicted that there will be an increase of five youth boys' teams (rounded up).

Table 2.10: Team generation rates

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (16-45)	15,234	31	1:491	14,164	28.8	0
Senior Women (16-45)	15,613	2	1:7807	14,424	1.8	0
Youth Boys (10-15)	3,442	39	1:88	3,841	43.5	4.5
Youth Girls (10-15)	3,149	1	1:3149	3,530	1.1	0.1
Mini-Soccer Mixed (6-9)	4,424	5	1:885	4,304	4.9	0

Participation increases

Just one club reports plans to increase the number of teams it provides. Rushden and Higham FC plans to develop at least four additional youth teams from next season, resulting in a need for two additional pitches.

2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing football. In extreme circumstances it can result in the inability of the pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times. Pitch quality is often influenced by weather conditions and drainage.

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As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its current quality (pitch capacity). Taking into consideration the guidelines on capacity the following ratings were used in East Northamptonshire.

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

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

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

Education sites

To account for curricular/extra-curricular use of education pitches it is likely that the carrying capacity at such sites will need to be adjusted. This adjustment is dependent on the amount of play carried out and also the number of pitches on site. The only time this would not happen is when a school does not use its pitches at all and the sole use is community use. The table below identifies the school sites and adjusted capacity where required.

Table 2.11: Secondary school capacity adjustment

Site ID	Type	Analysis area	Site name	Site capacity comments/actions
4	Secondary	South	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	Pitches are available for community use. Usage by the school reduces by one match equivalent per pitch
7	Secondary	South	Huxlow Science College	No community use aside from organised camps during school holidays. Drainage can be an issue.
14	Secondary	South	Manor School Sports College	No adult usage on grass pitches to preserve quality for school. 3G pitch located at school is used for most bookings.
16	Independent	North	Oundle School Playing Fields	Poor quality pitches but do have community use. Usage by the school reduces by one match equivalent per pitch
30	Secondary	South	The Rushden Academy	Did have a football team here but rabbit damage to the pitches was a problem. Currently no community use due to quality.

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Site ID	Type	Analysis area	Site name	Site capacity comments/actions
35	Secondary	North	Prince William School	Community use is mainly Oundle Juniors FC, that use the youth pitch. Pitches can get boggy, Usage by the school reduces by one match equivalent per pitch

Capacity of secondary schools has been adjusted accordingly where the School has quantified school use for matches/curriculum use.

Peak time

The peak time varies for different pitch types. The table below identifies whether or not spare capacity can actually be considered as such, based on whether pitches are available at peak time.

Table 2.12: Spare capacity in the peak period

Pitch type	Peak time	Comments
Adult	Saturday PM	<p>The peak time at which teams require adult pitches is considered to be Saturday PM. In total, 18 teams access adult pitches on a Saturday PM, with one accessing pitches on a Saturday morning, 12 on a Sunday AM, 14 on a Sunday PM and three mid-week.</p> <p>The demand for adult pitches on a Sunday morning exists from a variety of leagues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ United Counties League ♦ Peterborough and District Football League ♦ Northamptonshire Combination League ♦ Rushden and District Sunday League ♦ East Midlands Ladies League <p>The demand from youth 11v11 teams for adult pitches on Sunday afternoons reduces the capacity available for senior matches.</p>
Youth 11v11	Sunday PM	<p>There are six youth (11v11) pitches in East Northamptonshire and the peak demand is on a Sunday PM, when 32 teams access pitches. In addition, one youth (11v11) teams play on adult pitches on a Sunday AM, so this truly is the peak time for youth (11v11) football.</p> <p>One team plays youth (11v11) football mid-week, this team uses an adult pitch.</p> <p>The most prominent league servicing youth 11v11 teams is the Weetabix Youth League.</p>
Youth 9v9	Sunday AM	<p>Peak time for 9v9 pitches is considered to be Sunday AM, when all 18 teams are accessing youth (9v9) pitches.</p> <p>The most prominent league servicing youth 9v9 teams is the Weetabix Youth League.</p>
Mini 7v7	Saturday and Sunday AM	<p>The demand for mini pitches is limited to Sunday AM, when two teams access pitches for the Peterborough and District Junior Alliance League.</p> <p>The ten other mini (7v7) teams all participate in the Weetabix Youth league which is a central venue league, based outside of East Northamptonshire.</p>
Mini 5v5	Saturday AM and	<p>Demand for mini (5v5) football is on a Saturday and Sunday AM. This is when the Weetabix Youth Football League takes place at a central</p>

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Pitch type	Peak time	Comments
	Sunday AM	venue outside of East Northamptonshire. In addition this is when the Peterborough and District Youth League Alliance plays. This results in all 25 mini (5v5) teams playing on a weekend morning. Teams playing mini (5v5) are not accessing the one community available 5v5 pitch at Warmington Fun Field, but are using the youth (9v9) and youth (11v11) at Chancery Lane and Oundle School Playing Fields.

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Table 2.13: Grass football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Community use?	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play	Site capacity	Potential to accommodate additional play (-)	Pitches available in peak period	Other usage
1	Amos Lawrence Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	-	Adult pitch also used for youth (11v11) football.
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	
5	Gladstone Street Recreation Ground	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	-	
				Youth	(9v9)	Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-	
6	Hayden Road	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	2	3.5	2	1.5	-	Adult pitches also used for youth (11v11) football
						Poor						
7	Huxlow Science College	No	South	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
				Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
				Youth	(9v9)	Good	1	0	4	-4	-	
8	Irthlingborough Junior School	Yes	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1	1	0	-	
10	Jubilee Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	
11	Kiln Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-	
12	Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active)	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	2	
13	Lancaster Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	2	2.5	2	0.5	-	Adult pitch also used for youth (11v11) football
						Poor						
				Youth	(11v11)	Poor	2	3.5	2	1.5	-	
						Poor						
				Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	4	2	2	-	
						Poor						
14	Manor School Sports College	No	South	Adult		Good	1	0	3	-3	-	
16	Oundle School Playing Fields	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	2	Youth (9v9) pitch also used for mini (5v5) football
						Poor						
				Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	2	2	0	-	
						Poor						
19	Oundle Town Football Club	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	-	
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	1	1	0	-	
25	South End Junior School	Yes	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0.5	2	-1.5	0.5	
26	Spencer Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	2	0.5	3	-2.5	2	
						Standard						
27	Stanwick Recreation Ground	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0.5	Adult pitch also used for youth (11v11) football.
28	Thrapston Primary School	No	North	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
30	The Rushden Academy	No	South	Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	2	0	4	-4	-	
						Standard						
31	Titchmarsh Playing Field	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	
				Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	0.5	2	-1.5	1.5	
						Poor						

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Site ID	Site name	Community use?	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play	Site capacity	Potential to accommodate additional play (-)	Pitches available in peak period	Other usage
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-	Adult pitch also used for youth (11v11) football
				Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	0.5	2	-1.5	1.5	
						Poor						
33	Warmington Fun Field	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	
				Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	1	
34	Woodford Sports And Social Club	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	2	2.5	2	0.5	-	Adult pitches also used for youth (11v11) pitches
						Poor						
35	Prince William School	Yes	North	Adult		Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	
				Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	1	1	0	-	
48	Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	1.5	1	0.5	-	
51	Easton Playing Field	Yes	North	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	-1.5	0.5	
54	Chancery Lane	Yes	North	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0	Youth (11v11) pitch also used for mini (5v5) football.
				Youth	(11v11)	Standard	1	2.5	2	0.5	-	
55	Oundle Primary School Field	Yes	North	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1	
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0	
57	Crow Hill	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	-2	1	
58	High Street Recreation Ground	Yes	North	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1	
59	Thrapston Primary School	No	North	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	-	
60	Denfield Primary School	Yes	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	1	
61	Henry Chichele Primary School	No	South	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	-	
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
62	St Peters Academy	No	South	Mini	(5v5)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	-	
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
63	Windmill Primary School	No	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	-	
64	Moulton College, Higham Ferrers Campus	No	South	Mini	(7v7)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	-	

2.5: Supply and demand analysis

Spare capacity

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

The table below considers site by site the capacity of the pitches to accommodate further play and for them to be deemed as having 'actual spare capacity'. A pitch is only said to have 'actual spare capacity' if it is available for community use and available at the peak time for that format of the game. Any pitch not meeting these criteria has been discounted.

Match sessions

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

At this stage match equivalent sessions does not equate to the number of pitches which are required/surplus. For example, an analysis area might show three match equivalent sessions of spare capacity but you would need to cross reference back to individual sites to determine where the spare capacity originates from. If it is spread across a number of sites then there is minimal spare capacity within the site which may be required to accommodate strategic reserve. If the spare capacity is on one pitch then it might indicate a need to create a different type of pitch to address a deficiency. This will be fully determined and recommendations will be made accordingly within the Strategy and Action Plan.

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Table 2.14: Actual spare capacity on grass football pitches

Site ID	Site name	Community use	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitch size	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Current play	Site capacity	Potential to accommodate additional play (-)	Pitches available in peak period	Comments
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	Spare capacity discounted as drainage on the pitch is poor and high usage causes problems so limit to school use.
				Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	
10	Jubilee Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	Actual spare capacity at peak times.
12	Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active)	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.
16	Oundle School Playing Fields	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	2	0	2	-2	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.
25	South End Junior School	Yes	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0.5	2	-1.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
26	Spencer Park	Yes	South	Adult		Poor	2	0.5	3	-2.5	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.
						Standard						
27	Stanwick Recreation Ground	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	1.5	2	-0.5	0.5	Spare capacity discounted due to pitch also being used for training, which alters the capacity for match play.
31	Titchmarsh Playing Field	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality of pitches and mole issue.
				Youth	(9v9)		2	0.5	2	-1.5	1.5	
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	Yes	North	Youth	(9v9)	Poor	2	0.5	2	-1.5	1.5	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.
33	Warmington Fun Field	Yes	North	Adult		Poor	1	0.5	1	-0.5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor quality.
				Mini	(5v5)	Poor	1	0	2	-2	1	
35	Prince William School	Yes	North	Adult		Standard	1	0	1	-1	1	Spare capacity discounted as pitch over marked with rugby.
51	Easton Playing Field	Yes	North	Adult		Standard	1	0.5	2	-1.5	1.5	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
55	Oundle Primary School Field	Yes	North	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	1	4	-3	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
57	Crow Hill	Yes	South	Adult		Standard	1	0	2	-2	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
58	High Street Recreation Ground	Yes	North	Mini	(7v7)	Standard	1	0	4	-4	1	Actual spare capacity at peak time.
60	Denfield Primary School	Yes	South	Youth	(9v9)	Standard	1	0	2	-2	1	Spare capacity discounted as only available in school holidays.

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Actual spare capacity has been aggregated up by area and by pitch type in the table below.

Table 2.15: Actual spare capacity summary

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)				
	Adult	Youth (11v11)	Youth (9v9)	Mini (7v7)	Mini (5v5)
North	3	-	-	2	-
South	2	-	0.5	-	-
East Northamptonshire	5	-	0.5	2	-

The table shows a total of 7.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare capacity across East Northamptonshire, the majority of which is on adult pitches (4.5).

There are two pitches within East Northamptonshire that are available for community use and have actual spare capacity during peak time as they are unused (excluding education sites).

Table 2.16: Available for community use and unused

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches
57	Crow Hill	South	Adult	1
58	High Street Recreation Ground	North	Mini (7v7)	1

Overplay

Overplay occurs when there is more play accommodated on a site than it is able to sustain (which can often be due to the low carrying capacity of the pitches). There are 11 pitches overplayed in East Northamptonshire across eight sites by a total of 5.5 match equivalent sessions.

Ten of the 11 overplayed pitches were assessed as poor quality and as such have low carrying capacity. An improvement in quality at these sites will result in a reduction in overplay.

Table 2.17: Overplay summary

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
5	Gladstone Street Recreation Ground	South	Youth (9v9)	Poor	1	0.5
6	Hayden Road	South	Adult	Poor	2	1.5
11	Kiln Park	South	Adult	Poor	1	0.5
13	Lancaster Park	South	Adult	Poor	2	0.5
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	North	Adult	Poor	1	0.5
34	Woodford Sports And Social Club	North	Adult	Poor	2	1
48	Irthlingborough Central Recreation Ground	South	Adult	Poor	1	0.5
54	Chancery Lane	North	Youth	Standard	1	0.5

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
			(11v11)			

The majority of overplay occurs on adult pitches and is evident in each analysis area. Four of these sites are also accessed by youth (11v11) teams. These are:

- ▶ Lancaster Park
- ▶ Hayden Road
- ▶ Woodford Sports And Social Club
- ▶ Tollbar Road Playing Field

Transferring this play to dedicated youth (11v11) pitches will result in overplay reducing across East Northamptonshire by nine match sessions per week.

In addition, there are numerous community available pitches in the area that are played to capacity. Any further play on these pitches without an improvement in quality will result in overplay.

Table 2.18: Pitches played to capacity

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Agreed quality rating	No. of pitches	Capacity rating
1	Amos Lawrence Park	South	Adult	Poor	1	0
5	Gladstone Street Recreation Ground	South	Adult	Poor	1	0
13	Lancaster Park	South	Youth (9v9)	Poor	2	0
13	Lancaster Park	South	Youth (9v9)	Poor		
16	Oundle School Playing Fields	North	Youth (9v9)	Poor	2	0
16	Oundle School Playing Fields	North	Youth (9v9)	Poor		
19	Oundle Town Football Club	North	Adult	Poor	1	0
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	South	Adult	Poor	1	0
35	Prince William School	North	Youth (11v11)	Standard	1	0

The majority of the pitches being used to capacity are rated as poor quality. An improvement in quality would increase the capacity of the pitches.

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2.6: Conclusions

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identifies current demand (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay and any latent/unmet/displaced demand) in each of the analysis areas for the different pitch types, based on match equivalent sessions. Future demand is based on team generation rates (TGRs) which are driven by population increases⁶ as well as club development plans to increase the number of teams.

Table 2.19: Spare capacity/ overplay of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁷	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Latent/unmet demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	2.5	1.5	1	0	0.5	-0.5
South	2	3	1.5	-2.5	1.5	-4
East Northamptonshire	4.5	4.5	2.5	-2.5	2	-4.5

Overall in East Northamptonshire there is a current shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches. When accounting for future demand, there is an increased shortfall of 4.5 match equivalent sessions overall. This is due to the predicted decreasing number of adult teams expected, due to population change. As mentioned previously, removing youth 11v11 (u13-16) play from adult pitches will help to reduce shortfalls, as will quality improvements.

Table 2.20: Spare capacity/ overplay of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁸	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Latent/unmet demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	-	0.5	1	-1.5	1	-2.5
South	-	-	1	-1	4	-5
East Northamptonshire	-	0.5	2	-2.5	5	-7.5

The table above shows that there is a current undersupply of youth 11v11 pitches amounting to 2.5 match equivalent sessions; this is expected to a shortfall of 7.5 match equivalent sessions in future. As each analysis area is already overplayed, no capacity exists for the transfer of youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches therefore, additional pitches would be required

⁶ Important to recognise the TGRs do not take account of the Rushden East SUE. There is therefore a need to recognise any updating of national statistics as and when possible.

⁷ In match equivalent sessions

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Table 2.21: Spare capacity/ overplay of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity ⁹⁶	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
		Overplay	Latent/unmet demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	-	-	1.5	-1.5	1	-2.5
South	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	4	-4.5
East Northamptonshire	0.5	0.5	2	-2	5	-7

The table above shows that youth 9v9 pitches currently have a shortfall of two match session equivalents. As future demand increase, so does the shortfall and it is predicted that the deficit will be seven youth (9v9) pitches. There is a clear need for an increase in provision.

Mini football

The conclusions and future development of mini football in East Northamptonshire should be considered in the context of the Weetabix Youth Football League and its central venue format both in and outside of East Northamptonshire. Mini 5v5 and 7v7 is played at three venues, all outside of East Northamptonshire:

- ❖ North Park, Kettering
- ❖ Irchester Recreation Field, Irchester
- ❖ Old Grammarians, Wellingborough.

All mini teams in East Northamptonshire aside from one club, play in the Kettering Weetabix Youth League.

Oundle Junior FC is the one exception, with the Club entering mini teams into the Peterborough and District Youth Alliance League. Matches are played on the mini (7v7) and youth (9v9) pitch at Oundle School Playing Fields.

There are currently three community available mini pitches in East Northamptonshire, as shown in the table below. Together these provide a spare capacity of nine match equivalent sessions.

Table 2.22: Mini 7v7 and 9v9 pitches in East Northamptonshire and capacity

Site ID	Site name	Community use?	Analysis area	Pitch Size	Current play	Site capacity	Spare capacity
33	Warmington Fun Field	Yes	North	(5v5)	0	2	2
55	Oundle Primary School Field	Yes	North	(7v7)	1	4	3
58	High Street Recreation Ground	Yes	North	(7v7)	0	4	4

⁹ In match equivalent sessions

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There are three additional mini pitches in East Northamptonshire; however, these are not currently available for community use:

- ▶ Thrapston Primary School (7v7)
- ▶ Henry Chichele Primary School (7v7)
- ▶ St Peters Academy (5v5)

Clubs express latent demand for 3.5 match equivalent sessions to expand their mini football offer. The figures in the table above suggest that this demand could be catered for if the teams did not desire or were unable to play in the Weetabix Youth League at a central venue.

Football – grass pitch summary

- ▶ The audit identifies a total of 66 football pitches in East Northamptonshire on 36 sites. Of these, 49 pitches are available, at some level, for community use.
- ▶ Of the pitches available for community use, none are assessed as good quality, 15 as standard and 34 as poor quality.
- ▶ In total, 123 teams within 26 clubs were identified as existing within East Northamptonshire, consisting of 34 adult teams, 52 youth teams and 37 mini teams.
- ▶ There has been a change in the number of teams over the previous three years, with an additional three mini teams and a loss of two adult teams overall. Youth teams have not changed.
- ▶ There are six youth teams registered within East Northamptonshire that currently play outside of the local authority area. In addition, 29 mini teams are also displaced due to the nature of the Weetabix Youth League and its use of central venues outside of East Northamptonshire.
- ▶ Peak time demand is Saturday PM for adult pitches, Sunday PM for youth (11v11) pitches, Sunday AM for youth (9v9) pitches and both Saturday and Sunday AM for all mini football.
- ▶ Team generation rates predict an increase of five youth teams and a loss of just over two men's teams. Future demand expressed by a single club indicates a planned increase of four youth teams.
- ▶ There is a total of eight match sessions of actual spare capacity across East Northamptonshire, the majority of which (4.5) is on adult pitches.
- ▶ There are 11 pitches overplayed across eight sites, by a total of 5.5 match sessions.
- ▶ There is a current shortfall on adult pitches, youth (11v11) and youth (9v9) pitches. Spare capacity exists on mini (7v7) and (5v5) pitches.
- ▶ Factoring in future demand results in shortfalls in adult pitches, youth (11v11) pitches and youth (9v9) pitches.
- ▶ There is a low take up of grants to improve pitch quality, such as the Sport England Improvement Fund or Protecting Playing Fields Fund.
- ▶ There are three clubs without long term (i.e. over 25 years) security of tenure on the pitches that are accessed.- Thrapston Town FC, Higham Town FC and Rushden and Higham United FC.

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PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) PITCHES

3.1 Introduction

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces with an FA approved certificate and a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play at mini soccer and youth level. The preferred surface is medium pile 3G (55-60mm). Only competition up to (but not including) regional standard can take place on short pile 3G (40mm).

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

Table 3.1: 3G type and sport suitability

Surface	Category	Comments
Rubber crumb	Long Pile 3G (65mm with shock pad)	Rugby surface – must comply with World Rugby type 22, requires a minimum of 60mm. Football surface.
Rubber crumb	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)	Preferred football surface.
Rubber crumb	Short Pile 3G (40mm)	Acceptable surface for some competitive football.

3.2 Current provision

As seen in the table below, there are two full size 3G pitches within East Northamptonshire, which are both Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm).

Table 3.2: Full size 3G pitches in East Northamptonshire

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Ownership/ management	Analysis area	Pitch type
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	1	School	South	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)
14	Manor School Sports College	1	School	South	Medium Pile 3G (55-60mm)

Both 3G pitches have been FA certified for competitive matches.

Additional provision

In addition to the supply of full size 3G pitches in East Northamptonshire, there is one site containing a smaller sized pitch that can help to accommodate some demand for training.

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Table 3.3: Additional supply of AGPs

Site ID	Site name	No. of pitches	Size (m)	Ownership/ management	Analysis area	Pitch type
50	Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active)	1	60 x 40	Kings Cliffe and Area Community Sports Project Ltd	North	Short Pile 3G (40mm)

Figure 3.1 shows all 3G pitches located within East Northamptonshire.

Availability

Manor School Sports College 3G pitch is readily available for community use. It is reserved for school use during the week (09:00-17:30) and is available for the community from 17:45-20:45. The pitch is also available on weekends from 9am to 5pm, which amounts to total availability of 31 hours per week for community use.

As the AGP at Ferrers Specialist Arts College is so new, it is not yet available for private hire. The School state that the pitch will be available for community use from 18:00 to 22:00 on weekdays, and all day at weekends.

Usage

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for 3G pitches of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

Manor School Sports College reports that its pitch is operating close to capacity during the peak period, especially during winter months. The pitch is well used by teams in the area, including AFC Rushden and Diamonds, Ringstead Rangers, Thrapston Juniors and Higham Colts FC. The pitch is also accessed by teams from outside the area, such as Wellingborough Town.

As the AGP at Ferrers Specialist Arts College is not yet freely available, it is difficult to ascertain usage and operating capacity at this stage. However the School reports that a number of local clubs do access the AGP for winter training. It also reports expressed interest in use of the pitch from Rushden Diamonds Football Club and Higham Town Football Club. AFC Rushden and Diamonds are also involved in securing usage at the site.

It should be noted that most teams have preferred days (generally Tuesday to Thursday) in which they want to access 3G pitches and although a pitch may show spare capacity it does not mean a team will be willing to access it during the available time slots. For example, some sites may have late night slots available on Monday and Friday evenings, however, teams are unlikely to take advantage of this for training purposes as they do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match.

Quality

The Manor School Sports College and Ferrers Specialist Arts College have both been assessed as good quality. In addition, the training facility at Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active) has also been assessed as good quality.

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The carpet of an AGP usually last for approximately ten years with an appropriate FA maintenance programme. Manor School Sports College is approaching eight years old and no recorded refurbishment has taken place. Therefore, surface replacement may be recommended in the next few years. Ferrers Specialist Arts College is a newly laid facility and should not need major investment to address wear and tear until approximately 2026.

Table 3.4: Summary of quality of full size

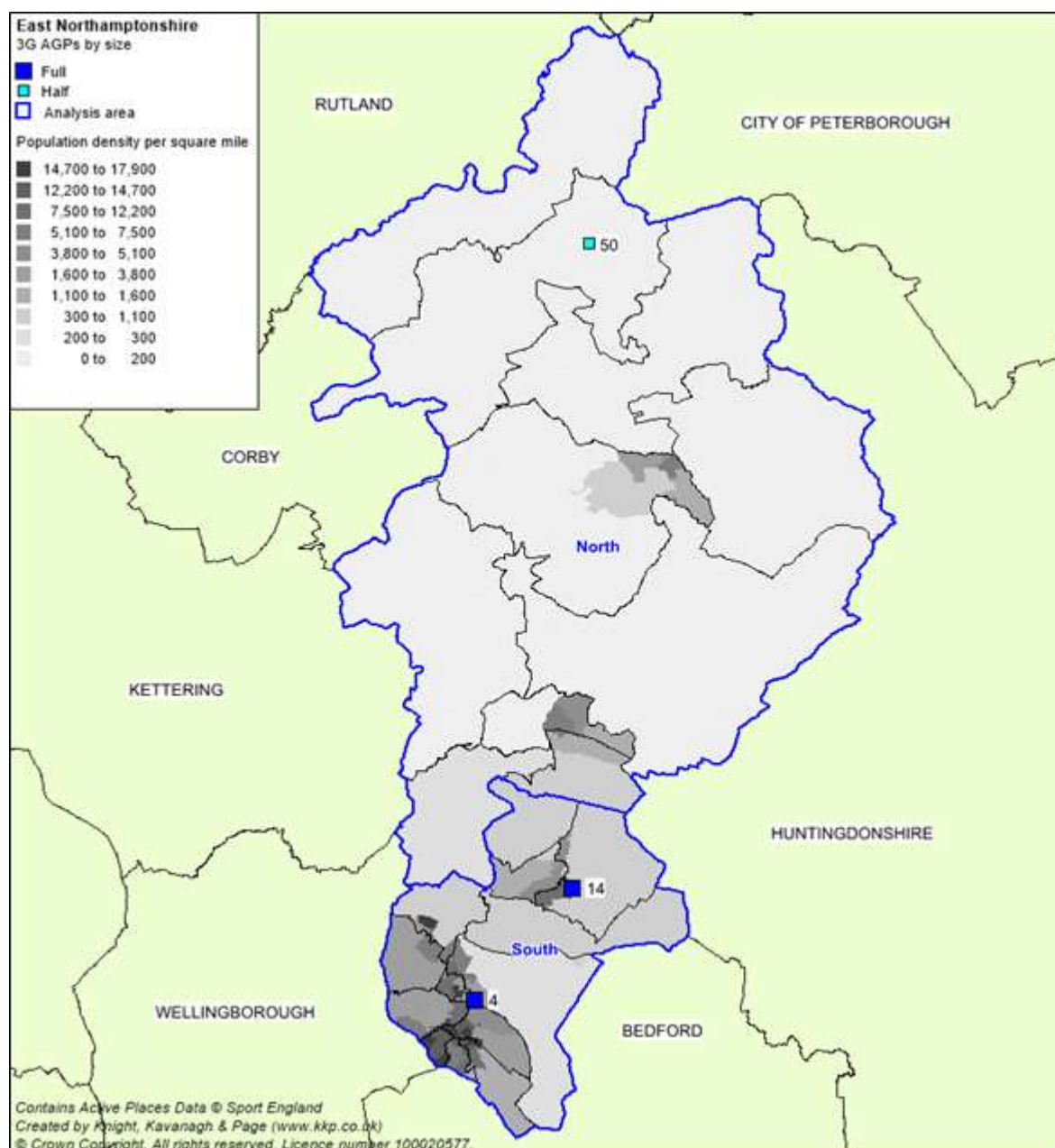
Site ID	Site name	Surface type	Year built (refurbished)	Quality ¹⁰	FA Pitch Register ¹¹
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	Medium pile 3G	2016	Good	FA approved
14	Manor School Sports College	Medium pile 3G	2008	Good	FA approved

¹⁰ Quality rating taken from non-technical assessment of the pitches

¹¹ Source: <http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>

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Figure 3.1: Location of AGPs in East Northamptonshire



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3.3 Demand

The FA considers high quality third generation artificial grass pitches as an essential tool in promoting coach and player development. The pitches can support intensive use and as such are great assets for both playing and training. Primarily such facilities have been installed for community use and training, however, are increasingly used for competition which The FA wholly supports.

Training demand

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

Of the clubs in East Northamptonshire that responded to consultation, over half (53%) report that they require additional training facilities, of which 78% specifically mentioned demand for 3G pitches. Many teams currently access sand based pitches or indoor sports halls, whilst other teams travel outside of East Northamptonshire in order to access more suitable training provision in neighbouring local authorities, most commonly Bedford.

The FA's long term ambition is to provide every affiliated team in England the opportunity to train once per week on a floodlit 3G surface, together with priority access for every Charter Standard Community Club through a partnership agreement. The FA Standard is calculated by using the latest Sport England research "AGPs State of the Nation March 2012".

Assuming that 51% of 3G pitch usage is by sports clubs, when factoring in the number of training slots available per pitch type per hour from 5pm-10pm Mon-Fri (peak football training time), it is estimated that one full size pitch can service 42 teams. As there are 83 teams currently playing in East Northamptonshire this means there is a demand for two pitches.

The table below considers the number of 3G pitches required if every team was to remain within their respective analysis area for training.

Table 3.5: Current demand for 3G pitches in East Northamptonshire (based on 42 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Potential shortfall
North	38	1	0	1
South	45	2	2	0
East Northamptonshire	83	3	2	1

Based on the number of teams in each analysis area, there is a current shortfall of one 3G pitch in the North Analysis Area and no shortfall in the South Analysis Area.

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Moving match play to 3G pitches

Improving pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs) alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football.

The alternative to grass pitches is the use of AGPs for competitive matches and this is something that the FA is supporting, particularly for mini football. No teams in East Northamptonshire are currently recorded as playing fixtures on 3G pitches; however the two existing 3G pitches are both FA certified (FIFA Approved). In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches the pitch must now be FA tested and approved (to either FA or FIFA standard) and it will then appear of the FA Pitch Register: <http://3g.thefa.me.uk/>

The majority of mini teams within East Northamptonshire play in the Kettering Weetabix Youth League on grass. The table below tests a scenario if all 5v5 and 7v7 football is moved to 3G pitches. A programme of play has been created based on the current peak time (/Saturday/Sunday AM) in East Northamptonshire.

Table 3.6: Moving all mini matches to 3G pitches

Time	Number of matches per pitch	Total games/teams
9.30am – 10.30am	4 x 5v5	4/8
10.30am – 11.30am	2 x 7v7	2/4
11.30am – 12.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4
12.30pm – 1.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4

Based on the above programming and separate start times for 5v5 and 7v7 matches, the overall need is for three 3G pitches to accommodate all mini football demand. This is calculated as shown below.

There are currently 25 5v5 teams which would require 3.1 (rounded to 3) AGPs and 12 7v7 teams which would require one AGP. Based on the above programming and separate start times for 5v5 and 7v7 matches, the overall need is for three AGPs to accommodate all mini football demand within East Northamptonshire, whilst also leaving some capacity (0.9 of a pitch) for growth.

The table below tests a similar scenario for 9v9 football. Based on 18 teams playing this format in East Northamptonshire, there is demand for two 3G pitches (rounded up from 1.5).

Table 3.7: Moving all 9v9 matches to 3G pitches

Time	Number of matches per pitch	Total games/teams
10am – Noon	2 x 9v9	2/4
Noon – 2pm	2 x 9v9	2/4
2pm – 4pm	2 x 9v9	2/4

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3.4 Supply and demand analysis

There is limited spare capacity on the current supply of 3G pitches when teams require access for training purposes, leading to 53% of clubs reporting a need for increased provision. The FA model suggests that to meet training demand there is a need for at least two community available pitches within East Northamptonshire, of which there is currently two. As such, the current demand can be accommodated, if the new pitch at Ferrers Specialist Sports College is open fully for community use as planned. If the consideration is taken into account for mini football demands, then one additional 3G pitch is required.

Priority should therefore be placed on the creation of a new 3G pitch in order to reduce shortfalls. It should be ensured that any development would meet the standard to qualify for inclusion on the FA Register.

3G summary

- ◀ There are two full size 3G pitches within East Northamptonshire, both floodlit, located at Manor School Sports College and Ferrers Specialist Arts College.
- ◀ Both 3G pitches are on the FA register to host competitive matches. Manor School Sports College is available for community use and Ferrers Specialist Arts College is planned to be available for community use in the near future.
- ◀ There is also a 60 x 40m 3G AGP at Kingsmead (Kings Cliffe Active), which contributes to provision for training but not match play.
- ◀ All three 3G pitches are rated as good quality and no issues reported. However, Manor School Sports College is approaching eight years old and no recorded refurbishment has taken place.
- ◀ Of clubs in East Northamptonshire that responded to consultation, 53% report that they require additional training facilities, of which, 78% specifically mentioned demand for 3G pitches.
- ◀ In order to satisfy training demand, there is a need for at least two full size community available full size 3G pitches.
- ◀ To accommodate all mini football matches on 3G pitches there is a need for three 3G pitches; to accommodate all 9v9 matches there is a need for two.
- ◀ There is limited spare capacity on the current supply of 3G pitches. As such, there is a clear need for more pitches to be developed.
- ◀ Priority should be placed on the creation of at least one new 3G pitch in order to meet the potential need from mini football shortfall.

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PART 4: RUGBY UNION

4.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the governing body for the sport across England. A full-time development officer is responsible for the Northamptonshire region and works closely with all the clubs to maximise their potential. This work involves developing club structures, including working towards the RFU accreditation (Clubmark) and the development of school-club structures. The rugby union playing season operates from September to May.

Club consultation

There are two clubs based within East Northamptonshire, listed below. Both clubs were consulted with through face to face consultations:

- ◀ Oundle RFC
- ◀ Rushden and Higham RFC

4.2: Supply

There are 28 rugby union pitches in East Northamptonshire located across nine sites, whilst there are no World Rugby compliant AGPs. There are 17 senior and 11 mini pitches, of which exactly half are unavailable for community use. The sites below are unavailable for community use, citing the need to preserve the quality of the pitches for school use:

- ◀ Huxlow Science College (one senior pitch)
- ◀ Manor School Sports College (one senior pitch)
- ◀ Oundle School Sports Centre (two senior and eight mini/midi pitches)

Provision is fairly evenly distributed between the two analysis areas, though there are no mini pitches in the South Analysis Area as shown below. The nature of rugby union play in the area is very much focused around the main two club sites; Oundle RFC and Rushden and Higham RFC.

Table 4.1: Summary of grass rugby union pitches available for community use

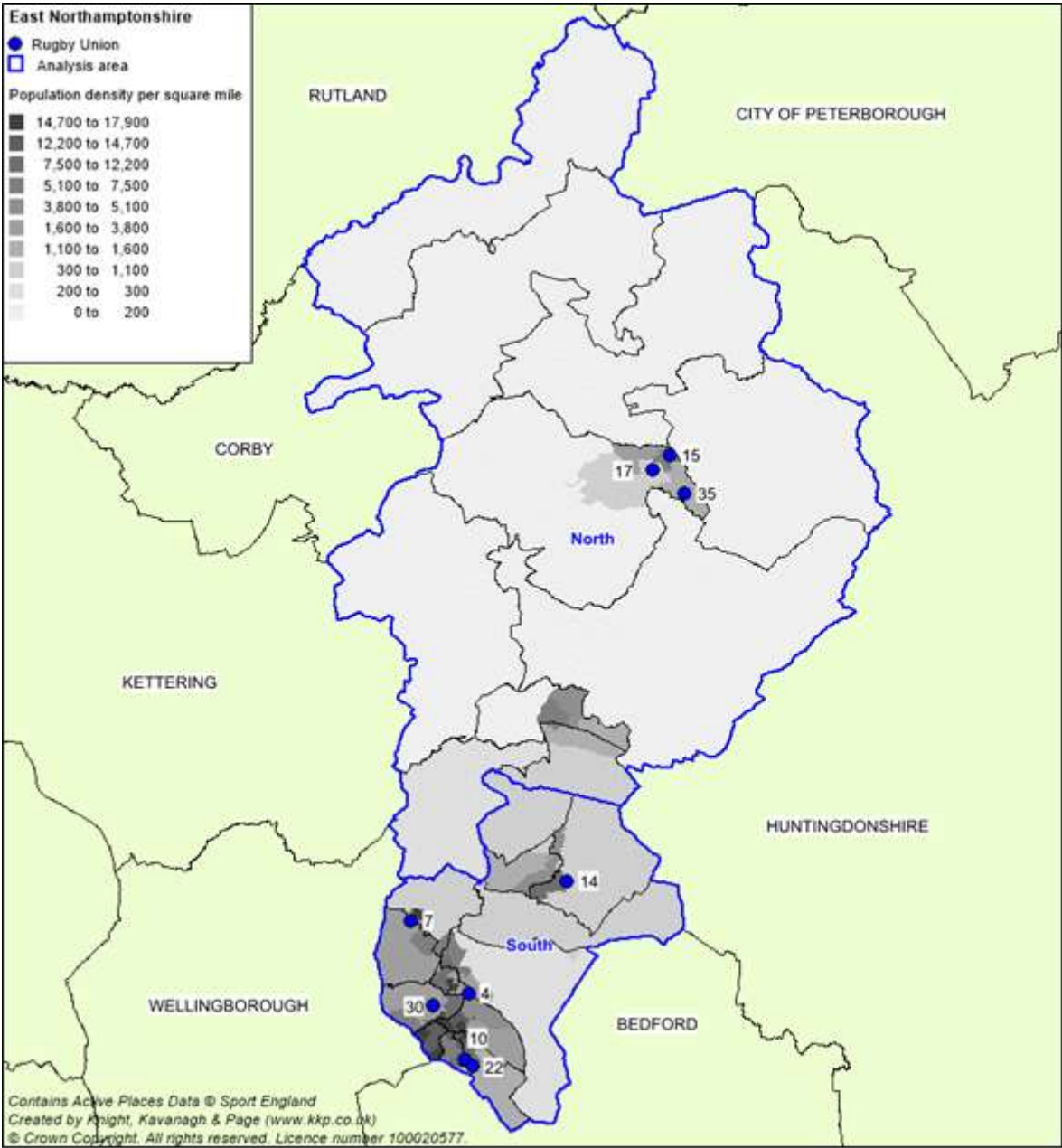
Analysis area	No. of senior pitches	No of mini pitches
North	5	3
South	6	0
Total	11	3

Ferrers Specialist Arts College, The Rushden Academy and Prince William School all report the pitches to be available but currently unused due to a lack of demand in the area.

A number of sites are consistently unused on a week to week basis but act as fallback venues for teams when pitches are unplayable. These act as contingency pitches and their retention plays a role in supporting club provision. Rushden and Higham RFC reports making infrequent use of Jubilee Park when junior and mini rugby programming requires access to extra pitch space. Oundle RFC has previously used Prince William School and states that it would look to do so again if required this season. For a key to the following map see Table 4.5.

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Figure 4.1: Location of rugby union pitches within East Northamptonshire



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Pitch quality

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements; the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated.

The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 4.2: Definition of maintenance categories

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

Table 4.3: Definition of drainage categories

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

Table 4.4: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

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

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

Table 4.5: Quality of rugby union pitches in East Northamptonshire

PPS Site ID	Site name	No. pitches	Community use	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	1	Yes-unused	South	Senior	M0 / D0
7	Huxlow Science College	1	No	South	Senior	M0 / D1
10	Jubilee Park	2	Yes-unused	South	Senior	M0 / D0

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PPS Site ID	Site name	No. pitches	Community use	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating
14	Manor School Sports College	1	No	South	Senior	M0 / D1
15	Oundle Rugby Football Club	3	Yes	North	Senior	M0 / D0
		3			Mini	
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	1	No	North	Senior	M2/ D1
		3	No	North	Senior	M1/ D1
		8	No	North	Mini	
22	Rushden and Higham RFC	2	Yes	South	Senior	M0 / D0
30	The Rushden Academy	1	Yes-unused	South	Senior	M0 / D1
35	Prince William School	2	Yes-unused	South	Senior	M0 / D0

Table 4.6: Quality of all rugby union pitches

Total pitches - senior and mini		
Good	Standard	Poor
1	11	16

Overall in East Northamptonshire there are 11 senior pitches available for community use, all of which were rated as poor quality. Similarly, all three available mini pitches are rated as poor. Pitches at Oundle School are comparatively better and all are rated as standard quality with the exception of the main pitch which is rated as good. These pitches are unavailable for community use and only accommodate school use.

Whilst maintenance varies on a site by site basis, no pitch is recorded as having an adequate drainage system in place. All drainage recorded is therefore either natural adequate or natural inadequate.

Rushden and Higham RFC is maintained by the Council and the Club reports that work undertaken is basic and limited to grass cutting. Line marking comes at extra cost and the Club believes that the quality of line markings is poor. This is likely due to limited club budget available and lines may not be marked as frequently as required due to costs. Issues with damage from rabbits and dog fouling are also highlighted. It is understood a rabbit proof fence has been provided by the Council.

Oundle School is currently undertaking a large programme of investment for its pitches. Once this is complete, the pitch quality should be improved.

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The table below shows the agreed quality ratings for each of the sites in East Northamptonshire based on a combination of non-technical site assessment scores as well as user ratings.

Table 4.7: Site quality ratings (available for community use)

Site ID	Site name	Community use?	Management	Analysis area	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	Yes - unused	School	South	Senior	M0/ D0	Poor	1	External company maintains grass pitches. Drainage is the main issue.
10	Jubilee Park	Yes - unused	Council	South	Senior	M0/ D0	Poor	2	Rushden and Higham RFC states that the pitch drains poorly and is on a severe slope. It is publicly accessible and prone to dog fouling.
15	Oundle RFC	Yes	Sports club	North	Senior	M0/ D0	Poor	3	All pitches (except for one) are located on a floodplain and are subject to waterlogging at times. Slight improvements in quality over recent years due to increased maintenance investment but still undergoing further remedial work.
					Mini			3	
22	Rushden and Higham RFC	Yes	Sports club/ Rushden Town Council	South	Senior	M0/ D0	Poor	2	Pitches are built on a former landfill site and are subject to some subsidence. Prone to surface damage by rabbits and dog fouling. Pitch two drains poorly but the main pitch not so badly. No remedial work undertaken.
30	The Rushden Academy	Yes - unused	School	South	Senior	M0 / D1	Poor	1	Some issues with rabbits on grass pitches. Not quite full size pitch, fairly even

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Site ID	Site name	Community use?	Management	Analysis area	Pitch type	Non tech score	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Comments
35	Prince William School	Yes - unused	School	South	Senior	M0 / D0	Poor	2	Overmarked with football so quality can suffer. Pitches can get boggy.

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Security of tenure

Oundle RFC leases two pitches from Oundle School Sports Centre (expires 2022) and one pitch from Oundle Town Council (expires 2018). Tenure of the Club site as a whole is considered to be secure in practice, however, the lease agreement with Oundle Town Council is due to expire within the next two years. Renegotiating secured long term use of this pitch is of key priority. The Club states that it has in the past tried to find a location where it might be able to have its own club site and continues to do so. It also considered the potential for a joint venture with a local junior football club but it is likely that the two sports would require use of the pitches at the same time.

Rushden and Higham RFC rent two pitches plus a training area at Manor Park from Rushden Town Council. However, the Club leases the clubhouse building and car park with over 20 years remaining on the current agreement. The Club has confirmed long term use of the site and therefore tenure is considered to be secure.

Ancillary facilities

Both clubs in East Northamptonshire have access to changing room provision for games at their home ground. Though pitches are reported to be available at school sites, in practice they may not be desirable for use by clubs if there is no access to onsite changing facilities. These may be located within main school buildings and inaccessible at weekends due to a lack of staffing.

Oundle RFC has recently made improvements to changing facilities, toilets, showers and clubroom facilities with the help of combined funding from the RFU in the form of a 20% grant and 80% loan. It would like to make improvements to the catering area including the roofing. Car parking is identified as a key issue on Sunday mornings due the number of mini teams using the site with cars parking along nearby roads which has caused issues with the police in the past.

There are four changing rooms at Rushden and Higham RFC which are used for both senior and junior teams. These are served by a communal shower block and have had a heating system recently installed. The Club identifies changing and shower facilities as an issue because they are non-compliant with child protection guidelines and present a potential welfare issue. Facilities are not easily accessible for those who may have a disability, something the Club is keen to resolve. Kitchen and clubhouse facilities have recently been updated with the help of several small grants as well as RFU Social Spaces funding. The Club has plans to resurface the car park and has successfully achieved planning permission, with some of the required materials having been donated from local companies. An application for £10,000 of grant funding is also outstanding which is planned to be used for the improvement of toilet provision.

4.3: Demand

Competitive play

Two rugby union clubs play within East Northamptonshire fielding a total of consisting of six senior, nine junior and 13 mini teams. There are no women's or junior girls' teams but there is a mixed age group girl's mini rugby team at Oundle RFC which plays friendly matches against other clubs.

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Table 4.8: Summary of rugby union demand in East Northamptonshire

Club	Analysis area	Team type	No. of rugby union teams		
			Senior	Juniors	Mini
Oundle RFC	North	League format	2	4	6
		Friendly/Infrequent	1	-	1
Rushden and Higham RFC	South	League format	3	5	6
Total			6	9	13

Training

All teams at Oundle RFC train midweek on the floodlit senior grass pitch. Senior teams train twice weekly whilst junior teams train once per week. Mini teams train on the mini pitches on Sunday mornings (when there is no match) which is typically every other week.

Rushden and Higham RFC trains onsite where there is a floodlit grass training area situated away from the match pitches. Senior teams twice weekly for approximately two hours each session, whilst juniors train on Wednesday evenings for the same duration. The Club states that this area frequently floods and can be too wet to use so access is often restricted to months when the weather allows. At the beginning of the season the senior squad and four of the older junior age groups sometimes use the AGP at Sharnbrook Upper School in Bedford for fitness but this depends on affordability, with junior use paid for by the Club and senior use by the squad themselves.

Casual use

Oundle RFC reports particular problems with dog walkers and dog fouling. There is signage in place but the Club often has to pick up litter, remove dog foul and treat the grass as a result. Jubilee Park is similarly subject to public access and dog fouling due to open and non-secured nature of the site.

Future demand

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

Table 4.9: Team generation rates

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate (2021)	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	13,277	6	1:2,213	12,291	5.6	0
Senior Women's (19-45)	13,936	0	0	12,798	0	0
Junior Boys' (13-18)	3,777	9	1:420	3,914	9.3	0.3
Junior Girls' (13-18)	3,331	0	0	3,522	0	0

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Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	6,406	13	1:493	6,692	13.6	0.6
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Future population projections forecast a relatively small increase in demand for both junior boys' and mini rugby though not sufficient enough for the probable creation of new teams, with any new players likely to be accommodated within current squads.

It is important to note that TGRs are based on population figures and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, Oundle RFC has existing school links and regularly delivers coaching sessions within local schools.

Oundle School

Oundle School is an independent co-educational school where pitches are maintained by a full time grounds person but are unavailable for community use. The site has significant supply of sporting provision and plans to improve facilities further as part of its Sporting Masterplan which initially included a new cricket pavilion in 2015. As in many independent schools, rugby union is a popular sport played during the both the school day and at weekends when fixtures are played on Saturday mornings. The school fields in excess of ten teams ranging from U14 to U18 age groups which all train on the match pitches.

4.4: Capacity analysis

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

- ▶ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ▶ All competitive play is on senior sized pitches (except for where mini pitches are provided).
- ▶ From U13 upwards, teams play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.
- ▶ Where mini pitches are not provided, mini (U7-12) teams play on half of a senior pitch i.e. two teams per senior pitch.
- ▶ For senior and youth teams the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away).
- ▶ For mini teams, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played across half of one senior pitch, based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis.
- ▶ All male adult club league rugby takes place on a Saturday afternoon.
- ▶ U13-18 rugby generally takes place on a Sunday morning.
- ▶ Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of team equivalents.
- ▶ Team equivalents have been calculated on the basis that 30 players (two teams) train on the pitch for 90 minutes (team equivalent of one) per night.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate. Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and

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maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and the club survey as follows:

Table 4.10: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

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

This guide should only be used as a very general measure of potential pitch capacity and does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

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

The peak period

In order to fully establish actual spare capacity, the peak period needs to be established. Peak time for senior rugby union matches in East Northamptonshire is Saturday afternoons; however, peak time demand for senior sized pitches is actually Sunday mornings. This due to the large number of junior and mini teams which regularly play on senior pitches on Sundays.

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Table 4.11: Rugby union provision and level of community use

Site ID	Site name (club name)	Security of tenure	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	No. of pitches	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
15	Oundle Rugby Football Club	Secured	North	Senior	M0/ D0 (Poor)	2	No	2	1	1	Senior pitches used by senior and junior teams for matches. Overplayed therefore no further use recommended.
						1	Yes	4	0.5	3.5	Floodlit pitch used to accommodate midweek training as well as senior and junior matches. Overplayed therefore no further use recommended.
				Mini		3	No	4.5	1.5	3	The pitches of varying sizes to accommodate the formats of play across the range of mini age groups. Overplayed therefore no further use recommended.
22	Rushden and Higham RFC	Secured	South	Senior	M0/ D1 (Poor)	2	No	6	3	3	Pitches used for all matches including senior, junior and mini age groups. Overplayed therefore no further use recommended.
				Training	M0/ D0 (Poor)		Yes	0	0	0	Training area only, not suitable for match play.

4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Spare capacity

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

The absence of leagues at both mini and junior level means that games are programmed on a friendly basis and are generally played less frequently than they would be in a home and away league structure. This means that junior and mini use of pitches is generally consistent because teams will train or play onsite most weeks except for in the case of an away fixture. The high level of activity leads to a sustained demand for pitches on an almost weekly basis rather than fortnightly as would typically be expected of teams playing within leagues. As such, mini team usage has been calculated based on one home fixture, one away fixture and two training sessions per four week month.

No sites show potential spare capacity, therefore there is no actual spare capacity in East Northamptonshire to accommodate additional play at peak time.

Overplay

Both sites with recorded community use are overplayed, resulting in total overplay of 10.5 match equivalents each week. This is made up of 7.5 match sessions of overplay on senior pitches and three match sessions on mini pitches.

Overplay at Oundle RFC is largely a product of midweek training demand focused on the floodlit pitch. Recommended capacity is also limited due to poor quality pitches which even without training use are unable to meet demand from the number of senior and junior teams.

Overplay at Rushden and Higham RFC is mainly caused by limited supply of pitches to accommodate demand from senior, junior and mini teams. In turn there are limited available match sessions due to poor quality pitches as a result of a basic maintenance regime.

4.6: Conclusions

At present, East Northamptonshire does not have sufficient supply of senior or mini rugby union pitches to accommodate current demand. There are requirements for a further 7.5 and three match equivalent sessions on senior and mini pitches respectively to address current levels of overplay. Given that no increases in demand are forecast from team generation rates or highlighted through club consultation, current supply is also insufficient to accommodate future demand.

A number of factors culminate to create the need for access to further match equivalent sessions at peak time. High levels of demand concentrated at just two clubs cannot be served by limited pitch capacity as a result of limited maintenance and remedial regimes. Added training demand on the match pitch at Oundle RFC enabled by flooding further exacerbates the level of overplay.

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Rugby union summary

- ◆ There are 28 rugby union pitches in East Northamptonshire located across nine sites, whilst there are no World Rugby compliant AGPs. There are 17 senior and 11 mini pitches, of which exactly half are unavailable for community use
- ◆ Overall in East Northamptonshire there are 11 senior pitches available for community use, all of which were rated as poor quality. Similarly, all three available mini pitches are rated as poor.
- ◆ The lease agreement Oundle RFC has with Oundle Town Council for the one of the senior pitches is due to expire within the next two years. Renegotiating secured long term use of this pitch is of key priority.
- ◆ Rushden and Higham RFC identifies changing and shower facilities as an issue because they are non-compliant with child protection guidelines and present a potential welfare issue.
- ◆ Training generally takes place at the club sites, either on a floodlit pitch (Oundle RFC) or a partially lit grass training area (Rushden and Higham RFC).
- ◆ Two rugby union clubs play within East Northamptonshire; Oundle RFC and Rushden and Higham RFC. Between them they field a total of six senior, nine junior and 13 mini teams.
- ◆ Oundle School contributes a significant number of pitches to existing supply however all are unavailable for community use. Rugby union is very popular at the school and pitches are well used both during the school day and for Saturday fixtures.
- ◆ No sites show potential spare capacity, therefore there is no actual spare capacity in East Northamptonshire to accommodate additional play at peak time.
- ◆ Both sites with recorded community use are overplayed, resulting in total overplay of 10.5 match equivalents each week.
- ◆ At present, East Northamptonshire does not have sufficient supply of senior or mini rugby union pitches to accommodate current or future demand, with requirements for a further 7.5 and three match equivalent sessions on senior and mini pitches respectively.
- ◆ Both clubs are currently without long term (i.e. over 25 years) security of tenure on the pitches that are accessed.

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PART 5: HOCKEY

5.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH) and is administered locally by the Midlands Region Hockey Association.

Competitive league hockey matches can only be played on sand based, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive play cannot take place on third generation turf pitches (3G), 40mm pitches may be suitable, in some instances, for beginner training and are preferred to poor grass or tarmac surfaces. For adults, a full size pitch for competitive matches must measure 100x60 metres.

It is considered that a hockey pitch can accommodate a maximum of four matches on the peak day (Saturdays) provided that the pitch has floodlighting.

Consultation

There is one club within East Northamptonshire, Oundle Hockey Club, which was met with face to face and the results of such consultation are used to inform key issues within this section of the Report. England Hockey was also consulted and highlighted that Oundle Hockey Club is a priority club for the NGB.

5.2: Supply

Quantity

There are three hockey suitable AGPs in East Northamptonshire, all of which are available for community use. Oundle School Sports Centre provides two sand based AGPs and Prince William School provides one sand based AGP. All pitches are located in the North Analysis Area. Figure 5.1 shows the location of all full size AGPs suitable for hockey.

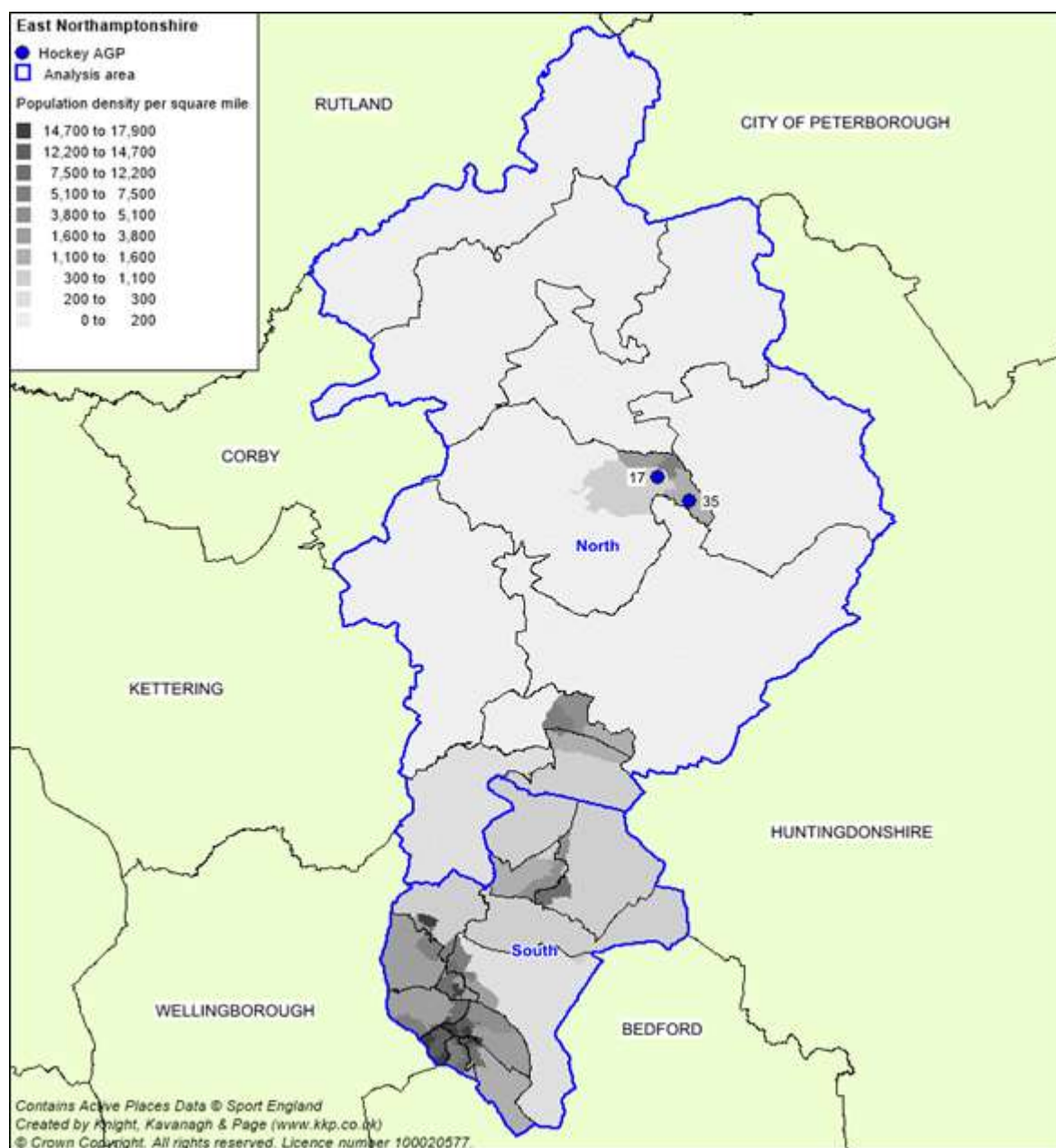
Table 5.1: Summary of sand based AGPs in East Northamptonshire by location

PPS Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch Size (yd.)	Floodlit (Y/N)	Surface type
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	100 x 60	Yes	Sand dressed
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	100 x 60	Yes	Sand dressed
35	Prince William School	North	100 x 60	Yes	Sand filled

All sand based pitches are full size. There are no under sized/ training type sand based AGPs in East Northamptonshire.

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Figure 5.1: Sand based AGPs in East Northamptonshire



Ownership/management

All three AGPs are located on school sites and bookings are managed in house by the schools.

Security of tenure

Oundle Hockey Club and Oundle School Sports Centre have a formal agreement in place for access to the AGPs, although it is unclear whether this is long term. There is a good relationship between the two parties.

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Floodlighting

All three AGPs are floodlit, providing additional opportunity to access for evening training and matches.

Future supply

Oundle School is currently in the process of producing plans to build two additional sand based AGPs. This could bring additional opportunities for use for community groups but at this stage there is no confirmation of plans.

Other strategic documents

The North Northamptonshire Strategic Sports Facilities Framework Update, produced in September 2014 by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit, states that the authority area is home to six AGPs. It is important to highlight that this report included an AGP at Rushden and Diamonds Centre (since closed), and two 3G pitches, which are covered separately in the football section.

Quality

In terms of quality, sand based AGPs are rated on the scale below.

Table 5.2: Sand based AGP quality scale

Good	Standard	Poor

Through an audit assessment of the AGPs, one AGP at Oundle School Sports Centre was assessed as good quality and has recently been relaid. Oundle Hockey Club generally uses this pitch opposed to the second pitch which is standard and due to be relaid shortly. The pitch at Prince William School was also assessed as standard quality but is reported by the Club to be of average quality and subject to flooding at times.

It is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately 10 years (dependant on levels of use). The Prince William School AGP is used extensively both for hockey and football and has recently been redressed. It has also started to become waterlogged in bad weather, which will affect the quality if not resolved in the short term. The surface is approximately eight years old and therefore will soon be in need of resurfacing; however, it is unclear whether a sinking fund is in place.

Table 5.3: Quality ratings of sand based AGPs in East Northamptonshire

PPS Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality rating
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	Good
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	Standard
35	Prince William School	North	Standard

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Ancillary facilities

Oundle Hockey Club has access to toilet facilities at Oundle School Sports Centre but has no access to onsite changing provision. Instead teams change at Oundle Town Cricket Club nearby which is also used as the social venue for after matches. It has use of its pavilion from the end of September once the cricket season has finished. This results in the Club arranging provision of food and social space at a local pub for the first few weeks of the season. The school would like the Club to use the newly built cricket pavilion which is also onsite but it believes that it is not an ideal facility, though shower and toilet provision at Oundle Town CC is also a bit dated and limited. Oundle Hockey Club highlights the desire for its own clubhouse and changing facility as a key priority, especially given the rate at which membership is growing.

Accessibility and availability

All AGPs are available for community use, although not for the entire peak period, as identified by Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM), which classes the peak period as follows:

- ◀ Monday - Thursday 17.00- 21.00
- ◀ Friday 17.00-19.00
- ◀ Saturday and Sunday 09.00-17.00

All pitches are relatively well used, especially in winter months as football teams hire the facilities for training purposes. Oundle Hockey Club reports no issues with accessing required capacity on AGPs for matches and training at present but is concerned that this may not be the case should the Club continue to grow.

Oundle School requires the pitch on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons for training and fixtures, so it is not available until 17.30 midweek. In addition this restricts the number of hours available for use by Oundle Hockey Club on a Saturday as the Club is only able to book the AGP for the morning until 13.00. The Club states that the majority of players travel up to 5 miles to access the facilities.

Prince William School AGP is also well used by the School and is available for community use for both hockey and football. It is used by Oundle Hockey Club for Club training two evenings per week.

5.3: Demand

Current demand

Oundle Hockey Club had approximately 16 members five years ago but has since tried to develop and expand the club. It now has 172 members and fields one senior men's team and two senior ladies' teams. It also runs junior training sessions providing coaching to approximately 50 juniors.

Club matches take place at Oundle School Sports Centre, generally as the quality of facility is better and the hire charge (£35) is cheaper than the Prince William School (£75). However, Prince William School is used for some junior sessions and when additional pitch space is needed.

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Future demand

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

Table 5.4: Team generation rates

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate (2021)	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (16-45)	15,234	1	1:15,234	14,164	0.9	0
Senior Women's (16-45)	15,613	2	1:7,807	14,424	1.8	0
Junior Boys (11-15)	2,842	0	0	3,235	0	0
Junior Girls (11-15)	2,634	3	1:878	3,000	3.4	0.4

Team generation rates indicate that population increases are not sufficient enough to result in the likely creation of additional teams at either senior or junior level. An increase in participants is projected at the junior girls' age group but it is probable that new players will join current clubs to become part of existing squads.

It is important to note that TGRs are based on population figures and cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, Oundle Hockey Club is keen to increase numbers at the Club and is working to develop further links with local schools, having already established a satellite club at Prince William School where it hopes to develop interest and demand for hockey. England Hockey suggests that the Club has potential to grow further, should the infrastructure and facilities be available to support this. The school sport partnership is actively working to promote hockey within local schools.

Oundle School

Hockey is a very popular sport at Oundle School with around 16 boy's teams and over 20 girl's teams across the various year groups. The school is building a further two sand based pitches which England Hockey reports is required given the significant level of demand. A number of former pupils have gone on to play international hockey and the school has a strong relationship with Oundle Hockey Club at which many of its pupils play club hockey.

England Hockey highlights Oundle School as fundamental to hockey in East Northamptonshire as not only does it provide the majority of hockey suitable provision and acts as the focus of most hockey play in the area, it also generates interest in local juniors which play hockey at the school and therefore acts as a key feeder to Oundle Hockey Club with regards to generating demand. England Hockey reports that upon completion of the two planned AGPs it would be keen to use the venue as a focus centre for its development pathway squads because of the extent of provision concentrated on one site together.

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Usage

The following table summarises the availability of full size hockey suitable AGPs for community use. In addition, it records the availability of provision within the peak period. Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) applies an overall peak period for AGPs of 34 hours a week (Monday to Thursday 17:00-21:00; Friday 17:00-19:00; Saturday and Sunday 09:00-17:00).

Table 5.5: Community opening times of full size hockey suitable AGPs

Site ID	Site name	Hours available for community use	Hours available in the peak period	Comments
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	Mon-Fri: 17.30-22.00 Sat: 09.00-13.00 Sun: Unavailable	Mon-Thurs: 17.30-21.00- 14 hours Fri: 17.30-19.00- 1.5 hours Sat: 09.00-13.00- 4 hours Total- 19.5 hours in the peak period	Used by Oundle Hockey Club for senior matches on Saturday mornings but must be finished and offsite for 13.00 when Oundle School uses the pitches for school fixtures. No capacity exists on Saturday for increased match usage.
35	Prince William School	Mon-Fri: 18.00-22.00 Sat: Unavailable Sun: unavailable	Mon-Thurs: 18.00-21.00- 12 hours Fri: 18.00-19.00- 1 hour Total- 13 hours in the peak period	Used by Oundle Hockey Club for training during the week. Also used extensively for football..

5.4 Supply and demand analysis

A full size floodlit hockey AGP is able to accommodate up to four hockey matches at senior peak time (Saturday). Given that there are three community club senior teams currently playing in East Northamptonshire, one pitch should be adequate to accommodate current demand. This considered, the requirement from Oundle School to use the Oundle School Sports Centre pitch on a Saturday afternoon restricts availability to two available timeslots during the morning, enough to accommodate four teams on a home and away basis.

Current supply of hockey suitable AGPs is adequate to meet current demand although given the rate at which the Club is growing, it may not be sufficient to cater for future demand. However, this may be addressed by the two new AGPs planned at Oundle School Sports Centre provided they are available for community use as the existing pitches are. Assuming the Club continues to maintain its good relationship and strong links to the school, access to these extra pitches would help support its continued growth and may even create available capacity midweek for training so to accommodate all use at the one site as a focus venue for hockey in East Northamptonshire.

Consideration should be given to the surface at Prince William School which is approaching the end of its recommended lifespan and should be replaced if quality deteriorates to an extent that it is unsuitable. Secure tenure of social space and changing facilities for Oundle Hockey Club should also be a key focus in order to create the required environment to accommodate increasing club membership.

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Hockey summary

- ◀ Schools provide the total supply of sand based AGPs in East Northamptonshire. There are two sand dressed pitches at Oundle School Sports Centre and one sand filled pitch at Prince William School.
- ◀ One pitch at Oundle School Sports Centre is rated as good quality having recently been resurfaced. The other pitch at the site along with the pitch at Prince William School was both rated as standard quality.
- ◀ The surface of the AGP at Prince William School is approximately eight years old and therefore approaching the end of its recommended ten year lifespan. Consideration should be given to resurfacing should it deteriorate to an extent that it is unsuitable.
- ◀ Oundle School plans to build two more hockey suitable AGPs at Oundle School Sports Centre, forming a four pitch site. It also plans to resurface the existing standard quality AGP.
- ◀ Oundle Hockey Club is the only hockey club in East Northamptonshire, with one senior men's team, two senior ladies' teams and small number of junior age groups. The Club plays matches at Oundle School Sports Centre and trains at Prince William School.
- ◀ The Club is keen to increase numbers, particularly within the junior section. However the Club is unsure how additional numbers would be accommodated, due to Oundle School Sports Centre pitch only available on a Saturday morning.
- ◀ Oundle School acts as a focus for hockey in East Northamptonshire, supplying the majority of provision. Hockey is very popular at the school and many of pupils play for Oundle HC.
- ◀ Team generation rates indicate that population increases are not sufficient enough to result in the likely creation of additional teams at either senior or junior level.
- ◀ The Club is keen to continue to increase membership of the junior section and is focused on establishing school links to do so.
- ◀ Oundle HC reports no issues with accessing required capacity on AGPs for matches and training at present but is concerned this may not be the case if the Club continue to grow.
- ◀ The security of tenure and long term agreement between Oundle School Sports Centre and Oundle Hockey Club is not clear.
- ◀ Current supply of hockey suitable AGPs is enough to meet current demand although given the rate at which the Club is growing and potential latent demand in the area, it may not be sufficient to cater for future demand.
- ◀ This may be addressed by the two new AGPs planned at Oundle School Sports Centre providing they are available for community use as the existing pitches are.

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PART 6: CRICKET

6.1: Introduction

Northants Recreational Cricket (NRC) is the main governing and representative body for cricket within Northamptonshire County, under which East Northamptonshire falls. Northants Recreational Cricket works closely with the ECB and has four core roles and responsibilities: strategic planning, programme management, performance management, and effective governance. NRC is responsible for participation, club accreditation, club members, coaching roles, volunteer roles and player development.

Consultation

There are 12 clubs identified as playing within East Northamptonshire. Of these, 11 were consulted either via an online survey or through a face to face consultation, resulting in a response rate of 92%. Results are used to inform key issues within this section of the report. The clubs which responded to consultation are as follows:

- ◀ Benefield Cricket Club
- ◀ Brigstock Cricket Club
- ◀ Easton-on-the-Hill Cricket Club
- ◀ Higham Ferrers Cricket Club
- ◀ Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club
- ◀ Laxton Park Cricket Club
- ◀ Nassington Cricket Club
- ◀ Oundle Town Cricket Club
- ◀ Raunds Town Cricket Club
- ◀ Rushden Town Cricket Club
- ◀ Thrapston Cricket Club

The one club not to respond is Kings Cliffe Cricket Club, based in the North Analysis Area. Information in this report relating to this club has been gathered from online research and consultation with NRC.

6.2: Supply

Quantity

In total, there are 13 grass cricket pitches in East Northamptonshire located on 13 separate sites. The only cricket pitches not available for community use are located at the Rushden Academy and Prince William School.

Table 6.1: Summary of pitches

Analysis area	Total pitches	Available for community use
North	9	8
South	4	3
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	13	11

Most provision is found in the North Analysis Area with nine cricket pitches, eight of which are available for community use.

Additionally to these pitches there are three cricket squares at Oundle School Sports Centre. Of these squares, two have nine wickets and one has ten. Further to this there are four two wicket strips. All of the cricket squares and strips are overmarked on winter sports pitches including rugby.

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Non-turf wickets

There are four non turf wickets in East Northamptonshire. Two of which are located on school sites:

- ◆ Rushden Town Cricket Club
- ◆ Prince William School
- ◆ The Rushden Academy
- ◆ Saffron Road Recreation Ground

The two school sites that do not have community use. One site is situated in the North Analysis Area (Prince William School) and one is located in the South Analysis Area (The Rushden Academy). Both are assessed as good quality and as such there could be future potential for their use if required.

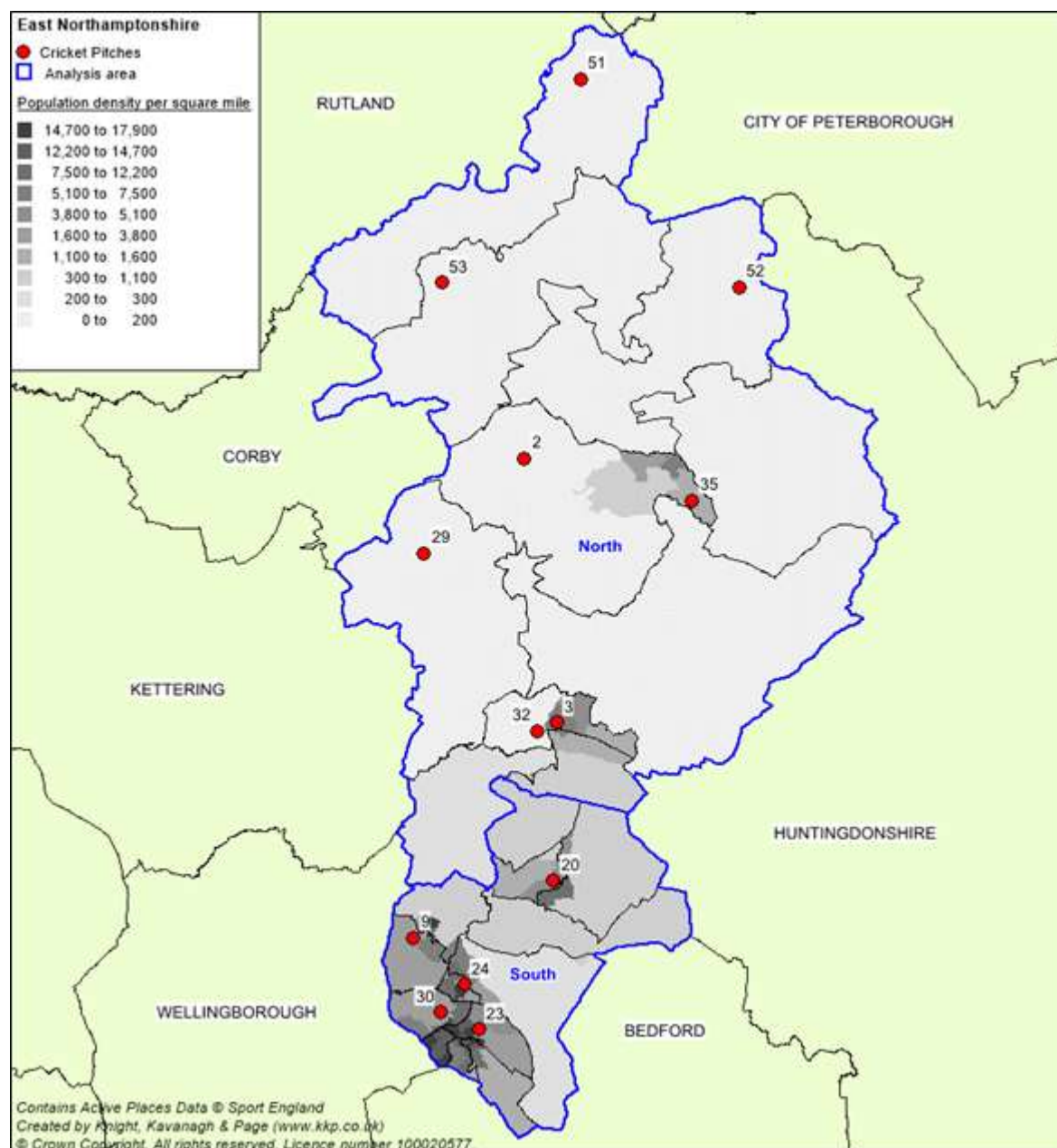
Competitive senior cricket is not generally sanctioned (by the leagues) on non turf wickets. However, they can be used for junior cricket and for training purposes with the aid of mobile nets.

The ECB's TS6 Guidance on performance standards sets requirements for match pitches that are non-turf wickets. The ECB highlights that pitches which follow this guidance are suitable for high level play. It should be noted that this is guidance for clubs and not standards.

The map overleaf identifies the location of cricket pitches within East Northamptonshire. For a key to the map see Table 6.2.

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Figure 6.1: Location of cricket pitches in East Northamptonshire



Security of tenure

All cricket pitch sites in East Northamptonshire are currently considered to be secured i.e. pitches will continue to be provided over the next three years. In addition security of tenure is generally not an issue for clubs.

The majority of clubs lease their ground (45%) from parish councils and have between 20 and 25 years remaining. The remaining clubs either rent their ground, as detailed below (27%), or own it (27%).

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A point of note is that Rushden Town Cricket Club's ground is owned by Rushden Sports Limited, which also own Rushden Town United Football Club, which runs in parallel. Consultation with Rushden Town Cricket Club reports that Rushden Sports Limited has discussed plans with the Club to sell the land on which the two clubs are situated and relocate to a bigger site. The Club report that there is a potential to accommodate two cricket pitches if this were to happen.

Table 6.2: Tenure of cricket clubs

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club based at site	Tenure
2	Benefield Social and Cricket Club	North	Benefield Cricket Club	Rented from the Social Club
3	Castle Playing Field	North	Thrapston Cricket Club	Rented from Thrapston Town Council
9	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	South	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	Owned by the Club
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	Oundle Town Cricket Club (3 rd team)	Owned by the School
18	Oundle Town Cricket Club	North	Oundle Town Cricket Club	Leased from Oundle School. 25 years remaining
20	Raunds Town Cricket Club	South	Raunds Town Cricket Club	Owned by the Club
23	Rushden Town Cricket Club	South	Rushden Town Cricket Club	Leased from Rushden Sports Limited. 20-25 years remaining
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	South	Higham Ferrers Cricket Club	Rented from Higham Ferrers Town Council
29	The Meadow	North	Brigstock Cricket Club	Leased from Brigstock Parish Council
30	The Rushden Academy	South	Not available for community use	
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	North	Thrapston Cricket Club (3 rd team)	Owned by Islip Parish Council
35	Prince William School	North	Not available for community use	
51	Easton Playing Field	North	Easton on the Hill Cricket Club	Leased from Easton on the Hill Parish Council. 25 years remaining
52	Nassington Playing Fields	North	Nassington Cricket Club	Leased from Nassington Parish Council. 25 years remaining
53	Laxton Park	North	Laxton Park Cricket Club	Owned by the Club
			Kings Cliffe Cricket Club	Hired from Laxton Park Cricket Club

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Quality

As part of the PPS methodology there are three levels to assess quality; good, standard and poor. In order to bring the PQS assessments in line with this pitches assessed as very good or good are considered 'good'. Above average and below average are considered 'standard' quality and poor and unsuitable pitches considered 'poor' quality.

The audit of cricket pitches in East Northamptonshire found the majority to be of a standard quality (nine pitches). Five pitches are assessed as good quality and one as poor. The table below summarises the pitch quality following site visits.

Table 6.3: Pitch quality of all pitches

Good	Standard	Poor
5	9	1

The quality score from the non technical assessment for each individual site is show in the table below.

Table 6.4 Individual site quality scores

Site	Club using site	Non technical assessment quality score
Benefield Cricket Club	Benefield Cricket Club	Standard
Castle Playing Field	Thrapston Cricket Club	Standard
Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	Standard
Oundle School Sports Centre	Oundle Town Cricket Club	Good
Oundle Town Cricket Club	Oundle Town Cricket Club	Good
Raunds Town Cricket Club	Raunds Town Cricket Club	Standard
Rushden Town Cricket Club	Rushden Town Cricket Club	Good
Saffron Road Recreation Ground	Higham Ferrers Cricket Club	Standard
The Meadow	Brigstock Cricket Club	Standard
The Rushden Academy	-	Good
Tollbar Road Playing Field	Thrapston Cricket Club (3rdTeam)	Standard
The Prince William Academy	-	Good
Easton Playing Field	Easton on the Hill Cricket Club	Standard
Nassington Playing Fields	Nassington Cricket Club	Standard
Laxton Park	Laxton Park Cricket Club Kings Cliffe Cricket Club	Poor

In support of the pitch assessment findings, two thirds (72%) of clubs responding to electronic survey or which were interviewed face to face report their pitch as either good or standard quality. Three clubs (27%) have described their pitch as being poor (Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club, Higham Ferrers Cricket Club and Laxton Park Cricket Club).

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Reasons for this include poor grass coverage, grass length, unevenness or a combination. Higham Ferrers Cricket Club also report vandalism, which causes damage to the pitch, consequently causing the pitch quality to suffer. Furthermore, Brigstock Cricket Club's pitch is liable to flooding due to its position adjacent to a river. It is understood that Irthlingborough CC has aspirations to upgrade its ground to a premier league standard. The Club is in the process of applying for funding.

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the Performance Quality Standards which are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsmanship. The report identifies surface issues and suggests options for remediation together with likely costs. For further guidance on this, please contact the ECB. The following pitches in East Northamptonshire have undergone a PQS assessment:

- ◀ Rushden Town Cricket Club
- ◀ Thrapston Cricket Club

The PQS for Rushden Town Cricket Club, produced in 2005 reports good soil composition, and no evidence of moss, weeds, pests or disease on the pitch. The grass coverage of 88% is described as an area for improvement along with improving presence of some nutrients within the grass. In order to improve grass coverage and a slight raise to the bowling ends of the wickets, the process of scarification is suggested.

Despite the PQS being conducted in 2005, it reflects the results of the recent non technical assessment. The wickets are reported to have good bounce, which can be attributed to the good soil composition described in the PQS. The PQS states that the soil composition present, lends itself to cricket. There is also still no evidence of moss or other materials on the surface of the wickets and the grass coverage remains over 80%. Some improvement may have been made with no unevenness being reported in contrast to the slight raises at the bowling ends of the wicket described in 2005.

Ancillary facilities

All clubs in East Northamptonshire have access to changing room facilities at their home ground. All but one club report their clubhouse/pavilion being good (33%) or acceptable (58%). The only ground with ancillary facilities that have been rated as poor are Easton on Hill Playing Fields. The Club state that vandalism is an issue at this site, which could account for this rating.

Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. In East Northamptonshire, just over half of clubs (54%) report a demand for additional training facilities. Three clubs report a need for artificial training areas and nets to help accommodate demand when the pitch is at capacity on scheduled training nights.

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Table 6.5 Expressed demand for cricket training facilities

Site	Demand Expressed
Easton on the Hill Cricket Club	Additional practice nets
Higham Ferrers Cricket Club	More facilities to cope with demand on training nights
Oundle Town Cricket Club	Additional practice nets
Raunds Town Cricket Club	Additional practice nets
Rushden Town Cricket Club	More indoor training facilities
Thrapston Cricket Club	More indoor training facilities

The following pitches are currently without practice nets:

- ❖ Saffron Road Recreation Ground (mobile nets are used)
- ❖ Tollbar Road Playing Field
- ❖ Oundle Town Cricket Club
- ❖ Prince William School
- ❖ The Rushden Academy

6.3: Demand

In total there are 33 senior teams making up 48% of the cricket teams in East Northamptonshire and 36 junior teams, making up the remaining 52% of teams in the area.

Cricket clubs in East Northamptonshire vary in size. Thrapston Town Cricket Club is a club with 14 teams, Easton on the Hill Cricket Club comprises of just one senior team. Five of the clubs in East Northamptonshire have a large number of teams. These clubs tend to have both large senior sections and teams at a number of junior age groups. For example, Oundle Town Cricket Club has six senior teams and six junior teams ranging from under 15's to under 11's.

The table below shows that there is more junior and senior cricket played in the North Analysis Area. There is also a womens senior cricket team, which is part of Thrapston Town Cricket Club. It currently plays in the Womens Midlands League (Division 2). It is also worth noting that Thrapston Cricket Club has a girls under 13's team within its junior section.

Table 6.6: Summary of teams by analysis area

Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
	Senior men	Senior women	Junior
North	19	1	21
South	13	0	14
East Northamptonshire	32	1	36

Club consultation indicates that the number of senior cricket teams in East Northamptonshire has predominantly stayed the same within the last three years. However, three clubs: Thrapston Cricket Club, Rushden Town Cricket Club and Laxton Park Cricket Club, report an increase in the number of senior players.

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Rushden Town Cricket Club has expanded particularly quickly, gaining three senior teams and seven junior teams in six years. Additionally seven clubs have expressed a desire to expand the number of teams at their club over the next few years.

Junior cricket within the area is seen to be increasing, with six teams reporting an increase in junior members. This includes Easton on the Hill Cricket Club, which reports an additional 30 juniors between the ages of six and fourteen attending training. Only Raunds Town Cricket Club notes a decrease in junior members.

Further to this Oundle School Cricket Club fields sixteen teams from U12 to 1st XI during the summer term with block fixtures against all the major cricket schools in the region.

Women's and girls' cricket

Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority for the ECB and there is a target to establish more female teams in every local authority over the next five years. 8-10% of the Whole Sport Plan funding is focused around women and girls and talent identification.

Within East Northamptonshire there is a girls' team and a women's team, both at Thrapston Town Cricket Club. Girls are also able to play in mixed junior teams. Consultation with Thrapston Cricket Club reports that womens cricket is trying to developing in the area. This is reflected by Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club and Rushden Town Cricket Club which both describe an increase in female members. Moreover, Rushden Town Cricket Club currently has ten female players in its senior section. During consultation, Nassington Cricket Club also expressed a desire to create a womens team.

Last Man Stands and Twenty20

There are a number of variations on the traditional game of cricket such as Last Man Stands (LMS) and Twenty20. There are currently no LMS teams or leagues reported to exist in East Northamptonshire. The fact this version of the game is not played in the area may be attributed to the fact that LMS is played on artificial wickets. It is also best placed at multi pitch sites. Whilst there is an artificial wicket both in the North and South analysis areas, neither of these are open to community use. Furthermore, they are not located on multi pitch sites.

Twenty20 (T20) cricket is a much shorter version of the game, lasting around three hours. There are currently two T20 teams in East Northamptonshire. One at Oundle Town Cricket Club and the other at Higham Ferrers Cricket Club. Both of these teams play midweek games.

Unmet demand

None of the clubs report current unmet demand for pitches, that is, no clubs report that teams were unable to play due to a lack of pitches.

Latent demand

One club expresses latent demand; Rushden Town Cricket Club explain how it would like to expand but would need access to a second home ground in order to do this.

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In addition, Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool also enables an analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in cricket but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 334 people, 86 (25.7%) of which is the segment 'Tim-Settling down males'.

Displaced demand

Rushden Town Cricket Club report having displaced demand. Its third and fourth teams have to travel outside of the study area to access a pitch. The Club travel to Dean Cricket Club in Bedfordshire. During consultation the Club explained that it travels out of the study area to find a second ground of good quality. However, would like the second ground to be closer to its home ground.

Future demand

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts. Team generation rates are used below as the basis for calculating the number of teams likely to be generated in the future (2021) based on population growth.

Table 6.7: Team generation rates based on population growth

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Future population within age group	Predicted future number of teams	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Mens (18-55)	20,713	32	1:647	19,654	30.4	0
Senior Womens (18-55)	21,257	1	1:21,257	20,317	1	0
Junior Boys (7-17)	6,465	35	1:185	6,843	37	2
Junior Girls (7-17)	5,931	1	1:5,931	6,218	1	0

Increases in population equate to the potential creation of two new junior boys teams across East Northamptonshire.

In addition to potential increases from population growth, seven clubs stated that they wish to increase the number of teams as outlined below.

Table 6.8: Club growth aspirations

Club	Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
		Senior men	Senior women	Junior
Easton on the Hill Cricket Club	North	-	-	2
Higham Ferrers Cricket Club	South	-	-	1
Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	South	1	-	2
Nassington Cricket Club	North	-	1	1
Raunds Town Cricket Club	South	-	-	1
Rushden Town Cricket Club	South	-	-	1

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Club	Analysis area	No. of competitive teams		
		Senior men	Senior women	Junior
Thrapston Cricket Club	North	1	1	1
TOTAL		2	2	9

There are clubs within both analysis areas that wish to grow. Thrapston Cricket Club is the most ambitious stating two men's, one women and one junior team. Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club also aims to create one senior and two junior teams.

It must be noted, however, that these plans are aspirations that the clubs have and, given that participation in cricket is declining nationally, such a large increase is unlikely to be fully realised.

Peak time demand

An analysis of match play identifies that peak time demand for cricket in East Northamptonshire is midweek. This is accounted to the high number of junior teams in the areas, as well as there being the senior Geddington Midweek League. However, it should be taken into account that midweek cricket has the potential to be spread across five days. Junior cricket is either played midweek or on a Sunday morning. The majority of junior teams (69%), at all age groups play in the Higham and District Youth League.

The peak time demand for senior cricket is Saturday afternoon, with 20 teams playing during this time period. This is compared to 13 teams which play their matches either on a Sunday or as a midweek fixture. Over half of the senior teams (54%) play in the Northamptonshire Cricket League. All the leagues fixtures, except for their Twenty20 plate are played on a Saturday afternoon.

6.4: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than weekly basis. This is due to playability (i.e., only one match is generally played per pitch per day at weekends or weekday evening). Wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and allow repair. Therefore, it is more accurate to assess capacity seasonally rather than weekly. The capacity of a pitch to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section presents the current pitch stock available for cricket in East Northamptonshire. It illustrates the:

- ✦ Number of grass and artificial cricket wickets per pitch
- ✦ Number of competitive matches per season per pitch

To help calculate pitch capacity, the ECB suggests that a good quality wicket should be able to take:

- ✦ 5 matches per season per grass wicket (adults).
- ✦ 60 matches per season per synthetic wicket (adults).

This information is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

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

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Table 6.9: Cricket pitch capacity for pitches in community use

Site ID	Site name	Clubs playing at the site	Analysis area	No. of pitches	No. of wickets	Quality	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)
2	Benefield Cricket Club	Benefield Cricket Club	North	1	8	Standard	9	40	-31
3	Castle Playing Field	Thrapston Cricket Club	North	1	12	Standard	71	60	11
51	Easton Playing Field	Easton on the Hill Cricket Club	North	1	7	Standard	10	35	-25
9	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	South	1	11	Standard	50	55	-5
53	Laxton Park	Laxton Park Cricket Club	North	1	4	Poor	18	20	-2
52	Nassington Playing Fields	Nassington Cricket Club	North	1	12	Standard	66	60	6
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	Oundle Town Cricket Club Oundle School Cricket Club (1 st team)	North	1	12	Good	30	60	-30
18	Oundle Town Cricket Club	Oundle Town Cricket Club	North	1	8	Good	60	40	20
20	Raunds Town Cricket Club	Raunds Town Cricket Club	South	1	8	Standard	29	40	-11
23	Rushden Town Cricket Club ¹²	Rushden Town Cricket Club	South	1	11	Good	57	55	2
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground ¹¹	Higham Ferrers Cricket Club	South	1	12	Standard	18	60	-42
29	The Meadow	Brigstock Cricket Club	North	1	10	Standard	51	50	1
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	Thrapston Cricket Club (3 rd team)	North	1	7	Standard	9	35	-26

¹² Site also has an artificial wicket. Not allocated as part of capacity analysis.

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6.5: Supply and demand analysis

Spare capacity

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified 'potential capacity' can be deemed 'spare capacity'. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular training sessions, or to protect the quality of the site.

Both midweek and Saturday afternoon capacity has been analysed. Although midweek has been identified as peak demand for cricket, it needs to be noted that this can be spread over five days. Therefore, the 25 teams which play midweek matches will not all play on the same day. However, the twenty teams which play on a Saturday afternoon, do all play on one day, subsequently, Saturday afternoon has potential to be seen as the true peak demand time for cricket in East Northamptonshire.

Midweek

Table 6.10: Actual spare capacity midweek

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Spare capacity (sessions per season)	Pitches available in peak period (Midweek)	Comments
2	Benefield Cricket and Social Club	North	1	-31	1	Capacity for two more teams' midweek.
51	Easton Playing Field	North	1	-25	1	Capacity for two more teams' midweek.
9	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	South	1	-5	0	No midweek capacity
53	Laxton Park	North	1	-2	1	Minimal spare capacity. Retain to protect quality.
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	1	-30	0	No midweek capacity
20	Raunds Town Cricket Club	South	1	-11	0.5	Capacity for one more team midweek.
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	South	1	-42	1	Capacity for two more teams midweek.
32	Tollbar Road Playing Field	North	1	-26	1	Capacity for two more teams' midweek.

There are eight sites that show potential spare capacity during peak time for cricket. However, only six have capacity to accommodate more teams midweek albeit all these pitches are assessed as standard quality and as such improving quality should be the priority.

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Saturday afternoon

Table 6.11: Actual spare capacity Saturday afternoon

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Spare capacity (sessions per season)	Pitches available in peak period (Saturday)	Comments
2	Benefield Cricket Club	North	1	-31	0.5	Capacity for one more team on Saturday afternoon.
51	Easton Playing Fields	North	1	-25	1	Capacity for two more teams on Saturday afternoon.
9	Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club	South	1	-5	0	No Saturday capacity.
53	Laxton Park	North	1	-10	1	Minimal spare capacity. Retain to protect quality.
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	North	1	-30	0.5	Capacity for one more team on Saturday afternoon.
20	Raunds Town Cricket Club	South	1	-11	0	No Saturday capacity.
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	South	1	-42	0	No Saturday capacity.
32	Tollbar Road Playing Fields	North	1	-26	0.5	Capacity for one more team on Saturday afternoon.

There are eight sites that show potential spare capacity during peak time for senior cricket. However, only five have spare capacity to accommodate more teams on a Saturday afternoon albeit most of these pitches are assessed as standard quality and as such improving quality should be the priority.

Overplay

Overplay occurs when more play is accommodated at a site than it is able to sustain. In East Northamptonshire, there is overplay recorded at five sites; Castle Playing Fields, Oundle Town Cricket Club, Rushden Town Cricket Club, The Meadow and Nassington Playing Fields. The table below highlights the extent to which the five sites are currently overplayed.

Table 6.12: Overplay summary

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality rating	Capacity rating	Comments
3	Castle Playing Fields	North	Standard	11	Moderate amount of overplay.
18	Oundle Town Cricket Club	North	Good	20	Large amount of overplay

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Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality rating	Capacity rating	Comments
23	Rushden Town Cricket Club	South	Good	2	Small amount of overplay. Just over capacity.
29	The Meadow	North	Standard	1	Small amount of overplay. Just over capacity.
52	Nassington Playing Fields	North	Standard	6	Small amount overplay.

The two sites with the most significant overplay are Oundle Town Cricket Club and Castle Playing Fields (Thrapston Cricket Club). It should be noted that a large percentage of usage at each site comes from junior cricket. In general, junior cricket will not have as much of an adverse effect on quality as senior cricket due to the shorter format of matches.

Overplay at Rushden Town Cricket Club (two match sessions per season) is not considered an issue. The site contains a artificial wicket which is likely to accommodate some junior play. Furthermore, the small amount of overplay is likely to be able to accommodated by the good quality of the site.

The Meadow (one match session per season) although not significant could be accommodated through improvements to pitch quality (both pitches are assessed as standard quality). The total overplay is shown in the table below. The majority of overplay (95%) is located in the North Analysis Area.

Table 6.13: Overplay analysis area summary

Analysis area	Overplay (matches per season)
North	38
South	2
East Northamptonshire	40

6.6 Conclusions

Consideration must be given to the extent in which current provision can accommodate current and future demand. The table below looks at available spare capacity considered against overplay and the future demand highlighted.

Table 6.14: Capacity of cricket pitches on Saturday afternoon

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (match equivalents)	Demand (match equivalents)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
North	112	38	74	3.5	70.5
South	0	2	-2	3	-5
East Northamptonshire	112	40	72	6.5	65.5

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Analysis suggests there will be a future overall spare capacity of 65.5 match equivalent sessions in East Northamptonshire. However, in South Analysis Area there is a small shortfall of 2 equivalent sessions currently. This is further exacerbated in the future to 5 match equivalent sessions.

Cricket summary

- ▶ There are 13 senior grass cricket pitches in East Northamptonshire all of which are available for community use and secured.
- ▶ The majority of pitches are considered to be standard quality, indicating that on the whole the pitches are fit for purpose but further work could be carried out to improve them.
- ▶ There are a total of four non-turf wickets in East Northamptonshire. Two are stand-alone non-turf wickets at education sites. Although both are rated as good quality, neither is available for community use.
- ▶ Although most clubs report that ancillary facilities are good or standard, Easton on the Hill Cricket Club rates their ancillary facilities as poor.
- ▶ Just over half of the clubs report demand for additional, or new, training provision.
- ▶ All clubs in East Northamptonshire have at least one adult team. However, the majority have more than one. There are three clubs that do not have any junior teams (Easton on the Hill Cricket Club, Laxton Park Cricket Club and Benefield Cricket Club). However Easton on the Hill Cricket Club has aspirations to create a junior section.
- ▶ Demand for cricket is good with a total of nine clubs generating 70 teams. There are a total of 33 senior and 36 junior teams.
- ▶ There are clubs within each analysis area that wish to grow. Thrapston Cricket Club and Irthlingborough Town Cricket Club are the more ambitious, both hoping to expand by three teams. The latter also has aspiration to upgrade their ground to premier league standards.
- ▶ As there is no actual spare capacity available on any of the squares at peak time, this suggests that there is an opportunity for further play on the squares but that the play must take place midweek or Sundays. This lends itself to junior cricket which allows clubs to grow these sections if demand exists in the future.
- ▶ Total over play equates to 40 match sessions per season across five sites, Castle Playing Fields, Oundle Town Cricket Club, Rushden Town Cricket Club, The Meadow and Nassington Playing Fields.
- ▶ Analysis suggests there is an overall spare capacity of 65.5 match equivalent sessions in East Northamptonshire. However, in South Analysis Area there is a small shortfall of 2 equivalent sessions currently. This is further exacerbated in the future to 5 match equivalent sessions.
- ▶ Greater use of artificial wickets could be one way to alleviate some overplay.
- ▶ There are three clubs without long term (i.e. over 25 years) security of tenure on the pitches that are accessed.- Thrapston Cricket Club, Higham Ferrers Cricket Club and Brigstock Cricket Club.

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PART 7: TENNIS

7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally in East Northamptonshire.

Consultation

There are five tennis clubs in East Northamptonshire, all of which responded to an online survey:

- ◆ Thrapston and District Lawn Tennis Club
- ◆ Kings Cliffe Tennis Club
- ◆ Oundle Lawn Tennis Club
- ◆ Apethorpe Tennis Club
- ◆ Ferrers and Rushden Lawn Tennis Club

The LTA were also consulted as part of this process and although East Northamptonshire is not currently a priority area, locally the focus is on larger areas of population and growth potential, such as Wellingborough, Kettering and Corby.

7.2: Supply

Quantity

There are a total of 49 tennis courts in East Northamptonshire, provided across 10 sites, including sports clubs, schools and recreation grounds. Of these, seven are categorised as being available for community use across seven sites. The courts unavailable for community use are predominately located at education sites. These are listed below:

- ◆ Ferrers Specialist Arts College (eight courts)
- ◆ Huxlow Science College (five courts)
- ◆ Oundle School Sports Centre (eight courts)

Oundle School Sports Centre does, however, have four additional courts that are available for community use.

For the purposes of this report, being available for community use refers to courts in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as being available for hire by individuals, teams or clubs.

Table 7.1: Summary of the number of tennis courts by analysis area

Analysis area	Courts (sites) available for community use	Courts (sites) unavailable for community use
North	15 (4)	8 (1)
South	13 (4)	13 (2)
East Northamptonshire	28 (8)	21 (3)

As indicated in Table 7.1, the North Analysis Area contains the most community available courts (15), although the South also has 13 courts available for community use.

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Indoor facilities

There are no indoor facilities within the boundaries of East Northamptonshire. However, indoor facilities are located in Huntingdonshire, Peterborough and Corby. The LTA state that there is no geographical need for indoor provision in East Northamptonshire.

Future supply

Kings Cliffe Active (Kings Cliffe and Area Community Sports Project) has recently been successful in securing £35,000 towards developing three new tennis courts/two netball courts. This would provide three additional courts available for community use in the North Analysis Area.

Thrapston and District Tennis Club intend on upgrading floodlighting at the facility, and longer term is considering resurfacing or developing a new court. Oundle TC is resurfacing three courts at the time of this report, and Ferrer and Rushden TC highlight aspirations to develop a new pavilion/storage hut on site.

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Table 7.2: Tennis courts in East Northamptonshire

Site ID	Site name	Ownership	Analysis area	Availability for community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type	Court quality ¹³
4	Ferrers Specialist Arts College	School	South	No	8	No	Tarmac	Average
7	Huxlow Science College	School	South	No	5	No	Tarmac	Average
14	Manor School Sports College	School	South	Yes	3	Yes	Tarmac	Average
					3	Yes	Macadam	Average
17	Oundle School Sports Centre	School	North	Yes	4	No	Macadam	Good
		School		No	8	No	Tarmac	Average
24	Saffron Road Recreation Ground	Council	South	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Good
30	The Rushden Academy	School	South	Yes	3	No	Tarmac	Good
36	Oundle Tennis Club	Club	North	Yes	5	Yes	Macadam	Good
37	Thrapston and District Tennis Club	Club	North	Yes	4	Yes	Macadam	Good
56	Apethorpe Tennis Club	Private - leased by club	North	Yes	2	No	Macadam	Good
67	Spencer Park, Rushden	Rushden Town Council	South	Yes	2	No	Artificial	Unknown ¹⁴

¹³ Assessed using a non technical site assessment proforma and also takes account of user comments.

¹⁴ Quality unknown due to late inclusion to study

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Quality

In terms of quality, tennis courts are rated on the scale below.

Table 7.3: Tennis court green quality scale

Good	Average	Poor

All facilities that are not available for community use are rated as average. Of provision that is available for community use, 23% (six courts) are rated as average. The remaining 77% (20 courts) are rated as good. There are no courts rated as poor.

Table 7.4: Summary of the quality of community accessible courts by analysis area

Analysis area	Good	Average	Poor
North	15	0	0
South	5	6	0
East Northamptonshire	20	6	0

The courts assessed as average quality are all located at Manor School Sports College. There is some evidence of moss/lichen on these courts.

Club consultation highlighted that the majority of clubs are happy with the quality of the courts and rate them as good. Oundle TC and Apethorpe TC both state that court quality has improved due to court resurfacing, Ferrers and Rushden Tennis Club (based at Saffron Road Recreation Ground) state that the court quality has improved due to moss treatment.

The three courts at the Rushden Academy are rated as good quality. The four courts that are available for community use at Oundle School Sports Centre are also rated as good quality. The other school sites, Ferrers Specialist Arts College, Huxlow Science College, Manor School Sports College and the eight remaining courts at Oundle School Sports Centre are all rated as average quality.

The majority of tennis courts within schools are over marked by netball courts. Courts which are over marked tend to receive higher levels of use which can result in more wear and tear.

Maintenance

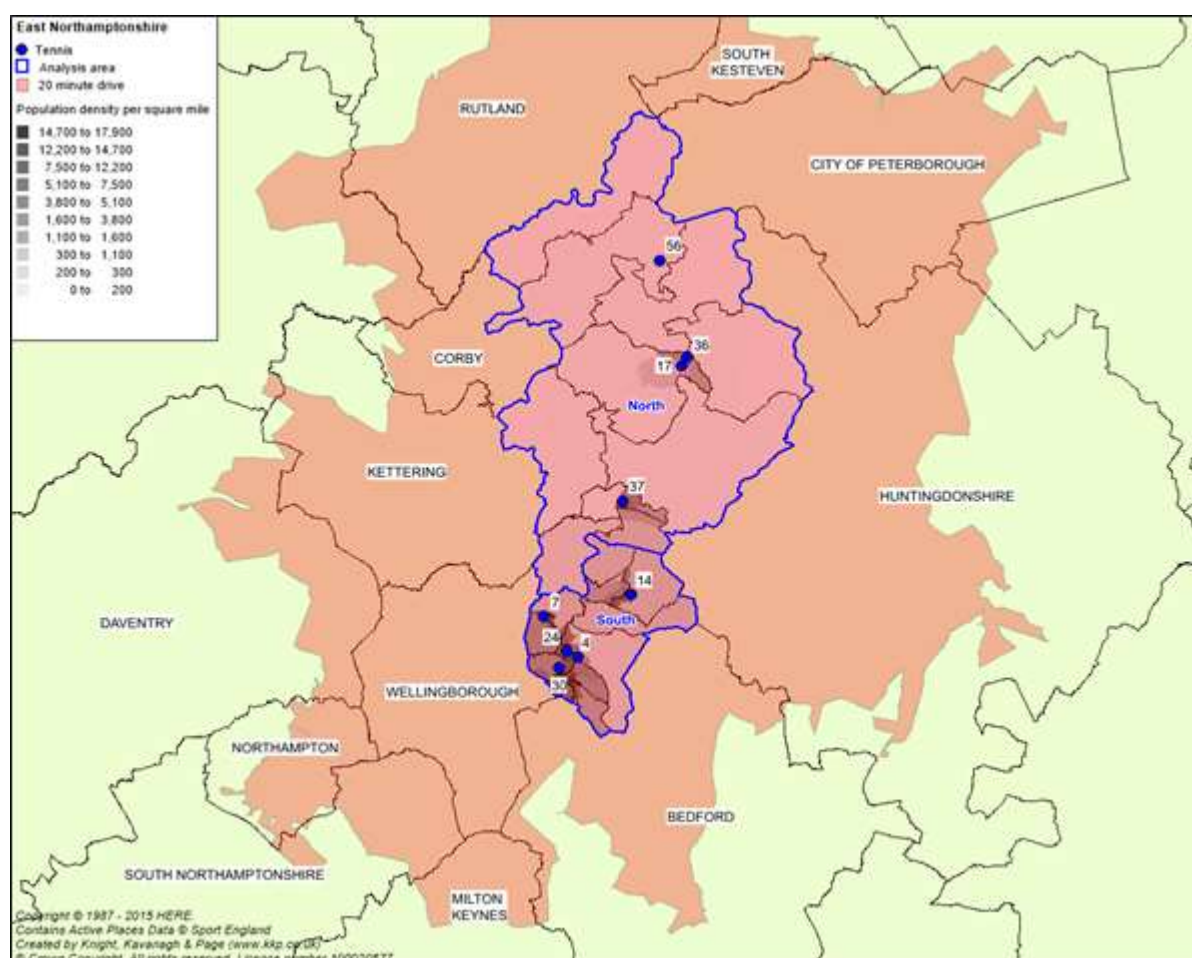
Oundle TC and Thrapston and District TC are both responsible for the maintenance of the courts at their facilities. The Council is responsible for the maintenance at Saffron Road Recreation Ground (home of Rushden and Ferrers TC).

Accessibility

The majority of clubs state that most players travel between two and five miles to access the facilities. Figure 7.1 below shows that most of the District and much wider is within a 20 minute drive of a tennis court in East Northamptonshire.

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Figure 7.1: Tennis courts in East Northamptonshire¹⁵



Floodlights

Two of the clubs, Oundle TC (five courts) and Thrapston and District TC (four courts), both have fully floodlit courts, providing additional opportunity to access courts for training and matches during the evenings. Manor School Sports College also has six fully floodlit courts, which are available for community use but neither club has the demand to use these facilities currently.

Kings Cliffe TC and Ferrers and Rushden TC both express a demand for floodlights in order to increase the capacity of the courts to accommodate more play.

Ownership/management

The table below highlights the management arrangements of community available courts within each analysis area. Of community accessible courts, 50% are located on education sites. There are no club sites in the South Analysis Area.

¹⁵ Courts at Spencer Park, Rushden are not mapped due to late inclusion

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Table 7.5: Courts available for community use by management arrangements

Analysis area	No. of club/private courts	No. of Council courts	No. of educational courts
North	11	0	4
South	0	4	9
East Northamptonshire	11	4	13

The Council manage two courts at Saffron Road Recreation Ground. The other two courts are managed by Rushden Town Council. All are located in the South Analysis area. All 11 club/private courts are located in the North Analysis Area.

Ancillary provision

Thrapston and District TC, Kings Cliffe TC and Oundle TC all report access to changing facilities and car parking. Ferrers and Rushden TC do not currently have access to adequate parking or ancillary facilities. The Club itself state that the provision of a pavilion/hut would provide storage, toilets and changing facilities, which would help to attract more members. Apethorpe TC has a small hut, with no water, electricity or changing facilities to service its courts.

Club challenges

Consultation with clubs highlighted a small number of challenges that some of the clubs face. These are listed by club below.

Table 7.6: Current site issues

Club	Current issues
Kings Cliffe Tennis Club	More funding being sought to develop three courts on site.
Apethorpe Tennis Club	Would like to upgrade the clubhouse but priority for limited funds is the upkeep of the courts.
Ferrers and Rushden Tennis Club	The provision of a club pavilion would help attract new members.

7.3: Demand

Current demand

Competitive tennis

There are five existing clubs in East Northamptonshire that currently provide a total of 479 seniors and 122 junior members. The clubs vary in size, with Oundle TC containing the most members (305) and Apethorpe TC the least (25).

Thrapston and District TC enter three mens, two ladies and three mixed teams into the East Northants Tennis League. Oundle TC enters one ladies and one mixed team into the same league. Ferrers and Rushden TC also enter one ladies and one mixed team into this league, plus one mens team in the Northampton League. Apethorpe TC does not enter any league and play purely social tennis.

Table 7.7: Summary of club membership

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Club	Number of members	
	Seniors	Juniors
Thrapston and District Tennis Club	138	55
Oundle Tennis Club	245	60
Apethorpe Tennis Club	25	0
Ferrers and Rushden Tennis Club	29	7
Kings Cliffe Tennis Club	42	0
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	479	122

Currently Kings Cliffe Active TC exists as a club without a permanent home. It has been successful in applying for some funding to build courts at the Kings Cliffe Active site, and is currently seeking additional funding.

All clubs report static senior membership figures over recent years, apart from Ferrers and Rushden TC, which has seen an increase of 20 senior members and seven junior members due to a recruitment campaign and change of venue. In addition, Oundle TC has seen an increase of 20 junior members due to an active recruitment drive.

Future demand

Each consulted club expresses plans to increase their membership. When asked to quantify potential growth, some clubs were not forthcoming with numbers, estimates from other clubs ranged from 50 to 15 new members.

Table 7.8: Summary of planned growth in tennis clubs

Club	Number of potential additional members	
	Seniors	Juniors
Thrapston and District Tennis Club	Unspecified	Unspecified
Oundle Tennis Club	5	10
Apethorpe Tennis Club	Unspecified	Unspecified
Ferrers and Rushden Tennis Club	10	5
Kings Cliffe Tennis Club	50	Unspecified
EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	65	15

All clubs report that the planned increase in membership can all be accommodated at current facilities, although Ferrers and Rushden TC and Kings Cliffe TC report a demand for floodlit courts. Two clubs, Kings Cliffe TC and Oundle TC have written sports development plans to assist with these targets.

Latent demand

No clubs in East Northamptonshire suggest that additional tennis courts either at their facility or in the area would lead to an increase in club membership. In effect, the perception is that any planned increases can be accommodated at existing facilities. There are not any clubs that operate a waiting list and the majority would welcome new members.

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Informal tennis

Improving park courts is a national priority for the LTA; however, it reports that unless tennis courts are supported by changing facilities, a café and floodlighting, it becomes harder to run a sustainable tennis programme, which therefore makes it harder to generate external investment. No park courts within East Northamptonshire satisfy the above criteria.

The majority of clubs do not readily allow for casual use of their courts by the community, with clubs preferring to remain strictly private, whilst others report that pay and play is difficult to manage.

No education sites which are available for community use report any regular demand from the community, other than Oundle School Sports Centre, which regularly hires its four courts out, mainly for camps in school holidays.

7.4: Supply and demand analysis

Based on LTA guidelines, a floodlit court provides capacity for 60 members and a non-floodlit court provides capacity for 40 members. Using this calculation in East Northamptonshire, the table below shows the estimated spare capacity at current club sites.

Table 7.9: Club capacity

Club	Courts		Estimated capacity	Members	Comments
	Flood-lights?	No flood-lights?			
Thrapston and District Tennis Club	4	-	240	193	Club has spare capacity.
Oundle Tennis Club	5	-	300	305	Club working at capacity
Apethorpe Tennis Club	-	2	80	25	Club has spare capacity
Ferrers and Rushden Tennis Club (Saffron Road Recreation Ground)	-	2	80	36	Club has spare capacity
Kings Cliffe Tennis Club	-	0	0	42	Unknown

Despite appearing to be working at capacity based on LTA guidelines, it is understood Oundle Tennis Club is able to accommodate new members.

The proposed development of three new tennis courts at Kings Cliffe Active will accommodate expressed demand from Kings Cliffe Tennis Club.

All remaining courts are deemed to have spare capacity and priority should be placed on improving current facilities, in particular the supporting ancillary facilities.

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Tennis summary

- ◀ There are a total of 49 tennis courts across 10 sites identified in East Northamptonshire with seven sites categorised as being available for community use.
- ◀ 46% of community accessible courts are available on school sites; however minimal demand is reported for their use.
- ◀ Of the provision that is available for community use and with a quality rating, 77% (20 courts) are rated as good quality. The remaining 23% (six courts) are average quality.
- ◀ There are five tennis clubs in East Northamptonshire, three have their own site, one hires from the Parish Council and one intends to build courts soon.
- ◀ There are 15 floodlit courts, all available for community use. The courts are not regularly used with club activity as there is no current demand.
- ◀ Development plans are in place for the creation of three new tennis courts at Kings Cliffe Active.
- ◀ Ferraers and Rushden TC do not have access to adequate changing facilities on site.
- ◀ There are five clubs in East Northamptonshire, providing a total of 479 senior and 122 junior members.
- ◀ The LTA reports that unless tennis courts are supported by changing facilities, a café and floodlighting, it becomes harder to run a sustainable tennis programme.
- ◀ No education sites which are available for community use report any regular demand from the community, other than Oundle School Sports Centre, which hires its four courts out regularly for holiday camps.
- ◀ Based on LTA guidelines, Oundle Tennis Club is operating at capacity. However, it is understood the Club still has capacity to accommodate new members. Kings Cliffe TC and Ferraers and Rushden TC both express a desire to develop floodlights and increase capacity.
- ◀ Priority should be placed on improving current facilities, in particular relating to ancillary facilities where lacking.
- ◀ On the whole, it is believed that the current level of provision can accommodate current and predicted future demand.

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PART 8: BOWLS

8.1: Introduction

All bowling greens in East Northamptonshire are flat greens. Bowls England is the National Governing Body for flat green bowls with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance of flat green bowls. Locally it is administered by Bowls Northamptonshire, the County Bowls Association. The bowling season runs from May to September.

Consultation

There are eight bowls clubs identified that access facilities in East Northamptonshire. All clubs responded to an online survey and are listed below. Bowls Northamptonshire and Bowls England have both also been consulted as part of this study.

- ◀ Irthlingborough Church Institute Bowls Club
- ◀ Oundle Bowling Club
- ◀ Islip Bowls Club
- ◀ Thrapston Bowls Club
- ◀ Stanwick Bowls Club
- ◀ Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club
- ◀ Raunds Conservative Bowling Club
- ◀ Rushden Town Bowling Club

8.2: Supply

Quantity

There are seven flat green bowling greens in East Northamptonshire provided across seven sites. Unusually, none of the facilities are provided by the District Council, although four facilities are leased or hired from parish councils. Oundle Bowling Club leases the facility from Oundle Town Council, Islip Bowls Club rent from Islip Parish Council, Thrapston Bowls club hire from Thrapston Town Council and Stanwick Bowls Club rent from Stanwick Parish Council.

Table 8.1: Summary of the number of greens by analysis area

Analysis area	Number of greens
North	4
South	3

In addition, there is an indoor bowling green at Rushden Town Bowling Club. Although this facility can supply some demand, especially during winter months, it is not included within the report as it is an indoor sports facility.

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Quality

In terms of quality, bowls greens are rated on the scale below.

Table 8.2: Bowls green quality scale

Good	Average	Poor

Greens within East Northamptonshire are generally considered to be good quality with six assessed as good and one as average quality. The table below summarises the quality of bowling greens that exist in East Northamptonshire, and the relative change in quality compared to last season, according to the clubs on site.

Table 8.3: Bowling greens in East Northamptonshire

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	No. of greens	Quality of green	Quality in comparison to last season	Bowls Northants grading
40	Higham Ferrers Town Bowling Club	South	1	Good	Slightly better	A
41	Rushden Town Bowling Club	South	1	Good	No difference	A
42	Islip Bowls Club	North	1	Good	No difference	B
43	Oundle Bowling Club	North	1	Good	No difference	A
44	Stanwick Bowls Club	South	1	Good	-	B
45	Thrapston Bowls Club	North	1	Good	Much better	A*
47	Raunds Conservative Bowls Club	South	1	Average	No difference	C

The quality of the greens has not changed in three of the facilities in East Northamptonshire. The green at Thrapston Bowls Club is reported to have got much better; the green at Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club is reported to be slightly improved in quality due to continued maintenance on the site. The green at Raunds Conservative Bowling Club has just been renewed in preparation for next season and is expected to improve the quality.

Islip Bowls Club requires investment to improve the green including edging and fencing, but has not been successful in applying for funding to date. Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club has plans for continued improvements and maintenance to the green and the Club. Raunds Conservative Bowls Club intends to improve the green this coming season (2016).

Bowls England suggests that nationally there has been a decline in the quality of greens, particularly at council owned sites, due mainly to budget restrictions and reduced maintenance programmes. This in turn has resulted in reduced enjoyment and reduced participation. However, given there are no District Council greens in East Northamptonshire this may explain why the area is bucking the national trend. None of the sites report any vandalism over the past 12 months.

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Bowls Northamptonshire state that improving the quality of existing greens is the main focus of all greens across the County that require improvement. The County Association also uses its own classification system to rate green quality in the area; this is also shown in Table 8.3. In the main, this grading supports the quality ratings as assessed by KKP. However there are some minor differences. This can be explained as the County grading system rating uses five different ratings, from A*(good) to nil grade (poor), whilst KKP assessments use three ratings, as outlined in Table 8.2.

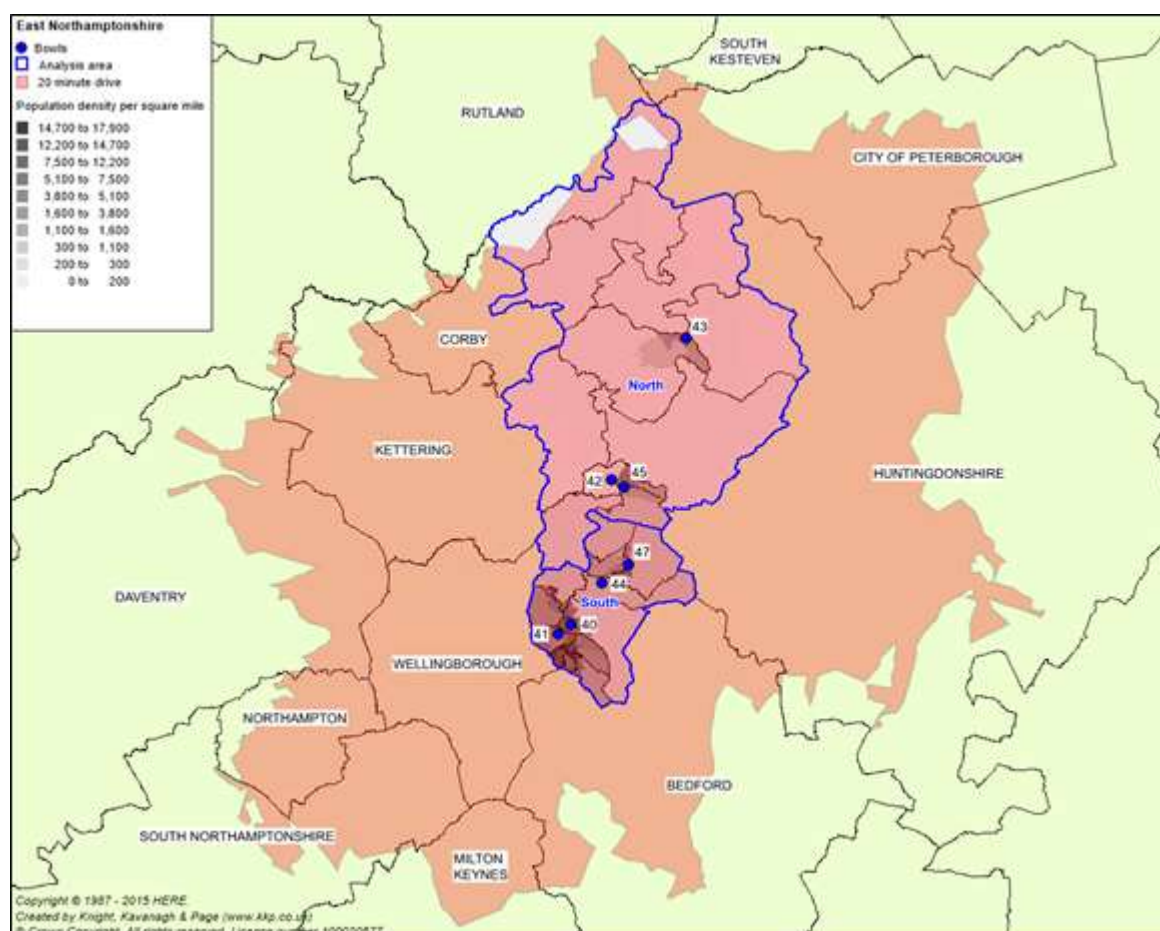
Maintenance

The clubs are all responsible for the maintenance of the greens at the facilities. Most rely on members; Higham Ferrers also use an external company to maintain the green at the Club site.

Accessibility

The majority of clubs state that most players travel between two and five miles to access facilities. Figure 8.1 below shows that the Southern Analysis Area sits within a ten minute drive of a facility and a large proportion of the Northern Analysis Area can also easily access a bowls facility within ten minutes. The very northern part of the authority area that does not fit within the catchment is an area of low population.

Figure 8.1: Bowls greens in East Northamptonshire



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Ownership/management

The majority of facilities are owned by a parish or town council and rented or leased to the clubs. The exceptions here are Raunds Conservative Club, that own the green at this facility and lease to the bowling club; and Rushden Town Bowling Club, that own this facility.

Ancillary facilities

All facilities are maintained by clubs based at the facilities. All provide a clubhouse, toilet facilities and have separate male and female changing areas. Clubhouse facilities are all rated as average or good quality. Thrapston Bowls Club is looking for funding opportunities to improve its average rated clubhouse and develop disabled access and toilet facilities. All sites apart from Islip Bowls Club provide adequate parking.

Oundle Bowling Club received a grant from the Thornhill Trust for the redevelopment of the changing rooms, toilets, equipment store and kitchen, resulting in improved facilities. The Club now plan to renovate the club room. Rushden Town Bowling Club received investment from Bowls England in 2014 for improvements to its changing and toilet facilities.

Club challenges

Consultation with clubs highlights a small number of challenges that some clubs face. These are listed by club below.

Table 8.4: Current site issues

Club	Issue to be resolved	
Irthlingborough Church Institute Bowls Club	"Lack of internal funding (subs/fundraising)" "Lack of appropriate local facilities" "Membership recruitment/retention"	
Islip Bowls Club	"Lack of internal funding (subs/fundraising)" "Lack of external funding (parish council, NGBs)" "Membership recruitment/retention"	The Club could maintain a better bowl green if there was more local funding towards up keep
Thrapston Bowls Club	We are currently looking into the feasibility of extending the Clubhouse. We desperately need disabled access and toilet facilities. Our toilet/changing room facilities are in need of extending/updating.	
Raunds Conservative Bowling Club	"Membership recruitment/retention"	

8.3: Demand

Current demand

There are eight clubs using the seven bowling greens in East Northamptonshire. Membership of those clubs that shared data amounts to 382 adult members and ten junior members. This does not include Rushden Town Bowling Club as it did not disclose membership information.

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The largest club, in terms of membership, is Oundle Bowling Club, which, despite a national trend of declining membership, reports an increase in membership over the past three years. Higham Ferrers Town Bowls and Raunds Conservative Bowls clubs both report a decline in membership.

Table 8.5: Current club membership for bowls clubs in East Northamptonshire

KKP site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	No. greens	No rinks	Clubs	Membership	
						Current	Past three years
40	Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club	South	1	6	Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club	58 adults 1 junior	Decreased
41	Rushden Town Bowling Club	South	1	6	Rushden Town Bowling Club	Unknown	Unknown
					Irthlingborough Church Institute Bowls Club	26 adults 3 juniors	Stayed the same
42	Islip Bowls Club	North	1	5	Islip Bowls Club	33 adults	Stayed the same
43	Oundle Bowling Club	North	1	6	Oundle Bowling Club	133 adult 5 juniors	Increased
44	Stanwick Bowls Club	South	1		Stanwick Bowls Club	40 adults	Stayed the same
45	Thrapston Bowls Club	North	1	6	Thrapston Bowls Club	76 adults 1 junior	Stayed the same
47	Raunds Conservative Bowls Club	South	1	6	Raunds Conservative Bowls Club	16 adults	Decreased

The following clubs do not enter any formal leagues and prefer to play friendly fixtures and club competitions, suggesting a demand for casual or informal competition in the area:

- ◀ Irthlingborough Church Institute Bowls Club
- ◀ Oundle Bowling Club
- ◀ Islip Bowls Club
- ◀ Stanwick Bowls Club

Future demand

Using ONS projections (2012-based projections 2012-2037. Released May 2014), the number of persons aged 65 and over is likely to increase continuously from 15,632 in 2012, to 20,821 in 2021, representing an increase of 33.29% and will account for 22% of East Northamptonshire's future population (compared to 17.9% currently). Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for bowling greens is likely to increase.

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Table 8.6 outlines the planned membership growth of clubs in the area. Four clubs identify plans to increase membership which will total an additional 36 adults and 17 junior players. Four clubs did not specify how many additional members are expected. Clubs state that advertising, word of mouth, flyers and open days will all contribute to the planned increase in membership. In addition, Raunds Conservative Bowls Club expects to see an increase in demand due to the closure of the relatively nearby Kettering Conservative Club.

Table 8.6: Future planned growth in bowls clubs in East Northamptonshire

Clubs	Analysis Area	No. greens	No rinks	Membership		
				Current	Plans to increase	Aim to increase
Higham Ferrers Town Bowls Club	South	1	6	58 adults 1 junior	Yes	10 adults 4 juniors
Rushden Town Bowling Club				Unknown	Yes	Unknown
Irthlingborough Church Institute Bowls Club	South	1	6	26 adults 3 juniors	Yes	6 adults 3 juniors
Islip Bowls Club	North	1	5	33 adults	Yes	10 adults
Oundle Bowling Club	North	1	6	133 adult 5 juniors	Yes	Unknown
Stanwick Bowls Club	South	1		40 adults	Yes	Unknown
Thrapston Bowls Club	North	1	6	76 adults 1 junior	Yes	10 adults 10 juniors
Raunds Conservative Bowls Club	South	1	6	16 adults	Yes	Unknown

Latent demand

No clubs suggest that an additional bowling green at their ground or in the area would lead to an increase in club membership. In effect, the perception is that any planned increases can be accommodated on existing greens. No clubs currently have a waiting list and would be able to accommodate new members.

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 153 people who would like to participate in the sport within East Northamptonshire. The most dominant segment is 'Frank' – Twilight Year Gents' (20.3%).

8.4 Supply and demand analysis

Generally it is considered that most bowling clubs in East Northamptonshire have spare capacity, meaning that current membership and an increase in membership is sustainable and clubs are able to accept additional members should demand increase. No clubs report demand for additional green space and all clubs report that identified future demand can be accommodated on greens currently available to them.

Priority should be placed on ensuring that green quality and ancillary provision at sites is sustained and improved where necessary in order to allow for continued use.

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Oundle Bowls Club is operating at above average membership for the area and it is therefore important to ensure that the Club is supported to enable it to grow. It is also important to ensure maintenance is appropriate to accommodate current levels of use.

Bowls summary

- ◀ There are seven flat green bowling sites in East Northamptonshire across seven sites and eight clubs.
- ◀ The green at Raunds Conservative Bowls Club is assessed as average quality. All remaining greens are assessed as good quality.
- ◀ Half of clubs choose not to enter formal leagues, participating in more casual and informal matches within the club, suggesting a demand for less formal competition.
- ◀ Despite a national trend of declining membership, Oundle Bowling Club report an increase in membership, while Stanwick, Thrapston, Islip Irthlingborough all report membership numbers have stayed the same over the past three years.
- ◀ Four clubs plan to increase membership and all are confident that this can be accommodated at existing sites.
- ◀ Future population projections suggest that almost one in three of the East Northamptonshire population by 2021 will be over 65+, the most likely band to play bowls.
- ◀ Generally, through consultation, it is considered that most bowling greens in East Northamptonshire have spare capacity, meaning current membership and an increase in membership is sustainable.
- ◀ Priority should therefore be placed on ensuring green quality and ancillary provision is sustained and improved where necessary.
- ◀ Oundle Bowls Club is operating at above average membership for the area and it is therefore important to ensure that the Club is supported to enable it to further grow.
- ◀ Most bowling clubs in East Northamptonshire have spare capacity, meaning that current membership and an increase in membership is sustainable and clubs are able to accept additional members should demand increase. It would appear that there are enough greens to accommodate both the current and future demand.

APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

Sport England: A Sporting Habit for Life (2012-2017)

In 2017, five years after the Olympic Games, Sport England aspires to transforming sport in England so that it is a habit for life for more people and a regular choice for the majority. Launched in January 2012 the strategy sets out how Sport England will invest over one billion pounds of National Lottery and Exchequer funding during the five year plan period. The investment will be used to create a lasting community sport legacy by growing sports participation at the grassroots level following the 2012 London Olympics. The strategy will:

- ✦ See more people starting and keeping a sporting habit for life
- ✦ Create more opportunities for young people
- ✦ Nurture and develop talent
- ✦ Provide the right facilities in the right places
- ✦ Support local authorities and unlock local funding
- ✦ Ensure real opportunities for communities

The vision is for England to be a world leading sporting nation where many more people choose to play sport. There are five strategic themes including:

- ✦ Maximise value from current NGB investment
- ✦ Places, People, Play
- ✦ Strategic direction and market intelligence
- ✦ Set criteria and support system for NGB 2013-17 investment
- ✦ Market development

The aim by 2017 is to ensure that playing sport is a lifelong habit for more people and a regular choice for the majority. A specific target is to increase the number of 14 to 25 year olds playing sport. To accomplish these aims the strategy sets out a number of outcomes:

- ✦ 4,000 secondary schools in England will be offered a community sport club on its site with a direct link to one or more NGBs, depending on the local clubs in a school's area.
- ✦ County sports partnerships will be given new resources to create effective links locally between schools and sport in the community.
- ✦ All secondary schools that wish to do so, will be supported to open up, or keep open, their sports facilities for local community use and at least a third of these will receive additional funding to make this happen.
- ✦ At least 150 further educational colleagues will benefit from a full time sports professional who will act as a College Sport Maker.
- ✦ Three quarters of university students aged 18-24 will get the chance to take up a new sport or continue playing a sport they played at school or college.
- ✦ A thousand of our most disadvantaged local communities will get a Door Step Club.
- ✦ Two thousand young people on the margins of society will be supported by the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust into sport and to gain new life skills.

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- ◀ Building on the success of the Places People Play, a further £100 million will be invested in facilities for the most popular sports.
- ◀ A minimum of 30 sports will have enhanced England Talent Pathways to ensure young people and others fulfil their potential.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The FA National Game Strategy (2011 – 2015)

The Football Association's (FA) National Game Strategy provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities, expenditure proposals and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a four year period. The main issues facing grassroots football are identified as:

- ◀ Growth and retention (young and adult players)
- ◀ Raising standards and behaviour
- ◀ Better players
- ◀ Running the game
- ◀ Workforce
- ◀ Facilities

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'The National Game Strategy' reinforces the urgent need to provide affordable, new and improved facilities in schools, clubs and on local authority sites. Over 75% of football is played on public sector facilities. The leisure budgets of most local authorities have been reduced over recent years, resulting in decaying facilities that do not serve the community and act as a disincentive to play football. The loss of playing fields has also been well documented and adds to the pressure on the remaining facilities to cope with the demand, especially in inner city and urban areas.

The growth of the commercial sector in developing custom built five-a-side facilities has changed the overall environment. High quality, modern facilities provided by Powerleague, Goals and playfootball.net for example, have added new opportunities to participate and prompted a significant growth in the number of five-a-side teams in recent years.

The FA National Facilities Strategy (2013 – 2015)

The recently launched National Facilities Strategy sets out the FA's long term vision for development of facilities to support the National Game. It aims to address and reflect the facility needs of football within the National Game. The National Game is defined as all non-professional football from Steps 1-7 of the National League System down to recreational football played on open public space. The role of facilities will be crucial in developing the game in England. One of the biggest issues raised from 'the Big Grassroots Football Survey' by that of 84% respondents, was 'poor facilities'.

The FA's vision for the future of facilities in England is to build, protect and enhance sustainable football facilities to improve the experience of the nation's favourite game. It aims to do this by:

- ✦ Building - Provide new facilities and pitches in key locations to FA standards in order to sustain existing participation and support new participation.
- ✦ Protecting - Ensure that playing pitches and facilities are protected for the benefit of current and future participants.
- ✦ Enhancing - Invest in existing facilities and pitches, ensuring that participation in the game is sustained as well as expanded.

The Strategy commits to delivering in excess of £150m (through Football Foundation) into facility improvements across the National Game in line with identified priorities:

- ✦ Natural grass pitches improved – target: 100
- ✦ A network of new AGPs built – target 100
- ✦ A network of refurbished AGPs – target 150
- ✦ On selected sites, new and improved changing facilities and toilets
- ✦ Continue a small grants programme designed to address modest facility needs of clubs
- ✦ Ongoing support with the purchase and replacement of goalposts

It also commits to:

- ✦ Direct other sources of investment into FA facility priorities
- ✦ Communicate priorities for investment across the grassroots game on a regular basis
- ✦ Work closely with Sport England, the Premier League and other partners to ensure that investment is co-ordinated and targeted

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Champion Counties – England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Strategic Plan (2013 – 2017)

“Champion Counties” - continues to focus on the four pillars, as identified in the ECB’s previous strategy: “Grounds to Play”. The pillars are:

- ✦ Energising people and partnerships through effective leadership and governance
- ✦ Building a Vibrant domestic game through operational excellence and delivering a competition structure with appointment to view
- ✦ Engaging participants through the maintenance of existing facilities, supporting club/school links, supporting volunteers and expanding women’s and disabilities cricket
- ✦ Delivering Successful England teams and world class global events

The key measures for the life span of the plan are as follows:-

- ✦ Increase the subset of participation measured by Sport England’s Active People Survey from 183,400 to 197,500.
- ✦ Increase attendances at LV= CC, YB50 and FLT20 by 200,000.
- ✦ Complete sponsorship and broadcasting agreements through 2019.
- ✦ Win the World Test Championship and Women’s World Cup in 2017.
- ✦ Win The Ashes and World Cup in 2015.
- ✦ Expand the number of clubs participating in NatWest Cricket Force from 2,000 to 2,200.
- ✦ Complete co-operation agreements for each of the 39 County Boards with their First Class County or Minor County partner.
- ✦ Deliver two world class global events in 2017 which exceed budget and exceed customer satisfaction targets.
- ✦ Increase the number of cricket’s volunteers to 80,000 by 2017.
- ✦ Expand the number of participants in women’s and disabilities cricket by 10% by 2017.
- ✦ Award all Major Matches through 2019 by December 2014.
- ✦ To increase the number of TwelfthMan members from 220,000 to 250,000 by 2017.
- ✦ Complete an approved Community Engagement programme with all 18 First Class Counties and MCC.
- ✦ Provide First Class Counties with total fee payments of £144m between 2014 and 2017.
- ✦ For each £1 provided in facility grants through the Sport England Whole Sport Plan grant programme ensure a multiplier of 3 with other funding partners.
- ✦ Provide a fund of £8.1m of capital investment to enhance floodlights, sightscreens, replay screens, power sub-stations and broadcasting facilities at First Class County venues.
- ✦ Provide an interest-free loan fund to community clubs of £10 million.
- ✦ Leverage the 2014 tour by India to engage with a minimum of 10,000 cricket supporters of Asian origin. Qualify and engage 50 Level 4 coaches to support the development of professional cricketers.
- ✦ Expand the number of coaches who have received teacher level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications to 50,000.
- ✦ Deliver an annual fixture for the Unicorns against a touring (Full, A or U19) ICC member nation.
- ✦ Provide a fund of £2 million for community clubs to combat the impact of climate change.
- ✦ Introduce a youth T20 competition engaging 500 teams by 2017.

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The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017)

The recently launched RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners. It identifies that with 470 grass root clubs and 1500 players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

- ◀ Create a platform for growth in club rugby participation and membership, especially with a view to exploiting the opportunities afforded by RWC 2015.
- ◀ Ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of rugby clubs, through supporting not only their playing activity but also their capacity to generate revenue through a diverse range of activities and partnerships.

In summary the priorities for investment which have met the needs of the game for the Previous period remain valid:

- ◀ Increase the provision of changing rooms and clubhouses that can sustain concurrent adult and junior male and female activity at clubs
- ◀ Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches and floodlighting
- ◀ Increase the provision of artificial grass pitches that deliver wider game development

It is also a high priority for the RFU to target investment in the following:

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues
- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment

England Hockey (EH) - A Nation Where Hockey Matters (2013-2017)

EH have a clear vision, a powerful philosophy and five core objectives that all those who have a role in advancing Hockey can unite behind. With UK Sport and Sport England's investment, and growing commercial revenues, EH are ambitious about how they can take the sport forward in Olympic cycles and beyond.

"The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'. A nation where hockey is talked about at dinner tables, playgrounds and public houses, up and down the country. A nation where the sport is on the back pages of our newspapers, where children dream of scoring a goal for England's senior hockey team, and where the performance stirs up emotion amongst the many, not the few"

England Hockey aspires to deepen the passion of those who play, deliver and follow sport by providing the best possible environments and the best possible experiences. Whilst reaching out to new audiences by making the sport more visible, available and relevant and through the many advocates of hockey.

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Underpinning all this is the infrastructure which makes the sport function. EH understand the importance of volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs and facilities. The more inspirational people can be, the more progressive Hockey can be and the more befitting the facilities can be, the more EH will achieve. The core objectives are as follows:

- ◀ Grow our Participation
- ◀ Deliver International Success
- ◀ Increase our Visibility
- ◀ Enhance our Infrastructure
- ◀ Be a strong and respected Governing Body

England Hockey has a Capital Investment Programme (CIP), that is planned to lever £5.6 million investment into hockey facilities over the next four years, underpinned by £2m million from the National Governing Body. With over 500 pitches due for refurbishment in the next 4-8 years, there will be a large focus placed on these projects through this funding stream. The current level of pitches available for hockey is believed to be sufficient for the medium term needs, however in some areas, pitches may not be in the right places in order to maximize playing opportunities

‘The right pitches in the right places’¹⁶

In 2012, EH released its facility guidance which is intended to assist organisations wishing to build or protect hockey pitches for hockey. It identifies that many existing hockey AGPs are nearing the end of their useful life as a result of the installation boom of the 90’s. Significant investment is needed to update the playing stock and protect the sport against inappropriate surfaces for hockey as a result of the rising popularity of AGPs for a number of sports. EH is seeking to invest in, and endorse clubs and hockey providers which have a sound understanding of the following:

- ◀ Single System – clubs and providers which have a good understanding of the Single System and its principles and are appropriately places to support the delivery.
- ◀ ClubsFirst accreditation – clubs with the accreditation are recognised as producing a safe effective and child friendly hockey environment
- ◀ Sustainability – hockey providers and clubs will have an approved development plan in place showing their commitment to developing hockey, retaining members and providing an insight into longer term goals. They will also need to have secured appropriate tenure.

Bowls England: Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Bowls England will provide strong leadership and work with its stakeholders to support the development of the sport of bowls in England for this and future generations.

The overall vision of Bowls England is to:

- ◀ Promote the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Recruit new participants to the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Retain current and future participants within the sport of flat green bowls.

¹⁶

<http://englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=1143§ionTitle=The+Right+Pitches+in+the+Right+Places>

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In order to ensure that this vision is achieved, ten key performance targets have been created, which will underpin the work of Bowls England up until 31st March 2017.

- ◀ 115,000 individual affiliated members.
- ◀ 1,500 registered coaches.
- ◀ Increase total National Championship entries by 10%.
- ◀ Increase total national competition entries by 10%.
- ◀ Medal places achieved in 50% of events at the 2016 World Championships.
- ◀ County development officer appointed by each county association.
- ◀ National membership scheme implemented with 100% uptake by county associations.
- ◀ Secure administrative base for 1st April 2017.
- ◀ Commercial income to increase by 20%.

Despite a recent fall in affiliated members, and a decline in entries into National Championships over the last five years, Bowls England believes that these aims will be attained by following core values. The intention is to:

- ◀ Be progressive.
- ◀ Offer opportunities to participate at national and international level.
- ◀ Work to raise the profile of the sport in support of recruitment and retention.
- ◀ Lead the sport.
- ◀ Support clubs and county associations.

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APPENDIX 2: REQUIREMENTS OF STEP SYSTEM

Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technical area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
7	No minimum and no boundary fencing required	Post and rope around all sides that accommodate spectators. Minimum of 1.83m (ideally 2m) away from touchline and if hard standing exists (not compulsory) it should be minimum of 0.9 metres width.	Not essential but its desirable that a technical area exists within the laws of the game	Not compulsory	Not required, however where one exists it must be fixed and fully operational	No specific requirements for accommodation	None Required	Provision should be made for adequate toilet facilities	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads and adequate toilets for players. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower and access to toilets (not necessarily inside the changing room). New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technica l area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
Entry to Step 6/ H	No minimum, but ground must be enclosed with fencing 1.83m high	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Hard standing width of 0.9m on spectator side of barrier on a minimum of 2 adjacent sides from the entrance.	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	1 required or a pay box.	Can be on 1 side only. 50 minimum covered. No allocation required for Directors	None Required	2 WC's should be required	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2,1 shower, 1 WC (exclusive use but not necessarily en suite)and 1 wash hand basin. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.
6/ G	No minimum, but ground must be enclosed with fencing 1.83m high	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Hard standing width of 0.9m on spectator side of barrier on a minimum of 2 sides on adjacent sides from the entrance.	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	1 required or a pay box.	Can be on 1 side but preferably 2 sides. 100 minimum covered of which 50 must be seated and located in one stand. No allocation required for Directors	None Required	Male: 2 urinals or equivalen t and 1 WC. Female: 2WC's	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2,1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technical area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
5/ F	No minimum, but ground must be enclosed with fencing 1.83m high	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Hard standing width of 0.9m on spectator side of barrier on a minimum of 3 sides.	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	1 required or a pay box.	Can be on 1 side but preferably on 2 sides of ground. 200 minimum covered of which 100 must be seated (can be 2 stands each 50) 16 seats allocated to Directors. Public address system required.	None Required	Male: 2 urinals or equivalent and 1 WC. Female: 2WC's	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technical area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
Seeking promotion from 5- 4/ E	1,000	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Must be in filled so ball can't pass through. 0.9m hard standing on all 4 areas of the ground	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	2 required with 0.9m hard standing to all spectator areas.	Preferably on at least 2 sides of ground. 250 minimum covered of which 150 must be seated in not more than 2 stands (no stand can have less than 50 seats). 16 seats allocated to Directors. Also need separate Directors room for hospitality serving minimum 16 people. Separate medical room required, not accessed through changing rooms. Public address system required.	Minimum 2 with lights and writing facilities	Male: 2 urinals or equivalent and 1 WC. Female: 2WC's	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. Bell buzzer required. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technical area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
4/ D	1,300 with potential to increase to 1,950	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Must be in filled so ball can't pass through. 0.9m hard standing on all 4 areas of the ground	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	2 required with 0.9m hard standing to all spectator areas.	Preferably on at least 2 sides of ground. 300 minimum covered of which 150 must be seated in not more than 2 stands (no stand can have less than 50 seats). 24 seats allocated to Directors. Also need separate Directors room for hospitality serving minimum 24 people. Separate medical room required, not accessed through changing rooms. Public address system required.	Minimum 2 with lights and writing facilities	Male: 2 urinals or equivalent and 1 WC. Female: 2WC's	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. Bell buzzer required. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technica l area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
3/ C	1,950, with potential to increase to 3,000	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Must be in filled so ball can't pass through. 0.9m hard standing on all 4 areas of the ground	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 8 people or 4m in length	Average lux of 120 for existing or 180 lux must be provided for new	3 required with 0.9m hard standing to all spectator areas.	Preferably on 2 sides of ground. 500 minimum covered of which 250 must be seated (no more than 2 stands, minimum of 50 per stand). 24 seats allocated to Directors. Also need separate Directors room for hospitality serving minimum 24 people. Separate medical room required, not accessed through changing rooms. Public address system required.	4 with lights and writing facilities	Male: 4 urinals or equivalent and 2 WC's. Female: 2WC's	Existing must be 12m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC. New build 18m2.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. Bell buzzer required. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technica l area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
2/ B	3,000, with potential to increase to 4,000	1.1m high and 1.83 m away from touchline (ideally 2m). Must be in filled so ball can't pass through. 0.9m hard standing on all 4 areas of the ground	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 11 people or 5.5m in length	Average lux of 180	6 required with 0.9m hard standing to all spectator areas.	Preferably on 2 sides of ground. 500 minimum covered of which 250 must be seated and located in one stand. 24 seats allocated to Directors. Also need separate Directors room for hospitality serving minimum 24 people. Separate medical room required, not accessed through changing rooms. Public address system required	6 with lights and writing facilities	Male: 4 urinals or equivalent and 2 WC's. Female: 2WC's	Must be 18m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC.	Minimum 4m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. Bell buzzer required. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.

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Step/ Grade	Min Capacity	Pitch Barrier	Technica l area	Floodlights	Turnstiles	Spectator Accommodation	Press seating	Toilets within ground	Players Changing	Match Officials Changing
1/ A	4,000, with potential to increase to 5,000	1.1m high and 2.25 m away from touchline (ideally 2.75m). Must be in filled so ball can't pass through. 1m hard standing on all 4 areas of the ground	Same side of pitch, ideally 3m apart and seat 11 people or 5.5m in length	Average lux of 250	8 required with 1m hard standing to all spectator areas.	Preferably on 2 sides of ground. 500 minimum covered of which 250 must be seated and located in one stand. 24 seats allocated to Directors. Also need separate Directors room for hospitality serving minimum 24 people. Separate medical room required, not accessed through changing rooms. Public address system required	12 with lights and writing facilities	Male: 4 urinals or equivalent and 2 WC's. Female: 2WC's	Must be 18m2, with 4 shower heads, 1 wash hand basin, 1 WC and 2 urinals.	Minimum 6m2, 1 shower, 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin. Bell buzzer required. New build 6m2. Provision for both male and female officials required.